



U.R. 05

The purpose of this resolution is to declare VCU Undergraduate Senate's support for legislation improving the lives of persons with disabilities (specifically SB1038, HB1762, HB1710, HB1253, and HB1806) in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Moreover, this resolution will add the support of legislation reducing medical and housing inequalities for persons with disabilities to the Lobby Day Agenda.

Support for Legislation Reducing Medical and Housing Inequalities for Persons with Disabilities

IN THE UNDERGRADUATE SENATE

February 3, 2025

Senator Habib and Senator Bunting with the support of Secretary Neil, introduced the following undergraduate resolution. The resolution was then read once on the floor and Sec. Funk motioned to vote on the resolution; the motion passed in a vote of 26-0-0.

Be it enacted by the Undergraduate Student Senate of the Virginia Commonwealth University Student Government Association assembled,

1 PREAMBLE:

- 2 Whereas, approximately 11% of citizens of the Commonwealth are classified as a
- 3 person with at least one disability.
- 4 Whereas, persons with disabilities and other protected classes have historically been
- 5 marginalized throughout the Commonwealth and continue to face discrimination.
- 6 Whereas, persons with disabilities face unique challenges living in a Commonwealth
- 7 built for those who are non-disabled.
- 8 Whereas, the needs and experiences of persons with disabilities should be
- 9 consistently and actively considered and represented within the Commonwealth.
- 10 Whereas, persons with disabilities are discriminated against in healthcare systems, as
- 11 they often incur higher costs, face bias from healthcare professionals, and struggle
- 12 more to break physical, communication, and transportation barriers.
- 13 Whereas, according to the National Institute of Health, 23% of persons in 2023
- 14 reporting having difficulty managing medical debts within the last 12 months were
- 15 classified as having a disability.
- 16 Whereas, according to the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, 59% of filed
- 17 Virginia fair housing discrimination claims were on the basis of alleged disability
- 18 discrimination.
- 19 Whereas, persons with disabilities also are discriminated against in the housing
- 20 market, facing bias from landlords and paying higher costs due to necessary
- 21 modifications to housing that lacks the physical accommodations needed to support
- 22 them.
- 23 Whereas, under legislation SB1038, HB1762, and HB1710, persons with disabilities

24 will be more readily able to access resources and treatment for medical care without
25 disproportionate financial burden.

26 Whereas, under legislation HB1253 and HB1806, physical dwellings will become
27 more accessible and easier for persons with disabilities to reside in.

28 **SECTION 1:**

29 “Person(s) with a disability:” any person(s) who has a physical or mental impairment
30 that substantially limits one or more of his major life activities or who has a record of
31 such impairment.

32 “Physical accommodation:” an adjustment to a physical space or environment to make
33 it accessible for people with physical disabilities.

34 “Non-disabled:” someone who does not have a disability.

35 “Medical debts:” debt incurred as a result of healthcare costs and related expenses.

36 “Protected classes:” a group of people who share a common characteristic that is
37 legally protected from discrimination.

38 “Fair housing discrimination claims:” Claims filed to the Virginia Department of
39 Professional and Occupational Regulations claiming violation of federal and/or state
40 housing laws set to prevent the discrimination of protected classes.

41 **SECTION 2:**

42 Therefore, be it resolved, the VCU Undergraduate Senate declares the support of
43 disability advocacy and accessibility legislation that comes forth from the Virginia
44 General Assembly, specifically in areas relating to the medical systems—including
45 SB1038, HB1762, and HB1710—and physical dwelling—HB1253 and HB1806.
46 Moreover, the VCU Undergraduate Senate supports and prioritizes the needs of
47 individuals with disabilities, physical or mental, in Richmond and the Commonwealth.
48 The Undergraduate Senate will also keep advocating and fighting for accessibility for
49 individuals with disabilities, especially for community members in Richmond,
50 Virginia.

51 **SECTION 3:**

52 Upon passage of this resolution, VCU Undergraduate Senate shall add this resolution
53 to the Lobby Day agenda, and lobby for the passage of legislation at the Virginia
54 General Assembly which seeks to benefit persons with disabilities, specifically
55 SB1038, HB1762, HB1710, HB1253, and HB1806.

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END

Undergraduate Student Senate

Motion by: Secretary Madeline Funk

Ayes: 26 Nays: 0 Present: 26

This undergraduate resolution has passed.

Presiding Officer: Madeline Funk
SGA President: Johanna Adams

Date: 2/3/2025.
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