

Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

Delegate • Virginia House District 45

Dear Friend,

It's been quite the week as we push towards the final deadline for bills to cross the finish line.

A number of bills have passed or gone to conference this week. A bill goes to conference if the Senate and House pass different versions of the bill and a committee is formed to figure out a compromise.

We are scheduled to adjourn tomorrow after we conclude voting on conference reports, but the budget is still being negotiated, so we will be back sometime next week to consider final passage of the budget.

Over the past few weeks, we have all noticed the dramatic increase in gas prices throughout the Commonwealth. Yesterday, Leader Eileen Filler-Corn called on Governor Youngkin to declare a state of emergency to activate the state's anti-price gouging law. With gas prices reaching record highs following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Governor Youngkin could take

proactive steps to protect Virginians from bad actors who take advantage of the situation to overcharge on gas and fuel. As we saw during the cyber attack on the Colonial Pipeline last year, price gouging is a real danger during times of anticipated increases in costs. Neighboring states like North Carolina are already taking action to prevent these unfair and costly practices.

Also yesterday, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents [sent a letter](#) expressing concern over components of the Administration's education policies and suggesting that they can "set public education in Virginia back many years." The organization, representing all 133 school superintendents, expressed concern over not being consulted during the development of the interim report mandated by Governor Youngkin's Executive Order Number One on ending the use of inherently divisive concepts in K-12 public education. They expressed disagreement with the Administration's removal of "EdEquityVA," an initiative that promoted equity and diversity through resources for school districts; the use of "equitable opportunities" instead of "equitable outcomes" given the factors that impact student achievement in underserved communities; and called on the Administration to end the so-called "tip line" set up to report divisive content, as it impedes positive relationships.

As always, I am grateful to be working on behalf of the residents of Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax. Continue reading below for bill updates and information on my virtual town hall with Senator Ebbin on March 19th.

Legislative Update

My remaining bills have all passed the Senate and are headed to the Governor. My bills on stalking and electronic meetings had quite the dramatic week with some twists and turns and a lot of work to get them across the finish line. Given time constraints today, I may write more about this in the future.

Ensuring Public Safety and Protections for Victims of Stalking

This bill will allow for Virginians to be protected against cyberstalking and other forms of stalking conduct that places them in reasonable fear of death, criminal sexual assault, or bodily injury to themselves or a family or household member. Currently, a perpetrator can only be prosecuted if the conduct occurs at least once within the jurisdiction where the person is tried.

Status: Passed the Senate 39-0 and is on its way to the Governor's desk.

Electronic Meetings

HB444 allows state and local advisory bodies and regional bodies to hold some electronic meetings outside of an emergency while also ensuring and enhancing access and transparency for members of the public.

Status: Passed the Senate 25-15 and is on its way to the Governor's desk.

Preventing Food Waste

HB1249, which became the vehicle for my bill on the same topic, would decrease food waste by protecting food donors and receivers from penalty or liability for donating or receiving food past the best-by date or other non-safety labels under certain conditions.

Status: Passed the Senate 39-0 and is on its way to the Governor's desk.

Updates on Other Bills

Typically I include an update on other bills and where they are in the legislative process, but given the number of bills that are still in conference I will provide more of an update after Sine Die.

Post-Session Town Hall

Please join me and Senator Adam Ebbin for a virtual Post-Session Legislative Town Hall on Saturday, March 19th at 10am.

Register and receive login instructions at: bit.ly/LegTownHall2022

Thank you

If you'd like to share your feedback on legislation during this session or need anything, please feel free to email me at DelEBennett-Parker@house.virginia.gov or call our office at 703-239-3155.

Warmly,
Elizabeth

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