

# 2024 VREA Policy Agenda

## Latina/x Health in Virginia

- Latinos/xs make up **10%** of the total population, with **14%** of families living below the Federal Poverty Level.
- In the past year, **23%** of Latinas/xs did not see a doctor due to cost barriers.
- Latinas/xs have the **highest rates** of teenage pregnancy and cervical cancer.

## Abortion in Virginia

- In 2021, there were **16,085** abortions performed, of which, **10%** were performed on Latinas/xs.
- Abortion is legal in Virginia, and the state remains an **important access point** for abortion care in the South.
- With just **18** clinics in the state, providers have seen an average increase of **550** additional abortions a month since Dobbs.

## Contraceptive Equity Act | Senator Hashmi & Delegate Mundon King (SB238/HB819)



A bill to ensure that Virginians have **affordable and equitable access to contraception**.

- Requires health insurance carriers to provide coverage for any prescribed contraceptive drug or device.
- Eliminates cost barriers such as co-pays, cost-sharing, reimbursement requirements, and coverage delays.

Access to contraception is a basic right, and an essential part of sexual and reproductive healthcare. However, for many, transportation, time, and cost pose significant barriers to accessing care – and particularly for young, low-income, and Latina/x populations. This much-needed effort will mean that more people across the state, including Latinas/xs and other communities of color, can access and afford the care they need.

According to a Guttmacher Institute study, if cost were not an issue...  
**23%** of women currently using contraception would prefer using a different method  
**39%** of women not using contraception would start using a method.

As seen in other states, attacks on contraception have already begun - we cannot allow Virginians to remain unprotected in this uncertain federal climate.



## Menstrual Data Privacy Bill | Senator Favola & Delegate Watts (SB16/HB78)

A bill to **prohibit any search warrant or subpoena** from being issued for **menstrual data** that is stored on third-party apps used to track period health.

Nearly **1/3 of American women** have reported using a period tracking app.

Menstrual data has become a target for anti-abortion advocates, with the intent to further criminalize people's bodies and birth outcomes. Historically, these acts of intolerance and stigma have put Latinas/xs and communities of color at risk of civil and criminal charges by unscrupulous prosecutors. These harmful efforts put politics over the health and wellbeing of people who need access to safe and reliable sexual and reproductive health information.

### Extradition Prohibition, Reproductive Health Services

Senator Favola (SB15)

A bill to **prevent the extradition** of individuals charged with a criminal offense in another state if the alleged violation is legal in Virginia.

- Prohibits the extradition of anyone who obtains a legal abortion in the state of Virginia.
- Protects private healthcare data held by private parties .

### Protect Virginia's Health Workers, Board of Medicine Bill

Delegate Mundon King (HB519)

A bill to **prevent the Virginia Medical Boards from punishing providers** who perform an abortion that is legal in Virginia.

- Amends the Code relating to the Board of Medicine's disciplinary authority.
- Specifies that disciplinary action can only be taken for abortion care explicitly prohibited by Virginia law.

Since Dobbs, abortion care providers have seen an influx of patients from other states. At the same time, anti-abortion legislatures have attempted to reach patients and providers outside their state borders, trying to impose their will on those accessing or assisting with abortion care. People coming to Virginia for an abortion and those providing care should not be afraid of extradition or criminalization by other states.



**Latina Institute  
for Reproductive  
Justice Virginia**

1. Kaiser Family Foundation ([www.kff.org/interactive/womens-health-profiles/virginia](http://www.kff.org/interactive/womens-health-profiles/virginia))
2. Statista ([www.statista.com/distribution-of-reported-legal-abortions-in-virginia-by-ethnicity](http://www.statista.com/distribution-of-reported-legal-abortions-in-virginia-by-ethnicity))
3. Society of Family Planning ([www.societyfp.org/research/wecount](http://www.societyfp.org/research/wecount))

# 2024 VREA Policy Agenda | Talking Points

## Topline Messages

At the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice, **we believe that everyone should have access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, including abortion care** – and that no one should be denied care because of their income, age, race, disability, im/migration status, or what state they call home.

- When people can make decisions that are best for their lives, families thrive and we build communities where each of us can participate with **dignity and equality**.
- Throughout a pregnancy, a person's health and well-being – **not political interference** – should guide important medical decisions.

## The Impact of Dobbs and Abortion Bans

The Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade has **disproportionately harmed Latinas/xs, im/migrants, and all communities of color**.

- Right now, **27 states** have banned or are poised to ban abortion access and out-of-touch politicians across the country are rushing to ban abortion for even more Americans. **We know that they won't stop until they ban abortion nationwide.**
- **Abortion bans fall hardest on Latinas/xs and other communities of color**, who may work multiple jobs that provide no sick days or insurance coverage and live in underserved communities. They often don't have the time or money to travel to a different state to access abortion care.
- Bans on abortion care harm our communities and families and do nothing to protect anyone's health or safety. In fact, there are serious **negative physical and economic consequences** for people who are denied abortion care and their families.



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Nearly **6.7 million** Latinas/xs – **43 percent** of all Latinas/xs ages 15-49 – live in the 27 states that have banned or are likely to ban abortion. They represent the largest group of women of color impacted by current or likely state bans.

# 2024 VREA Policy Agenda | Talking Points

## Looking to Virginia

With access to abortion care banned or restricted in huge swaths of the country, **we cannot allow Virginia to be next.**

- For people who live in states that have banned abortion, those with the means to do so may travel to another state to get care. Others may decide to self-manage their abortion at home or in another safe place of a person's choosing. We also know that many people who can't get the care they need **may be forced to remain pregnant.**
- Many clinics in states with access to abortion care, including here in Virginia, are **overwhelmed with an influx of patients from other states**, which can lead to delays in people getting the care they need.
- We've seen time and again that people are also having a hard time getting other important pregnancy care, or are **being denied the care they need**, including treatment for miscarriages and ectopic pregnancies, and in some places, maternity wards have been forced to close.
- We also know that **Virginians have made clear that they support access to abortion care and strongly oppose the extreme politicians** who want to ban abortion and interfere with their personal health care decisions.
- The National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice is committed to **building power in Latino/x communities throughout Virginia and across the country.** We will keep fighting for a world in which everyone has the right to make their own decisions about their bodies and their lives.

With so many legal challenges to abortion access, many people are confused about what the laws are in their own state and where they can go for information or healthcare. This has contributed to a **climate of fear and uncertainty** that makes it easier to spread **misinformation**, particularly among Latinas/xs.

