

REPUBLICAN

GOVERNOR

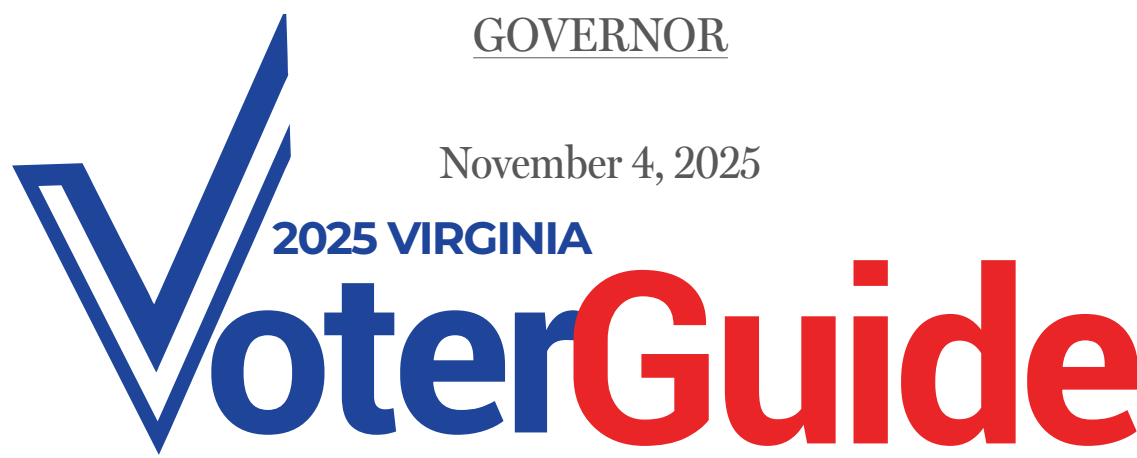
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WINSOME EARLE-SEARS



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VIRGINIA PRESS ASSOCIATION | VIRGINIA LOCAL NEWS PROJECT

November 4, 2025

The governor of Virginia is the state's chief executive, responsible for enforcing laws, overseeing state agencies and proposing a budget. The governor can sign or veto legislation passed by the General Assembly, appoint judges and key officials, and represent Virginia in dealings with other states and the federal government. The job pays \$175,000 a year, an amount set in 2013. Under the state constitution, governors serve a single four-year term and cannot serve consecutive terms. The governor and lieutenant governor are elected separately and may be from different political parties.



ABIGAIL SPANBERGER



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THE ISSUES

MINIMUM WAGE

Virginia's minimum wage is set to rise to \$12.77 on January 1, 2026. Do you support further increasing the minimum wage to \$15 or higher? If so, what timeline would you propose, and how would you ensure the increase balances the needs of workers and small businesses?

As I travel across Virginia, I hear from families who have to choose between paying rent, keeping the lights on, or putting food on the table. Every Virginian who works full time deserves the opportunity to save for their futures and their children's futures. As bills increase and Virginians are forced to spend more of their pay to keep up, working families need stronger wages to make ends meet — and I will sign into law legislation to finally raise Virginia's minimum wage to \$15 per hour. As we see attacks on Virginia's workforce and economy, it's an important step forward to ensure that Virginians who are working hard in every corner of our commonwealth can get a pay raise and keep up with increasing costs.

Virginia's minimum wage is already set to rise to \$12.77 on January 1, 2026, and I support those responsible, inflation-based adjustments because they help workers while giving small businesses the ability to plan ahead. But I do not support rushing to \$15 or higher just because that's what California did. We've all seen the results there, higher prices, fewer entry-level opportunities, and businesses cutting hours or closing altogether. That is not the future I want for Virginia.

I believe the real way to raise wages is by raising value. That's why, as lieutenant governor, I fought to raise salaries for teachers and support staff, and it's why I'll keep focusing on creating better-paying jobs through economic growth, career training, and workforce development. Mandates and one-size-fits-all policies hurt more than they help. Virginians deserve opportunity and prosperity, not California-style economic damage.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

With the median home price in Virginia at \$443,000 and median rent at \$1,700, housing affordability remains a growing concern. What specific policies would you support to lower housing costs and increase the availability of affordable housing across Virginia?

The cost and supply of housing is a top concern for Virginia families, seniors, and veterans as I travel across the commonwealth. Virginia deserves a governor who is focused on lowering costs and giving families more breathing room, which is why I rolled out my *Affordable Virginia Plan* earlier this year to build more affordable housing, work with localities to respond to Virginia's unique regional housing challenges, and reduce burdensome regulations that drive up the cost of housing and slow down production. As the next governor of Virginia, I will help direct investments towards housing that families can afford — from incentives for new construction of starter homes to increasing funding for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund. I want to make Virginia the nationwide leader in addressing the housing affordability crisis and make sure more Virginians—including first-time homebuyers—can afford to make our commonwealth their home.

Virginians are right to be worried about housing affordability. With the median home price over \$440,000 and rent climbing every month, families across the commonwealth feel squeezed. Abigail Spanberger claims she will incentivize new construction and protect affordable housing, but her record in Congress tells a very different story.

She supported Biden's Build Back Better Act, the basis for the Inflation Reduction Act, which the National Association of Home Builders opposed because it piled on new housing code mandates, radical climate goals, and wage requirements that drive up costs. That same law added countless energy mandates, worsening Virginia's cost-of-energy crisis and limiting the land available for construction. Spanberger also voted for the PRO Act, which would have gutted Virginia's right-to-work law and imposed restrictions that hurt builders, realtors, and contractors.

