

Bills That Passed (Enacted into Law in 2025):

- **HB2475 – Motor vehicles; use of safety belt systems.** Requires **all adult passengers** in a motor vehicle to wear a seat belt while the vehicle is in motion, not just those in the front seat. (This closes a gap in prior law, which only mandated belts for front-seat adults.) **Status:** Passed both chambers and signed into law (effective July 1, 2025).
- **SB1416 – Vulnerable Road Users; penalty for injury in crosswalk.** Increases penalties when a driver **strikes and kills or seriously injures a pedestrian or cyclist in a crosswalk.** Previously this was only a traffic infraction (max \$250 fine); SB1416 elevates it to a Class 1 misdemeanor (up to \$2,500 fine and potential jail). **Status:** Passed with bipartisan support.
- **SB1233 – Automated enforcement in school/work zones and high-risk areas.** Allows jurisdictions to **install cameras to monitor crosswalk and stop-sign violations** in school crossing zones, highway work zones, and within 1,000 feet of school property (areas already eligible for speed cameras). It adds safeguards like daily calibration checks and directs fine revenues to local traffic safety projects. Passed both Senate and House in a conference compromise (awaiting Governor’s signature as of March 2025).
- ****HB2096 – Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) program for reckless drivers.** Establishes an ISA pilot program in Virginia. Courts can require **repeat reckless driving offenders** (such as those caught driving 100+ mph) to install a speed-limiting device in their car as an alternative to license suspension. This allows offenders to keep driving for work/family needs while preventing speeding, an approach backed by safety advocates. **Status:** Passed with broad bipartisan support.
- **SB847 – Improper driving as lesser offense to reckless driving.** Allows a jury to find a defendant **“not guilty of reckless driving but guilty of improper driving”** when the wrongful driving was slight. (Previously only a judge or prosecutor could reduce a reckless charge to improper driving.) This creates a lesser offense option in borderline cases. **Status:** Unanimously passed and signed by Governor.
- **HB1549 – Vehicle operation; unlicensed minor; penalty.** Makes it a **Class 1 misdemeanor for a vehicle owner to knowingly allow an unlicensed minor to drive.** (Under prior law, owners were penalized only if the minor’s license was suspended or revoked.) This change – inspired by a tragic crash – holds parents/adults accountable with up to 12 months jail and \$2,500 fine for permitting unlicensed teen driving. **Status:** Passed into law.
- **HB2213 – School boards; driver education behind-the-wheel training.** **Encourages all school boards** to offer in-car behind-the-wheel driver training as part of high school driver education, either during **before/after-school hours or on weekends.** to ensure every teen has access to behind-the-wheel training (an essential safety skill) even if not provided during the regular school day. **Status:** Passed (recommendation to schools; not a mandate).

- **HB2724 – Use of automatic license plate readers; data privacy rules.** Imposes state-wide rules on **automated license plate reader (ALPR) cameras** used by law enforcement. The bill defines approved uses (such as active criminal investigations, locating **wanted or stolen vehicles**, and combating human trafficking). It limits data retention to **21 days** unless reauthorized and requires annual reporting. (Local police and State Police are explicitly authorized to deploy ALPR on highways, bridges, tunnels) **Status:** Passed both chambers; Governor’s amendments on data retention were rejected, so the bill proceeds with the 21-day limit.
- **HB2036 – Reckless driving; illegal street racing and stunt driving (“exhibition driving”).** Expands the definition of reckless driving to cover **“exhibition driving”** – e.g. burnouts, doughnuts, drifting, street racing, or road takeovers performed in close proximity to bystanders. Offenders driving in such dangerous stunts face up to 12 months in jail, \$2,500 fine, at least a 6-month license suspension, and vehicle impoundment. Passengers riding on a moving vehicle’s hood or roof during these events can be fined \$500. **Status:** Passed and sent to the Governor as a crackdown on street racing and “sideshow” events.

Bills That Failed (Did *Not* Become Law in 2025):

- **HB2041 – Speed cameras in high-risk pedestrian zones.** Sought to **expand local authority to use speed enforcement cameras beyond school and work zones.** The bill would have allowed speed cameras on other **high-risk pedestrian corridors**, with any excess fine revenue directed to Virginia’s Highway Safety Improvement Fund for bike/pedestrian safety projects. **Status:** Passed the House but *defeated in the Senate Transportation Committee* on Feb. 13. (Key provisions of this bill were later folded into SB1233, which did pass.)
- **SB1491 / HB2159 – Expanding definition of school crossing zones.** Identical Senate/House proposals to include **college and university campuses** in the definition of “school crossing zone” for traffic management. This change would have extended school-zone traffic controls (e.g. lower speed limits, photo enforcement eligibility) to roads around higher-education institutions. **Status:** *Failed* – SB1491 never got a committee hearing in the Senate, and HB2159 was not heard in the House.
- **SB1007 – NVTa study for bike/ped project funding.** Directed the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority to convene a group to **recommend funding options for bicycle and pedestrian safety projects** by Oct 1, 2025. (The original concept was to levy a small tax on commercial parking spaces to fund safety improvements). **Status:** *Died* in House Transportation – after passing a subcommittee, it was never heard by the full committee before the deadline.
- **SB776 – Speed enforcement on GW Parkway (federal road).** Would have empowered Virginia State Police and local police to **enforce speed limits on the George Washington Memorial Parkway** in Northern Virginia (a federally owned roadway). **Status:** *Defeated* – passed a House subcommittee but then failed in the full House Transportation Committee on Feb. 13. (after clearing the Senate earlier).

- **SB918 – DUI exception on private property.** Sought to create an exception in Virginia’s DUI laws: under this bill, the DUI and underage DUI provisions **would not apply to individuals driving on their own residential property or adjacent property** while intoxicated. In effect, it would have legalized driving under the influence on one’s private property. **Status:** *Failed* – passed the Senate but was left in House Courts of Justice (no final vote).

Sources: Official Virginia General Assembly bill summaries and status updates legiscan.com vabike.org vabike.org/waba.org legiscan.com/virginiamercury.com legiscan.com/landline.media landline.media/virginiamercury.com waba.org waba.org/waba.org waba.org/waba.org/billtrack50.com, news coverage by Virginia Mercury and advocacy organizations virginiamercury.com virginiamercury.com.