

Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

Delegate • Virginia House District 45

Dear Elizabeth,

There are lots of upcoming deadlines in the next week for voting in this year's election, applying for the House Page program, requesting public service loan forgiveness, and submitting public comment on Governor Youngkin's recent policy proposals. Please keep reading below for more.

As I prepare for the upcoming 2023 General Assembly session in January, I welcome your input. There are details below on upcoming office hours and how to nominate an individual or organization for a commending resolution.

Office Hours

We would love to hear from you! Do you have thoughts on possible legislation for the upcoming 2023 General Assembly Session or need assistance with a state agency?

I will be holding office hours from 10:00AM -1:00PM on Saturday, November 12. Join me in person at City Hall or on zoom. [Sign up here!](#) If you can't make that day, please sign-up and select another day and time. I will also be holding a town hall with other members of the Alexandria delegation before session begins.

Early Voting is Happening Now!

This year, like every year, is an election year in Virginia and early voting has begun in our district to choose a Representative to the U.S House in the 8th Congressional District. If you live in Arlington, you also have elections for a member of the County Board and School Board.

You can vote:

- By mail - [applications](#) must be received by **5pm Friday, 10/28**
- Early in-person at certain locations **through Saturday, 11/5**
- Between 6am-7pm at your polling place on Tuesday, 11/8

Same Day Voter Registration

Beginning this year, voters are able to register to vote at any time, up to and including Election Day. That means if you moved or changed your name and missed the 10/17 voter registration deadline, you are still able to vote. [You can learn more about same day voter registration here.](#)

Find more information on voting at your locality's website:

- Alexandria <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Elections>
- Arlington <https://vote.arlingtonva.us/Home>
- Fairfax <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/>

Nominations for Commending or Memorial Resolutions

Commending Resolutions are a great honor to celebrate an individual or an organization that has demonstrated dedication to the well-being of others in our community. For example, I recently presented Lyles Crouch crossing guard Ms. Cora Reed with a [Commending Resolution](#) for her 50+ years of service, dedication to our students, and recognition as one of the most Outstanding Crossing Guards in Virginia. Other examples include a local organization's milestone anniversary, or celebrating an individual's retirement from public service or notable award or recognition. Memorial Resolutions recognize outstanding leaders in our community who have recently passed.

I welcome your ideas and suggestions for deserving individuals and organizations in our community. Please nominate an individual or organization [here](#).



Public Comment due 10/26 on RGGI Participation and Transgender Student Policy

Public comment is currently open on two proposed policies affecting our district - withdrawing Virginia from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and the treatment of transgender and nonbinary students.

Last month, the Youngkin administration announced they would begin a regulatory process to withdraw Virginia from RGGI. Composed of 11 mid-atlantic and northeastern states, RGGI puts a regional cap on carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and companies have to buy allowances at quarterly auctions for every ton of carbon they emit. Over time, the cap gets stricter and the number of allowances up for auction declines, incentivizing companies to cut emissions.

The program cuts greenhouse gas emissions, while returning proceeds to build resilience through funding for the Community Flood Preparedness Fund and energy-efficiency programs for low-income Virginians. Virginia has received more than \$370 million dollars for these programs since last year. In RGGI's first decade, emissions from power plants in the ten participating states dropped by 50% – [twice as fast as in the rest of the country](#). Alexandria has received \$6 million from RGGI proceeds for flooding mitigation projects in neighborhoods in our district, including Old Town and Arlandria. Additionally, the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing has received RGGI funding to renovate 163 affordable

rental units in Arlington and to build 80 new affordable senior housing units in Fairfax that will be more energy efficient and reduce energy bills for residents.

Public comment will be open until October 26. [You can find more information and comment here.](#)

Last month Governor Youngkin also released a proposed policy that would reverse the current Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students in public schools. These new policies are not evidence-based best practices, received no public input while being drafted, would lead students to be outed before they are ready, and cause harm and discrimination to transgender and non-binary students. All students deserve to feel safe and welcome at school. I am thankful that all three school systems of the 45th district have reaffirmed their support for LGBTQIA+ students.

