



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Advocates for women's health to deliver 33,030 petitions
opposing personhood and mandatory ultrasound bills**

Richmond, VA - A coalition of grassroots organizations supporting women's health delivered 33,030 petitions to Governor McDonnell Wednesday morning, opposing bills that insert the government into women's personal, private medical decisions. Virginians from across the Commonwealth have expressed their disappointment and outrage at bills including HB 1 ("personhood" bill), which defines a fertilized egg as a person and could outlaw abortion under all circumstances and restrict women's access to birth control, and HB 462 and SB 484, which would force the vast majority of women seeking to terminate their pregnancies to submit to a transvaginal ultrasound whether or not she wants one.

ProgressVA, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia, NARAL Pro-Choice Virginia, and Virginia New Majority organized the petition drive.

At a press conference this morning to announce the petition signatures, Dr. Wendy Klein related the stories of 4 women who have been adversely affected by "personhood" bills across the country. She implored lawmakers to reject these bills and remove government from doctor-patient relationships.

Vicki Yeroian, a junior at Virginia Commonwealth University, said "the bills before the Virginia legislature are an attack on women and women's reproductive health care. As a new adult, a college student, and a woman I no longer feel safe in this state. No woman living in the realities of the 21st century in Virginia can feel safe."

Anna Scholl, Executive Director of ProgressVA, in announcing the 33,030 signatures, declared "To many people in this building, these bills are political. But to women and families across our Commonwealth, they are very personal. Our message today is clear: stop the attacks on women's health. Stop interfering in personal, private medical decisions that should be left to a woman, her family, and her doctor. Get back to work."

The text of the petition reads:

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“I'm writing to express my opposition to bills before the General Assembly that insert the government into women's private medical decisions. Please oppose HB 1, which would define a fertilized egg as a person and could outlaw abortion under all circumstances and restrict women's access to birth control, and HB 462, which will traumatize women by forcing some to submit to an invasive, trans-vaginal ultrasound before seeking an abortion.

“I've had enough of this war on women and I'm asking you to get back to work on Virginians' priorities: investing in our economic growth, ensuring our kids get an excellent education, and repairing our crumbling transportation infrastructure. We sent you to Richmond to make life better for Virginia families, not make it more difficult for women to access comprehensive reproductive health services.”

Virginians may continue to take action on these issues and sign the petition by visiting www.SignOn.org.

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ProgressVA is a nonprofit, multi-issue progressive advocacy organization that seeks to engage citizens from across the Commonwealth around issues of immediate state or local concern. www.ProgressVA.org