While she talks about protecting affordable housing, she ignores naturally occurring affordable units and instead backs government programs and regulations that risk raising prices and shrinking supply. By the NAHB's estimate, regulations already account for about 24 percent of housing costs—and Spanberger voted to make them higher.

On top of that, she supports raising the minimum wage to \$15, a policy that would cripple construction, and she wants to create yet another interagency housing council, adding bureaucracy instead of solutions.

The bottom line is simple: Spanberger's record makes housing less affordable. Virginians deserve a governor who cuts red tape, supports right-to-work, lowers energy costs, and unleashes construction. The only way we fix the housing crisis is to build, build, build.

IMMIGRATION and NATIONAL GUARD

Would you support the federal government deploying the Virginia National Guard to enforce federal immigration policy within the state? Why or why not, and under what circumstances, if any, would you consider such cooperation appropriate?

I am a former federal law enforcement officer who worked narcotics cases and CIA case officer who tracked cartels and transnational criminal organizations. Given this experience, I know the incredible value of varied agency coordination, but if making the decision today with the set of facts we see on the ground in Virginia, I would absolutely not deploy the Virginia Guard to enforce federal immigration policy within our commonwealth. That task of detaining individuals on immigration detainers should remain within the purview of federal immigration agents, while the task of arresting those for whom an arrest warrant—for any variety of offenses—has been signed should fall to local, state, or federal agencies depending upon the charges. Notably, during my time in Congress, the Virginia Guard deployed to Texas on a border security support mission, and I supported that mission as the authorities and purpose of that mission were clear and appropriate given the guard's training and statute.

As a Marine, I believe in law and order, and that means securing our borders and enforcing immigration laws. I would absolutely support cooperation with the federal government, including deploying the Virginia National Guard if necessary, to stop illegal immigration and protect Virginians.

When Washington brings resources to the table, we should take advantage of them to strengthen enforcement and keep our communities safe. If the mission is to stop illegal crossings, crack down on drug and human trafficking, and keep violent criminals out of our communities, then I will make sure Virginia is a partner.

Protecting Virginians comes first, and I won't hesitate to work with the federal government when it means enforcing the law and keeping our commonwealth safe.

DATA CENTERS and STATE REGULATION

Virginia is home to over 600 data centers and handles a large portion of the world's internet and cloud computing services. What role should the commonwealth play in regulating or setting policy around data center development, especially in terms of land use, energy consumption, and environmental impact?

I believe Virginia needs a clear statewide strategy on data centers that helps localities across every corner of Virginia make informed decisions about their best path forward. Virginia can benefit from having data centers here—but to reap those benefits, we need to make sure we are accounting and planning for the energy generation, water, and other resources needed to support them. We also need to make sure they aren't driving up energy bills for everyone else. I rolled out my *Affordable Virginia Plan* to lower costs—including energy costs—and as Virginia's next governor, my strategy will focus on bringing Virginians together to meet rising energy demand while accounting for local resource needs, driving down costs for ratepayers, and supporting good-paying jobs in this sector.

Virginia is the world's leader in data centers, and that industry is critical to our economy, our tax base, and our jobs. At the same time, we have to recognize the unique challenges data centers bring in terms of land use, energy consumption, and environmental impact. I believe the commonwealth's role is to set clear, consistent, and commonsense standards that balance economic growth with protecting our communities. That means respecting local zoning decisions, ensuring infrastructure keeps pace with demand, and pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy so we can power this growth reliably and affordably.

What I won't support are heavy-handed mandates that drive investment out of Virginia or raise costs on families. As governor, I'll make sure we keep Virginia competitive, attract cutting-edge industries like data centers, and do it in a way that safeguards our land, our resources, and our taxpayers.

VOTER INFORMATION

IMPORTANT DATES

OCT. 24

- Last day to register or update your address to vote a regular ballot for this election
Voters may register in person after this date, through Election Day, and vote using a provisional ballot

OCT. 24 (by 5 p.m.)

- Last day to request that a ballot be mailed to you

OCT. 25 (Saturday)

- Local voter registration offices open for in-person voting

NOV. 1 (Saturday)

- Last day to vote early in-person at your local voter registration office

NOV. 4 (Election Day)

- Vote at your polling place. Polls are open 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

INFORMATION and LINKS

Register to vote or update an existing registration - https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation

- Through Friday, Oct. 24, 2025.
Register to vote or update an existing registration online using the



Citizen Portal.

- Voters may register and vote using a provisional ballot In-Person after Oct. 24, 2025, through Election Day.
Contact your local registrar's offices for more information.

EARLY, IN-PERSON VOTING

- Available Monday - Friday and Saturday, Oct. 25 and Nov. 1 through 5 p.m.
Contact your local registrar's offices for all early voting and satellite location information.
Voter registration offices will be open for early voting on Saturday, Oct. 25, 2025 and Nov 1, 2025.

Apply for a ballot to be mailed to you: https://www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/

- Through 5 p.m., Friday, Oct. 24, 2025.
Your request must be received by your local registrar's office by 5 p.m.
Apply for an absentee ballot online using the Citizen Portal.

CANDIDATE LISTS

See who is on your ballot by viewing the candidate lists.

POLLING PLACES

Find your polling place: https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation

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## THE ISSUES

Virginia cannot have strong schools without strong teachers, and right now we're losing too many of them to other states and other careers. I absolutely support building on the progress we've made with teacher raises, because pay has to be competitive if we want to recruit and keep the best educators. This is why we increased teacher pay by 18% across the board, especially in high-need areas like math, science, and special education.

