

Janet D. Howell, Senate of Virginia

Janet Howell has been a state senator since 1992. A community leader prior to running for office, Janet was a PTA president, community association president, and chair of the State Board of Social Services.

Janet is currently second in seniority and is one of Virginia's most influential senators. For the past nine years she has been a Senate budget conferee, crafting the final state budget. In 2013 she was also a conferee on the omnibus transportation funding legislation.

She serves on four standing committees: Finance, Education and Health, Courts of Justice, and Privileges and Elections. She also serves on numerous committees and commissions, including the Crime Commission, the Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission, and the Joint Committee for Mental Health Services in the Twenty First Century.

Janet is credited with major legal reforms. She headed the overhaul of our family violence laws. She led efforts to protect children from sexual predators. Virginia has genetic information privacy legislation due to her work. She spearheaded the mental health law reform following the Virginia Tech tragedy.

Her work has been widely praised and honored. The American Academy of Pediatrics named her their National Child Advocate of the Year. The Virginia Sheriffs have repeatedly called her Senator of the Year. Numerous human services organizations, including the Virginia Interfaith Center, have also given her awards.

Janet is a former public school teacher and legislative assistant. She has been married since 1966 to Hunt Howell. They have two married sons, Eric and Brian, two granddaughters and one grandson. Janet received a B.A. degree from Oberlin College and an M.A. degree from the University of Pennsylvania.