



Participating Organizations

Alexandria for Palestine
 Alliance of Baptists
 American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
 American Muslims for Palestine
 Appalachian Peace Education Center
 Arab American Association of Central Virginia
 Central Atlantic Conference (UCC) Palestine/Israel Network
 Defenders for Freedom, Justice, and Equality
 Episcopal Peace Fellowship—National Capital Regional Chapter
 Hampton Roads For Palestine Here4TheKids
 Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church—USA
 Jewish Voice for Peace
 Muslims for Just Futures
 National Arab American Women's Association
 New Dominion PAC
 Northern Virginians for Peace & Justice
 Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace
 Plowshares Peace & Justice Center
 Richmonders for Peace in Palestine
 Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East—Northern Virginia Chapter
 United Methodists for Kairos Response
 US Campaign for Palestinian Rights
 Washington Interfaith Alliance for Middle East Peace

VCHR Urges the General Assembly to Pass HB614

The Virginia Coalition for Human Rights (VCHR) calls on the Virginia General Assembly to pass **HB614** – *“A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-208.01:1, relating to history and social science standards and instruction; historically marginalized communities,”* which will ensure comprehensive, accurate, and inclusive education in public elementary and secondary schools. It would do so by requiring “instructional materials and standards in history and social science to include the contributions, perspectives, and experiences of historically marginalized communities, including racial and ethnic minorities; immigrants and refugees; women individuals with disabilities; individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+); individuals from various socioeconomic statuses; individuals from various religious backgrounds;... in order to affirm such communities and promote a more holistic understanding of history.”

The General Assembly should pass HB614 for the following reasons:

1. **Promotes Accurate and Complete Historical Education** - HB614 ensures that students receive a full and honest account of history, rather than a selective narrative. Including diverse perspectives leads to greater historical accuracy, deeper understanding, and improved critical thinking.
2. **Strengthens Civic Literacy and Democratic Values** - By learning about the struggles and contributions of diverse communities, students gain a better understanding of human rights, democracy, civil rights, social justice, and constitutional development, preparing them to become informed and responsible citizens.
3. **Improves Student Engagement and Academic Outcomes** - Research consistently shows that inclusive curricula improve student engagement, motivation, and academic performance, particularly among historically underserved student populations. When students see their experiences reflected in coursework, educational outcomes improve.
4. **Supports Equal Opportunity and Educational Equity** - The bill promotes equity in education by ensuring that no group's history or contributions are marginalized or erased, reinforcing the principle that every student deserves to see themselves represented in history.
5. **Prepares Students for a Diverse Workforce and Society** - Modern workplaces and communities are increasingly diverse. HB614 helps students develop cultural competency, empathy, and communication skills, all of which are essential for professional success and civic harmony.
6. **Aligns Virginia with National Educational Best Practices** - Many states and professional education organizations support inclusive curriculum standards. HB614 aligns Virginia with best practices in education, ensuring that the Commonwealth remains competitive, modern, and forward-looking.

In summary, HB614 strengthens education by ensuring that Virginia students learn a complete, accurate, and inclusive history that prepares them for informed citizenship, economic participation, and respect for social justice and human rights. **Based on all the above, VCHR urges all General Assembly members to vote YES for HB614!**

The Virginia Coalition for Human Rights (VCHR) is a broadly based grass-roots coalition that advocates for Palestinian human rights. We support and defend universal human rights, equity, free speech (including the right to boycott), and academic freedom. We believe that the attainment of human rights, equal rights, and civil rights, requires an open and free debate, and we oppose any effort to curtail or forestall such debate by placing limits on free speech or academic freedom. We oppose all types of racism, oppression, and violations of international law wherever they occur; and we oppose hate speech, and any type of discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin, wherever it may occur, domestically or abroad. We celebrate our diversity and strongly oppose any manifestation of racism against anyone. <https://vchr.org/>.