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INTRODUCTION

New Virginia Majority (NVM) started fourteen years ago with the audacious goal of building a bloc of conscious, consistent voters to advance a new politic rooted in the needs and struggles of working class people of color, immigrants, women, and young people. Despite the outcome of the November 2021 general elections, our priorities have not changed.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to building the people power needed to create more equitable political systems that truly work for all of us and advancing policies that address the legacy and ongoing impact of racial and economic injustice in the Commonwealth.

For more than a decade, we have made significant strides to create a Virginia that reflects the values of the Latinx, African American, Asian American Pacific Islander, and youth communities that we organize with year-round. The expansion of Medicaid, ensuring people are not evicted from their homes during a pandemic, making it easier for all eligible Virginians to vote, establishing Virginians' right to environmental justice, and advancing rights restoration are a few examples of major victories that we have worked on and gotten passed in the legislature.

In order to build a Virginia that centers the policy demands and everyday needs of working-class communities of color, we will work with our allies and legislators to fiercely protect and defend the progress we have made to improve the lives of Virginia families. Our 2022 legislative agenda is the next step in the progression of our Ten Year Vision and a reflection of the bold actions that are required to create a Virginia that is welcoming to all who call it home.

In solidarity,

Tram Nguyen  
Co-Executive Director

Kenneth Gilliam, Jr  
Policy Director

Tyneshia Griffin  
Environmental Policy Analyst

Mariko Lewis  
Housing Policy Analyst

Dominique Martin  
Criminal Justice Policy Analyst
EDUCATION

We believe that all Virginia students should have access to a high-quality education, regardless of their zip code, race, immigration status, or country of origin. This includes having fully funded schools, affordable higher education and workforce training, and safe and supportive learning environments. New Virginia Majority is a proud member of the Fund our Schools Coalition, and will continue to advance our shared legislative priorities to fully and fairly fund Virginia’s schools during the 2022 legislative session.

1. **Fully Fund the Revised Standards of Quality:** The Virginia Board of Education recently sent their recommendations to lawmakers for updating our Standards of Quality — the minimum funding standards to provide K-12 students an adequate education. These updates include nearly $813 million in new state spending for essential positions like school counselors, social workers, instructors of English learners, reading specialists, funding for high-poverty divisions, and much more.

2. **Lift the Cap for School Support Positions:** In 2009, lawmakers added language to the budget creating a “cap” on support staff funding — cutting hundreds of millions in state funding for support staff. Between 2009 and 2019, support staff in Virginia schools has declined by 2,800 positions while student enrollment increased by more than 57,000 students. The Virginia Board of Education has repeatedly recommended lifting this arbitrary and damaging cap.

3. **Bold Investments to Start Providing Adequate Teacher and Staff Pay:** According to the Economic Policy Institute, Virginia has the least competitive teacher salaries in the country compared to professions with similar education levels. While pay has improved over the past couple of years, it would take far too many years at that incremental pace for Virginia to provide competitive salaries. With our historic budget surplus, it’s time for lawmakers to make bold investments to improve teacher and staff salaries and get us on track to reach the national teacher pay average over the next few years.

4. **Invest in School Infrastructure:** Since at least the 1980s, Virginia has provided tens of millions of dollars in direct state aid for school construction grants and subsidized financing. In the wake of the Great Recession, however, the zeroing out of the school grant program and greatly diminished support for school construction from the Literary Fund drastically reduced state support for school infrastructure projects. Today, the state has identified around $24 billion in needed K-12 school infrastructure updates.

5. **Stand Against Cuts and Repurposing of K-12 Public School Funding:** With students and schools still recovering from the setbacks of the pandemic, we can’t afford to shift investments to voucher and tax credit programs that redirect public K-12 funding and have track records of hurting student outcomes. Lawmakers should look to invest in evidence-based initiatives that our Board of Education and student-advocacy groups in the state have promoted for years, like funding the revised Standards of Quality and lifting the support cap.

For questions related to this issue area please contact:

**Kenneth Gilliam, Jr**  
Policy Director  
kgilliam@newvirginiamajority.org
HEALTH

Access to affordable and quality health care is the foundation of building strong and thriving communities. This means that everyone deserves access to health care coverage no matter where they live, country of origin, or their citizenship status.

1. **Expand Coverage Options for Virginia’s Immigrant Children:** In Virginia, there are stark inequities in access to health coverage for immigrant children. To address this issue, Virginia should create a program to cover children regardless of their immigration status. Ten states and the District of Columbia currently use or plan to use state-only funds to cover income-eligible children in Medicaid/CHIP-like programs who are otherwise ineligible due to immigration status. This investment in children’s health coverage could be partially offset by state savings in other state funded programs.

