

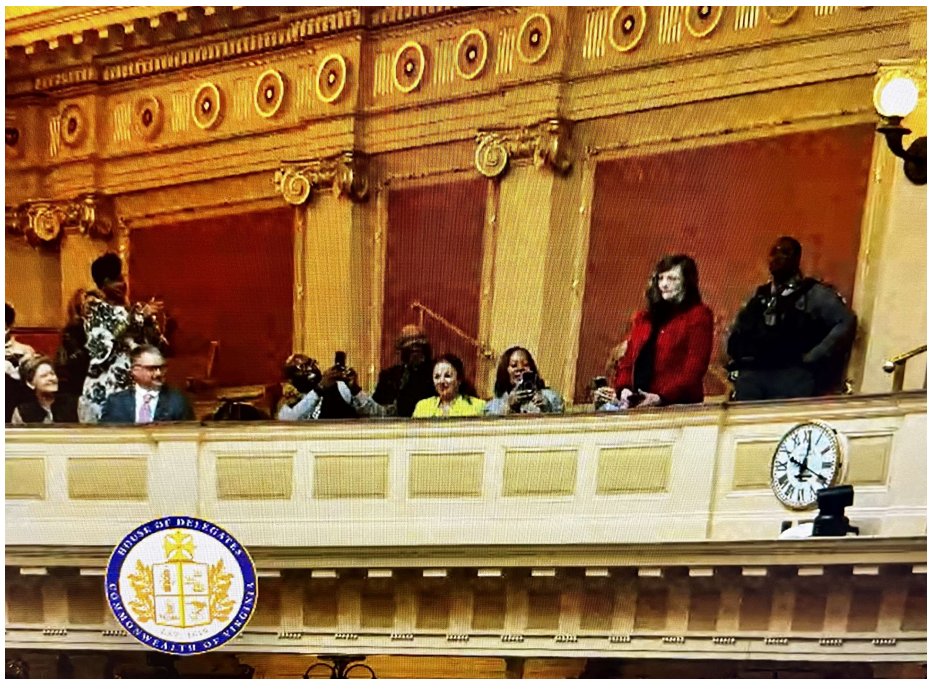
# Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

Delegate • Virginia House District 45

Dear {{ FirstName | default: 'Friend' }},

We have finished the third week of the 2023 General Assembly Session. It is difficult to describe the intensity and pace of session. Last year, we considered about 2,250 bills in two months; this year we only have a month and a half to complete our work. Crossover is February 7th; this is the day by which bills must pass their chamber in order to head to the other chamber. For bills to pass the House by the 7th, they have to pass out of committee by the middle of next week. Consequently, committee and subcommittee meetings, along with our floor sessions, are getting substantially longer as we get closer to these deadlines. Meetings start as early as 7am and start as late (or even later than) 6pm. If you have sent me an email on particular legislation, please know that I have information on your position when I vote, but I likely have not had time to respond yet.

A highlight of my week was introducing Lyles-Crouch Principal Dr. Patricia Zissios to the House of Delegates. Dr. Zissios is retiring this year after 50 years of service to public education. We passed a [Commending Resolution](#) in her honor and she received a standing ovation from the entire House. I hope you will join me in thanking her for her incredible commitment to our students.



## **Town Hall**

A reminder that later this morning, Saturday, at 10:00am, we will hold an Alexandria General Assembly Delegation Town Hall in the Cafeteria of Alexandria City High School. We hope to see you there!



## **Update on Legislation**

Last week, I highlighted some of the bills I had introduced. We will provide a status update in the coming weeks as they continue to move through the subcommittee/committee process.

