

Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

Delegate • Virginia House District 45

Dear Elizabeth,

I hope you will join Senator Ebbin and me for a virtual post-session Town Hall Meeting tomorrow, Saturday, March 19th at 10 AM. You can register in advance [at this link](#). This newsletter also includes an update on the General Assembly's unfinished business and some of the bills that passed this session, as well as information on dogs that need a home and programs for high school students interested in government.

Post-Session Virtual Town Hall

Saturday, March 19th @10am



**Delegate
Elizabeth
Bennett-Parker**

**Senator
Adam Ebbin**

Register at: bit.ly/LegTownHall2022

We adjourned last Saturday afternoon without a budget and with almost 40 bills still outstanding. The House and Senate budgets are about \$3 billion apart - a clear expression of the different values and priorities of the House and Senate.

The Senate budget was more similar to the introduced budget, whereas the House budget cuts hundreds of millions of dollars from public preK-12 education, including substantial cuts to early childhood education. It also rolls-back progress towards environmental goals in a number of areas, including removing Virginia from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and removes funding for needed combined sewer outfall projects, including a \$40 million cut to Alexandria. Furthermore, it slashes funding for the Housing Trust Fund, gun violence prevention, and voter outreach and education. Finally, by removing the proposed increase to make the Earned Income Tax Credit refundable (at a cost of \$315 million) and instead doubling the standard deduction (at a cost of \$2.1 billion), the budget eliminates not only tax relief for families who need it the most, but the ability to provide funding for the valuable services and infrastructure outlined above.

Our budget conferees are working to resolve these differences at which point we will head for a special session to take up a final compromise budget and consider the outstanding legislation that was left in conference.

Adopt a Beagle



(Photo credit: Style Weekly)

Among the bills we passed in a bipartisan manner this session included [a few](#) to address the horrific [conditions at the Envigo](#) dog-breeding facility and prevent the mistreatment of animals bred for experiments. About 5,000 dogs live at this facility and there are hundreds that need homes. If you would like to add a furry friend to your family, please contact our office at DelEBennett-Parker@house.virginia.gov and we would love to connect you.

Legislative Update

Four of the bills I introduced made it 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.

Ensuring Public Safety and Protection for Victims of Stalking

HB451 allows 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.

Electric Vehicle Parking

HB450 allows non-electric vehicles that are parked in a space reserved for charging electric vehicles to be ticketed.

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.

Updates on Other Bills

Below are some of the other bills that passed this session.

Bill	Description
HB125	Provides that violating political campaign advertisement disclosure laws while expressly advocating against a clearly identified candidate shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$25,000.
HB139	Extends the expiration of the Commission to Study Slavery and Subsequent De Jure and De Facto Racial and Economic Discrimination Against African Americans.
HB141	Establishes the Virginia Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Historic Preservation Fund for the purpose of awarding grants for the eligible costs of acquiring land or undertaking preservation activities that is of cultural or historic significance to Black, indigenous, or people of color communities.
HB142	Changes from a maximum of 25 percent to a minimum of 25 percent the amount of Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) funds that must be used to support programs that reduce the impact of transit fares on low-income individuals.
HB258	Requires hotel employees to undergo training related to human trafficking
HB319	Improves the state-wide strategy for early student literacy by requiring educator preparation programs and school divisions to revise and align their literacy methodologies to the latest, evidence-based reading instruction, intervention, and assessment practices, consistent with the science of reading, among other provisions.
HB323	Increases the amount of a grant that may be made to a political subdivision for projects that support local food production and sustainable agriculture.
HB404	Strengthens the ability to prosecute sexual assaults by allowing forensic medical examination reports to be admitted into evidence by video testimony.
HB414	Directs Dominion Energy to provide local reliability data within 30 days upon request by a locality.
HB426	Allows cocktails-to-go for two more years.
HB481	Requires every hospital to make information about standard charges for items and services available on their website.
HB492	Requires political campaigns to retain certain records that may be used in reviews of campaign committee accounts.
HB516	Implements recommendations from the first Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan and provides guidelines for the development of a Virginia Flood Protection Master Plan for the Commonwealth.
HB525	Establishes mandates at colleges and universities related to preventing hazing.
HB526	Designates survivors of human trafficking eligible for in-state tuition.
HB551	Exempts medicine purchased from veterinarians from sales and use tax. Currently, if you take a prescription to a pharmacy (for your dog or cat - or yourself you will not be charged

