Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 187 / Senate Bill 104, which relates to teacher compensation.

I support the goal of ensuring that teachers and state-funded education support positions are funded competitively. I am proud of the pay increases the General Assembly and I have already enacted. On a bipartisan basis, Virginia has championed teacher pay increases, investing \$1.6 billion to grow teacher salaries by 23% since 2021.

Due to this bipartisan commitment across multiple budgets, Virginia's average teacher pay was already projected to exceed the national average this fiscal year. This was thanks to the 7% increase enacted in September 2023. The additional 6% increase (3% per year) included in the budget signed on May 13, 2024, represents a \$540 million investment in teachers that will maintain Virginia's competitive position for teacher compensation.

The proposed legislation grants the ability to determine spending in the upcoming budget to the National Education Association (NEA), an unelected labor union, restricting the Governor's ability as chief budget officer, a responsibility established by the General Assembly over a century ago. The bill also fails to account for various scenarios, such as an economic downturn or a state of emergency. This could impede the Commonwealth's flexibility to provide a Budget that is in the best interest of the Commonwealth and its citizens.

Additionally, the NEA's method does not accurately reflect the complete picture of teacher compensation in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and deviates from that developed by the Virginia Department of Education. NEA's methodology includes substitute teacher compensation and fails to account for supplemental salary expenditures in determining teacher compensation. Consistent, annual reporting of accurate teacher compensation data is essential for lawmakers and the Governor to make sound decisions.

While data sources and calculation methodologies differ, one truth remains the same – Virginia has made great strides increasing teacher compensation. The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission's March 2024 letter to the chairs of the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee and House Appropriations Committee cites "recent progress on increasing state funding for teacher salaries" in the FY23 and FY24 budgets.

I offered an amendment that would have restored the legislation to a version that passed the Senate of Virginia unanimously and would have informed further teacher pay increases through a detailed annual teacher compensation review. Unfortunately, the General Assembly failed to adopt my recommendation.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 609/Senate Bill 237, which creates an overly broad cause of action against political subdivisions and parents, as well as medical professionals acting in their expert judgment and within their scope of practice, fails to include adequate conscience clause protections for providers and also undermines the fundamental right of parents to make decisions concerning their children's upbringing and care.

I support contraception access. Of course, there is no question today that access is protected under the Constitution as laid out in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965) and *Eisenstadt v. Baird*, 405 U.S. 438 (1972). Quality health care for women is essential and contraception remains a crucial component of reducing abortions and fostering a culture of life, making Virginia the best place to raise a family. As the issue continues to be deliberated by the legislature, and recognizing the diverse religious, ethical, and moral beliefs of Virginians, any contraception-related changes must be coupled with robust conscience clause protections for providers and also must uphold the fundamental right of parents to make decisions concerning their children's upbringing and care.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 819/Senate Bill 238, which amends existing laws related to insurance coverage for contraceptive drugs or devices without providing an adequate conscience clause.

I support contraception access. Of course, § 38.2-3407.5:1of the Code of Virginia already protects access to contraception through health insurance plans. Quality health care for women is essential and contraception remains a crucial component of reducing abortions and fostering a culture of life, making Virginia the best place to raise a family.

As the issue continues to be deliberated by the legislature, and recognizing the diverse religious, ethical, and moral beliefs of Virginians, any contraception-related changes must be coupled with robust conscience clause protections for providers and uphold the fundamental right of parents to make decisions concerning their children's upbringing and care.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 536 which amends the statutory definition of bullying and could cause confusion for teachers and school administrators by excluding some groups.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments. Those recommendations would have expanded the definition of bullying to encompass all possible motives.

School administrators must work to prevent bullying and support our students' mental health through a healthy learning environment, but the narrow definition provided in the legislation could be interpreted to exclude groups not included in the Virginia Human Rights Act, such as bullying victims raised with traditional values or those who are in foster care.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 224 which adjusts existing training requirements for teachers and relevant school personnel.

Code of Virginia § 22.1-298.6 already directs that each school board shall adopt and implement policies that require each teacher and other relevant full-time personnel to complete a mental health awareness training or similar program at least once.

