

Brenda POGGE

★ DELEGATE ★

96th District, Virginia House of Delegates

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Legislative Aide

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Although snow-covered roads closed schools and businesses this week, the General Assembly remained in session. As Virginians were shoveling and awaiting snow plows, the legislature considered hundreds of bills and resolutions. Outlined below are a few important issues we addressed during the week.

Concealed Carry

On December 22, 2015, Attorney General Herring unilaterally revoked Virginia's concealed carry reciprocity agreements with 25 states. Since that time, I have received countless emails and phone calls expressing opposition to this blatant political maneuver. As a strong supporter of the rights of law-abiding gun owners, I, too, opposed the Attorney General's actions. Reversing this decision was a top legislative priority for Republicans in the General Assembly.

For this reason, I am pleased to share a bit of positive news. In a bipartisan agreement, universal reciprocity will be restored in return for voluntary background checks at gun shows and a prohibition on gun possession for individuals who are under permanent protective orders due to a domestic violence offense.

This agreement restores the rights of law-abiding citizens and sends a clear signal about the House's commitment to preventing domestic violence. For a news article on the subject, [click HERE](#).

Opportunities in Education

As vice chairman of the House Education Committee, I have

the privilege of working with my colleagues to craft policies promoting opportunities in education. Because I am a mother of five and a grandmother of six, I understand firsthand the importance of a high-quality system of education. Each child is unique and has different needs and learning styles. For this reason, I support flexibility and choice in education.

During this session, I am supporting legislation authorizing a constitutional amendment giving the Board of Education the authority to establish charter schools in Virginia. To give you an idea of how Virginia compares with other states, New York alone has 197 charter schools. Virginia has only nine.

If the legislation passes the General Assembly, the amendment will appear as a referendum on the ballot during this fall's election. Voters will then have the opportunity to approve the amendment.

A state reptile?

By now you may have read the news that I'm carrying a bill designating the garter snake as the official reptile of Virginia.

If you are wondering about the source of my newfound passion for reptiles, allow me to explain. Last summer I had the privilege of attending a science camp hosted by the College of William & Mary. During camp, I met Aiden Coleman, a student at Berkeley Middle School. Upon learning that Virginia has no official state reptile, Aiden proposed the garter snake for this honor. I promised Aiden that I would introduce a bill to this effect under one condition: that he research the snake and provide talking points for me.

Aiden not only provided this information to me, but he also traveled to Richmond to testify in front of the House Committee on General Laws. He was an outstanding advocate, and his efforts were rewarded. The bill passed out of committee with unanimous support. I expect the bill to pass the House of Delegates next week.

[Click HERE to read coverage of Aiden's testimony before committee.](#)



Congratulating Aiden Coleman on his successful efforts in the House General Laws Committee.

Last chance to take my legislative survey!

If you have not already done so, please [take my online legislative survey](#). I look forward to receiving your input. As always, if you need detailed information about a bill, please contact my office by calling 804-698-1096 or emailing DelBPogge@house.virginia.gov.

General Assembly visitors

Although the wintry weather slowed visitor traffic earlier this week, we nevertheless hosted many guests in Richmond. Thank you to all who stopped by my office!



Lunching with members of the York Republican Women's Club during the annual Virginia Federation of Republican Women's Legislative Day.

Interested in a specific bill?

As a reminder, if you have questions about a bill or policy proposal, please email DelBPogge@house.virginia.gov or call 804-698-1096. If you visit Richmond prior to March 12, please stop by my office, Room 403 in the General Assembly Building.

Stay warm and safe!

Delegate Brenda Pogge

Paid for and Authorized by Brenda Pogge for Delegate