



2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

WEEK #1 SESSION REPORT

January 12, 2024

Prepared for the:



2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENES

The 2024 Virginia General Assembly convened on Wednesday, January 10, 2024. As an even-numbered year, the session is expected to last for 60 days. Throughout this period, legislators will concentrate on the passage of legislation and the approval of a budget for the 2024-2026 biennium.

As of today, there have been more than 2,108 bills and resolutions introduced. As we continue our review of legislation of potential interest and impact, we will be updating our bill tracker. The link to view the bill tracker is available below.



IMPORTANT DATES AND MILESTONES

Important dates and milestones over the past week included the following:

- January 10th
 - Session convened.
 - First Black Speaker of the House sworn into office.
 - Governor Glenn Youngkin delivered the State of the Commonwealth Address.
- January 12th – Deadline to submit amendments to the state budget.

Upcoming dates and deadlines are listed below.

- January 19th – Last day to introduce legislation and certain joint resolutions.
- February 13th – Crossover (otherwise known as the half-way point of the session when all bills must be acted on in their body of origin) – likely date, pending adoption of the rules.
- February 18th – “Budget Sunday,” when the House and Senate money committees will recommend their proposed budgets – likely date, pending adoption of the rules.
- March 12th – Final day of session, otherwise known as Sine Die – likely date, pending adoption of the rules.
- 30 days following session adjournment: Reconvened/Veto session, where legislature returns to act on Governor’s amendments and vetoes.
- July 1st – Effective date for legislation and budget unless otherwise specified.

GOVERNOR GLENN YOUNGKIN DELIVERS 2024 STATE OF THE COMMONWEALTH ADDRESS

Governor Glenn Youngkin delivered the annual State of the Commonwealth address before members of the General Assembly on Wednesday, marking the first day of the 2024 General Assembly session. During his address, the Governor emphasized the importance of promoting bipartisanship, fostering both economic and educational advancement, and implementing policies to encourage Virginians to stay in the Commonwealth.

The Governor took the opportunity to recognize some of the most distinct aspects of the 2024 session, notably the influx of new Delegates and Senators. He also acknowledged the historic appointment of the state's first Black Speaker of the House, Del. Don Scott, D-Portsmouth. The General Assembly welcomed 54 new members as it convened this week, primarily attributed to redistricting, retirements and primary losses for a number of long-standing incumbents.

The Governor highlighted the substantial job growth that has occurred since he took office two years ago, citing an increase of 233,000 employed Virginians. On this, he shared that Virginia has risen from the bottom third state in job growth, to number three in the nation.

Governor Youngkin noted that Virginia has re-established expectations of excellence with intensive tutoring, adoption of the science of reading, the launch of lab schools, and a renewed focus on technical and career education.

The Governor highlighted his "Right Help, Right Now" behavioral health transformation initiative, stating that Virginia now has eight emergency room alternatives, 97 mobile crisis units, and more than 8,300 calls on the 988 line.

At the conclusion of his speech, he highlighted the importance of working together to achieve a unified goal to build a Virginia that is overflowing with opportunity and prosperity.

To read the Governor's full State of the Commonwealth address, click [here](#).

Following the Governor's address, leaders of the Virginia House Republican Caucus issued the following statements:

House Republican Leader Todd Gilbert:

"Governor Youngkin's call for bipartisan work is a refreshing contrast to some of what we've seen out of our Democratic colleagues in the past 24 hours. While some Democrats, such as Speaker Scott, have expressed a willingness to work together, far too many have said that anything that comes from the Governor or a Republican is 'dead on arrival.' Knee jerk partisanship does nothing for anyone. I look forward to working with the Governor, and hopefully many willing Democrats, to find a way forward on our shared priorities."

House Republican Caucus Chair Amanda Batten:

"I applaud Governor Youngkin's call to take even stronger action against antisemitism. Every single Virginian should be able to practice their faith without fear, and I hope our Democratic colleagues will join us in working to make that a reality."

