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Va. Senate committee approves two nondiscrimination bills

The Virginia Senate's General Laws Committee on Monday approved two bills that would ban discrimination in public employment and housing based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The committee approved [Senate Bill 202](#), which would ban discrimination against LGBT state employees, by a 12-3 vote margin. [Senate Bill 423](#), which would add sexual orientation and gender identity to the Virginia Fair Housing Law, passed by the same margin.

State Sens. Adam Ebbin (D-Alexandria) and Jennifer Wexton (D-Loudoun County) introduced SB 202 and SB 423 respectively.

The bills will now go before the full Senate.

Equality Virginia in an email to supporters noted the Senate has approved the nondiscrimination bills three times. The Virginia House of Delegates subsequently killed each of them.

Governor Ralph Northam's first executive order, which he signed shortly after [his inauguration on Jan. 13](#), banned discrimination against state employees based on their sexual orientation, gender identity and other factors. Ebbin's bill would codify the LGBT-specific provisions of this mandate into Virginia law.

State Del. Mark Levine (D-Alexandria) has introduced a measure — [House Bill 401](#) — that would ban discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, public accommodation, housing, banking, insurance, public contracting and apprenticeships. HB 401 is currently before the Virginia House of Delegates' General Laws Committee.

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