But pay alone isn't enough. We need to restore respect for the teaching profession, give teachers more support in the classroom, and make sure parents and administrators are partners, not adversaries. That means cutting red tape, improving discipline policies, and focusing resources where they have the most impact. To fund these initiatives, I will prioritize education in the state budget, cut wasteful spending, and grow Virginia's economy so we can sustain higher salaries long-term.

Additionally, I am going to invest in early childhood education and ensure we attract and retain the very best early childhood educators as well. However, my plan is about more than just raising pay; it's about creating an environment where teachers feel valued, supported, and empowered to do the job they were called to do.

### TEACHER PAY, RECRUITMENT and RETENTION

Teacher shortages are a pressing issue in Virginia, where teacher pay remains below the national average despite a raise this year. What is your plan to improve teacher recruitment and retention, especially in high-need areas and subjects, and do you support another raise? How would you fund these initiatives and ensure long-term sustainability?

Every student in Virginia should have access to a world-class education. Like many states, Virginia faces challenges recruiting and retaining teachers, but Virginia can be a leader in addressing this challenge. My *Strengthening Virginia Schools Plan* will focus on increasing funding for teacher residency and apprenticeship programs, expanding the recruitment pool to include federal employees, teaching assistants, and servicemembers transitioning to civilian life and increasing pay for Virginia's teachers to keep our best and brightest in the classroom. We also need to boost grow-your-own teacher preparation programs, which can help to strengthen the teacher pipeline in rural areas of the commonwealth, and improve career pathways for middle and high schoolers to enter the teaching profession through increased collaboration between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education. As governor, I look forward to working with the general assembly to give localities the option to raise funds for public school construction and renovation.

I believe every parent deserves the right to choose the best education for their child, whether that's a public school, a charter school, a private school, or homeschooling. Public funds should follow the student, not the system, because education is about children, not bureaucracy.

School choice, including vouchers, gives families real options and hope for a better future. I do not believe this harms public education; in fact, competition pushes every school to do better. At the same time, I will continue to invest in our public schools, raise teacher pay, and hold all schools—public or private—accountable for results.

Educational fairness means giving every child, regardless of zip code or family income, the opportunity to succeed. As governor, I will put parents in charge and ensure Virginia's education system is built around students, not politics.

### SCHOOL VOUCHERS

What is your position on the use of public funds for private school vouchers in Virginia? Do you believe vouchers help or harm public education, and how would you address concerns around educational fairness and accountability?

I do not support efforts to defund our public schools, and unfortunately, my opponent has a decades-long track record of wanting to do just that. But as a mom of three daughters in Virginia public schools, I believe we need to focus on strengthening our schools and expanding opportunities for all students—especially at a time when Virginia ranks dead-last in the country in student math recovery. That includes making sure Virginia has an accountability system in place that provides clear insights into how our kids are progressing and allows parents and teachers to use these insights to drive improvements that respond to the needs of Virginia students. My *Strengthening Virginia Schools Plan* will provide the commonwealth's schools with the resources they need to prepare every student—regardless of their zip code—for success and give parents more options within our public school system.

Our administration has seen successes in healthcare, like our Right Help, Right Now initiative, which has tripled the number of crisis centers and distributed life-saving drugs. We've also increased coverage to much-needed areas like OB-GYN and psychiatry. And we're adding more doctors through common-sense programs like SB 995, which allows foreign-trained doctors to gain a Virginia license if they work at least two years in an underserved area.

Additionally, fiscal responsibility is essential to keeping taxes low and making sure the state has enough money for our healthcare programs. So we should embrace a host of pro-business, pro-growth policies while also ensuring only those who really need social services receive them. Those who are able-bodied and of-age should not receive taxpayer-funded healthcare coverage without even applying to work part-time, volunteer, or go to school.

I do want to see continued protection and expansion of Medicaid in Virginia, but under those stipulations. I will prioritize rural hospitals. I want to flip the conversation from one of closure to one of opportunity: How can we be an attractive place to start a hospital? Access to infrastructure, an abundance of doctors and other human capital, and a high quality of life are all essential to answering that question.

In short: our efforts are already helping to keep down the cost of healthcare. I'll continue in that common-sense vein as governor. I will also continue our administration's fiscal sanity to keep all of our programs at peak efficiency and meet the needs of Virginians.

### HEALTHCARE COSTS and MEDICAID

Healthcare costs continue to rise for many Virginians. As governor, how would you work to contain costs while ensuring access to quality care? Do you support continued protection and expansion of Medicaid in Virginia, and if so, how would you approach funding and implementation?

Everywhere I go across the commonwealth, I hear from seniors, families, and Virginians who are worried about increasing healthcare and prescription drug costs. I know there are steps we can take right now to save Virginians money and prevent Virginians from falling into medical debt. In Congress, I helped lead the charge to give Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices, capped the cost of insulin at \$35 dollars for Medicare beneficiaries, and stood up to transnational pharmaceutical companies. Particularly in the wake of the passage of the disastrous "Big Beautiful Bill," which my opponent has praised, we need to use every resource at the commonwealth's disposal to protect Virginians' access to healthcare they can afford. As governor, I intend to work with the general assembly to address shortfalls in Virginia's budget and protect safety net providers, and work with our attorney general to defend critical programs Virginians rely on. Additionally, my *Affordable Virginia Plan* will focus on preventing Virginians from falling into medical debt by cracking down on pharmacy benefit managers and stopping predatory billing practices. Virginia deserves a governor who is focused on lowering healthcare costs for Virginians.

Everywhere I go, Virginians tell me the same thing: it's getting harder to make ends meet. Groceries, childcare, utilities, and transportation are eating up more and more of family budgets, and too many hardworking people feel like they're falling behind even with full-time jobs.