The Board of Education adopted the revised Suicide Prevention Guidelines for Virginia Public Schools in 2020, which includes many of the proposal's provisions but goes further than the groups designated in the legislation. Unfortunately, the legislature failed to accept my amendment, which would have reverted to the more robust guidelines issued by the Board of Education.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 624 / Senate Bill 105, which makes significant changes to education funding.

On May 13, 2024, the General Assembly adopted, and I signed, a budget making the largest investment in the history of the Commonwealth in direct aid to K-12 education: \$21.6 billion over two years. This is a nearly 10% increase over the previous biennium which set a record at the time. Virginia's funding to meet our commitment to high-quality education has increased by 51 percent, from \$14 billion to nearly \$22 billion, since 2019.

Notwithstanding the \$7.2 billion increase in K-12 funding since 2019, there are legitimate questions raised by many parties in state and local government about the efficacy of the formula we use to fund education, and whether that formula successfully drives our taxpayer dollars to students in the classroom.

Regrettably, the General Assembly failed to adopt my amendments to this legislation.

These recommendations would have added a re-enactment clause and directed the Department of Education to work with the Joint Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education Funding to assess the effects of changing the at-risk student proxy and eliminating the Standards of Quality Prevention, Intervention, and Remediation program on school division funding and other Direct Aid accounts.

Chapter 1 of the 2023 Special Session I Acts of Assembly established a Joint Subcommittee of 10 members from the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, charged with a comprehensive review of the Commonwealth's funding formula to meet the Standards of Quality for Education (SOQ), and to review the recommendations of the July 2023 JLARC report. The Subcommittee is tasked with reporting on new funding models and implementation plans by November 1, 2024.

Before further action on the funding formula can be changed statutorily, the Commonwealth needs an effective K-12 funding formula that should account for the specific needs of the students and, ultimately, the school divisions. This approach should allow school divisions to optimize budgets and personalize learning experiences.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 904/Senate Bill 300, which makes multiple changes to the Department of Elections' list maintenance practices.

To be clear, elections in Virginia remain safe and secure. While I agree with the general purpose of addressing these list maintenance practices, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments, which would have allowed a workgroup to properly study and make recommendations regarding voter registration and list maintenance.

Secure elections start with comprehensive list maintenance practices. Interagency exchange of data is a vital component of election administration in the Commonwealth. Transparency and interagency collaboration are essential to ensuring that every eligible Virginian can exercise their right to vote and know that the list of registered voters is accurate and up to date.

Updating and maintaining the Commonwealth's voter registration has seen many improvements over the last two years. The Commonwealth has made unprecedented strides in improving the accuracy of its voter list through audits of all list maintenance practices. As a result, Virginia has been nationally recognized for its robust list maintenance improvements and new initiatives.

The continued improvement of the Commonwealth's list maintenance processes is largely contingent upon the interagency data provided to the Department of Elections for processing. As Virginia transitions to a new statewide voter registration system targeted for delivery next year, and given the fact there is a shared responsibility held not only by the Department of Elections but all the other entities within the Commonwealth that provide data, a workgroup to properly study these changes is necessary.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 1130/Senate Bill 35, which directs the Board of Medicine to mandate unconscious bias and cultural competency training as a component of the continuing education for license renewal.

I will continue working with the General Assembly on our shared goals of providing more support for mothers and mothers-to-be.

My commitment is demonstrated by our ongoing efforts which have improved prenatal care, with additional investment and partnership with maternal health hubs in areas such as Petersburg and have expanded access to doulas who are specially trained to provide direct support for mothers before, during, and after childbirth.

Regrettably the General Assembly did not adopt my amendment, which would have directed the Board of Medicine to require that persons licensed by the Board who work with maternal populations, including persons who work in fertility care, prenatal care, birth care, and postpartum care, complete two hours of continuing learning activities that address maternal health care for populations of women that data indicate experience significantly greater than average maternal mortality, including African American, indigenous, and Hispanic women and women in underserved rural communities.

