

2009 Virginia Women in History

Excerpt from *The Mary Sue Terry Agenda for Action*

CRIME, VIOLENCE AND DRUGS

“As your Attorney General, I worked with our police to fight crime, worked with our legislature to pass a tough ‘three-time loser’ bill and to fight domestic violence, coordinated the investigation of the Lyndon LaRouche operation in Virginia and sent the criminals involved to jail; and defended the death penalty.

To do more to fight crime means doing more at the local level.

State bureaucrats can’t fight crime; police working with supportive and empowered neighborhoods can. That’s why, as Governor I will support community-based policing. Getting law enforcement officials on the beat in our neighborhoods is a critical deterrent. As Governor, I’ll work to make it happen.”

-Mary Sue Terry

Mary Sue Terry is committed to safe communities where each of us can work, play, learn, and enjoy our families. As a prosecutor in Patrick County, as a member of the General Assembly and as Attorney General of the Commonwealth, she worked tirelessly to fight crime and support law and order. As Governor, she will continue that commitment. Mary Sue Terry will insist that violent and repeat offenders be punished to the fullest extent of the law—including the death penalty for the most violent criminals.

EMPOWER COMMUNITIES TO FIGHT CRIME

Crime is not just a law enforcement problem. It’s everybody’s problem. The way we will bring about a real change in the fight against crime in our neighborhoods, schools and workplaces is for each of us to get involved. Mary Sue Terry will:

- **Organize Community Crime Councils:** Made up of community and business leaders, local law enforcement officials, educators, parents, and youth, these councils will develop community-based strategies to combat crime and violence. State agencies will support, not direct, these local initiatives.
- **Encourage Community Policing:** Local police and sheriffs’ departments need support in their move from “motorized rapid response” to “community policing”—an approach that emphasizes greater community presence and coordinated problem solving. The State will help local law enforcement in their efforts to be more visible in our neighborhoods and to work for greater citizen participation.

COMBAT THE DRUG CRISIS

Drugs are a pervasive problem in our society. Illegal drug sale and use are crimes that often lead to other violent crimes, domestic violence, violence in our schools and deaths on our highways. Drugs also are a major factor in many illegal gun purchases and weapons offenses. Indeed, a

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majority of crimes are drug-related, and more than 80% of those currently in prison had serious drug problems at the time of their commitment.

Combatting drugs is a complicated business. Like most wars, it must be fought on several fronts at the same time. The war won't be won unless we all join forces in the effort. Mary Sue Terry understands this and will:

- **Provide Strong and Effective Leadership to Address the Drug Crisis:** As a prosecutor, member of the General Assembly and Attorney General, Mary Sue Terry has worked hard in the war against drugs. At her urging, for example, the General Assembly passed a tough “three-time loser” statute for serious drug offenders. On the demand side of the drug problem, her citizen-run CADRE program has been recognized nationally as a leading school and community-based anti-drug program.

- **Focus the State’s Law Enforcement Efforts on the Drug Crisis:** Virtually all of the remaining anti-crime measures addressed below deal in some way with drug offenders and other serious substance abusers. Drug traffickers and other serious drug offenders are dangerous, and often violent, criminals who must be caught and punished. In addition to the other specific anti-drug steps addressed below, Mary Sue Terry will ensure that:

~The full resources and expertise of the Virginia State Police are available to help local law enforcement authorities investigate drug offenses.

~Additional training in narcotics enforcement is available to all local law enforcement agencies.

ENSURE PUNISHMENT OF OFFENDERS

Criminals must be punished. Although incarceration is expensive, violent and repeat criminals must be jailed—and for long terms. Public safety is our first priority in corrections. For non-violent offenders, we must develop and impose cost-effective “intermediate sanctions” that punish offenders for their conduct and deter them and others from committing crimes in the future. Mary Sue Terry will lead the fight to:

- **Carry Out the Death Penalty for Murderers:** The law provides that the most heinous murderers be executed. Mary Sue Terry supports the death penalty in these cases. As Attorney General, she won three (out of three) important death penalty cases in the United States Supreme Court preserving defendants’ due process rights but dramatically limiting the frivolous procedural tactics often used to delay the imposition of the death penalty. As Governor, Mary Sue Terry will continue her support of the death penalty and her fight against frivolous delay tactics.

- **Slam the Door on Violent and Dangerous Criminals, and Repeat Offenders:** The message to violent and other dangerous criminals and repeat offenders will be clear: You will do time— long time—for your crimes.

