



**DAVE LaROCK**  
POST OFFICE BOX 6  
HAMILTON, VIRGINIA 20159  
THIRTY-THIRD DISTRICT

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
**HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
RICHMOND

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:  
TRANSPORTATION  
COUNTIES, CITIES, AND TOWNS  
COMMUNICATIONS, TECHNOLOGY  
AND INNOVATION

April 30, 2020

Dear Friends,

I hope this message finds you well. These are extremely challenging times for all of us.

The Governor first declared a state of emergency on March 12, the final day of the 2020 session.

Compounding these issues, the Governor and the new liberal majority in the legislature have rammed through many liberal laws worse than New York's and California's, meaning we're likely to have a slower job recovery than we otherwise would. A few months ago, Virginia was recognized as fiscally conservative, "Best State for Business", new home of Amazon HQ2, and boasted unemployment at 2.6%. We must get our economy going again, and I've been urging the Governor to loosen his restrictions in a common-sense way, allowing millions of Virginia individuals and businesses to make decisions for themselves and their employees, instead of one-size-fits all bureaucratic mandates.

Going back to the General Assembly session, it was extremely difficult. Under the new leadership, massive changes were enacted which will harm businesses, non-profit religious organizations, 2nd Amendment rights, protection of women and babies, and massively increase taxes and energy costs. Information about those and other issues is on the following pages; the index below directs you to the topics that may interest you most.

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### Ongoing Community and Constituent Efforts

- **Opposing New Taxes and Tolls:** We have a responsibility to ensure that existing funds are being utilized effectively. I voted against regional tax increases in Northern Virginia, as well as large state-wide increases in gas taxes and other taxes. I also worked across party lines to reduce tolls on the Dulles Greenway, and am continuing to work with Loudoun County in their efforts on this important priority. We were able to expedite I-81 improvements through leveraging existing, dedicated I-81-corridor revenues. More info is at [www.votelarock.us/issues/transportation](http://www.votelarock.us/issues/transportation)
- **Restorative Justice:** I was a chief-co-patron of successful legislation to restore drivers' licenses revoked for court fines and fees, allowing over 600,000 Virginians to provide for themselves and their families. I also continue supporting efforts to improve drug courts, education, workforce and reentry initiatives, and drug treatment to help at-risk populations break free from the cycle of addiction and become productive members of society.
- **Improving Transportation:** Recent allocations of state funds show that the Governor's staff still has far too much discretion to send money to projects like those around the Amazon HQ2 in Arlington, rather than congestion-relief projects in Loudoun and elsewhere. I continue to push for greater accountability, transparency, and congestion-relief. Information on local transportation projects is on my website at [www.votelarock.us/issues/local-transportation-projects](http://www.votelarock.us/issues/local-transportation-projects).
- **Broadband expansion:** Affordable high-speed internet is a growing necessity for families and businesses. This is not an easily-solved problem, nor one the government can spend our way out of. I met with local and state experts and introduced legislation directed at lowering barriers to broadband expansion in the Commonwealth. This year, I also supported a good bill which did pass. I suspect another bill which passed will be struck down over unconstitutional provisions. Although I, along with some others, worked to fix the provisions, our efforts were to be denied by the bill's patron, who is running for Governor next year. More information is on my website at [www.votelarock.us/issues/broadband](http://www.votelarock.us/issues/broadband).

While the legislative session is completed, my work as a legislator is not. I continue to work on local issues, resolve constituent concerns with state agencies, and meet with constituents around the district. Here are a few recent comments:

*Words cannot express the gratitude I have for your efforts... I've never been politically active at the state level until this legislative session.... [You were] incredibly responsive throughout the legislative process and helped guide us through this process, as well. Many, many thanks. Thank you again for all of your efforts, I know it was not a small undertaking. With Gratitude, **Constituent from Leesburg***

*Thank you, Dave. It was a good outcome. I greatly appreciate your help with this [Speed limit reduction]. **Constituent from Clarke County***