As governor, I will tackle the cost-of-living crisis head-on. That means cutting taxes on essentials so families keep more of what they earn, reining in utility costs by pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy for affordable and reliable power, and expanding access to childcare through public-private partnerships that increase availability without driving up prices. I will also invest in better roads and transit options so Virginians spend less time and money getting to work.

My focus will be on targeted, sustainable relief policies that work for both urban and rural communities, not one-size-fits-all mandates from Washington. At the end of the day, it comes down to common sense: lower costs, more opportunity, and a government that puts families first.

### COST OF LIVING and ECONOMIC RELIEF

With the rising cost of essentials such as groceries, utilities, childcare, and transportation, many Virginians report difficulty making ends meet—even with full-time employment. As governor, what specific policies would you propose to ease the cost-of-living burden for low- and middle-income residents? How would you ensure these efforts are targeted, sustainable, and effective across both urban and rural communities?

As I've talked to families across Virginia, I hear from families who are working harder and harder, yet finding it more difficult to get by, which is why I've rolled out my *Affordable Virginia Plan* to lower healthcare, housing, and energy costs for Virginia families. As governor, I'll lower prescription drug costs and protect access to affordable healthcare coverage. Additionally, I want Virginia to be the nationwide leader in addressing the housing affordability and supply crisis. And I want to see Virginia become more energy independent and become a global leader in developing the energy technologies of the future—all while saving Virginia consumers money along the way. At a time when Republicans in Washington—backed by Winsome Earle-Sears—are trying to make life more expensive for everyday Virginians, I want to work with both parties in Richmond to make sure every Virginian can afford to call the commonwealth their home.

Virginia's universities should be first and foremost places of learning, not laboratories for DEI ideology. I applauded UVA's decision to dissolve its DEI office because it was a win for merit, opportunity, and the American Dream. When institutions take federal funding, accountability naturally follows. Taxpayers have a right to demand transparency and results. That's not overreach, that's responsibility.

As governor, I will make sure our universities stay focused on academic excellence, fiscal responsibility, and preparing students for real careers. I also believe our boards of visitors must be reformed to reduce political gamesmanship and strengthen accountability to Virginians. My priority is simple: protect free speech, cut wasteful DEI bureaucracy, and ensure every dollar—state or federal—goes toward real education, not politics.

### FEDERAL INTERVENTION in PUBLIC UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

The Trump administration has recently delved into Virginia's public university system, resulting in the resignation of UVA's president under pressure and investigations into George Mason University's diversity, equity and inclusion practices. As governor, would you welcome that type of federal involvement in matters typically handled by university boards? If not, what specific actions would you take to oppose it? Do you support changes to how universities are governed or their boards appointed to reduce political or external influence, and if so, what changes would you propose?

Virginia's public universities are incredible assets to our communities and our economy, and should be recognized for their immense value. It has been sad to watch Governor Youngkin stand by as the Trump administration aggressively attacked the University of Virginia and now continues to do the same at George Mason University. These political games are an attack on academic freedom, Virginia's institutions, and our economy. As governor, I will expect the members of our commonwealth's boards of visitors to be uniquely focused on strengthening the individual universities they serve, and that the members of our boards demonstrate the fortitude necessary not to kowtow to any administration—whether it be in the Trump administration in Washington or mine in Richmond. As governor, I will ensure that all board appointees I select understand that they must demonstrate a standard of leadership that puts academic excellence, Virginia's students, and the strength of Virginia's public colleges and universities ahead of any political agenda.

### VIRGINIA PRESS ASSOCIATION (VPA)

The Virginia Press Association is a nonprofit trade organization that represents print and online news outlets across the state. Founded in 1881, VPA supports local news through training, legal resources, advocacy, and recognition programs. The association's mission is to strengthen the role of newspapers in their communities and highlight the importance of a free press in sustaining democracy.



### VIRGINIA LOCAL NEWS PROJECT (VLNP)

The Virginia Local News Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to sustaining, supporting and growing local news in every Virginia community. Founded by the Virginia Press Association in 2013, VLNP provides programs, and to help strengthen the digital capabilities of local news, train the next generation of journalists, protect press freedoms, and grow the public's understanding



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LT. GOVERNOR

2025 VIRGINIA  
VoterGuide

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The lieutenant governor of Virginia presides over the state Senate and is first in line to succeed the governor. The officeholder also serves on several state boards and councils. The position pays \$36,321 annually, a salary set in 1998, and is officially part-time. Unlike the governor, the lieutenant governor may serve unlimited four-year terms.



DEMOCRAT

GHAZALAH HASHMI

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## THE ISSUES

### TIE-BREAKING VOTES and PRESIDING OVER the SENATE

As lieutenant governor, you would be responsible for presiding over the Virginia Senate and may be called upon to cast tie-breaking votes on key legislation. How would you approach this role to ensure fairness, transparency, and the effective functioning of the Senate across party lines? What values or decision-making principles would guide you when voting on highly contested or partisan issues?

I will approach the role of lieutenant governor (LG) with the same degree of attention and thought that I have brought to my legislative work over the past six years. As the tie-breaker in the Virginia Senate, the LG plays a crucial role, especially in a narrowly-divided Senate.

In addition to carefully reviewing all legislation that is under debate on the Senate Floor, I will engage with my Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle, discuss legislation and policy proposals with a variety of stakeholders, research and analyze the issues, and base decisions on facts, data, and merit.

Over my two terms in the Senate, I have learned the vital importance of listening to the perspectives of different parties, compromising when possible, and being able to explain one's own position to others. I will bring these same approaches to the role of lieutenant governor.