This session, I am the Chief Copatron on a number of important bills:

- **Safe Housing.** [HB 1650](#) would empower localities to take greater steps against negligent landlords who do not keep units in safe and habitable conditions. Too many renters in our community and across the state are suffering in unsafe and unhealthy living conditions, without adequate heating or cooling or with mold or rodent infestations. This is a reprise of HB802 from last year, which passed the House and Senate and was then vetoed by the Governor. This bill passed the subcommittee 5 Y - 3 N, but then failed in full committee 11-11.
- **Eviction Prevention.** [HB 1652](#) would help hardworking families in Virginia prevent eviction by giving them a little more time to pay their rent. The bill would increase the “pay or quit” period from 5 days to 14, before large landlords could file for eviction. This bill died in subcommittee on a partisan vote, 5-3.
- **Gun Safety.** [HB2240](#) would ban the sale of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. This bill was killed in subcommittee on Thursday on a partisan vote, 6-4.
- **Gender Equity.** [HB 2023](#) addresses the wage gap and promotes gender equity by prohibiting employers from seeking the wage or salary history of a prospective employee or basing prospective salary on the wages of their former position. This bill has been referred to the Commerce and Energy Committee and has not yet been heard.
- **Disability Equity.** [HB 1924](#) would prohibit employers from paying individuals with disabilities wages lower than minimum wage. This bill passed subcommittee 8-1.
- **Supporting Families.** [HB 2205](#) would establish a refundable state child tax credit for households with an income that does not exceed \$100,000. This bill would put money directly into the pockets of hardworking families and greatly reduce childhood poverty and hunger rates. The bill has been referred to the Finance Subcommittee #3 and will be heard on Monday afternoon.

Here are some of the bills I am co-patroning:

Bill	Topic	Status
HB1423	Establishes the Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education to provide recommendations for and track progress on the financing of a comprehensive birth-to-five early childhood care and education system.	Passed House 98-0
HB1510	Authorizes localities to establish programs to grant tax incentives or provide regulatory flexibility to encourage the preservation, restoration, or development of urban green space.	Passed Committee 19-3
HB1526	Expands the Virginia Literacy Act to include students in grades four through eight.	Passed Committee 21-0; Passed Appropriations 22-0
HB1532	Allows localities to adopt rent stabilization measures.	Died in Subcommittee 5-3
HB1534	Creates a loan repayment program for mental health professionals.	Passed Committee 17-5, Referred to Appropriations
HB1538	Requires health insurance to cover doula care services.	Died in Subcommittee 10-0
HB1552	Prohibits the personal use of campaign funds, with exceptions for childcare.	Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections
HB1564	Establishes minimum staffing standards for nursing homes.	Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions
HB1566	Requires public school teachers to be paid at or above the national average and requires state funding for a certain flat percent annual pay increase for each individual employed in a Standards of Quality-funded position	Referred to Subcommittee on Early Childhood
HB1567	Requires the Virginia Department of Health to convene a workgroup to evaluate strategies to reduce maternal & infant mortality rates.	Passed Committee 22-0, referred to Appropriations
HB1596	Establishes a Prescription Drug Affordability Board and Fund.	Died in Subcommittee 4-3
HB1615	Establishes a statute of limitations for medical debt.	Passed Subcommittee 4-2
HB1702	Requires landlords with more than four units whose leases have an automatic renewal provision or the option to renew to provide written notice of any rent increase at least 60 days before the lease ends.	Passed Committee 17-5
HB1967	Makes school meals free.	Died in Subcommittee 3-5
HB2022	Provides that landlords cannot increase rent during the term of a written lease unless the increase is agreed to in a separate, written document signed by the tenant and the landlord that includes the new amount of rent, the date the increase becomes effective, and any additional terms or benefits the tenant agreed to as consideration for the increase.	Died in Subcommittee 5-3
HB2035	Establishes a paid family and medical leave program, administered by the Virginia Employment Commission. The bill provides self-employed individuals the option of participating in the program.	Died in Subcommittee 4-3
HB2070	Makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor to purchase, possess, or transport a firearm following a misdemeanor conviction for assault and battery against a person in a dating relationship.	Referred to Courts Committee
HB2078	Makes it a Class 1 misdemeanor for manufacturers and dealers to sell, deliver, or transfer a handgun without either a locking device for that handgun, or a warning label that handguns should be locked and kept away from children and that there may be civil and criminal liability for failing to do so.	Referred to Courts Committee
HB2087	Requires health care providers and grocery stores to provide provide paid sick leave for their employees.	Died in Subcommittee 5-3