*Dave, I can't thank you enough for working to change the law so that handicapped parking spaces are available for those who really need them. You listened to me, we worked together, you treated me as though I was your most important constituent and we got the law changed. **Leesburg constituents***

*Good morning, Delegate LaRock - I want to thank you so much for all your efforts to get our [roads] paved. It was a job well done and I have heard compliments. What a difference you have made. Thank you again for making this effort successful. With sincere appreciation, **Frederick County constituent***

If there is anything I can do to assist you, please contact me. My mailing address is PO Box 6, Hamilton, VA 20159, phone is 540-751-8364 and email is DelDLaRock@house.virginia.gov. My website is [www.VoteLaRock.us](http://www.VoteLaRock.us), where you can find helpful information, contact me, or read and **sign up for my email updates**. You can also follow me on Facebook and Twitter for more frequent information. I look forward to hearing from you, and I hope to continue serving you in future years.

Sincerely,



## **LaRock Legislation**

My priorities include improving access to affordable rural internet service; lowering tolls; prioritizing and funding necessary road improvements; reforming government and standing up for life, maintaining high level of service while balancing the state budget and keeping taxes low for hardworking Virginians. This session, I introduced 41 bills, including several suggestions brought to me by 33rd District constituents and localities. However, Democrats killed every single one in Committee. Five of my bills were incorporated into similar bills moving to the Governor:

- [HB 632 Loudoun and Leesburg request to fix an ambiguity which was hindering property rights](#)
- [HB 767 Allow Frederick County to regulate parking of large commercial vehicles in residential areas](#)
- [HB 773 Simplify and expedite ability of local government to refund of overpaid taxes](#)
- [HB 1227 Allow localities to regulate drone use on government property to ensure safety](#)
- [HB 1487 Gun safes; exemption from sales tax for sales of safes.](#)

The rest of my legislation this year was defeated by Democrat-controlled Committees in the House or Senate. I will be limited to 15 bills next session, so, unfortunately, many of these will have to wait another two years...

### **Transportation Solutions, Many Supported by Local Governments, which were DEFEATED:**

- [HB 635 Traffic incident management vehicles to more efficiently respond to and clear accidents](#)
- [HB 642 Reform statewide transportation funding prioritization process to fund more and better projects](#)
- [HB 768 Allow localities in the I-81 Corridor to levy commercial & industrial property taxes for transportation](#)
- [HB 774 Commonwealth Transportation Board; increases revenue-sharing funds.](#)
- [HB 970 Prevent diversion of dedicated transportation funds for other uses](#)
- [HB 1377 Decrease project costs by streamlining architectural and engineering contracts in Loudoun](#)
- [HB 1389 Require General Assembly authorization for use of transportation funds outside of Virginia](#)
- [HB 1729 Better representation for Loudoun on the Commonwealth Transportation Board](#)

### **Toll Relief Measures DEFEATED:**

- [HB 677 Interstate 66; reverse tolling, toll revenue on Interstate 66 and Interstate 395.](#)
- [HB 771 Dulles Greenway; amends the powers and responsibilities of the SCC to regulate toll road operators.](#)
- [HB 772 Virginia Department of Transportation given authority to regulate tolls on Dulles Greenway](#)
- [HB 971 Increased financial transparency on the Dulles Greenway](#)
- [HB 1728 Motor vehicles; car tax credit for paid tolls.](#)

### **Supporting and Enhancing Recruitment for Our Local First Responders: DEFEATED**

- [HB 766 Provide state income tax subtraction for volunteer firefighters and rescue squads](#)
- [HB 1367 Give in-state tuition as incentive to our local volunteer firefighters and EMS providers](#)

