

Dear {{FirstName or 'Friend'}},

2024 began with my first session after being sworn in with thirteen other women in the Senate, making up the first-ever women's majority in the Senate Democratic Caucus. I introduced 12 bills, which ranged from expanding public employee work protections, reestablishing the Autism Advisory Council, and the “most sweeping consumer protection measure to emerge in this year's General Assembly session.”

## A Year in Review: 2024



## Bills Signed into Law

- **SB 13:** Permits zoning flexibility to allow localities to establish more child day programs
- **SB 389:** Reestablishes and expands the Autism Advisory Council
- **SB 392:** Mandates at least one doctor on duty in ERs at all times

- **SB 391:** Protects public employees using medicinal cannabis products
- **SB 608** - Creates the Office of Community Schools at the Department of Education
- **SB 610** Allows individuals with a Developmental Disability waiver slot request slot-retention requests for a period up to 365 calendar days
- **SB 726:** Requires public schools to carry opioid antagonists such as Narcan

## Bills that Passed the General Assembly, Vetoed by the Governor

- **SB 225:** Notifying parents about safe storage of guns
- **SB 393:** MEI Project Approval Commission to consider the diversity of boards for businesses requesting state grants
- **SB 586:** Codifies the use of restorative discipline practices in public schools





# Commission Appointments



Hiring!

I chair the Autism Advisory Council, which facilitates the coordination of services and resources among agencies and helps develop legislation and policies that may further address the needs of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. I also serve on the following commissions:

- Virginia Commission to End Hunger
  - Geographic Information Network Advisory Board
  - Joint Commission on Health Care
  - Online Virginia Network Authority
  - School Health Services Committee
  - Special Education and Related Services, Department of Education Advisory Committee
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## Constituent Services



Our office provided constituent serves throughout the year helping constituents solve issues like road re-pavement , unemployment assistance, medical bill assistance, and tax issues. We are always ready to help respond to the needs of our community.

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## Honoring Our Community





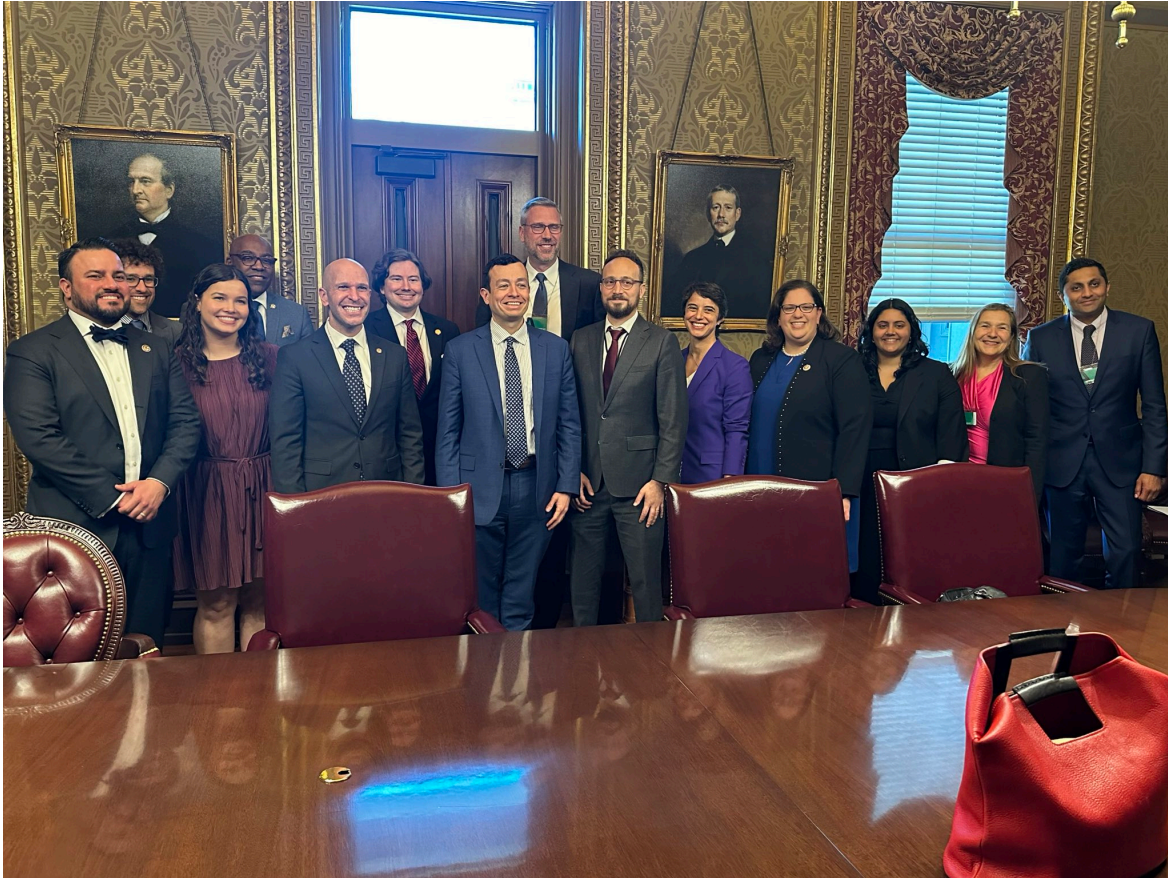
Sen. Pekarsky introduced resolutions recognizing organizations and individuals who have made a positive impact on SD 36. Highlights include:

- **The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department** for the 75 years of excellent service to Fairfax County.
- **The Assistance League of Northern Virginia**, a chapter of the National Assistance League, for 20 years fighting hunger in Fairfax County.
- **Sarah Mayhew**, the president of the Fairfax Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists, has served the Fairfax County community for 20 years in various volunteering capacities related to protecting Fairfax County's natural habitat and the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- **Rachel Grover**, a librarian at Rocky Run Middle School, for earning the 2023 Librarian of the Year Award from the Virginia Association of School Librarians for her innovative programs.
- **Asha-Jyothi**, for their support of Fairfax County Public Schools.
- **Friends of Fairfax Station** for their 50th anniversary.
- **The Fairfax Beekeepers Club** for four members winning awards at the Open Honey Competition at the Virginia State Fair.
- **Archi Marrapu**, a student at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax County, for being named Eighth Congressional District of Virginia's winner in the 2023 Congressional App Challenge.
- **Ryan Jisup Kim**, a student at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax County, for being

named a Regeneron Science Talent Search Scholar by the Society for Science in 2024.

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## Visiting the White House



I was invited to attend a briefing at the White House with other policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels to discuss consumer protection policies that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is implementing, as well as strategies for states on how best to protect consumers.

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## American Economic Liberties Project Panel





I participated in a panel hosted by the American Economic Liberties Project with Arizona Representative Annalise Ortiz to discuss the national movement to protect families from hidden junk fees.

## Community Town Halls



In November, I held two town halls for the community. Together with Sen. Jennifer Carroll Foy, I hosted a Teacher Town Hall where we shared our legislative priorities and bills for the 2025



session, and educators were given the opportunity to discuss their concerns and experiences. Topics discussed included concerns addressing curriculum challenges, pay gaps, achieving student success, and state public school funding. I then partnered with the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington to host a town hall to raise awareness and solicit community feedback on recent antisemitic targeted acts in our district.

## Outreach in our Community



I had the opportunity to attend many community events. Highlights include honoring the group of 6th-grade students at Centre Ridge Elementary School who installed a Captain Planet Foundation Project Learning Garden. I visited two classrooms during Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA)'s Take Your Legislator to School Month, a leadership class at Centreville High School, and an AP Government class at Chantilly High School. I visited Soo Kyung Jung's studio to thank the students for their community service. Soo Kyung Jung is the director of DI DIM SAE Korean Traditional Art Institute, and she teaches Korean dance and drums at



Centreville and Chantilly High Schools. Finally, I really enjoyed attending high school graduations across the district.

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## In the News

# Richmond Times Dispatch

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SB 388, sponsored by Senator Stella Pekarsky, is the most sweeping consumer protection measure to emerge in this year's General Assembly session

By Dave Ress  
February 23, 2024

- [Virginia Mercury](#) | [Bills requiring schools to send parents gun safety notices clear Va. House, Senate](#)
- [Richmond Times Dispatch](#) | [Junk fee ban on the move after earlier hiccup](#)
- [Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions](#) | [St. Peter's in the Woods — Fairfax County's First Old-Growth Community Forest](#)
- [WRIC ABC 8](#) | [Virginia Dems call on Youngkin to work with IRS to allow Direct File](#)
- [The Bristol Herald Courier](#) | [Virginia Senate Dems propose school cellphone restriction bill with more exceptions](#)

- [3WTKR | VA is in the bull's eye:' First Lady Suzanne Youngkin holds discussion on school cell phone policies](#)
- [Connection Newspapers | Governor's Use of Power & Authority Questioned](#)
- [Washington Jewish Week | Active Listening, Improved Holocaust Education Needed to Combat Antisemitism in Fairfax County](#)

## Recognition



For my work during session, I was named Freedom Virginia's 2024 Legislator of the Year and an Affordability Champion. I share this honor with my friend in the House, Del. Karrie Delaney. I was designated one of the Virginia Education Association (VEA)'s Legislative Rookies of the Year. Sen. Saddam Salim and I were honored by the Fairfax County Professional Firefighters & Paramedics IAFF Local 2068 for our work in the General Assembly for passing bills that positively impact the lives of firefighters.

## Happy New Year





Thank you for being part of my first year in the Senate of Virginia. During my campaign, I promised to always fight for working families and advocate for our children's education. I know this is just the beginning, and I will work tirelessly to champion our community in Richmond. From my family to yours, we wish you a very Happy New Year.

**Cheers,**



**Stella Pekarsky**  
**Senator, District 36**

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**SENATOR PEKARSKY**  
SENATE DISTRICT 36

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## **It is a pleasure to serve you in the 36th District**

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