I believe the Commonwealth can—and must—effectively address disparities and promote the health and dignity of every individual before, during, and after birth.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 812, which prohibits the issuance of certain license plates issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The Department of Motor Vehicles (the Department) offers over three hundred different types of specialty plates. The spectrum of special interest plates spans from expressions of regional support, such as for the Northern Neck or the City of Fairfax, to more personalized affiliations like favorite musicians or sports teams and even to endorsements of private businesses.

The Department also offers specialty plates for debated social issues, such as advocacy for fox hunting, coal, or internet infrastructure. In some instances, the plates represent overtly political statements, including pro-abortion, pro-life, for and against the Second Amendment, and even international relations concerning Tibet.

Some of these plates may be offensive and controversial to some, but the Department oversees a neutral and impartial process for their approval and issuance, with ultimate approval by the legislature. This process ensures that all viewpoints are considered and that no one interest dominates.

These plates are not endorsements by the Commonwealth.

Unfortunately, the General Assembly failed to adopt my amendments, which would have set in motion a process to establish a uniform schedule for the expiration of acts establishing special license plates.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 173/Senate Bill 100, which establishes a felony for knowingly possessing certain firearms or materials.

In the 2024 Session of the General Assembly, Senate Bill 363 was enacted with my recommendations, representing a bipartisan effort to address the issue of ghost guns.

This proposal would create confusing changes that could affect not only gun owners but also others who have industrial parts such as aluminum, which, if sold to the public to become a frame or receiver once completed, must be serialized under this bill.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 597, which provides enforcement of the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (VRLTA) by localities.

The proposal is nearly identical to House Bill 802 which I vetoed in the 2022 General Assembly Session, and my concerns persist.

The legislation contains unnecessary and duplicative provisions, already established under the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC). The existing USBC powers provide enforcement authority to localities to enforce the USBC against both the landlord and the tenant, whereas House Bill 597 proposes only to provide localities powers to enforce the VRLTA against the landlord.

Under the USBC and the VRLTA, landlords and tenants both have responsibilities to maintain safe, decent, and sanitary housing.

It is neither clear why this language is necessary to enforce already existing provisions of state law, nor what the additional language contained in the legislation seeks to accomplish beyond what is already authorized in the USBC.

Landlords should be held accountable for creating unsafe and hazardous living conditions for their tenants. The current Building Code regulations and the implementing regulations, 13VAC5-63-485, already address the policy objective of the underlying legislation.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 861/Senate Bill 515, which would have made possessing or transporting firearms or other weapons in a hospital providing mental health services a Class 1 misdemeanor.

The proposal is unnecessary and has unintended consequences for hospital employees and patients.

Current law prohibits firearms in state-owned or operated hospitals prohibiting firearms or explosives on-premises, while private hospitals already possess the authority to ban firearms, with violators subject to trespassing penalties.

The proposal, however, removes a hospital's discretion to permit employees to carry stun guns for safety. Moreover, the proposal contains drafting errors such as banning plastic knives in a hospital cafeteria allowing certain hospital personnel to legally bring explosives into a hospital, which my amendments would have rectified.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto Senate Bill 119, which requires certifications by drug manufacturers related to the 340B drug pricing program.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments. As Congress deliberates the federal 340B Program, stakeholder input, recent court rulings, and program developments must be considered to provide clarity, transparency, and accountability.

My amendments would have ensured input from various stakeholders to enhance the 340B Program, such as assessing patient insurance usage, compiling contract pharmacies, analyzing 340B savings, and ensuring benefits reach intended citizens.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 993/Senate Bill 422, which prohibits housing providers from recovering fees for maintenance or repair and establishing periodic rent payment options.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments.

My amendments clarified that housing providers may recover costs for maintenance, such as landscaping, trash removal, or the upkeep of common areas such as lounges or recreation rooms.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 955, which requires a summary page, upon request, alongside rental agreements, detailing certain provisions.

The General Assembly adopted my recommendations to House Bill 967 and Senate Bill 405, which require landlords subject to the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act to include on the first page of a written rental agreement or an addendum a description of any rent and fees charged to the tenant.

