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**2008 Session of the General Assembly  
Women's Roundtable Report**

*Legislative Forum*

*meets every Wednesday during session 9-10 a.m. 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room West*

*By Olga Hernandez, President and moderator*

January 16, 2008

The Women's Legislative Roundtable convened for our first forum this session in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor west conference room of the General Assembly building at 9 AM. We were joined by members of various non-profit organization members visiting the General Assembly. Five Senators and one delegate addressed the group.

**Delegate Vivian Watts Dist. 39 (Fairfax):** Delegate Watts is working on bills to address the mental health system. She believed this is a bipartisan issue that was brought forth by the Virginia Tech events of April 17, 2007. Many bills on the topic have been introduced. This is a very complex issue with multiple parts and is being addressed in various committees.

**Senator Kenneth Cuccinelli District 37 (Fairfax)** The Senator continued speaking about mental health concerns. He revealed that he is an appointed attorney for mental health patients going through the court system. In the past he has seen patient revolve through the system and wants to address that problem. He is working with Senator Marsh on out patient treatment systems. He is also submitted legislation to set up a bipartisan redistricting committee to do Redistricting.

**Ben Greenberg lobbyist for the Virginia Organizing Project** spoke briefly regarding their work on Payday lending industry loans. The sides are meeting to work out a compromise. The VOP favors a cap of 36%. Currently the "fees" per \$100 work out to be as much as 391%.

**Debbie Sherman** spoke on behalf of Delegate Watts spoke about Delegate Watts bills for Care giver tax breaks, Nursing home care personnel ratio standards and an increase to the gas tax of 10 cents per gal to deal with the transportation problems the abuser fees cannot address.

**Janie Burton**, representing Senator Mary Margaret Whipple, welcomed everyone and expressed Senator Whipple pleasure in arranging for our use of the room and listing in both the House and Senate calendars.

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