



★ SENATOR ★ BARBARA FAVOLA

Representing the 31st District of Virginia

SENATOR BARBARA FAVOLA'S 2019 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

A new session is like the first day of school. It is a fresh opportunity to pass a meaningful bill and make strides in improving the lives of Virginians. There will be two overriding issues in 2019: Passage of constitutional amendment language creating an independent redistricting commission; and, the opportunity to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. Rest assured, I will diligently work to ensure that we make progress on independent redistricting and make history by adopting the Equal Rights Amendment.

BELOW ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF MY AGENDA:

✓ Improving Access to Health Care

Working in collaboration with the Medical Society of Northern Virginia and area pediatricians, I will submit a bill that would require all health insurance plans in the Commonwealth, including short term plans and association plans, to cover the basic primary and preventive services currently required under the Affordable Care Act.

"So often folks do not realize that these "cheaper" plans really don't cover many services at all. It is heartbreaking to know that consumers learn about these omissions when they need care." – Barbara Favola

✓ Protecting Our Animals

In response to constituent concerns about the treatment of companion animals, I have submitted a bill that grants local governments the authority to adopt an ordinance that defines "adequate care."

✓ Fighting for Criminal Justice

We know that solitary confinement severely affects a person's mental health and ability to reintegrate into society. I am sponsoring a bill that would require the Department of Corrections to submit an annual report to the General Assembly containing statistical information regarding the use of solitary confinement.

✓ Supporting Vulnerable Families

Once again, I am submitting a budget amendment to provide child care subsidies and case management services to individuals, mainly moms, for a 2-year period if they are participating in an educational or work training program.

"It is absolutely critical that individuals transitioning off of public assistance be given the opportunity to succeed. This means we should help them continue their education or technical training so they can secure jobs that pay enough to support a family. Our income security programs must be redesigned to help folks achieve self-sufficiency and not just provide band aids for the moment."

– Barbara Favola

I am also supporting a budget amendment to ensure that when foster children are reunited with their families, the family receives case management services for a year to help ensure a smooth transition.

✓ Reducing Hate Crimes

For the past several years I have submitted bills to strengthen Virginia's Hate Crime laws. At the request of Attorney General Mark Herring, I will be carrying a bill to include sexual orientation and gender identification as causes for hate crimes.

A stronger Virginia Hate Crimes statute will give prosecutors more "tools" in the tool box when they are evaluating sentencing options.

"It is incredibly important to keep track of and understand crimes motivated by hate and prejudice. We must send a message that all Virginians are valued and the Commonwealth is committed to keeping everyone safe." – Barbara Favola

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✓ Protecting Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

As chair of the Sexual Assault Advisory Committee, I learned from Victims' Rights groups that the process for continuing a protective order can cause a hardship on the survivor. My bill would enable a judge to rule on the continuation of a preliminary protective order at the same time the criminal trial is being heard. This eliminates the need for the survivor to return to court just for a hearing on a protective order.

I also submitted a bill which would allow a judge to hear a request for a protective order using Skype if the petitioner is hospitalized or cannot make an in-person appearance because of an extraordinary circumstance.

✓ Promoting Gun Safety

I will be submitting legislation to require that an individual who has been convicted of two misdemeanor assaults of a household member shall forfeit possession of a firearm. Additionally, I will be advocating for passage of "red flag" laws and the implementation of more complete and more universal background checks.

"We must take steps to remove guns from those who have a history of violence. Abused women are 5 times more likely to be killed if their abuser owns a firearm. Virginians want to be safe in their homes and in their communities. Responsible gun ownership needs to accommodate safety considerations."

— Barbara Favola

✓ Fighting for Paid Family Leave

I have been working with stakeholders to craft a bill that provides much needed support for families. We are looking at best practices in other states to evaluate ways for making such a program universal. My bill will seek a tax credit to help small employers cover the costs associated with the program.

✓ Promoting Women's Health

I am submitting a bill to codify the U.S. Supreme Court decision on "Roe versus Wade." This decision granted women the right to privacy in making reproductive health care decisions, including access to abortion care for up to 20 weeks during a pregnancy.

"Given the new composition of the Supreme Court, States will likely be granted authority to establish barriers for women wishing to access abortion care. Virginians want us to act now to protect this important right to privacy."

— Barbara Favola

✓ Championing Solar Freedom

I am proud to collaborate with my colleague, Senator McClellan, environmental leaders and business leaders on a bill that will enable the creation of more solar energy, including increased opportunities for individuals and businesses to participate in new metering.

✓ Promoting Quality K-12 for All Students

In collaboration with Loudoun Public Schools and other stakeholders, I am submitting legislation to enable the creation of "Divisions of Innovation." This concept will enable schools to create a more comprehensive and more meaningful way to teach and measure academic success. I will also be advocating for increases in teacher salaries.

✓ Promoting Mental Health Services in Public Schools

I am submitting legislation that will require school counselors to allocate 80 percent of their time to behavioral health counseling. It is also important that the Standards of Quality reflect a counselor to student ratio of 1 to 250. I will address this issue in my budget amendments.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve you in the State Senate. Don't forget to sign-up for my legislative updates by going to my website: BarbaraFavola.org and follow me on Twitter and Facebook. If it is convenient, I always appreciate seeing you in Richmond. Just give us a call and we will make your visit meaningful. Moreover, if you wish to advocate for an issue, personal visits to lawmakers really make a difference. Thanks for your on-going support. Together, we will move Virginia forward.

— Barbara Favola



Barbara Favola



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