

Undermining the Right to Vote

The Virginia House of Delegates passed a voter suppression bill to eliminate Election Day or same-day voter registration. In 2022, Delegate Margaret Ransone was the lead patron of House Bill 185 which would repeal a provision that would permit any person who is qualified to register to vote to register to vote in person up to and including the day of the election but allows for any member of a uniformed service. Deb Wake, the President of the League of Women Voters of Virginia, said the repeal could negatively affect first-time voters' experiences, and maybe sour them on voting later. Same-day voter registration increases voter turnout, allows for updating and correcting voter rolls, and aligns with the goal of election security. The Virginia House passed the bill 52 Y-47 N on 2/3/2022, but died in the Senate. [[VA HB 185](#), Passed by indefinitely in Privileges and Elections (9-Y 6-N), 2/22/2022; NCSL, accessed [5/22/2023](#); WVTF, [1/28/2022](#)]

The Virginia House of Delegates passed a voter suppression bill to ban ballot drop boxes. In 2023, Delegate John J. McGuire III was the lead patron of House Bill 1693 which would repeal the provisions of the Code providing for the establishment of drop-off locations for the return of absentee ballots. Del. John J. McGuire III said his House Bill 1693 would eliminate ballot drop boxes that were first created to make voting safer during the pandemic because they are an unnecessary expense for local elections officials. After 2020, right-wing activists scrutinized security footage of drop boxes but failed to turn up evidence of widespread voter fraud. The Virginia House passed the bill 51 Y-47 N on 1/26/2023, but died in the Senate. [[VA HB 1693](#), passed by indefinitely in Privileges and Elections (9-Y 6-N) 2/14/2023; Washington Post, [1/26/2023](#); The Center for Public Integrity, [10/30/2023](#)]

The Virginia House of Delegates passed a voter suppression bill to limit early voting to two weeks from 45 days. In 2023, Delegate Phillip A. Scott was the lead patron of HB 1877 which would limit absentee voting in person to the two weeks immediately preceding an election. Under current law, absentee voting in person is available beginning on the forty-fifth day prior to an election. Delegate Phillip Scott argued that his House Bill 1877, which would reduce the period of in-person absentee voting to 14 days from 45, followed the example of states such as Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey that utilize shorter periods. However, the ACLU holds that cutting early voting is voter suppression. The Virginia House passed the bill 51 Y-47 N on 1/26/2023, but died in the Senate. [[VA HB 1877](#), passed by indefinitely in Privileges and Elections (9-Y 6-N) 2/14/2023; Washington Post, [1/26/2023](#)]