

Women's Equality Legislative Summit 2020

- The Women's Equality Legislation Summit (WELS) took place on January 7, 2020, the day before the 2020 Virginia legislature began.
- WELS featured eight bills on a variety of equality-related topics.
- The WELS bills were tracked throughout the legislative session (January - March 2020).



2 WELS bills **passed** outright;
4 WELS bills **passed in different formats**;
2 WELS bills **failed to pass**



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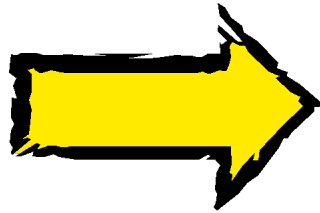
- All WELS bills, with detailed summary sheets, found at <https://varatifyera.org/january-7th-summit/>

House Bill 8: School-to-Prison Pipeline

- House Bill (HB) 8: eliminates the use of the “disorderly conduct in public places” misdemeanor on k-12 school property.
- Intended to reduce Virginia schoolchildren charged in the criminal justice system.
- HB8 was incorporated into HB 256 during the legislative session.
- HB256 passed the legislature!



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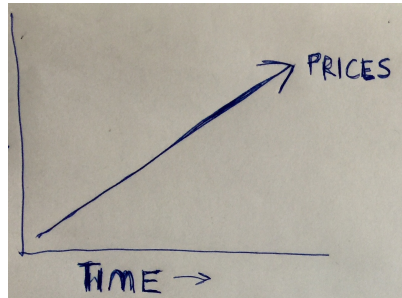
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House Bill 286: Criminal Justice Reform

- HB 286: raises Virginia's felony theft threshold from \$500 to \$1500.
- Intended to reduce # of Virginians charged with felonies due to inflation over decades.
- HB 286 was one of *four* proposed bills to raise the felony larceny threshold.
- House committee picked HB995 (\$1000 threshold).
- HB995 passed the legislature!



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House Bill 338: Domestic Worker Wages

- HB338 required domestic workers to be paid at least minimum wage.
- HB338 was “continued to 2021” in committee.
- BUT...
- Senate Bill (SB) 804 *also* required domestic workers to be paid at least minimum wage.
- SB804 passed the 2020 legislature!



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House Bill 405: Menstrual Supplies in Schools

- HB405 requires each school board to make tampons and pads available at all times and at no cost to students in k-12 school bathrooms.
- Intended to provide students with menstrual supplies.
- HB405 passed the 2020 legislature!



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House Bill 652: No Bail Payments for Misdemeanor Charges

- HB652 would change the law to direct a judge to release misdemeanor arrestees without cash bond, except in certain circumstances (like stalking).
- Women face significant financial obstacles to securing pretrial release when cash bond is set and sometimes bond is denied for no readily apparent reason.
- HB652 was “continued to 2021.”
- No other bills changing cash bond passed in 2020. Next year!



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Senate Bill 50: Hairstyle-Based Racial Discrimination

- SB50 clarifies that Virginia's laws against racial discrimination includes discrimination based on hair texture, hair type, and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists.
- Black women are 50% more likely to be sent home or know of a black woman sent home from the workplace because of her hair.
- SB50 passed!



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Senate Bill 76: Protective Orders: Penalty for Firearm Possession

- SB76 was a “red flag” law banning firearm possession by certain violent offenders who had protective orders against them.
- SB76 was “stricken” during session at the request of its chief patron, Sen. Janet Howell.
- Instead, Sen. Howell supported SB479, a similar “red flag” law.
- SB479 passed!



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Senate Bill 231: No Sales Tax on Menstrual Supplies

- SB231 fully eliminates the “tampon tax” on menstrual supplies.
- Virginia doesn’t apply sales tax to medical supplies like bandages, but menstrual supplies are taxed.
- SB231 passed the Senate, but...
- SB231 was killed in the House Appropriations Committee.
- Next year!



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