### LEADERSHIP WITHOUT a LEGISLATIVE VOTE

The lieutenant governor doesn't sponsor legislation or serve as a voting member except in ties. How would you use the platform and visibility of the office to influence policy, elevate underrepresented issues, or convene stakeholders across Virginia?

As the Chair of the Senate Education and Health Committee, Vice Chair of the Joint Commission on Health Care, member of the Virginia Housing Commission, as well as numerous other commissions and boards, I have built the critical relationships across state agencies and developed policy insights that will help me to serve as a strong, capable, and effective leader in Virginia's next administration. I will use my platform to address the most pressing issues facing Virginia, including fully funding public education to put every student on the path to success, ensuring every Virginian has access to affordable health care, and bringing down costs on everything from housing to child care to make life more affordable in Virginia.

### MINIMUM WAGE

Virginia's minimum wage is scheduled to rise to \$12.77 by January 2026. Do you support increasing it to \$15 or higher? What timeline and economic factors would inform your position, especially regarding small business impact and cost of living?

Recent reports show that Virginia families are going into debt in order to put food on the table; prices are rising much faster than wages. With the rising costs of housing, childcare, health care, and basic needs, a basic living wage is essential. That's why I support raising the minimum wage to at least \$15 and establishing an alignment of wages with inflation and cost of living.

I have championed efforts to increase the minimum wage and supported legislation to eliminate minimum wage exemptions for domestic workers and farm workers. When workers are paid a living wage, those dollars go right back into the local economy, supporting small businesses, entrepreneurs, and communities.

### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

With home prices and rents outpacing income for many Virginians, what specific policies would you support to increase affordable housing availability and reduce barriers to homeownership across the commonwealth?

My husband and I arrived in Richmond in 1991 as a young newlywed couple. Our income was limited so we lived paycheck to paycheck, severely restricted all discretionary spending, and frequently had \$50 or less at the end of every month after paying our rent. These experiences have all served to make me attuned to the hardships and insecurities that so many in our communities face because housing prices continue to go up.

All Virginians deserve housing that they can afford without having to sacrifice putting food on the table or paying for lifesaving medication. I will continue my work to find solutions that make housing more affordable, increase higher density housing development, support financial products that help first-time homebuyers, and decrease eviction rates. I was a leader in the general assembly in finding solutions to ensure people can afford clean, safe and decent housing, including my Faith in Housing Act to allow faith-based institutions and non-profits to build affordable housing on land they own.

### HEALTHCARE and MEDICAID

How would you work to protect and improve health-care access for Virginians, particularly those who rely on Medicaid? What role do you believe the state should play in addressing rising healthcare costs and protecting vulnerable populations?

Republicans in Washington have passed a bill, which my opponent supports, that will rip away health care coverage from 322,000 Virginians and put rural hospitals at risk of closing. We have already begun to see the closure of clinics and hospitals in Southwest Virginia. These federal cuts to Medicaid will leave vulnerable Virginians without access to critical health care and will have ripple effects across our entire health care system.

Virginia needs new leaders who take these cuts seriously and act to ensure all Virginians have access to affordable and quality health care, including reproductive health care, safe and legal abortion, contraception, and low-cost prescription drugs. As the Chair of the Senate Education and Health Committee and as the Vice Chair of the Joint Commission on Health Care, I am fully aware of the looming crisis facing Virginia with the potential loss of Medicaid expansion, Congressional failure to reauthorize the Enhanced Premium Tax Credits, and the devastating effects these cuts will have, especially on our rural communities. That's why, in 2025, I wrote the budget amendment to protect Medicaid in Virginia. I will be focused on responding to this crisis.

As lieutenant governor, I will approach my responsibility to preside over the Senate with humility and fairness. My role is not to dominate debate but to ensure the chamber functions smoothly, rules are respected, and every voice has a chance to be heard. When called upon to cast a tie-breaking vote, I will use a clear set of principles: fidelity to the Constitution, commitment to limited and accountable government, and putting the interests of Virginia families first.

Too often, partisan politics in Richmond lead to gridlock or heavy-handed solutions that make life harder for working people. I believe tie-breaking votes should not be cast based on party loyalty but on what best advances freedom, affordability, and opportunity for Virginians. For example, I would oppose measures that expand bureaucracy, raise taxes, or limit parental rights. At the same time, I would support policies that lower costs, strengthen public safety, and expand choice in education and health care.

My goal as presiding officer is to ensure transparency in how the Senate conducts its business. I will foster respect across party lines by encouraging open debate and refusing to use the gavel as a partisan weapon. Virginians expect their elected leaders to govern responsibly. In the rare moments when my vote decides the outcome, I will honor that responsibility with the seriousness it deserves, guided by conservative, common-sense values, and a focus on the long-term well-being of our commonwealth.

The lieutenant governor's office is unique in that it carries influence without a direct legislative agenda. I see that as an opportunity to use the visibility of the office to lift up voices too often ignored in Richmond—working families struggling with high costs, parents seeking better schools for their kids, small business owners weighed down by red tape, and communities left behind by one-size-fits-all policies.

I intend to be a convener, not just a presider. That means bringing together stakeholders from across the commonwealth—local leaders, entrepreneurs, educators, health providers, law enforcement, and faith communities—to find solutions rooted in real-world experience, not ideology. For example, I will use the platform of the office to highlight workforce and childcare challenges, expand conversations on affordable housing, and ensure veterans and first-responders get the support they deserve.