HB2227	Creates a civil cause of action against a parent or guardian for injury or wrongful death resulting from a minor's possession and use of a firearm, if the minor came into possession of the firearm because the parent/guardian did not reasonably secure the firearm.	Referred to Courts Committee
HB2273	Establishes a three-day waiting period for firearm sales with certain exceptions.	Died in Subcommittee 6-4
HB2338	Directs the Commonwealth Transportation Board to use up to 30 percent of available funds in the Transit Ridership Incentive Program to improve the accessibility of transit bus passenger facilities and transition public transit bus fleets and infrastructure to zero-emission bus fleets and infrastructure.	Passed Committee 21-1, referred to Appropriations

We will provide additional legislative updates on these bills and others in the coming weeks.

### **Visitors**



### **Alexandria City Council and Arlington County Board**

Last week, members of the Alexandria City Council and Arlington County Board came to Richmond for local government day. Thanks to Councilwoman Alyia Gaskins for testifying in support of [HB1732](#), legislation she suggested to prevent evictions in the City by requiring large landlords to offer payment plans to tenants who owe less than one month's rent before they file for eviction.



**Fairfax Firefighters**

We met with Fairfax Firefighters to discuss their legislative priorities, including bipartisan legislation to increase healthcare coverage for firefighters by expanding the presumption of compensability for certain cancers.



**Virginia Interfaith Center**

We met with constituents who belong to the Virginia Interfaith Center to discuss their legislative priorities including affordable housing, improving maternal health, and ending solitary confinement in our prisons.



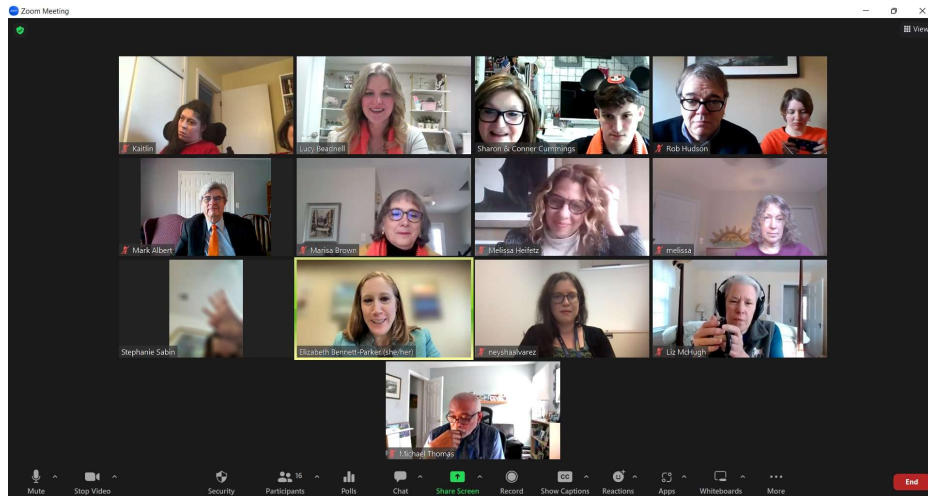
**AARP & Alexandria City Commission on Aging**

I have been working closely with Commission on Aging members and the Northern Virginia Aging Network on my bill to expand flexibility for local advisory boards to hold virtual meetings. We also discussed minimum staffing standards for nursing homes and Medicaid reimbursement rates.



## Chamber of Commerce

The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, and the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce brought members to Richmond last week to discuss transportation, childcare, and more.



## The Arc of Northern Virginia

Advocates with The Arc of Northern Virginia met with me virtually after their bus unfortunately broke down. I am working with The Arc on two bills this session - expanding curbside voting for people with non-physical disabilities and increasing virtual meeting flexibility for local advisory boards.



## Lost Dog Cafe

I met with constituents who work at Lost Dog Cafe as part of the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association Lobby Day. We discussed legislative priorities for the hospitality industry, including the bill I am working with them on to allow restaurants to hire individuals who have felony convictions.

## Contact Me

If you'd like to share your feedback on legislation during this session or need anything, please email me at [DelEBennett-Parker@house.virginia.gov](mailto:DelEBennett-Parker@house.virginia.gov) or call our office at 804-698-1045.

Warmly,  
Elizabeth

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