

Taylor Was The Founder Of Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice, The Radical Group That Pushed To Defund The Police And Reduce Sentences For Criminals Who Assault Police Officers. Taylor's Group Wants To Put Criminals Back On The Street.

Taylor Was A Cofounder Of The Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice, A Group That Has Advocated For Issues Such As Cashless Bail, Eliminating Mandatory Minimums And Reining In Law Enforcement

In 2020, Taylor Was One Of 11 Commonwealth's Attorneys That Founded Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice (VPPFJ), A Group That Sought To Restrict "No-Knock" Search Warrants, End The Mandatory 6-Month Driver's License Suspension For Drug Convictions, And Increased Accountability Over Police Conduct, Among Several Other Measures. "A group of nearly a dozen elected Virginia prosecutors are backing significant changes to the state's criminal justice system as lawmakers begin debating reform. The 11 commonwealth's attorneys want to restrict 'no-knock' search warrants, end the mandatory 6-month driver's license suspension for drug convictions and increase accountability over police conduct, among several other measures. The 'Virginia Progressive Prosecutors for Justice,' as they are called, include three prosecutors from Hampton Roads and five from Northern Virginia. They hail from largely Democratic-leaning cities and counties that account for more than 40% of the Old Dominion's population." (Peter Dujardin, "Progressive Prosecutors' Press For Criminal Justice, Police Reform At General Assembly," [Daily Press](#), 7/27/20)

Death Penalty

Taylor, Along With Other Members Of The VPPFJ, Supported Abolishing The Death Penalty. "Earlier This Month A Group Of A Dozen Commonwealth's Attorneys Calling Themselves The Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice, Including Shannon Taylor, The Henrico Commonwealth's Attorney, Also Announced They Backed Abolishing The Virginia Death Penalty." (Peter Dujardin, "Progressive Prosecutors' Press For Criminal Justice, Police Reform At General Assembly," [Daily Press](#), 7/27/20)

No-Knock Warrants

Taylor, Along With Other Members Of The VPPFJ, Supported The Abolition Of No-Knock Warrants. "A requirement that all warrants be served during the daytime and include a knock-and-announce provision with additional showing to a judge, not a magistrate, for (i) nighttime service and (ii) no-knock service." (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 7/13/20)

License Suspension For Drug Convicts

Taylor, Along With Other Members Of The VPPFJ, Supported The Elimination Of The Six-Month Operator's License Suspension For All Drug Convictions. "The elimination of the mandatory six-month operator's license suspension on all drug convictions because the suspension serves no public safety interest and is an inappropriate punishment unrelated to the criminal behavior." (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 7/13/20)

Police Reform

Chief Among The Group's Goals In 2020 Were New Measures In Law "Related To Police Officer Accountability For Use Of Force Misconduct And Other Behavior-Related Complaints," Including Allowing "Prosecutors Unrestricted Access To All Police Reports, Information, And Disciplinary Records Of Officers Involved In A Matter Before The Court." "All measures related to police officer accountability for use of force misconduct and other behavior-related complaints, to include the requirement to allow prosecutors unrestricted access to all police reports, information, and disciplinary records of officers involved in a matter before the court." (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 7/13/20)

Expungement Of Criminal Records

VPPFJ Supported "Automated, Automatic, And Free Expungement Of Criminal Records" For Convicted Criminals. "Automated, automatic, and free expungement of criminal records for formerly system-involved community members: Our communities are safest when we more

fully reintegrate those convicted of crimes into society, instead of forcing them down a path of recidivism. Too often, a persistent criminal record prevents those who have interacted with the criminal justice system from finding employment, securing housing, or attaining an education long after they have proven to no longer pose a safety risk to the community. Ensuring equal access to such second chances for those who have achieved rehabilitative benchmarks will improve safety outcomes while promoting equity across our criminal justice system. We can achieve this by automatically expunging certain criminal records free of charge after individuals have maintained a clean record for an amount of time that corresponds to the severity of their offense.” (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 1/4/20)