Because I do not carry a voting card in the Senate, I have the freedom to build bridges and elevate issues without being tied down to partisan maneuvering. That also means holding Richmond accountable when it forgets that its purpose is to serve the people, not itself.

I believe the lieutenant governor should be the voice that cuts through bureaucracy and red tape. By traveling the commonwealth, listening, and shining a spotlight on practical solutions, I can help shape the debate in a way that benefits all Virginians. My goal is to use this office to champion freedom, opportunity, and fairness—not to grow government, but to ensure it works for the people it serves.

Virginia families deserve rising paychecks and a stronger economy, but government mandates are not the best way to achieve that. A rapid push to \$15 or higher sounds simple but risks hurting the very people we want to help. Small businesses—the backbone of our communities—often operate on razor-thin margins. Forcing higher costs overnight can mean higher prices, fewer hours, or even layoffs. That does not help families; it makes things worse.

The better path is building an economy where wages rise because opportunity grows. I want to see small businesses flourish, expand, and compete for workers by paying more. That means cutting unnecessary regulations, reducing taxes, and making Virginia the best place to start and grow a business. It also means investing in workforce development and apprenticeships so Virginians have the skills that command higher pay in a free market.

We also cannot ignore inflation. Families know that a bigger paycheck does not mean much if groceries, gas, and rent keep climbing. Tackling inflation and the cost of living must be part of the conversation.

I do not support rushing to \$15 or higher without considering the impact on small businesses and rural communities. Instead, I support policies that give every Virginian a chance to climb the ladder of opportunity—policies that make it easier to find work, keep work, and build a career that supports a family. That is how we achieve real, lasting prosperity.

The dream of homeownership should not be slipping further out of reach for Virginia families, yet rising prices and limited supply are making it harder than ever for young people and working families to buy a home. The answer is not more bureaucracy from Richmond, but smart policies that expand supply, lower costs, and respect local needs.

First, I support a first-time homebuyer tax credit of up to \$25,000 to help families build equity rather than being stuck renting forever. That kind of targeted relief empowers working- and middle-class Virginians without inflating the market further. Second, I believe in local flexibility—not a one-size-fits-all housing mandate from the state. Counties and cities should be able to use tools like bonding authority to build housing options that fit their communities' character and needs.

We must also tackle red tape. Excessive permitting, zoning restrictions, and outdated state regulations add unnecessary costs to new housing. By streamlining processes and encouraging innovation, we can create more affordable options. Partnerships with community colleges, trade schools, and the private sector can also help train more builders and contractors to meet demand.

Finally, expanding pathways to affordable rentals while protecting property rights will ensure stability for those not yet ready to buy. Housing is about more than shelter—it is about families putting down roots and communities thriving. My approach is focused on empowering localities, cutting costs and giving every Virginian a fair shot at the American dream of homeownership.

Healthcare in Virginia is too expensive, too complicated, and too limited in choice. Families worry about affording a new baby, seniors struggle with prescription costs, and small business owners cannot keep up with premiums. Politicians in Richmond have layered on red tape but have not fixed the problem.

I believe Medicaid must remain strong for the vulnerable who rely on it, but we also need to make the system more efficient and accountable. Protecting Medicaid does not mean expanding bureaucracy—it means ensuring the program delivers care effectively without waste.

More broadly, we must tackle the root issue: rising costs. Virginians deserve price transparency so they know what procedures and medicines cost before they walk into a hospital or pharmacy.

We need more competition—allowing insurance purchases across state lines and encouraging innovative models like telemedicine. And we should reduce mandates that drive up premiums and limit choices.

The state's role should be to empower patients, not bureaucrats. I want families to be in charge of their healthcare decisions, with real options that fit their needs. That means fostering competition, innovation, and transparency to bring down costs and expand access. My approach is rooted in conservative, common-sense principles: protect the vulnerable, ensure efficiency, and trust Virginians to make the best choices for themselves and their families.

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LT. GOVERNOR

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Every parent deserves the right to choose the best education for their child. That is why I support expanding charter schools, lab schools, and education savings accounts. These tools give families real options and create competition that raises the bar across all schools. Parents—not politicians or bureaucrats—should be in the driver’s seat when it comes to their children’s education.

On SOL reform, it is time to move beyond a test-driven system that too often narrows learning. Assessments should measure mastery of skills and knowledge, not just test-taking ability. I would support reforms that reduce “teaching to the test,” incorporate career and technical readiness and give schools more flexibility in how they demonstrate student success. Our goal should be excellence, fairness, and preparation for the real world.

Education should prepare students for life—college, career, and citizenship—not just a multiple-choice exam. By expanding choice, respecting parents, and reforming outdated testing models, we can restore rigor, fairness, and opportunity to Virginia’s schools. Stronger schools mean stronger families, and that is the foundation for a stronger commonwealth.

EDUCATION POLICY: SCHOOL CHOICE and SOL REFORM

Virginia continues to debate the role of school choice and the effectiveness of the Standards of Learning (SOL) system. As lieutenant governor, what is your position on expanding school choice options such as charter schools and education savings accounts? Additionally, would you support reforms to Virginia’s SOL assessments, and if so, what changes would you propose to improve educational outcomes and fairness across the commonwealth?

As a public educator for nearly three decades, as the Chair of the Senate Education and Health Committee, and as a mom of two daughters who attended our public schools, I am strongly opposed to school vouchers and privatizing public education. I have stood up to Governor Glenn Youngkin’s attempts to direct public school dollars into private hands. My opponent, John Reid, supports Governor Youngkin’s school voucher agenda. Reid said [in January 2022] it was “time to just close the public schools,” and he wants to funnel taxpayer dollars into expensive private schools instead. A recent JLARC report found that Virginia public schools have faced severe underfunding to the tune of \$6.6 billion.