House Republican Whip Michael Weibert:

"The vision Governor Youngkin laid out in his State of the Commonwealth speech is one every Virginian can get behind. Voters want us to work together and listen to each other, rather than shut down an idea simply because it comes from the other team. I'm hopeful that our Democratic colleagues will join us in working to lower the tax burden on Virginians dealing with the aftermath of sky-high inflation."

Deputy House Republican Leader Israel O'Quinn:

"The Governor is absolutely right that we need an 'all of the above' approach to energy. Our power grid can't keep up with demand, and we must build capacity as soon as possible. I hope our Democratic

colleagues will be pragmatic and work with us to keep the lights on by expanding our baseload power portfolio, and in the process, put Virginians back in charge of what cars they can and cannot buy.”

At the time this report was written, no other official statements had been released.

DEL. DON SCOTT SWORN IN AS FIRST BLACK SPEAKER OF THE VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES



January 10th was a monumental day in Virginia’s history, with the swearing in of Virginia’s first Black Speaker of the House, Del. Scott. In breaking barriers and surpassing historical precedents, Scott has not only made history for the state but also for the entire nation. He was unanimously elected speaker-designee by the House Democratic Caucus.

After he was sworn in as Speaker of the House, he stated, "My first immediate emotion is just gratitude..." He proceeded by expressing gratitude to his wife, daughter, and mother for their instrumental support in helping him get to where he is now.

He also mentioned the significance of timing. 405 years after the formation of the first General Assembly and, "coincidentally, 405 years after the first enslaved people arrived here, not far from where we stand down the road in Hampton Roads, so I know I stand on the shoulders of those who came before me."

Del. Scott was first elected to represent Portsmouth as a member of the House in 2019. In 2022, Del. Scott was elected by his caucus to serve as House Democratic Leader. Within his time in the legislature, Del. Scott has been a champion for reproductive freedom and uplifting working families by ensuring a strong, equitable economy. His legislative priorities also include strengthening Virginia’s public schools, improving healthcare quality and affordability, and criminal justice reform.

He was born and raised in Houston, Texas and was one of six children, raised by a single mother. He graduated from Texas A&M University and from there, he enrolled in the Navy’s Officer Candidate School in Rhode Island. He proudly served his country as an officer in the United States Navy before earning his law degree from Louisiana State University. In 2015, Del. Scott started his own law practice before becoming a partner at Breit Biniazan P.C.

Del. Scott is a member of the Portsmouth Bar Association, the Old Dominion Bar Association, the Virginia State Bar Association, the Virginia Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys, and the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association. He is the former Chair of the Portsmouth Economic Development Authority and former President of the Southeastern Employment and Training Association. He is also a member of the Eureka Club and holds lifetime memberships in the NAACP, V.F.W., Post #993 and American Legion Post #190. To learn more about Del. Scott, click [here](#).

JOINT DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS UNVEILS PILLARS FOR 2024 SESSION

On Wednesday morning, the members of the House and Senate Joint Democratic Caucus unveiled their messaging pillars for the 2024 Legislative Session – Keep Virginia Moving Forward. Democrats are committed to protecting the rights and freedoms of all Virginians, and making the Commonwealth the best place to live, work, and raise a family.



The five pillars are:

- Securing our children’s future through a world class education;
- Revitalizing our infrastructure from Northern Virginia to Hampton Roads to Southwest Virginia, and all points in between;
- Fostering an economy that works for hardworking Virginians;
- Keeping Virginia communities and our children safe; and
- Protecting the rights and freedoms of all Virginians.

2024 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS ANNOUNCED

As the legislature convened on Wednesday, leadership in the House and Senate announced committee assignments for the 2024 session. Given the significant change in composition and members in both bodies, we will see significant changes in the committees as well. Below, you will find the new committee assignments for both bodies with the greater Williamsburg delegation members highlighted.

