

Women's Legislative Roundtable
4th Floor East Conference Room
March 2, 2016

LWV-VA Co-president Lois Page welcomed attendees and invited them to introduce themselves.

Sen. John Miller (D - 1)

Re: Education and election bills

SB336 - Redesign of high school graduation requirements - in conference committee

Gives students flexibility for program of core education, then academic or career preparation; credit for internships and externships and credentialing

SB211 Requires that every child K-5 have 20 minutes of physical activity daily.

SB427 Current system penalizes schools for students who opt out of SOL testing; schools must report a zero on scores. This legislation would provide that students who have opted out will be recorded as not taking the test. This may be the case for up to 50% of students.

SB190 Directs that electronic voting machines with no paper trail may not be used as of 2020. Localities will have to pay for new machines if needed. Now, 49 localities in Virginia still use machines that will be prohibited.

Sen. Miller reported that bills establishing an Independent Redistricting Committee and providing that voters age 65 and over may vote absentee with no excuse passed the Senate but were killed in the House.

Sen. Dick Black (R - 13)

SB291 Requires all law enforcement agents in Virginia to test rape kits. Study reveals that 2300 remain untested in Virginia. A task force from the Director of Public Safety is working on this with support from the Governor.

SB248 Addresses issue of suspected perpetrator having to give permission for minor's rape kit to be tested. Would override parental consent in these instances. Chain of custody requirements lead to burden on forensic nurses; the bill eliminates this and directs law enforcement officers to maintain chain of custody. This bill has so far survived the budget process.

Last year the legislature passed the Hannah Graham bill forcing law enforcement into college campuses so crimes won't be buried. Women's community has been helpful on this issue.

Becky Bowers Lanier, Transparency Virginia, rep for midwives

Sen. William Stanley (R - 20) supports controversial bill (**SB620**) requiring more autonomy for advanced practice nurses, nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, and nurse anesthetists. At present these professionals must have written relationship with a physician. When doctors leave practice, or there is a gap between physicians, nurses cannot practice. This bill provides for oversight via telemedicine. AARP has been supportive.

HB760 Transparency/open government bill

Audit bill to make it easier for public to see the budget is up today for a vote.

HB481 Carol Noggle reported a transparency concern at meeting last Friday. Aliens are being detained in jail for immigrant pickup; a Sanctuary City issue. Bill is on the floor today and is pretty much gutted. This bill makes the locality responsible if a detainee gets free before pickup.

Del. Vivian Watts (D - 39)

Delegate Watts spoke to **HB481**. She says this bill actually does nothing. Check Congressional Research Service for discussion. ICE detainers are requests to hold for 72 hours; locality has no obligation to hold beyond that. Cost element, liability come back to the locality. Also a civil rights issue. This bill would make the sheriff think twice before releasing.

Del. Watts also offered observations on mental health. She spoke of the difficulty of getting an emergency order to detain. At age 18 person is an adult and parents have no authority. Brain research and chemistry reveal that hormones, genetics, substance abuse, and reaction to trauma are all enmeshed in mental health issues. In recent years vet trauma from battle and repeated deployments is receiving more mental health attention.

Sen. Mamie Locke (D - 2)

Explained her "no" vote (only one in Senate) on the budget. She voted against the budget because of what was not in it. No money for judges in the district court; not enough funding for food deserts; Medicaid expansion was stripped out. Yet legislators gave themselves staff increases, per diem increases, and funds for pet projects.

HB 516 (Steven Landes) (R - 25)

This bill is before the Public Education subcommittee. Concerns sexually explicit instructional materials in the classroom. Requires parental notification but goes beyond that; could also apply to arts and sciences; would adversely impact AP classes, which have content determined outside the local school curriculum. Board of Education would make determination re content.

Discussion among attendees:

There is a line item in budget to prohibit Medicaid payment for abortion for gross fetal anomaly.

Planned Parenthood was defunded; budget negotiations are ongoing.

Because budget is set for two years, Medicaid expansion cannot happen for at least two years.

Carol Noggle

Said that two constitutional amendments proposing a Constitutional Convention have both passed the House and gone to the Senate Rules Committee. Chair is Sen. McDougle. One amendment is very broad; the other relates only to fiscal restraint (balanced budget).

It was reported that the Governor has vetoed two bills we are glad to have vetoed: (1) the home school Tiebow bill regarding public school sports participation for home schooled students, and (2) a bill to change the lines (a redistricting

adjustment) in a split precinct in Louisa County (could normally only be done every 10 years).

Mary Fraser (on staff of Sen. Dick Black)

Mary commented on domestic violence issues.

As much as 64% of crime in Virginia is related to domestic violence. She also discussed the spiritual ramifications of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Notes By Bland Crowder, RMA