Public comment on the proposal is also open until October 26. [You can find more information and leave your comment here.](#)

House Page Applications due 10/31

If you know a 13- or 14-year-old interested in learning about our legislative process in the Capitol and developing important skills along the way, encourage them to apply to the 2023 Page Program for the legislative session starting in January. You can learn more about the program and find the application at: https://publications.virginiageneralassembly.gov/display_publication/197

Applications are due on Monday, 10/31 by 5pm. Applications require an endorsement letter from your Delegate and I welcome applicants to contact me at DelEBennett-Parker@house.virginia.gov.

Student Loan Forgiveness - Public Service Deadline 10/31

If you work in public service (nonprofits, government, or education) or plan to for at least ten years - even if not consecutively - you may be eligible to have **all your student debt canceled**. It is now easier than ever to receive that forgiveness, or get credit toward forgiveness, if you have not yet served 10 years. **But you must apply before October 31, 2022.** Learn more: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/publicserviceloanforgiveness/>

Additionally, **the application for student loan forgiveness regardless of where you work is now open.** Nearly 22 million people have already signed up. The Biden Administration previously announced plans to cancel student debt up to \$20,000 for Pell Grant recipients and up to \$10,000 for non-Pell Grant recipients. Borrowers are eligible for this relief if their individual income is less than \$125,000 or \$250,000 for households. This announcement also includes a final extension of the student loan repayment pause through the end of the year

and a plan to make the student loan system more manageable for current and future borrowers through measures such as capping the amount borrowers must pay at 5% of their discretionary income monthly.

While a federal appeals court has placed a temporary hold on the program while the court reviews a case brought by six Republican-led states, the administration is encouraging people to continue submitting their applications. **Apply here:** <https://studentaid.gov/welcome/>

In the community



Soil Collection Ceremony

The Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP) held a powerful and moving ceremony to honor the lives and acknowledge the tragic deaths of Joseph McCoy and Benjamin Thomas, who were lynched in Old Town. The jars were then taken by a group of community members to the Equal Justice Initiative's National Memorial for Peace and Justice and Legacy Museum. Learn more about ACRP and get involved at:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/cultural-history/alexandria-community-remembrance-project>



Trinity Blessing of the Animals

I joined Trinity United Methodist Church at their annual Blessing of the Animals. Mostly dogs attended until the end, when we were all delighted to meet Olaf the chinchilla.



AGLA Ice Cream Social

It was great to be back at the Arlington-Alexandria Gay & Lesbian Alliance's annual ice cream social.



Ethiopian Fall Festival

I had a wonderful time meeting constituents and enjoying delicious food at the Ethiopian Fall Festival.



Doorways

My colleague Delegate Patrick Hope, other community members and I had a great time supporting the work of Doorways. Doorways provides pathways out of homelessness, domestic violence and sexual assault - and is one of only a few shelters in the US to offer shelter for people's pets, too. Learn more at: <https://www.doorwaysva.org/>



Paws in the Park

If you missed the Alexandria Animal Welfare League's Paws In the Park festival, you can find your fur-ever friend at: <https://alexandrianimals.org/>



Lyles Recognition Ceremony

We celebrated 2016 T.C. Williams High School (now ACHS) graduates and track and field champions Noah and Josephus Lyles at a recognition ceremony at City Hall. They have competed at the highest level of track and field (Noah was a 2020 Olympic bronze medalist) and have served as outstanding community ambassadors and leaders in mental health advocacy.



Leadership Alexandria

Delegate Charniele Herring and I had a fantastic time speaking with the current class of Leadership Alexandria about state government.



NVAR Breakfast

We joined realtors from our community and across Northern Virginia at their annual breakfast, where we heard from Old Town resident Robert Costa, the chief election and campaign correspondent for CBS News.

Thank you