

Restricting Our Fundamental Freedoms

Members of the Virginia Legislature proposed extreme restrictions on abortion including a complete ban and a 15-week ban. Following the fall of Roe v. Wade, Republicans in various states have pursued policies to abolish or restrict access to abortions. Senate Bill 1284, patroned by Republican Senator Travis Hackworth in 2023, would have instituted a total ban on abortions and would have required a police report to be filed to allow an exception for rape and incest. Senate Bill 1385, patroned by Senator Stephen Newman in 2023, would have outlawed any abortion performed after 15 weeks. According to WRIC, “Under current VA law, women can freely access abortion in the first and second trimesters (up to week 26 of the pregnancy) and can receive an abortion in the third trimester if their life is endangered. Both bills were retained in the Senate. [WRIC, [1/20/23](#); SB 1284, Senate: Passed by indefinitely in Education and Health (10-Y 5-N), [1/26/2023](#), SB 1385, Senate: Passed by indefinitely in Education and Health (10-Y 5-N), [01/26/23](#)]

Extremists in the Virginia Senate introduced legislation prohibiting healthcare professionals from performing gender-affirming medical procedures for trans youth. Senate Bill 960, patroned by Republican Senator Mark Peake in 2023, would have banned transition procedures for anyone under the age of 18. Over the past two years, Republicans across the country have prioritized attacks on the LGBTQ+ community. The ACLU has tracked nearly 500 pieces of legislation attacking and undermining the rights of LGBTQ+ Americans in 2023. According to the Huffington Post, “the proposed measures, which are all sponsored by Republicans and come at a time when the GOP has been consumed by anti-LGBTQ hysteria, attempt to criminalize drag performances, bar trans youth from playing sports at school, and ban health care for transgender children and adults.” [ACLU Legislative Tracker, [Accessed 5/21/2023](#); Huffington Post, [3/1/2023](#); VA SB 960, Senate: Passed by indefinitely in Education and Health, [2/2/2023](#)]