The language of the proposed bill, unfortunately, is largely duplicative or contradictory to House Bill 967 and Senate Bill 405. This could potentially sow confusion among landlords and tenants, and more importantly, it would not serve the purpose of making housing costs easier to understand.

Unfortunately, the legislature failed to adopt my proposed amendment, which would have mitigated these effects.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 824, which limits the repayment amount for taxpayer-funded legal representation by individuals convicted of crimes.

Regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments, which would have aligned the bill with the overlapping provisions of HB 102 and SB 356, which passed unanimously.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 653, which eliminates specific felony offenses from the list of violent felony offenses considered for setting initial discretionary sentencing guideline midpoints.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments. These recommendations would have provided adequate time to assess potential unintended consequences of the bill.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 950, which prohibited the Governor and the Board of Housing and Community Development from modifying the Uniform Statewide Building Code until the next triennial code development process concludes.

The proposal precludes the Board of Housing and Community Development's regulatory authority concerning Virginia residents' health, safety, and welfare. Past amendments, such as emergency regulations for cooling multi-family buildings and updates to smoke and carbon monoxide alarm requirements in rental properties, were necessary outside of the standard three-year cycle.

My proposed amendment addressed this issue, but unfortunately, the General Assembly chose not to adopt it.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 498/Senate Bill 225, which relates to school boards notifying parents about information related to firearms.

This proposed legislation is unnecessary for responsible parents and ineffective in persuading the irresponsible.

The General Assembly failed to adopt my amendments, which would prioritize informing parents of their rights, such as the fundamental right to make decisions concerning the upbringing, education, and care of their child.

The legislation has a singular focus on one parental responsibility, which applies to a subset of parents, omitting other legal obligations, like providing an environment free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. This relegates such a duty to second-tier status.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 992, which restricts the conditions on SNAP benefits.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve all my recommended amendments.

My amendments would have provided flexibility for local departments of social services to promote participation in coordinated workforce development services.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 996, which mandates certain housing providers provide certain information to applicants for tenancy.

While I agree that price transparency and informing consumers are beneficial policies, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments to accomplish these goals. Instead, the General Assembly insisted on a version of this legislation that establishes costly and burdensome mandates for housing providers. Many housing providers are small businesses that would be unable to comply with the requirements of this bill, which could reduce the availability of rental housing and lead to higher housing costs.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 568/Senate Bill 517, eliminating tax exemptions for specific organizations.

The Commonwealth should pass necessary reforms regarding exemptions from local property and recordation taxes.

Historically, the Constitution of Virginia permitted the General Assembly to grant exemptions from local taxation to specific nonprofit organizations through classification or designation, with a three-fourths vote in each house. In 2003, a constitutional amendment altered the process to ordinance-based exemptions, but those established before January 1, 2003, remained in force.

The property tax exemption by designation is ripe for reform, delineated by inconsistencies and discrepancies. Specific civic associations and for-profit businesses are exempted, while others are not. Among these groups, some organizations have titles offensive in contemporary discourse, such as outdated references to the intellectually or developmentally disabled; some organizations reference political affiliations and engage in political contributions like the Ocean View Democratic and Social Club, and others are historical societies whose lineage is connected to contentious periods such as the Civil War, illustrated by the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

A more effective approach to reform would involve broad-based measures, allowing local governments autonomy in determining tax exemptions and considering the locality's tax base and deed transfers. These considerations would be permitted when a county or city sets its real estate tax levy, helping to reduce effective tax increases through assessments.

Narrowly targeting specific organizations to gain or lose such tax exemptions sets an inappropriate precedent. Initially, the General Assembly granted exemptions through a three-quarter vote of both houses, but now, a simple majority can revoke them. Choosing winners and losers is imprudent and undermines the tax system's fairness.

Unfortunately, the General Assembly rejected my recommendations, which would have accomplished broad-based reform to address the issue of tax exemptions effectively.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 740, which prohibits the court from bifurcating an unlawful detainer case if the defendant disputes the amount owed by the plaintiff.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments. These recommendations would have allowed the court to bifurcate the case at their discretion.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 576/Senate Bill 313, which would require the Board for Contractors to mandate certain contracts for residential contractors and add certain restrictions on solicitations.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments.

