



THE JCRC'S 2019 VIRGINIA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

State & County Issues:

- **Separation of Church and State:** The statewide Jewish community is a leading advocate for the separation of church and state. The JCRC supports the constitutional right to individual religious expression and affirms our opposition to efforts to legislate coercive religious practice into Virginia government institutions and schools.
- **Combating Bias & Hatred:** The JCRC believes in a Commonwealth that is safe and welcoming to all and supports expanding hate crime protections as well as unequivocally opposes discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental illnesses or chronic conditions, physical, intellectual and cognitive disabilities, and genetic information.
- **Criminal Justice Reform:** The JCRC is committed to advocating for a criminal justice system for adults and juveniles that is just, restorative, and provides equal treatment for all under the law. We support policy changes on the spectrum of issues ranging from an individuals' first encounter with law enforcement through sentencing, incarceration, and reentry into society.
- **Security for Faith-Based Institutions:** The JCRC supports funding for security measures and programs to support faith-based institutions and schools.
- **Support for Social Services:** Our Jewish agencies provide a range of support for aging adults, individuals with special needs, victims of domestic violence, Holocaust survivors, and individuals seeking counseling and mental health services. These services are provided to all, regardless of faith, background, or ability to pay. We support expanding the social safety net to support our agencies in their work to serve all Virginians in need.
- **Gun Violence Prevention:** The JCRC supports bipartisan efforts to prevent gun violence such as background checks on all purchases and transfers of ownership, as well as other steps to ensure that only those who are properly trained and in sound mental health have access to firearms.
- **Our Environment:** The JCRC supports conservation and policies to protect our environment, including incentivizing energy efficiency and utilization of renewable energy sources.
- **Immigration:** The JCRC supports a generous immigration policy that enables a path to legal status and citizenship. We support humane efforts to reduce the flow of illegal immigrants into the United States but oppose legislation that discriminates against only certain immigrants and refugees, would deny healthcare, education, and other services to undocumented immigrants and their children, or discourage their access to law enforcement assistance by compelling local law enforcement agencies to perform federal immigration enforcement duties.
- **Voter Access:** Laws limiting voter access – regardless of intent – may disenfranchise eligible voters and disproportionately affect minorities, the elderly, voters with disabilities, and those who live in poverty. The JCRC supports legislation to expand access to the polls and opposes legislation unduly restricting ballot access and legislation to permanently bar the formerly incarcerated from the polls.
- **Disability Advocacy:** The JCRC seeks to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the resources they need to live with dignity and fully participate in society and Jewish life. We are committed to creating opportunities for self-sufficiency and inclusion.
- **Virginia-Israel Advisory Board:** The JCRC supports the Virginia-Israel Advisory Board (VIAB) in its mission to facilitate economic development opportunities between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the State of Israel.