The VPPFJ’s Purpose For Supporting Expungement Was To Offer Convicts A ‘Meaningful Second Chance.’ “The ability to expunge convictions from one’s record to enable one to have a meaningful ‘second chance.’” ... “Expungement of criminal records for formerly system-involved community members: Prioritizing the reintegration of individuals convicted of crimes back into our communities after they have served their time makes our Commonwealth safer. Too often, a persistent criminal record prevented Virginians who had interacted with the criminal justice system from living healthy, full, and productive lives long after they had proven to no longer pose a safety risk, unnecessarily fueling recidivism. Thankfully, due to the expungement reforms passed in the most recent legislative session, the Commonwealth will now afford those with criminal records opportunities to reclaim their lives and fully reintegrate into society.” (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 3/8/21)

Mandatory Minimums

VPPFJ Supported Ending Mandatory Minimum Sentences, Saying They Lead To The Irrationally Lengthy Prison Sentences That Fuel Mass Incarceration. “End mandatory minimum sentences: We wrote in advance of the special session in support of the General Assembly striking mandatory minimums from state law. We once again urge you and your colleagues to implement this critical reform. Mandatory minimums prevent judges from taking an individualized, holistic approach to each sentence based on the specific circumstances of a given case. They lead to the irrationally lengthy prison sentences that fuel mass incarceration while exacerbating the racial and socioeconomic inequities that have come to characterize our criminal justice system. Banning mandatory minimums will make our communities safer and stem the tide of mass incarceration.” (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 1/4/20)

- **VPPFJ Press Release, July 13, 2020:** “The removal of mandatory minimum sentences from the law, allowing judges to take into account the needs and facts of each person’s case before their court.” (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 7/13/20)
- **VPPFJ press release, March 8, 2021:** “Ending mandatory minimum sentences: As we wrote in advance of both the August 2020 special session and the most recent session, mandatory minimums prevent judges from taking an individualized, holistic approach to each sentence based on the specific circumstances of a given case. They lead to the irrationally lengthy prison sentences that fuel mass incarceration while exacerbating the racial and socioeconomic inequities that have come to characterize our criminal justice system. Ending mandatory minimums will make our communities safer and stem the tide of mass incarceration. We are encouraged that majorities of both chambers recognized the need for action on this front and hope that this consensus serves as a foundation for a full repeal of all mandatory minimums when the General Assembly reconvenes.” (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 3/8/21)

Cashless Bail

VPPFJ Supported Ending Cash Bail, Arguing That It Leads To A Two-Tiered Justice System – One For The Rich And One For Everyone Else. “End cash bail: Cash bail leads to a two-tiered justice system – one for the rich and one for everyone else. Those who sit behind bars while awaiting trial are exposed to significant collateral consequences, like the loss of a job or even custody of their children. What’s more, these impacts are disproportionately experienced by Virginians of color. If someone poses a significant safety or flight risk, no amount of money will change that, and that person should be held pretrial. Otherwise, we should rely on Virginia’s comprehensive suite of pretrial services to help decisionmakers make informed determinations about the interventions and supervision that will

allow for pretrial release while keeping the community safe and incentivizing defendants to show up to court. The state should increase its investment in pretrial services, social services, and support networks to provide for universal access to resources like social workers that help mitigate recidivism. Ending cash bail is a vital step toward ensuring fair and equal access to justice in the Commonwealth.”

(Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 1/4/20)

- **VPPFJ Press Release, March 8, 2021:** “Ending cash bail: Cash bail leads to a two-tiered justice system, one for the rich and one for everyone else. Those who sit behind bars while awaiting trial – disproportionately Virginians of color – are exposed to significant collateral consequences, like the loss of a job or even custody of their children. If someone poses a significant safety or flight risk, no amount of money will change that, and that person should be held pretrial. Otherwise, we should employ a strong presumption in favor of pre-trial release and not put a price on Virginians’ freedom. The General Assembly’s passage of legislation mandating the collection of data on pretrial detention reflects a recognition that this system is flawed. We urge you and your colleagues to take the next step in the coming legislative session and end cash bail.” (Press Release, [Virginia Progressive Prosecutors For Justice](#), 3/8/21)