### **Good Ideas from Constituents: DEFEATED**

- [HB 680 Accountability for state IT contractors on projects which are behind schedule](#)
- [HB 685 Preference for state contractors to use verification software to reduce waste, fraud and abuse](#)
- [HB 626 Opioid prescribing, require full disclosure of risks to patient and parents of minors](#)
- [HB 769 Prevent local governments from penalizing citizens for violation of secret ordinances](#)
- [HB 979 Improve broadband access by reducing cost to use existing utility easements](#)
- [HB 1476 Ensure motor vehicle dealers are accurately advertising vehicle mileage](#)
- [HJ 69 Study why Virginia State Police provide air emergency medical services in only some areas](#)

## **LaRock Legislation (continued)**

### **Education Reform and Opportunity: DEFEATED**

- [HB 678 Fund Education Savings Accounts for parents who withdraw current students from public schools](#)
- [HB 683 Family life education programs- change parental role to opt-in rather than opt-out](#)

### **Local Government Legislative Priorities: DEFEATED**

- [HB 634 Allow Loudoun and future "School Divisions of Innovation" flexibility through local assessments](#)
- [HB 636 Clarify that town residents should be provided the county services they pay for](#)
- [HB 679 Help lower local tax rates by removing improper and obsolete property tax exemptions](#)
- [HB 770 Allow localities to use cost-effective and environmentally friendly goats to graze stream buffers](#)
- [HB 978 Reduce costly and court-time-consuming charges for minor accidents](#)
- [HB 1212 Ensure timely resolution of insurance claims for motor vehicle accidents where a minor is at fault](#)
- [HB 1357 Allow hunters to sell their wildlife or fish mounts without going through an auctioneer](#)
- [HB 1393 Limit developer's ability to turn more of Clarke County's farmland into forests](#)

### **Fighting Back to Protect Life: DEFEATED**

- [HB 1485 Prohibit localities from setting workplace rules which violate employees' right to self-defense](#)
- [HB 1486 Clarify that places of religious worship can allow armed self-defense to protect their congregation](#)
- [HB 1551 Prohibition on brutal and unnecessary fetal dismemberment abortions](#)

## **LaRock Legislation – Budget Amendments**

I introduced numerous budget amendments to protect 2nd Amendment rights, protect the unborn, improve transportation, protect vulnerable people from violence in our communities, meet needs at local state-owned facilities that serve the public, prevent welfare fraud, and improve funding for law enforcement. All of these were defeated by the Democrat-controlled Appropriations Committee or on the House floor.

- Remove \$4,821,660 from the Governor's planned enforcement of his unconstitutional infringement of 2nd Amendment rights. Instead, I requested that these funds be spent on things which would actually help prevent violence: Drug courts, mental health services, and sexual assault crisis centers (women's shelters).
- Implementation funding for Parental Choice Education Savings Accounts
- Help reduce local taxes by restoring full state formula funding for sheriff deputy positions, including many in Loudoun and Frederick County, that have been underfunded by the state for years.
- Prohibit taxpayer funding of abortions, and defund millions of dollars of contraceptives
- Fund eligibility review to prevent fraud by those requesting welfare and Medicaid benefits
- Operational funding for the new Loudoun County State Park
- Funding to replace a state-owned agricultural education facility destroyed by fire at Clermont Farmin Berryville
- Transfer management of the state's share of I-66, I-95, and I-395 toll revenues to NVRTA, allowing them to fund road projects instead of only transit projects
- Implement fair tolling on Arlington, Alexandria, Washington, DC, and Maryland commuters on I-66
- Redirect funding from 10 anti-2nd-Amendment-enforcement State Police positions to bonuses for poorly-paid State Police troopers

## **Business, Taxes, and Energy Costs**

My Republican colleagues and I urged the other side to consider the economic toll that new taxes would place on Virginians, and to understand the importance of preserving policies that attract job-creating businesses to Virginia. Yet, rather than engage with our concerns, they continued their practice of prohibiting debate on the floor in order to ram their most controversial bills through the House. Over the years, I have worked to cut taxes as much as possible and get every penny of value out of the taxes we already collect. The new taxes and fees being levied this year will undoubtedly be felt by our constituents soon. Initiatives like drastically raising the minimum wage and allowing government employees to unionize threaten our economy and local fiscal stability. Prior to the Governor's COVID-necessitated cuts, the final budget for the next two years would have increased Virginia's total spending by over 18% – a whopping \$21 billion. It still includes new taxes and fees with many new commitments.