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- **Close the “Revolving Door”:** All but the most violent and dangerous offenders are released eventually. We must ensure that when they are returned to our communities, they won’t repeat their crimes. Through a combination of more effective education, job training, and drug and alcohol treatment programs during their incarceration, and more effective transition programs to help prisoners adjust when they return to society, the “revolving door” can—and will—be closed.

- **Use Effective Intermediate Sanctions for Non-Violent Offenders:** Virginia already has some alternatives to traditional incarceration. For example, the pilot “boot camp” for young adults is a highly structured, military-style program that teaches self-discipline, respect for authority and responsibility for one’s actions. Mary Sue Terry will make this camp a permanent part of our corrections strategy and will expand the use of the concept for 16- and 17-year-olds and for juvenile offenders caught with guns or other weapons in schools. We also need to explore ways to expand the use of curfews, home confinement and other forms of electronic surveillance for non-violent offenders.

ENSURE SAFE SCHOOLS

Schools are for learning. Virginia must protect its students, teachers and other school personnel against guns, drugs and violence. We must guarantee that our schools are places where students can learn and teachers can teach. Mary Sue Terry, together with Bill Dolan, will lead the fight to:

- **Discipline Juvenile Criminals:** Juveniles who threaten the safety of our schools must be treated appropriately—including expulsion when necessary. Expelled students will not be left to the streets but will be sent to alternative education programs or tough juvenile boot camps to be taught discipline and basic social values.

- **Impose Tougher Penalties:** We need stricter penalties, including boot camp for the possession of guns or drugs on school property. Criminal penalties for those who sell guns and drugs to minors should be increased.

- **Mandate Weapon and Drug Reporting:** Schools should be required to report all weapon and drug violations on school property to the police.

- **Emphasize School-Based Drug and Alcohol Prevention Strategies:** School-based prevention programs—like DARE and CADRE—offer the best hope to fight substance abuse. Children must be taught at home and at school about the danger of drugs and alcohol. School personnel must be educated to identify at-risk children and to know where to refer students for counseling and treatment.

FIGHT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

A third of our homes experience some form of domestic violence or abuse. Spouses and children must be protected and treated with dignity. They need to know their rights. Mary Sue Terry will see that they do and will continue her fight to:

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- **Enforce the “Stalking” and “Repeat Offender” Statutes:** At Mary Sue Terry’s recommendation, the General Assembly enacted a statute making “stalking” a crime and making repeat offenses under Virginia’s “assault and battery of a family or household member” statute a felony. Law enforcement officers, magistrates, judges, and victim advocates must be trained fully on the use of these new statutes.

- **Expand the Use of Protective Orders:** Law enforcement officers, magistrates, judges, and victim advocates must be trained fully on the availability and use of a statute, passed at the urging of Mary Sue Terry, that authorizes “emergency protective orders” for victims of domestic violence. This law allows police to respond to domestic violence on the spot by obtaining a protective order by telephone.

COMBAT DRUNK DRIVING

For fifteen years, Mary Sue Terry has been a national leader in the fight against drunk driving. First as a legislator, then as Attorney General, she was successful in her fight to strengthen our laws against the needless death and destruction caused by drunk drivers. The bill lowering the blood alcohol threshold for drunk driving to 0.10% and the “vehicular homicide” statute the General Assembly passed at her urging are among the toughest drunk driving laws in the nation. Administrative license revocation, under which drunk drivers would immediately lose their licenses if their blood alcohol content is 0.10% or higher, will continue to be a top priority. As Virginia’s next Governor, she will continue her commitment to making Virginia’s streets and highways safe.

KEEP GUNS OUT OF CRIMINAL HANDS

Mary Sue Terry maintains a firm commitment to preserving our Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. Given the rapid increase in the use of handguns in the commission of crimes, she believes there are reasonable steps that can and should be taken to keep guns out of the hands of criminals—steps that won’t infringe on the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens. She supports our new laws governing handgun purchases and will see that they are enforced. She also supports a five-day waiting period for handgun purchases. She will propose a new law to require handguns seized in criminal cases to be destroyed unless they can be used by the police.

ASSIST VICTIMS

As a prosecutor, legislator and Attorney General, Mary Sue Terry has worked hard for the rights of victims of crime. As Governor, she will continue her fight to:

- **Support and Expand Local Victim/Witness Programs:** Victim/Witness program services are not available in each community. They need to be available—through the use of volunteers where appropriate.

- **Crime Victims Compensation Fund:** Victims must be promptly and adequately compensated through the Crime Victims Compensation Fund for injuries caused by criminals.

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Terry, Mary Sue, *The Mary Sue Terry Agenda for Action*, Terry for Governor, 1993, JK2318.V8 T32 1993, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.