	tax, but if you fill it at your veterinarian's office you will have to pay tax.
HB573	Limits the statute of limitations for the collection of medical debt to three years.
HB582	Provides notice to college students about their eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.
HB583	Prohibits public schools from denying a student the opportunity to participate in any extracurricular because they owe a school meal debt.
HB717	Provides that an unaccompanied homeless youth shall be deemed an adult for the purpose of consenting to housing, including emergency shelter.
HB719	Provides that sexual assault evidence kits in certain circumstances shall be stored for a period of at least 10 years.
HB750	Prohibits any law enforcement agency or official from establishing a formal or informal quota that requires a law-enforcement officer to make a specific number of arrests or issue a specific number of summonses within a designated period of time.
HB768	Provides for association health plans for real estate agents, to increase access to health insurance and health care.
HB802	Allows localities to enforce the health and safety provisions of the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act, subject to certain conditions.
HB920	Provides that a person is guilty of a misdemeanor if he operates a vehicle in a careless or distracted manner and causes the death or serious bodily injury of a vulnerable road user.
HB971	Conforms the Commonwealth's taxation system with the Internal Revenue Code.
HB979	Allows the Board of Education to issue a provisional teaching license to any individual who holds a valid teaching license issued by an entity outside of the United States.
HB1107	Requires hospitals that provide obstetrical services to adopt a protocol for the direct readmission of patients who experience postpartum complications requiring immediate medical care.
HB1187	Allows certain health care practitioners licensed out-of-state temporary authorization to practice in Virginia.
HB1270	Creates a workgroup to develop a proposal to allow people imprisoned in state and local facilities to apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits prior to reentering society.
HB1329	Requires hospitals to develop a plan for providing pediatric sexual assault survivor treatment services for children under 18 or to transfer those services to an approved pediatric health care facility. (Current law only applies to children under 13.)
HJ53	Continues the Joint Subcommittee to Study Comprehensive Campaign Finance Reform.
SB24	Extends from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2024 the expiration date of the Eviction Diversion Pilot Program.
SB108	As introduced and passed the Senate, would have ended solitary confinement. The House substitute creates a workgroup to review restorative housing in correctional facilities.
SB280	Directs Dominion Energy to provide local reliability data within 30 days upon request by a locality.
SB493	Provides a penalty for knowingly sending an intimate image to another adult without consent.
SB537	Adds more flexibility for implementation and management of tree canopy banks, tree canopy credits, and tree canopy requirements.
SB777	Prohibits the "Carolina Squat" - a modification to trucks in which the height of the front bumper is raised substantially above the back, leading to decreased visibility.

And here are some of the bills that are still in conference:

Bill	Description
HB86	Requires a searchable campaign finance database that allows users to easily search for and sort information.
HB349	Directs local departments of social services to provide housing support to any person between 18-21 who is aging out of the foster care system.
SB490	Increases student support positions to four per 1,000 students (from three per 1,000 students).
HB563	Establishes the School Construction Matching Grant Fund and Program.
HB993	Makes the crime of hazing a Class 5 felony if such hazing results in death or serious bodily injury to any person. The crime of hazing that does not result in death or serious bodily injury remains a Class 1 misdemeanor.
HB1053	Creates a workgroup to study the fees charged to individuals in local jails, including commissary rates, telephone rates, and fees associated with work release employment or participation in an educational or rehabilitative program.
HB1353	House version of the bill to establish the Virginia Football Stadium Authority as a political subdivision charged with financing the construction of a football stadium and related facilities. I voted against this bill.
SB471	Establishes an annual open application process for Literary Fund loans to finance the construction and renovation of public elementary and secondary school buildings and increases from \$7.5 million to \$25 million the maximum loan amount.
SB727	Senate version of the bill to establish the Virginia Football Stadium Authority as a political subdivision charged with financing the construction of a football stadium and related facilities. I voted against this bill.

High School Programs

Sorensen Institute High School Leaders Program

The University of Virginia is now accepting applications for its Sorensen Institute High School Leaders Program (HSLP). Participants learn about how Virginia government—both local and state—functions, how public policy is shaped and debated, and how to develop professional skills, pitch stories to the media, effectively address audiences, collaborate with others, and lobby legislators. The program will be held in Charlottesville from 7/9-7/23. Additional information about the program and the application process can be found [here](#). The deadline to apply is 3/22.

House Page Program

Each year the Speaker of the House of Delegates appoints 13- and 14-year-olds from across the Commonwealth to serve as House pages during the regular session of the General Assembly. These young people assist the members of the House of Delegates, the House Clerk's staff, and other legislative staff in the daily duties required for the successful operation

of the House of Delegates during the session. The application process for next year will open in August. You can learn more [here](#).

Thank You

If you'd like to share your feedback or need anything, please email me at DelEBennett-Parker@house.virginia.gov or call our office at 804-698-1045.

Warmly,
Elizabeth

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