These recommendations would have directed the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation to assemble a work group comprising various stakeholders to propose additional consumer protections for solar energy facilities.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 246, which mandates clerks of courts to furnish itemized statements of fines and fees to individuals convicted of crimes.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments. These recommendations would have introduced practical clarifications, including the requirement for written requests, a nominal fee to support the Clerk's office in their new duty, and a specified delivery method for the itemized statements.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 588, which requires a housing provider to provide certain accommodations for tenants.

The circumstances contemplated by this bill can be dire for both tenants and housing providers.

Consequently, this bill was recommended for study at the Department of Housing and Community Development to ensure respective changes to the Code of Virginia represented the best interests of both parties.

Regretfully, the General Assembly rejected this recommendation, and as a result, this bill carries a significant risk of unintended consequences for housing providers and tenants.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 962, which modifies the terminology of persons who are not citizens or nationals of the United States in the Code of Virginia.

This legislation makes numerous and potentially substantial changes to the Code of Virginia, which could have lasting and unintended consequences.

Unfortunately, the legislature failed to adopt my proposed amendment, which would have required the legislation to be reviewed by the reputable Code Commission before the legislation's enactment.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 416/Senate Bill 189, which would amend Virginia Beach's charter to establish a city council with only single-member districts and a mayor.

Given the pending litigation concerning the validity of the adopted district system in Virginia Beach, it is prudent to allow the courts to adjudicate on the correctness of the implementation, with the expectation hat this legislation will be re-introduced once the court's adjudication has been finalized.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto Senate Bill 188, which permits certain localities to convert at-large seats to single-member districts via ordinance.

Given the pending litigation concerning the validity of the adopted district system in Virginia Beach, it is prudent to allow the courts to adjudicate on the correctness of the implementation with the expectation that this legislation will be re-introduced once the court's adjudication has been finalized.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 1504, which mandates the Board of Education to create guidelines for school-connected overdose response and parental notification policies to assist local school boards.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the House of Delegates did not approve my amendments. These recommendations would have required division superintendents to inform parents within 24 hours of any school-related overdose, providing details on the cause (including drug names, street names, whether it's a combination, and identifying features) and circumstances.

This policy is already in place and will continue to be in effect as Executive Order 28 (2023) which directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide guidance to school divisions on school-connected overdose reporting. I am signing Senate Bill 498 into law so that the Board of Education can adopt these legislatively mandated guidelines.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto Senate Bill 729, which establishes the Virginia Clean Energy Innovation Bank.

While I agree with the underlying purpose behind the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not adopt my recommendations which would have allowed the opportunity for conflicts between the entity created by this legislation and existing programs at the Virginia Department of Energy to be resolved.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto Senate Bill 196, which prohibits the use of voter data received from another state or jurisdiction or through a list comparison for list maintenance purposes when the data file does not include a unique identifier for each individual.

While I agree with the general purpose of the legislation, regrettably, the General Assembly did not approve my amendments. These recommendations would have improved Virginia's data-sharing activities under this bill by aligning them with common practice in nearly every other state and restored the ability of voters to appeal registration denials with general registrars rather than the circuit court.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto Senate Bill 212, which legalizes games of skill in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In recent years, the Commonwealth of Virginia has authorized casinos, sports betting, and parimutuel wagering, on top of longer-standing gaming options like the Virginia Lottery, horse racing, and charitable gaming.

When it comes to additional gaming options, such as games of skill, we must proceed with a robust set of safeguards.

I sent over a package of amendments which addressed my many concerns with the bill. While it is regrettable that my recommendations were not adopted, I remain open to working with the General Assembly going forward on this subject.

Pursuant to Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of Virginia, I veto House Bill 781, which directed the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to reestablish the Task Force on Maternal Health Data and Quality Measures.

Unfortunately, the proposed legislation politicized an otherwise noncontroversial issue. I offered an amendment to address this, but unfortunately the General Assembly did not adopt it.

In lieu of legislation, I am directing the Secretary to reestablish the task force.

I will continue working with the General Assembly on our shared goals of providing more support for mothers and mothers-to-be.