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Va. Senate committee kills LGBT-inclusive hate crimes bill

A Virginia Senate committee on Monday killed a bill that would have added sexual orientation and gender identity to the state's hate crimes law.

Members of the Senate Courts of Justice Committee in a 9-6 vote struck down Senate Bill 112 that state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-Arlington County) introduced.

State Sens. R. Creigh Deeds (D-Bath County), John Edwards (D-Roanoke), Janet Howell (D-Fairfax County), J. Chapman Petersen (D-Fairfax City), L. Louise Lucas (D-Portsmouth) and Richard Saslaw (D-Fairfax County) voted for SB 112, which would have also added gender and disability to Virginia's hate crimes law. State Sens. A. Benton Chafin, (R-Russell County), Ryan McDougle (R-Hanover County), Thomas Norment (R-James City), Mark Obenshain (R-Harrisonburg), Mark Peake (R-Lynchburg), Bryce Reeves (R-Spotsylvania County), William Stanley (R-Franklin County), Richard Stuart (R-Stafford County) and Glen Sturtevant (R-Richmond) voted against it.

The vote took place five days after the 2018 General Assembly began.

Republicans maintain slim majorities in the state Senate and the Virginia House of Delegates.

State Del. [Danica Roem \(D-Manassas\)](#) is the first openly transgender person ever seated in a state legislature in the U.S. State Del. Dawn Adams (D-Richmond) is the first out lesbian elected to the Virginia General Assembly.

Governor Ralph Northam on Saturday [was inaugurated](#) on the steps of the Virginia Capitol.

Northam shortly after he took office signed an executive order that bans discrimination against state employees based on factors that include sexual orientation and gender identity. His predecessor, Terry McAuliffe, did the same after his 2014 inauguration.

Bills that would add sexual orientation and gender identity to Virginia's nondiscrimination law and would repeal the state's statutory same-sex marriage ban are among those that lawmakers will consider during the 2018 legislative session. State Sen. Scott Surovell (D-Fairfax County) and state Del. Patrick Hope (D-Arlington County) have introduced measures that would [ban so-called conversion therapy for minors in the Virginia](#).

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