



DELEGATE LANDES' LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

**By Delegate R. Steven Landes
Week of January 16, 2012**

The first full week of the 2012 Session is now in the books, and we are starting to make our way through the myriad of house bills and resolutions that have been introduced for the sixty day “long” Session.

Most bills are still being debated in committees; however, there was significant progress on a number of important issues that I would like to bring your attention to in this week’s newsletter.

Uranium Mining

On Thursday, Governor McDonnell announced that he will not seek legislation to lift the moratorium on uranium mining in Virginia until a pending comprehensive study of the issue is completed by a newly-created multi-agency state workgroup. Uranium mining has been a widely discussed topic over the past year, but more time is needed to ensure that the uranium can be mined safely. While uranium mining offers a potential positive economic impact for Southside and the entire state, the safety of all Virginians must be considered. As I stated in my town hall meetings, I think we need to take the utmost care when considering this issue and ensure that proper time is given to study the issue. I applaud Governor McDonnell for continuing to gather information before asking for the ban to be lifted.

Local Mandates Task Force

On Monday, Governor McDonnell announced the findings of a task force aimed at reducing mandates on localities. The task force has recommended the removal of twenty mandates, such as the elimination of the requirement to report public notice of request for proposals in newspapers of general circulation. The task force recommends replacing this antiquated and expensive requirement with appropriate online advertisements and notices in public spaces.

Many conservative legislators at the state level, including myself, often decry the seemingly endless federal mandates that emanate from Washington that are forced upon states and localities. It is appropriate for us to look closely at the mandates that are placed on the localities to ensure they are necessary and to remove those that impose an undue burden.

Governor Unveils 2012 Public Safety Agenda

House Republicans understand the importance of keeping our families safe. A number of delegates are working with Governor McDonnell and fellow delegates on McDonnell's 2012 Public Safety Agenda. Highlights of the Governor's agenda include legislation to provide tough mandatory minimum sentences for repeat drug dealers, and life sentences for sex offenders who prey on children; further protect victims of crime; streamline procedures for Virginia's asset forfeiture laws; and, strengthen the response to emergencies and ensure maximum protection for victims.

Bills

In the upcoming days, many of my bills will be going before committees and the House of Delegates.

House Bill 776 creates the Federal Oversight Commission, consisting of seven legislative members representing the House of Delegates and the Senate. The commission is to meet twice a year with the United States Senate members of the Virginia Congressional Delegation, and to communicate with Virginia's members of the United States House of Representatives, to address public policy issues for which both federal and state policy makers have responsibility. The Commission will be funded the first year from the operating budgets of the House and Senate Clerks' offices. The Division of Legislative Services will provide staff support and other state agencies will provide technical assistance upon request. HB 776 has been referred to the Studies Subcommittee of the House Rules Committee.

House Joint Resolution 109 expresses the General Assembly's support for a balanced budget amendment and urges Congress to submit such an amendment to the states for ratification in order to promote fiscal integrity at the federal level. HJ 108 has been referred to the House Rules Committee.

Visitors

Many visitors came to our door this week to advocate for their causes and express concerns about legislation and funding.

Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Tea Party groups, members of our Deaf Community and members of the Family Foundation dropped by to visit. Students from Blue Ridge Community College and Piedmont Community College came to express their support for higher education. There were visits from Dentists and Radiologists. Advocates for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Virginia Hemophilia Foundation, National Eating Disorders Association, Virginia Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs, Virginia Healthy Foundation, Virginia Veterinary Medical Association, and Virginia's Free Clinics were down to advocate for support for services to our citizens. We had a lot of visitors.

Let me sincerely thank the many individual friends and constituents of the 25th House District that have taken time to drive to Richmond to speak to their causes.

Contact Me

As always, my legislative aide, Judy Wyatt, and I are here to serve you. We want to hear what you think about the legislation pending before the House, or if there's anything we can do to help you in dealing with a state government agency. Please use the contact information listed below to reach us in the Richmond Office by phone, fax, or email. My office can be reached **by phone at [804.698.1025](tel:804.698.1025)** or by

email at steve@stevelandes.com. Our Richmond Fax number is **804.698.6725**. Our Richmond Address is Post Office Box 406, Richmond, Virginia 23218. Feel free to access my website, www.stevelandes.com, for more information.

If you are in Richmond, be sure to stop on by and visit! I am located in Room 515 of the General Assembly Building, located on the corner of 9th and Broad Streets.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve as your Delegate.

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