Legislation also created a dozen new causes of action for workers to sue their employers. Among them are:

- Lawsuits for 'misclassification'; contract workers who think they should be treated as actual employees.
- Lawsuits for any violation of the Virginia Human Rights Act, including new provisions barring discrimination on the basis of LGBT status, gender identity, and more.
- A cause of action for low-wage employees to sue if they are required to sign a non-compete covenant as a term of employment.

*Notable legislation- Anti-business:*

- [HB 123 Nonpayment of wages; construction contracts, etc.](#)
- [HB 395 Minimum wage: raises to \\$10 per hour](#)
- [HB 416 Prohibition on employer inquiry about wage or salary history of prospective employees; civil penalty.](#)
- [HB 582 Collective bargaining by public employees; labor organization representation.](#)
- [HB 617 Workers' compensation; injuries caused by repetitive motion. \\_\\_\\_](#)
- [HB 800 Requirement for disclosure of the terms of employment.](#)
- [HB 833 Prevailing wage; public works contracts, penalty.](#)
- [HB 1635 Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; labor organizations.](#)

*Notable legislation- Taxes:*

- [HB 502 Litter tax; adds \\$100 to the existing penalty for delinquency.](#)
- [HB 534 Disposable plastic bag; local tax.](#)
- [HB 785 Local taxing authority; equalizes city and county taxing authorities.](#)
- [HB1414 Transportation; amends numerous laws related to funds, safety programs, revenue sources](#)

Virginia residents and businesses have some of the lowest electricity rates in the nation. This session, 'all-of-the-above', market-based approaches to diversifying Virginia's energy production were thrown aside in favor of policies to end fossil fuel energy sources as quickly as possible, regardless of the short- and long-term consequences of such policies. They passed some of the most aggressive changes to energy policy in the country, moving to a completely renewable portfolio of sources by 2045. This legislation will increase bills by 23.9 percent, according to House Democrats. Additionally, Governor Northam is poised to have Virginia join the energy tax scheme known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) costing Dominion Energy \$3.3 to \$5.9 billion, which would be passed along to consumers. The average customer would see a \$7 to \$12 monthly increase on their electric bill. The "Virginia Clean Economy Act" will increase power bills by 25%, RGGI compliance will increase bills by an additional 10%.

*Notable legislation:*

- [HB 528 Coal-fired or natural gas fired electric generation facilities; retirement of facilities.](#)
- [HB 1526 Virginia Clean Economy Act.](#)

## **K-12 Education**

Voters consistently rank public education as one of their most important issues. For the last several years, we have increased funding for public schools and higher teacher pay, all while adopting reforms to the SOLs and making sure more money is spent in the classroom. This year's budget makes significant new investments in K-12 education, including:

- \$1.4 billion in additional K-12 funding over the biennium (roughly \$350 million over what rebenchmarking called for)
- 2% raise in FY 2021, 2% raise in FY 2022\*
- \$98 million for early childhood education
- Increased funding for school counselors
- Establishes the Infrastructure and Operations Fund
  - 30% of deposited funds in FY 2021 and 40% of deposited funds in FY 2022 dedicated to non-recurring expenditures
  - Includes a floor ensuring every division receives \$200,000 minimum
  - Intended to address a wide range of capital needs, including roof repair, general renovations/repairs, purchase of school buses, etc.

Some of these investments have been “unallotted” by the Governor’s budget amendments, and will be re-looked at later this summer.

*Notable legislation:*

- [HB351 School bus drivers; critical shortages.](#)
- [HB 999 School board policies; epinephrine, accessibility.](#)
- [HB 1394 Require that family life education materials are available to be reviewed by parents online](#)

## **Higher Education**

Last year, the House of Delegates fought to make college more affordable and accessible, promoted in-demand degrees, and supported transparency in college administration. During the 2020 Session, we were successful in keeping the tuition freeze in place for another year, and limiting increases in the next fiscal year to less than 2 percent, despite major opposition from the Senate. Again, these will be re-examined later this year.

