

0

SHARES

[ShareTweet](#)

837 views

**By: Riley Ginger | [rginger@radford.edu](mailto:rginger@radford.edu)**

The Virginia Senate and House of Delegates have passed ground-breaking legislation in favor of the LGBTQ+ community this past Thursday.

On February 6th, the [Virginia Values Act](#) was successfully moved from the House into the Senate.

The vote to pass the legislation was a bipartisan vote, with a 30-9 vote in the Senate and a 59-35 vote in the House of Delegates. In previous years, the [Virginia Senate](#) has barred said legislation that has dealt with LGBTQ+ rights.

The bill will protect individuals in Virginia from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and veteran status when it comes to employment, housing, and usage of public facilities.

The bill also entails that those who “engaged in a pattern or practice of resistance” of discrimination will be subjected to penalty by the attorney general’s office.

“Discrimination against our gay, lesbian and transgender friends, family, neighbors and co-workers in employment, housing and public accommodation has always been abhorrent and unacceptable,” said Virginia Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn after the vote was decided in a report by [The Washington Blade](#).

Virginia has been noted as the first southern state in history to pass such laws protecting LGBTQ+ members and other minorities.

According to the [Human Right’s Campaign](#), “In addition to sexual orientation and gender identity, the bill also extends protections to Virginians based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, and status as a veteran .... The first state in over a decade to add sexual orientation and gender identity to existing non-discrimination law, and the first state since 1993 to add a prohibition on discrimination in public accommodations (protecting all Virginians) where none existed before.”

Governor Ralph Northam has stated that he will sign a final version of the bill once a reconciled version is passed by both the House and Senate.

Read about Radford's LGBTQ+ club, [Spectrum](#), on The Tartan.

**Featured Image: (Jasmin Sessler on Unsplash)**