

Senator Favola and Delegate Bennett-Parker's Press Release: This Governor Has Turned His Back on Women

(March 9, 2024)

Governor Youngkin once again stood with extremists and against women with his veto of [SB47/HB46](#). These bills did not take away the rights of gun owners. They simply ensured that current law is followed, a necessary and important step to keep women and families safe.

In short, the bills require that a person already prohibited from owning a firearm because they were convicted of assaulting a family member must document that they actually relinquished their firearm. Many offenders choose to relinquish their firearms by transferring them to another person. This option has a loophole which the legislative proposals aim to fix. The proposals require the offender to file a form with the court that identifies the recipient of the firearm. The recipient must be at least 21 years of age, reside outside of the offender's household, and be legally allowed to possess a firearm.

[Senator Barbara Favola](#) of Arlington stated: "Fully one third of Virginians are, at some point, endangered by the people with whom they share their lives. I am deeply disappointed that given the opportunity to better protect innocent lives, uphold our laws against domestic abusers, and lift up families, this governor has instead turned his back. Women deserve better."

[Delegate Bennett-Parker](#) of Alexandria added: "Guns and domestic violence are a lethal combination and these deaths are preventable. These bills were a common-sense fix to ensure that guns stay out of the hands of perpetrators of domestic violence. I'm deeply disappointed that the Governor vetoed our ability to better enforce our existing laws and to protect women who are dying at the hands of their abusers."

Jonathan Yglesias, Policy Director of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, noted "The Governor can't claim to be tough on crime without addressing lethal domestic violence."

According to the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, 33.6% of Virginia women and 28.6% of men experience intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner rape, and/or intimate partner stalking in their lifetime.

[According to a 2021 Virginia Commonwealth University Study,](#)

- More than 30% of Virginia's homicides are domestic violence related.
- About 56% of domestic violence homicides involve firearms.
- About 80% of domestic violence homicides happen in people's homes.
- More than 20% of domestic violence homicides involve a homicide-suicide.
- Women make up 51% of Virginia's population but account for 63% of the people killed by firearms in intimate partner-related homicides.