

VIRGINIA SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

News Release

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Sen. Frank W. Wagner
Sen. John C. Watkins

Thomas J. Cosgrove
Executive Director

Contact: Jeff Ryer
Phone: 757.713.5333

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SENATE REPUBLICANS REPORT ON SESSION PROGRESS AT CROSSOVER

RICHMOND, VA, 16 FEBRUARY 2012: The Virginia Senate Republican Caucus today expressed satisfaction on the progress of the 2012 Session of the Virginia General Assembly at Crossover, the halfway point of the legislative session.

Of the 684 bills filed by members of the Virginia Senate, 403 have been approved by the upper chamber by the Crossover deadline. Those bills will now be considered by the House of Delegates. Remarkably, 77 House Bills were approved by the Senate by the Crossover deadline, advancing the legislative process with significantly greater efficiency than in previous years. And in a departure from previous sessions, all Senate bills were heard in full committee.

"Our members should be proud of what we have accomplished so far this session," noted Senate Majority Leader Thomas K. Norment, Jr. (R-James City). "We have

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approved important measures that will spur economic growth, streamline our government, and improve the quality of education in Virginia. And, we have accomplished this by administering the legislative process fairly and transparently, allowing bills to be presented and discussed by the Senators in full committee."

The Senate approved many of the key components of Governor Robert F. McDonnell's agenda, including his legislation to reduce and streamline the state's boards and commissions. It also approved multiple measures focused on spurring economic development and creating jobs.

"The wide range of bills that were considered and approved is particularly impressive," said Senator Ryan T. McDougle (R-Hanover), Chairman of the Senate Republican Caucus. "Bills on jobs and economic development, education, public safety, government reform, health care, and veterans' affairs have all been approved by the Senate and are headed to the House. We are on track to have one of the most productive sessions in recent memory."

The Senate's proposed version of the 2012-2014 Biennial Budget is subject to a separate deadline and will be considered next week. The Senate Finance Committee will unveil its version of the budget on Sunday, February 19.

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.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- [SB 112](#) (McDougle) Passed Senate 40-0
Exempts certain computer hardware and software from sales and use taxes in order to incentivize the creation of data centers.
- [SB 122](#) (Watkins) Passed Senate 40-0
Makes it easier for localities to receive derelict buildings for the purposes of redevelopment.
- [SB 128](#) (Stanley) Passed Senate 39-0
Develops the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund to provide economic development grants aimed at agricultural and forestry operations.
- [SB 130](#) (Stanley) Passed Senate 40-0
Establishing the Building Revitalization Grant Fund to give grants to corporations retrofitting buildings to serve as new places of business.
- [SB 344](#) (McDougle) Passed Senate 40-0
Creates investment tax credits for small businesses.
- [SB 368](#) (Reeves) Passed Senate 40-0
Extends the Major Business Facility jobs tax credit.
- [SB 413](#) (Norment) Passed Senate 26-14
Creates incentives for businesses producing renewable energy.
- [SB 444](#) (Vogel) Passed Senate 40-0
Exempts any gain made under federal rehabilitation tax credits from Virginia income taxes as well.
- [SB 549](#) (Wagner) Passed Senate 28-12
Classifies machinery and tools purchased after July 1, 2012 as intangible personal property and therefore subject only to state taxation.
- [SB 607](#) (Carrico) Passed Senate 38-2
Assists economic development in Bristol.

EDUCATION

[SB 85](#) (Hanger and Favola) Passed Senate 40-0
Expands the two-year college grant program from students whose expected family contribution is no more than \$8,000 to those whose expected family contribution is no more than \$12,000.

[SB 278](#) (Smith) Passed Senate 28-11
Shifts the date for contract renewal from April 15th to June 15th.

[SB 440](#) (Obenshain) Passed Senate 20-18
Eases restrictions on charter schools in Virginia.

[SB 489](#) (Ruff) Passed Senate 24-14
Streamlines diploma requirements in secondary education by creating 3 categories instead of 7.