Republicans remain committed to college affordability, accessibility, and transparency.

- The budget contains nearly \$80 million to hold the line on tuition for the coming fiscal year.
- In-state financial assistance for students will increase by \$69 million.
- HB 30 also contains funding to increase Tuition Assistance Grants to \$4,000 per year for all students, including those already enrolled in distance learning courses.
- Unfortunately, Democrats insisted that those not already enrolled not be eligible for TAG grants going forward. Republicans will work to fix this bad policy in future budgets.
- HBCUs will also get full funding under this budget.

*Notable legislation:*

- [HB 1322 Force public colleges to allow admission of students with criminal history.](#) (passed House, died in Senate)
- [HB 1547 In-state tuition for illegal immigrants](#) (also [SB 935](#)) – signed by the Governor

## **Protecting Life, Religious Liberty and Family Values**

The 2019 Regular Session highlighted the Democrats new position on abortion. For the first time Virginia Democrats were forced to publicly reckon with the end result of their efforts to end abortion safety regulations; legal abortion until the very moment of birth with minimal or no oversight. Virginians, and Americans as a whole, continue to find that appalling. Republicans pushed back, but Democrats had the numbers to force this through. The 2020 General Assembly has seen Democrats move forward in their quest to abandon “safe, legal, and rare” and implement policies that will roll back longstanding laws designed to protect women and ensure an informed decision is being made about an abortion. Additionally, under these new policies, those who may perform an abortion has been drastically expanded to those with lesser training and experience.

*Notable legislation:*

- [HB 980 Provision of abortion. \(also SB 733\) Removes all meaningful safety & limitations on abortions](#)
- [HB 1551 Prohibition on brutal and unnecessary fetal dismemberment abortions \(LaRock legislation\)](#)

I led the fight to amend several pieces of LGBT legislation to ensure that religious organizations, including those who provide critical services like food pantries, foster and adoption services, pro-life ministries, and more, are not shut down or faced with massive fines and legal fees. These efforts were rejected by the majority party, so as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, we will likely see significant attacks on organizations which attempt to hold to the tenants of their faith while serving those in our communities, including those with significant needs. I suspect that these laws will be challenged in the courts for their very clear intentional discrimination against certain viewpoints, the free exercise of religion, freedom of association, and more.

- [SB 868 Prohibited discrimination; public accommodations, employment, credit, and housing: causes of action; sexual orientation and gender identity.](#) Creates causes of action for unlawful discrimination in public accommodations and employment in the Virginia Human Rights Act. The bill allows the causes of action to be pursued privately by the aggrieved person or, in certain circumstances, by the Attorney General, to Assess a civil penalty against the respondent (i) in an amount not exceeding \$50,000 for a first violation and (ii) in an amount not exceeding \$100,000 for any subsequent violation. Before a civil cause of action may be brought in a court of the Commonwealth, an aggrieved individual must file a complaint with the Division of Human Rights of the Department of Law, participate in an administrative process, and receive a notice of his right to commence a civil action. The bill prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in public and private employment, public accommodations, in credit, and in housing practices.
- [HB 1049 Prohibited discrimination; sexual orientation and gender identity.](#) Prohibits discrimination in employment, public accommodation, public contracting, apprenticeship programs, housing, banking, and insurance on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. The bill also adds discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity to the list of unlawful discriminatory housing practices.

## **Election Security**

Over the last several years, many bills were passed to protect the integrity of the vote, only to be vetoed by Governors McAuliffe and Northam. This year, significant efforts were made by the new majority Democrats to pass bills which will likely undermine the security of Virginia’s elections. The fact is that one illegitimate vote cancels out a legitimate vote, and there are statistical/verifiable examples of fraud. In 2017, a tied race for House of Delegates in Newport News was determined by drawing David Yancey’s name from a bowl, giving Republicans two years of control in the House of Delegates. Sen. Mark Obenshain lost his statewide Attorney General race to current AG Mark Herring by 165 votes , so ensuring election security is critically important.