For the last two sessions, I have led efforts in the general assembly to prioritize funding our public schools, and we’ve been able to increase public education support by almost \$3 billion. However, more needs to be done to strengthen Virginia’s education system, both K-12 and post-secondary opportunities. To ensure all children in Virginia can enjoy quality education that prepares them for well-paying jobs or higher education, we must fully fund public education and lower the costs of post-secondary credentials and college degrees.

Every Virginian deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Marriage equality is protected under federal law, and I do not support efforts to overturn that. Families should never be caught in the crossfire of politics.

If I were called upon to cast a tie-breaking vote on issues affecting LGBTQ+ Virginians, my guiding principles would be fairness, individual liberty, and equal protection under the law. As a conservative, I believe in limited government. That means government should not intrude into private lives or relationships.

At the same time, I will stand firmly against measures that foster discrimination or divide our communities. My focus is on building a Virginia where every family can thrive, where opportunity is open to all, and where the rights of individuals are respected. We may not always agree on every issue, but we can agree on treating each other with respect and ensuring that freedom and dignity are preserved for every Virginian.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE and LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

While same-sex marriage is currently protected under federal law, recent court challenges and legislative proposals have raised concerns about the durability of those protections. As lieutenant governor, how would you approach legislation affecting the rights of LGBTQ+ Virginians, including marriage equality? If called to cast a tie-breaking vote on such issues, what principles would guide your decision?

We have a fundamental responsibility to ensure that this country’s ideals of justice, equality, and fairness are a reality for all, including LGBTQ+ Virginians. After the disastrous Dobbs Supreme Court decision, Justice Clarence Thomas expressed interest in rolling back the legalization of same-sex marriage. Virginia’s constitution currently does not protect same-sex marriage and leaves the rights of LGBTQ+ Virginians vulnerable to the whims of the conservative Supreme Court that has proven willing to take away freedoms.

In the past general assembly session, I voted for a constitutional amendment that would protect marriage equality. My opponent, John Reid, said he would have voted “no.” I am the candidate that can be trusted to guarantee Virginia enshrines marriage equality into our constitution, and I will fight for the right of every Virginian to marry the person they love.

I believe Virginia’s universities should be accountable first and foremost to Virginians—not to Washington, and not to outside political agendas. Federal micromanagement of our schools is not the answer. The best way to protect academic integrity is through transparency, accountability, and strong boards of visitors who reflect the diversity of Virginia’s communities and viewpoints. I support reforms to make these boards more balanced and less political, with a focus on student outcomes—graduation rates, affordability, and workforce readiness.

Universities should be centers of learning, not partisan battlegrounds. We need to protect free inquiry, encourage debate, and prepare the next generation to thrive. As lieutenant governor, I will work to ensure higher education in Virginia is focused on opportunity, affordability, and excellence—not ideology or outside interference.

FEDERAL INTERVENTION in PUBLIC UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE

The Trump administration has recently delved into Virginia’s public university system, resulting in the resignation of UVA’s president under pressure and investigations into George Mason University’s diversity, equity and inclusion practices. As Lieutenant Governor, would you welcome that type of federal involvement in matters typically handled by university boards? If not, what specific actions would you take to oppose it? Do you support changes to how universities are governed or their boards appointed to reduce political or external influence, and if so, what changes would you propose?

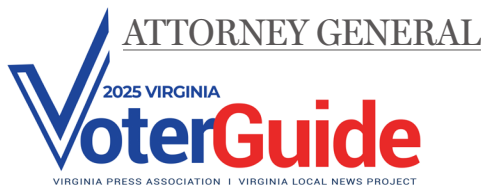
The resignation of UVA President Jim Ryan is a deeply troubling escalation in the partisan attacks against higher education, and it should alarm every Virginian who believes in academic freedom. As a lifelong educator and as a mom, I believe Virginia’s universities, both public and private, should remain dedicated to serving the people of the commonwealth with excellence and independence and not serve as playgrounds for partisan agendas.

Over the past few years, Governor Youngkin has replaced highly qualified and experienced board members with individuals whose top credentials appear to be ideological alignment and partisan loyalty. Many of the new appointees have expressed open hostility toward the initiatives and programs that support student learning and success. As Virginia’s next lieutenant governor I will continue fighting to protect opportunity and academic freedom across every corner of our commonwealth.

REPUBLICAN

JASON MIYARES

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ATTORNEY GENERAL



DEMOCRAT

JAY JONES

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The Miyares campaign declined to provide answers for the VPA/VLNP Voter Guide.

Answers to each of the questions below were provided by the Jay Jones campaign.

ABORTION and STATE vs. FEDERAL LAW

If federal restrictions are imposed on abortion medications like Mifepristone, would you defend Virginians’ access under existing state law, or would you support enforcing the federal limits within Virginia?

JONES: I will always defend Virginians’ abortion rights under state law, and I look forward to protecting those rights in our Constitution in November. Virginia women deserve the right to make their own healthcare decisions, and as attorney general, I will use every tool available to defend these rights against federal attacks and ensure every Virginian can make personal healthcare decisions free from political interference.

As a delegate, I eliminated unnecessary barriers to abortion and safeguarded Virginians’ right to birth control. I also served on the board of the Virginia League of Planned Parenthood to protect those rights and ensure women had access to critical preventive services, including breast cancer screenings.