For questions related to these issue areas please contact:

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We want an economy that works for all of us, not just the wealthy few and profitable corporations. Virginians deserve a fair and equitable tax system that advances racial justice and new revenue to invest in our communities.

1. **Mandatory Combined Reporting:** Mandatory combined reporting, adopted by 28 states and the District of Columbia, is a key tool to counter tax avoidance strategies used by some large, multi-state corporations. It improves the fairness of the tax code by putting multi-state corporations on a more level playing field with locally-based corporations. According to state estimates, enacting combined reporting in Virginia would likely result in substantial new state revenues, with estimates ranging from $60 million to $80 million per year.

2. **Taxing Digital Downloads:** Virginia is one of only 12 states that does not apply a general sales tax to streaming platforms and one of only 16 states that does not apply that tax to digital products generally (as of 2019). By updating the tax code to include these products, the state would put digital downloads on a level playing field with equivalent goods that have been traditionally included in sales taxes and generate an estimated $40 million in state revenues, as well as new local revenues.

For questions related to this issue area please contact:

**Kenneth Gilliam, Jr**  
Policy Director  
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All Virginians deserve access to clean, safe, and affordable housing regardless of their income, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, or if they were formerly incarcerated. We want to create a more equitable housing landscape for all by expanding tenant protections, creating and maintaining affordable housing, and increasing access to homeownership for marginalized communities.

1. **Making the 14 Day Pay-or-Quit Law Permanent**: Due to economic instability during the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Assembly temporarily extended the five day pay-or-quit eviction notice to fourteen days. This allowed tenants to have a longer grace period to pay rent owed, which increased housing stability during the pandemic. This extension should be made permanent because even prior to the pandemic, housing instability was abnormally high in Virginia, as nearly half of renters were cost burdened and one in nine renters faced eviction in 2016. Making the fourteen day pay-or-quit law permanent will promote housing stability during the pandemic and beyond.

2. **Initiating the Creation of a Statewide Housing Voucher Program**: Housing vouchers have been proven to prevent eviction, lift families out of poverty, and reduce racial disparities in housing instability. In the first year of the biennium, this budget amendment would create a stakeholder group, including DHCD, to describe what a statewide housing voucher program would look like in Virginia, and how it would be implemented by our state agencies. In the second year of the biennium, $73 million would be allocated to carry out the statewide housing voucher program.

3. **Creating a Tax Credit for Mobile Home Park Owners Selling to Resident Organizations**: Manufactured homes, or mobile homes, are some of the most affordable forms of housing in the Commonwealth. It is important to preserve and strengthen this form of affordable housing by incentivizing mobile home park owners to sell to residents instead of third party investors. This budget amendment would provide owners a 10 percent tax credit on the realized gain when they sell to nonprofit organizations representing at least 25 percent of mobile home community residents.

For questions related to this issue area please contact:

**Mariko Lewis**
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ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

We believe that communities should be informed of and have the power to make decisions about environmental policies, projects, and practices that impact their health and daily lives and have access to workforce training and education for the green jobs of tomorrow.

1. **Create a 25% Spending Floor for the State’s Zero-Fare Transit Pilot Program:** The Transit Rider Incentive Program (TRIP) provides transit agencies with funding for zero-fare and low-income projects that help bolster ridership, decrease personal vehicle emissions, and increase transportation affordability and access for existing riders, who are often working-class and people-of-color. Creating a 25% program spending floor can increase the transportation dollars available to help improve transit access and meet the greater demand for TRIP’s zero-fare transportation funding from transit agencies across the state.

2. **Expand Virginia’s Utility Customer Service Disconnection Protections:** The state’s utility disconnection moratorium has ended and utilities can resume service disconnections, leaving utility customers with fewer protections. To better ensure the well-being of utility customers over the long-term and in the event of state and local public emergencies, utility service disconnections should be prohibited during certain declared state or local emergencies and seasonal and weather extremes.

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE

We believe that a fair and just criminal justice system does not criminalize poverty, place undue burdens on low income Virginians, fully realizes due process protections, implements alternatives to incarceration, reduces the jail and prison population, and facilitates an environment where returning citizens have an opportunity to fully participate in our society and succeed.

1. **Counsel At First Appearance:** We believe the right to legal counsel applies at all stages of the legal process. Legal representation at the earliest stages of a legal matter is a constitutional right and leads to more favorable outcomes for the accused including higher rates of release, lower bail conditions (including lower fees), and more pretrial freedom.

2. **Access to Police Disciplinary Records Through FOIA:** Law enforcement should be transparent and accountable to the communities they serve. Therefore the public records regarding disciplinary decisions should be accessible through the Freedom of Information Act. Currently, law enforcement can disclose this information at their discretion which effectively bars the public from public records. This practice does not build trust between law enforcement and their communities, and stifles the ability of community members to hold officers and local police departments accountable.