SENATE OF VIRGINIA COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Marsden (Chair), Obenshain, Stuart, Stanley, Suetterlein, Favola, Hashmi, Hackworth, Roem, Williams Graves, Perry, Pekarsky, French, Salim

COMMERCE AND LABOR

Deeds (Chair), Obenshain, Lucas, Marsden, Ebbin, Surovell, Stanley, McDougle, Locke, Reeves, DeSteph, McPike, Peake, Rouse, Bagby

COURTS OF JUSTICE

Surovell (Chair), Obenshain, McDougle, Deeds, Stuart, Stanley, Boysko, Peake, Bagby, Jordan, Aird, Subramanyam, Carroll Foy, Perry, Salim

EDUCATION AND HEALTH

Hashmi (Chair), Lucas, Locke, Suetterlein, Peake, Pillion, Favola, Boysko, Bagby, Head, Aird, VanValkenburg, Durant, Pekarsky, Craig

FINANCE AND APPROPRIATIONS

Lucas (Chair), Deeds, Locke, Marsden, Ebbin, McDougle, Obenshain, Stuart, Reeves, Favola, Surovell, McPike, Boysko, Pillion, Hashmi

GENERAL LAWS AND TECHNOLOGY

Ebbin (Chair), Locke, Reeves, McPike, Pillion, Rouse, Head, Jordan, Aird, VanValkenburg, Roem, Subramanyam, Carroll Foy, French, Craig

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

McPike (Chair), Stanley, Suetterlein, Bagby, Sturtevant, McGuire, Aird, VanValkenburg, Roem, Subramanyam, Williams Graves, Durant, Diggs, Pekarsky

PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Rouse (Chair), Deeds, Ebbin, Hackworth, DeSteph, Sturtevant, McGuire, VanValkenburg, Subramanyam, Carroll Foy, Durant, Perry, Diggs, Salim

REHABILITATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Favola (Chair), McDougale, Reeves, Surovell, DeSteph, Rouse, Head, Jordan, VanValkenburg, Williams Graves, Carroll Foy, Perry, French, Salim, Craig

RULES

Locke (Chair), Lucas, Deeds, Marsden, Favola, Ebbin, McPike, Surovell, Boysko, Hashmi, Rouse, McDougale, Stuart, Peake, Pillion

TRANSPORTATION

Boysko (Chair), Marsden, DeSteph, Suetterlein, Obenshain, Hashmi, Hackworth, Bagby, Sturtevant, McGuire, Aird, Roem, Williams Graves, Diggs, Pekarsky

HOUSE OF DELEGATES COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

AGRICULTURE, CHESAPEAKE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Lopez (Chair), Clark, Bulova, Tran, Helmer, Simonds, Willett, Herring, Krizek, Glass, Hernandez, Laufer, Ware, Wright, Orrock, Marshall, Wilt, Webert, Bloxom, Fowler, Runion, Kent

APPROPRIATIONS

Torian (Chair), Sickles, Bulova, Carr, McQuinn, Krizek, Hayes, Reid, Rasoul, Willett, Sewell, Askew, Knight, Austin, Morefield, Bloxom, Marshall, Hodges, Coyner, Wyatt, Wiley, Campbell

COMMUNICATIONS, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Hayes (Chair), Shin, Lopez, Ward, Clark, Glass, Seibold, Maldonado, Henson, Jones, Keys-Gamarra, Martinez, McNamara, Hodges, Taylor, Cordoza, Freitas, Wachsmann, Garrett, Griffin, Earley, Lovejoy

COUNTIES, CITIES AND TOWNS

Mundon King (Chair), Bennett-Parker, Sewell, Shin, Simonds, Askew, Reaser, Callsen, Cohen, Jones, Gardner, Martinez, Morefield, Hodges, McNamara, Wyatt, Ballard, Scott, P.A., Tata, Wachsmann, Campbell, Milde

COURTS OF JUSTICE

Hope (Chair), Simon, Watts, Sullivan, Delaney, Maldonado, Hernandez, Cousins, Reaser, Thomas, Callsen, Keys-Gamarra, Kilgore, Leftwich, Ballard, Williams, Batten, Cordoza, Arnold, Davis, Obenshain, Earley

