

VIRGINIA SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
12 February 2015

SENATE REPUBLICANS REPORT ON SESSION PROGRESS AT CROSSOVER

RICHMOND, VA, 12 FEBRUARY 2015: The Virginia Senate Republican Caucus today expressed satisfaction on the progress of the 2015 Session of the Virginia General Assembly at Crossover, the halfway point of the legislative session.

Of the 790 bills filed by members of the Virginia Senate, 453 were approved by the upper chamber by the Crossover deadline and will now be considered by the House of Delegates. Senate Bill 800, Amendments to the 2014-2016 Biennial Budget, will be taken up by the Senate later today.

"Senate Republicans have advanced bills focused on the issues most important to the people of Virginia," noted Senate Majority Leader Thomas K. Norment, Jr. (R-James City). "We have approved measures to strengthen our economy, maximize our resources, improve education,

~ more ~

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and increase access to healthcare. And today, we unanimously approved a budget that puts Virginia's fiscal house in order without raising taxes.

"In the months leading up to session, Senator McWaters led a working group of our members, now 21 strong, in crafting bills that would benefit Virginians. Those were the bills we worked to pass and the bills we hope will ultimately be enacted this year."

Below is a select list of bills, sponsored by members of the Senate Republican Caucus and grouped by topic, that were approved by the Senate of Virginia by Crossover.

STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY AND CREATING JOBS

SB1127 (Hanger)

Passed Senate 38-0

Eliminating de minimis property taxes. Declares miscellaneous and incidental property with an original cost of less than \$250 as a separate classification of tangible personal property.

SB1447 (McDougle)

Passed Senate 25-13

Granting tax exemption to international businesses that relocate to Virginia. Tax exemption for international businesses that have relocated internationally and return to Virginia with a capital investment of at least \$5 million.

SB1007 (Watkins)

Passed Senate 38-0

Port of Virginia Economic and Infrastructure Development Grant Fund.

SB1359 (McWaters)

Passed Senate 38-0

Virginia Port Authority. Adds conveyance and transfers of real property by state agencies and temporary transfers of use of property between state agencies and lease to private entities to the list of exemptions for the Virginia Port Authority.

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MAXIMIZING VIRGINIA ENERGY

SB741 (Carrico)

Passed Senate 32-6

Coalfield employment enhancement tax credit. Extends the expiration date of the credit to January 1, 2019.

SJ 273 (Wagner)

Passed Senate 37-0

Department of Environmental Quality to study "double-counting" of benefits of EPA Clean Power Plan.

SB1308 (Chafin-Ruff)

Passed Senate 39-0

Gas Severance Tax. Extends the expiration date for the local gas severance tax that is dedicated to the local Coal and Gas Road Improvement Fund; the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Fund; and water, sewer, and natural gas systems and lines to December 31, 2018.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION

SJ 256 (Obenshain)

Passed Senate 21-17

Charter Schools Constitutional amendment. Grants the Board of Education authority, subject to criteria and conditions prescribed by the General Assembly, to establish charter schools within the school divisions of the Commonwealth.

SB 971 (Ruff)

Passed Senate 37-0

Establishes the Community College Workforce Training Grant Program to provide a \$1,000 incentive payment to a community college for each student who has successfully completed a noncredit workforce training program at the community college and subsequently obtains an industry-recognized certification or license in a high employer demand field in the region served by the community college.

SB 1335 (Cosgrove)

Passed Senate 38-0

Awarding academic credit for military training at Virginia's Community Colleges. Requires the State Board for Community Colleges to adopt a policy for the award of academic credit to any student enrolled at a comprehensive community college who has successfully completed a military training course or program as part of his military service.

SB 712 (Black)

Passed Senate 38-0

Reporting of sexual assault by institutions of higher education. Requires each public institution of higher education to establish written policies to require a responsible employee of the institution who in the course of his employment receives information from a victim that a sexual assault has occurred to report such information to the institution's Title IX coordinator within four hours.

SB 1329 (Garrett)

Passed Senate 38-0

Requires the governing board of each public or private institution of higher education to establish a written memorandum of understanding with a local sexual assault crisis center or other victim support service and adopt policies that require the institution to offer to refer the sexual assault victim to the sexual assault crisis center.

SB 1193 (Norment)

Passed Senate 38-0

Requires the registrar of each public institution of higher education and certain private institutions of higher education to include a prominent notation on the transcript of each student who has been suspended, permanently dismissed, or withdraws from the institution for any sex offense.

INCREASING ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

SB 717 (Stanley)

Passed Senate 40-0

Expanded eligibility for medical school scholarships. Expands eligibility for the medical school scholarship program administered by the Board of Health for medical students who agree to practice in underserved areas of the Commonwealth.

SB 718 (Stanley)

Passed Senate 38-0

Telemedicine Pilot Program. Directs the Department of Health to establish a three-year telemedicine pilot program designed to reduce patient use of emergency department facilities for the treatment of low-acuity conditions.

SB 866 (Chafin-Vogel)

Passed Senate 38-0

Health insurance for local employees. Allows local school boards and local governing bodies to elect to have all their employees and retirees eligible to participate in the state employee health insurance plan.

SB 1227 (McWaters)

Passed Senate 38-0

Amends the definition of telemedicine services, requiring at least one in-person physical examination must have occurred if a telemedicine services practitioner prescribes medication other than Schedule VI (lowest) controlled substances to a patient.

ENSURING TRANSPARENCY AND ETHICS

SB 1424 (Norment)

Passed Senate 35-1

Comprehensive Ethics Reform.