*Notable legislation:*

- [HB 177 Presidential electors; National Popular Vote Compact.](#) (passed the House, died in Senate)
- [HB 187 Elections; same-day registration; in-person absentee and election day voting.](#)
- [HB 19 Voter identification; repeal of photo identification requirements.](#)
- [HB 185 Allows first-time voters in jail to vote by absentee ballot, when others have to vote in-person](#)

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment**

The new majority abandoned all pretense of moderation in their pursuit of gun control this session, adopting criminalizing law-abiding citizens, banning the most common firearms and magazines, and demanding citizens turn over their lawfully purchased property as their central policies. I am committed to preventing violence, but doing it in a way that respects the Second Amendment -- and a way that works. The 2020 Session also witnessed an unprecedented gathering of more than twenty-two thousand activists assembled to defend their right to bear arms against Democrat-led efforts to chip away at the Second Amendment. I am pleased to say that their efforts had an effect. While House Democrats continued to ignore opposition to their anti-gun legislation, some of the most heinous bills – including efforts to ban common rifles and standard handgun magazines – were rejected in the Senate. More information on my 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment efforts is on my website here: [www.votelarock.us/issues/2nd-amendment](http://www.votelarock.us/issues/2nd-amendment)

*Notable Legislation:*

- [HB 2 Firearm transfers; criminal history record information check; penalty.](#)
- [HB 9 Reporting lost or stolen firearms; civil penalty.](#)
- [HB 421 Control of firearms by localities. \(also SB35\)](#)
- [HB 674 Firearms; removal from persons posing substantial risk; penalties. \(also SB240\)](#)
- [HB 812 Purchase of handguns; limitation on handgun purchases; penalty.](#)
- [HB 1004 Protective orders; possession of firearms; surrender or transfer of firearms; penalty.](#)
- [HB 1083 Allowing access to firearms by minors; penalty.](#)
- [SB 71-](#)

One bad bill passed the House, but was sent by a Senate Committee for further study and future consideration

- [HB 961 Prohibiting the sale, transport, etc. of assault firearms, certain firearms magazines, trigger activators, and silencers; penalties.](#)

Two of my bills, to allow individuals to defend their own lives, were killed by Democrat-majority committees.

- [HB 1485 Prohibit localities from setting workplace rules which violate employees' right to self-defense](#)
- [HB 1486 Clarify that places of religious worship can allow armed self-defense to protect their building](#)



## Criminal Justice

In the April 22 reconvened session, the Democrat majority voted to allow the Governor to grant early release to 4,618 inmates currently serving their prison sentences in response to COVID-19. The Governor could have limited the list to non-violent offenders only, or only those serving time for drug possession. He did not, instead choosing to allow dangerous criminals back onto our streets. This comes at the same time Democrats voted to make it more difficult for Virginians to purchase and own a firearm for self-defense. This move is irresponsible. I hope and pray that it doesn't lead to tragedy. More than a third of those now eligible are deemed a "high risk" to reoffend. In fact, by the statutory definition, 64% of the inmates are serving sentences for violent crimes. The list includes murderers, kidnappers, arsonists, robbers and more. These include:

<b>Inmates Eligible for Early Release</b>	<b>Offense</b>
3	Homicide-2nd
65	Manslaughter
102	Abduction
30	Rape/Sexual Assault
690	Robbery
696	Assault
200	Weapons
142	Other Sex Offenses
24	Arson
470	Burglary

Other legislation:

[HB 34 Allow individuals who refuse an alcohol test to receive a restricted driver's license](#)

[HB 33 Parole; exception to limitation on the application of parole statutes.](#)

[HB 1150 Allows jail and corrections staff and to withhold from ICE information on misdemeanor convictions](#)