EDUCATION

Rasoul (Chair), Simonds, McQuinn, Sewell, Convirs-Fowler, Askew, Clark, Cousins, Reaser, Laufer, Cohen, LeVere Bolling, **Batten**, Freitas, Coyner, Cherry, Tata, Scott, P.A., Garrett, Ennis, **Green**, Zehr

FINANCE

Watts (Chair), Sullivan, Mundon King, Bennett-Parker, Convirs-Fowler, Tran, Simonds, Hernandez, Laufer, Anthony, Gardner, Keys-Gamarra, Orrock, Ware, Fowler, Freitas, McNamara, Walker, Runion, Wiley, Davis, Kent

GENERAL LAWS

Bulova (Chair), Carr, Torian, Price, Krizek, Simon, Delaney, Bennett-Parker, Seibold, Cole, McClure, Thomas, Knight, Leftwich, Morefield, Fowler, Coyner, Austin, Bloxom, Wiley, Campbell, Arnold

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Sickles (Chair), Tran, Hope, Price, Hayes, Willett, Herring, Shin, Cole, Srinivasan, Henson, Gardner, Orrock, Hodges, Walker, Cherry, Taylor, Ennis, Obenshain, Higgins, Owen, Lovejoy

LABOR AND COMMERCE

Ward (Chair), Herring, Lopez, Sullivan, Convirs-Fowler, Helmer, Mundon King, Maldonado, Shin, Jones, LeVere Bolling, Feggans, Kilgore, Marshall, O'Quinn, Webert, Wilt, McNamara, Gilbert, Runion, Ballard, Williams

PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS

Price (Chair), Convirs-Fowler, Sickles, Krizek, Reid, Maldonado, Glass, Cole, Srinivasan, Henson, Anthony, LeVere Bolling, O'Quinn, Gilbert, Leftwich, Bloxom, Scott, P.A., Wachsmann, Cherry, Milde, **Green**, Phillips

PUBLIC SAFETY

Simon (Chair), Mundon King, Hope, Lopez, Rasoul, Clark, Helmer, Seibold, Bennett-Parker, McClure, Thomas, Feggans, Wilt, Kilgore, Webert, **Batten**, **Cordoza**, Taylor, Ennis, Obenshain, Owen, Phillips

RULES

Scott, D.L. (Chair), Helmer, Watts, Ward, Sickles, Herring, Carr, Torian, Simon, Hayes, Tran, Gilbert, Kilgore, Austin, O'Quinn, **Batten**

TRANSPORTATION

Delaney (Chair), Reid, Ward, McQuinn, Carr, Watts, Sewell, Glass, McClure, Anthony, Cohen, Feggans, Austin, Wyatt, Tata, Wright, O'Quinn, Williams, Griffin, Milde, Higgins, Zehr

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO FOLLOW GENERAL ASSEMBLY WORK

If you're interested in following the work of the legislature over the next 60 days, there are a number of ways you can do that. Below, we've provided some resources that are available to members of the public to follow the General Assembly's important work.

Watch Committee Meetings and Floor Sessions

These streaming platforms provide the opportunity to watch live videos of the House and Senate floor and all committee meetings. In addition, users can access recordings of past floor sessions and committee meetings, conveniently organized by the date and time of each session.

- House – click [here](#).
- Senate – click [here](#).

Explore Bills and Resolutions Under Consideration by the General Assembly

If you wish to explore bills and resolutions, you can perform searches based on various criteria such as bill number, member, committee, subject, or day. This resource will provide detailed information including the legislator who introduced the bill (patron), title, summary, full text, and history of each bill. Click [here](#) to start searching.

Make Sure You Know the Legislators Who Represent You

Learn who represents you in the legislature by entering your work or home address or use map-based navigation to see who was elected to represent your interests at both the state and federal level. To find out who your legislators are, click [here](#).

We hope this report is helpful. Further updates to come as the session proceeds.

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