By contrast, my opponent has an extreme anti-abortion record: urging the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade, endorsing an abortion ban, voting repeatedly against Virginia’s Reproductive Health Protection Act, aligning with anti-abortion extremists, and attempting to defund Planned Parenthood – the same agenda now being carried out under the Trump administration.

MIYARES: No response.

USE of NATIONAL GUARD in FEDERAL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Would you support the federal government’s use of the Virginia National Guard to enforce immigration policies in the commonwealth? What legal standards or precedents would guide your decision?

JONES: This is federal overreach by Donald Trump to distract voters from rising prices and his disastrous economy. Fighting crime is critically important, but you make communities safer by doing the hard work over the long run: building strong law enforcement departments, supporting officers with good training, and building ties with local communities – not

by grabbing headlines. As attorney general, I’ll absolutely work with partners in the District of Columbia and Maryland to fight crime over the long term in our region, and I will ensure our National Guard is ready to support us in emergency situations as intended.

MIYARES: No response.

PROTECTING PUBLIC OFFICIALS from THREATS

What role should Virginia’s attorney general play in preventing and responding to violent threats against school boards, election officials, and other local public servants? How would your office coordinate with local law enforcement in such cases?

JONES: As attorney general, my office will send a very clear message that violence and hate-driven acts will not be tolerated in our commonwealth and that if you engage in violence, you will be held accountable. I will work closely with the Virginia State Police and local law enforcement to ensure Virginians are protected as threats arise.

MIYARES: No response.

CONSUMER PROTECTION and ONLINE SCAMS

With online scams, identity theft, and deceptive business practices on the rise, what specific tools or strategies would you use as attorney general to protect Virginia consumers, particularly seniors and vulnerable populations?

JONES: As an assistant attorney general in the Office of Consumer Protection, I fought to prevent higher grocery prices by working to block the Albertsons-Kroger merger and took on corporations unfairly raising prices. As Virginia’s next attorney general, I’ll bolster the Office of Consumer Protection and fight back against corporate landlords, predatory lenders, scams, and corporate fraud on behalf of consumers. I’ll do this by cracking down on illegal price fixing and discrimination in the housing process, holding companies accountable for illegally deceiving Virginians with junk fees and deceptive pricing, and helping Virginians navigate complex healthcare billing schemes so they can fight back

against insurance companies.

By contrast, Jason Miyares has done little to stand up for Virginia’s consumers. Time and again, he’s sided with special interests instead of Virginia families, whether it’s letting utility companies hike up electricity bills, letting corporate landlords off the hook, or failing to protect people from predatory lenders.

MIYARES: No response.

PARTISANSHIP and the AG’S OFFICE

The attorney general serves as the commonwealth’s top legal officer. How would you maintain the office’s independence and impartiality in politically sensitive cases, especially when they involve state agencies or the actions of elected officials?

JONES: As Virginia’s next attorney general, the only client that I will ever be beholden to is the people of Virginia. Unlike Jason Miyares, I’ll make decisions based on the laws and the facts, not on political pressure or personal relationships. That means if a state agency or elected official violates the law or infringes on Virginians’ rights, I won’t hesitate to hold them accountable, regardless of their position or party. And I’ll never back down and follow orders from Washington politicians, no matter which party is in power.

MIYARES: No response.

GUN VIOLENCE and PUBLIC SAFETY

What is your position on enforcing and defending existing gun safety laws in Virginia? Are there specific public safety initiatives or legal tools you would prioritize to address gun violence in communities across the state?

JONES: Guns are the leading cause of death for Virginia kids, and as attorney general, I will not stand for it. As a delegate, I expanded background checks, passed a law holding people accountable who allow children to access loaded guns, and got guns out of the hands of domestic abusers – all measures that Jason Miyares voted against. And as an assistant attorney general, I put the nation’s largest ghost gun manufacturers out of business.

As attorney general, I’ll work closely with local law enforcement and commonwealth’s attorneys’ offices, making sure they have access to the most

up-to-date technologies to trace gun crimes and prosecute bad actors, and increase interagency cooperation with regional partners. I’ll crack down on unscrupulous gun dealers who are not following the law – unlike my opponent, who has spent his administration catering to his gun lobby endorsers and refusing to hold bad gun dealers accountable. To target the root causes of gun violence, I’ll expand violence interruption programs, including placing more anti-violence coordinators on the ground. Finally, I’ll hold gun manufacturers who created the gun violence epidemic accountable for stopping it, like cutting off the flow of illegal guns and using settlements to fund violence interruption and gun safety programs.

MIYARES: No response.

CIVIL RIGHTS and DISCRIMINATION

How would you use the attorney general’s office to protect civil rights and combat discrimination in Virginia, including in areas such as housing, employment, policing, and voting access?

JONES: We must ensure every Virginian is protected in their civil rights and civil liberties every single day. That’s why one of my top priorities as attorney general is expanding the Civil Rights Division, including broadening its authority to combat predatory practices in housing and employment to lower costs for Virginians.

I’ll crack down on housing discrimination by holding lenders and landlords accountable for preying on Virginia renters. As a former member of AFGE 1403, I’ll strengthen enforcement against workplace discrimination and wage theft, so that every Virginian has a fair shot at earning a decent living without fear of retaliation or bias. And as I did with the NAACP, I’ll protect the right to vote by fighting back against suppression tactics and defending the ballot box so every voice in Virginia is heard.

Our current attorney general, Jason Miyares, has turned a blind eye to these abuses. He’s left Virginians unprotected from predatory landlords, ignored discrimination in the workplace, and done nothing to ensure fair treatment in our justice system. As attorney general, I’ll make sure this office stands up for all Virginians and delivers real protections, every single day.

MIYARES: No response.