



For Immediate Release
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At Richmond Press Conference Republican Delegate Announces Introduction of Non-Discrimination Legislation; New Polling Highlighted Showing Virginia Republicans Strongly Support Passage of Such Measures

*Polling by The Tarrance Group in 2018 and Mason-Dixon this January Finds
Broad Majorities of Republican Voters in Commonwealth Back Protections for
Gay and Transgender Virginians*

RICHMOND- The ongoing effort to provide gay and transgender Virginians with long overdue legal protections in housing and public employment received a significant boost today as Republican Delegate Roxann Robinson (R-Chesterfield) announced she is introducing legislation to protect gay and transgender Virginians from discrimination in housing and public employment in the Commonwealth. The move comes after the Virginia State Senate, with Republican support, has passed similar measures the previous three years, and is poised to do so again this session of the General Assembly. At the same press event new polling was also unveiled showing that Republican voters in Virginia strongly back such protections, providing a fresh and unique look at voter sentiment in the GOP specifically on these issues.

Speaking about her bill Delegate Robinson noted, “Republicans believe in equality for all citizens. Our party should embrace and champion nondiscrimination not just because it’s a genuine reflection of our values, but because it is an opportunity to move our country forward. Throughout my time in public office, I have been a strong defender of our basic rights and freedoms, and I am adamant that these rights and freedoms should be applied equally to all of Virginia’s citizens.”

The polling occurred in back to back years, providing for a 12-month snapshot of Republican voter sentiment. In the first look, in February of 2018, The Tarrance Group, a longtime Republican polling firm that has done extensive work for Virginia and national Republican candidates, polled only “base” Republican voters, specifically voters who have participated in at least two out of four of the last Republican primaries in the Commonwealth. They found:

- 55% of Republican voters believe it “should be against the law to discriminate in housing against someone who is gay or transgender.” Only 35% opposed.

- 59% of Republican voters believe it should be against the law to discriminate in public employment against someone who is gay or transgender.” Only 32% opposed.
- There is strong support for passage of both measures amongst numerous sub-groups of Republican voters including Trump approvers; Strong NRA supporters; Very/Extremely conservative voters; Strong Pro-Life voters; and Republicans who have participated in all four of the last primary elections

The full deck is attached with further details.

Last week, Mason-Dixon, a pollster with a long track record of work in Virginia as well, asked about the same issues in a January 2019 statewide poll. While finding broad support amongst the greater electorate, the pollster again found Republican voters onboard. They found:

- 53% of Republicans said they would support “legislation at the General Assembly this year that would update Virginia’s nondiscrimination laws to protect gay and transgender people from discrimination in housing.” Only 38% opposed.
- 63% of Republicans said they would support “legislation at the General Assembly this year that would update Virginia’s nondiscrimination laws to protect gay and transgender people from discrimination in employment.” Only 30% opposed.

The full deck of this poll is also attached with further details.

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Equality Virginia is the leading advocacy organization in Virginia seeking equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. Contact EV at info@equalityvirginia.org or 804-643-4816.