3. **Mandatory Minimums:** Mandatory minimum sentences have long been studied and shown to fuel mass incarceration while providing no public safety benefit. Mandatory minimums have disproportionately targeted people of color and this is exacerbated by the fact that prosecutors can use mandatory minimums to threaten defendants into plea deals because the risk of going to trial is so severe. These “Tough on Crime” and “Drug War” era sentences bypass judges who are appointed because of their ability to examine the facts of a case and give judgments accordingly. Virginia should ban the use of mandatory minimums.

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Criminal Justice Policy Analyst
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EXPANDING DEMOCRACY

Our democracy is strongest when we all have the ability to participate. The right to vote, to choose our leaders, and to weigh in on issues affecting our lives is at the heart of what it means to be in a democracy.

1. **Right to Vote Amendment**: As approved during the 2021 General Assembly, the amendment establishes that the sole qualifications to vote in Virginia are US citizenship, not being incarcerated, being at least 18 years of age, residency in Virginia, and registration to vote. To change the Constitution of Virginia, the exact amendment must be approved again during the 2022 legislative session and approved by voters during the 2022 elections.

For questions related to these issue areas please contact:

**Tram Nguyen**  
Co-Executive Director  
tnguyen@newvirginiamajority.org
## Budget Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Item</th>
<th>FY23 GF</th>
<th>FY24 GF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Appropriations:</strong> Provides funding to state agencies to facilitate and improve language access.</td>
<td>$7,903,000</td>
<td>$2,903,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Corrections:</strong> Provides additional funding to implement earned-sentence-credit legislation.</td>
<td>$3,423,098</td>
<td>$3,639,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Corrections:</strong> Provides funding for increased medical costs based on updated projections and authorizes positions to support the transition of medical service delivery to a state-managed model.</td>
<td>$11,049,177</td>
<td>$9,534,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Corrections:</strong> Provides funding to support Medicaid enrollment outreach to state-responsible individuals housed in local and regional jails and individuals under community supervision.</td>
<td>$298,766</td>
<td>$356,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Criminal Justice Services:</strong> Provides additional funding for pre-release and post-incarceration services.</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Criminal Justice Services:</strong> Provides ongoing general fund support and two positions in the second year to assist with the implementation of the MARCUS Alert System.</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Elections:</strong> Provides additional general fund appropriation for election public education.</td>
<td>$1,250,000</td>
<td>$1,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Energy:</strong> Fund the Low-to-Moderate Income Solar Loan and Rebate Pilot Program.</td>
<td>$30,000,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Environmental Quality:</strong> Provides funding for three ombudsman positions in the Department of Environmental Quality.</td>
<td>$366,300</td>
<td>$366,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Housing and Community Development:</strong> Provides additional positions and funds to support the creation or preservation of affordable housing units across the Commonwealth through construction financing and grants.</td>
<td>$70,000,000</td>
<td>$120,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget Item</td>
<td>FY23 GF</td>
<td>FY24 GF</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Medical Assistance Services:</strong> Provides funding to provide care coordination services to individuals who are Medicaid eligible 30 days prior to release from incarceration.</td>
<td>$1,062,185</td>
<td>$1,385,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Social Services:</strong> Adds language to create a criminal justice diversion task force responsible for studying effective types of diversion tools for use in local criminal justice diversion programs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grants to Localities:</strong> Provides funds for an additional five localities to implement a local Marcus Alert System.</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grants to Localities:</strong> Provides funds for the continued implementation of the crisis system transformation.</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
<td>$22,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Education:</strong> Updates the cost of the English as a Second Language Standards of Quality program to reflect the number of students with limited English proficiency reported by local school divisions.</td>
<td>$10,317,445</td>
<td>$10,317,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Education:</strong> Provides one-time grants to local school divisions for nonrecurring costs, such as school construction and infrastructure needs.</td>
<td>$500,000,000</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Education:</strong> Provides the state share of salary increases for funded Standards of Quality instructional and support positions.</td>
<td>$245,546,121</td>
<td>$505,476,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Education:</strong> Provides additional support for educationally at-risk students by increasing the At-Risk Add-On program maximum add-on percentages.</td>
<td>$194,229,743</td>
<td>$74,243,665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Education:</strong> Supports additional instructional positions for English language learners under the English as a Second Language program based on 22 instructional positions per 1,000 students for whom English is a second language.</td>
<td>$9,705,007</td>
<td>$10,533,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of the Governor:</strong> Provides funding and two positions to support the Cannabis Equity Re-investment Board.</td>
<td>$255,388</td>
<td>$459,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of the Governor:</strong> Provides funding and four positions within the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI).</td>
<td>$54,3036</td>
<td>$54,3036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>