[SB 514](#) (Wagner) Passed Senate 40-0
Mandates the state board of education credits students with gaining industry certifications on their diplomas.

[SB 564](#) (Black) Passed Senate 23-17
Limits required description of the curriculum a home school student will follow to a list of subjects to be studied.

[SB 598](#) (Newman) Passed Senate 30-10
Creates a process for distribution of education funds for school systems using virtual school programs.

GOVERNMENT REFORM

[SB 117](#) (McDougle) Passed Senate 39-0
Changes budget cycle so the biennial budget shall begin on July 1 of odd-numbered years.

[SB 267](#) (Norment) Passed Senate 40-0
Requires reports to be issued with the budget conference report that specifically identify any non-state agency appropriation, and item in the conference report that was not included in the House or Senate budget, and any item that represents failed legislation.

[SB 274](#) (Smith) Passed Senate 25-15
Removes mandate that Virginia localities create urban development areas.

[SB 348](#) (McWaters) Passed Senate 20-20
Creates the Government Agency Effectiveness Review Commission to review state agencies on a five-year cycle on their effectiveness.

[SB 446](#) (Vogel) Passed Senate 40-0

Creates a bi-partisan redistricting commission to take redistricting out of the hands of politicians.

[SB 678](#) (McDougle)

Passed Senate 25-14

The Governor's reform package that combines, consolidates, and streamlines over 50 government agencies.

[SB 679](#) (Newman)

Passed Senate 40-0

Eliminates multiple state mandates on localities.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

[SB 341](#) (Newman)

Pending

Increases the amount an individual can claim from 15-30% of the premiums paid.

[SB 450](#) (Vogel)

Passed Senate 39-1

Requires health insurers that provide cancer chemotherapy to provide coverage for a prescribed, orally administered anti-cancer medication.

HONORING VETERANS AND MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS

[SB 114](#) (McDougle)

Passed Senate 40-0

Adds veterans' organizations to non-profit entities that qualify for tax exemptions.

[SB 254](#) (Reeves)

Passed Senate 39-0

Increases the ratio of claims agents with the Department of Veterans Services to the number of veterans in the Commonwealth.

[SB 508](#) (Wagner)

Passed Senate 40-0

Makes in-state tuition available for any member of the National Guard residing in Virginia through a grant program.

[SB 527](#) (Garrett)

Passed Senate 40-0

Creates a preference in state hiring for members of the National Guard, adding 5 percent to the total points available.

[SB 528](#) (Garrett)

Passed Senate 39-0

Allows a permanently disabled veteran to receive a combined hunting and freshwater fishing lifetime license at no cost.

LAW ENFORCEMENT, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[SB 66](#) (Stanley) Passed Senate 40-0
“Caylee’s Law” that makes it a crime for a parent or guardian of a child under 12 to fail to report a child missing to law enforcement within a reasonable period of time.

[SB 159](#) (Obenshain) Passed Senate 38-1
Strengthens penalties for drug trafficking in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

[SB 239](#) (Stuart) Passed Senate 37-3
Expands the list of individuals required to report suspected child abuse and neglect to include those associated with or employed by a public organization responsible for the care of children and persons employed by a public or private institution of higher education.

[SB 273](#) (Smith) Passed Senate 40-0
Amends criminalization of synthetic marijuana to add newly identified chemical combinations.

[SB 314](#) (Blevins) Passed Senate 40-0
Changes method for determining if a prisoner or defendant is a sexually violent predator.

[SB 330](#) (Carrico) Passed Senate 40-0
Tightens restrictions on coal mine mapping and worker safety.

[SB 345](#) (McDougale) Passed Senate 39-0
Raises penalty for gang recruitment.

[SB 369](#) (Reeves) Passed Senate 32-6
Mandates that insurers must state in their policies whether fire insurance covers earthquakes.

[SB 431](#) (Stuart) Passed Senate 39-0
Creates protection for seniors who are incapacitated from losing their assets due to fraud.

[SB 436](#) (Obenshain) Passed Senate 27-13
Imposes mandatory minimum life sentence for certain sex crimes against children under 13.