



July 2026 Newsletter

Dear {{FirstName or 'Friend'}},

Happy July!



(right) Senator Stella Pekarsky, Senator Barbara Favola, Delegate Cliff Hayes and Senator Lashrecse Aird (left) at the 2026 JCOTS Tech Symposium earlier this summer.

I hope you are having a wonderful summer and finding time to enjoy the people and moments that make this season so special!

As we prepare to celebrate Independence Day and begin commemorating the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, I'm reminded of the enduring ideals that have united Americans since the beginning. This milestone offers an opportunity not only to reflect on our history, but also to recommit ourselves to the principles, purpose, and promise upon which our nation was founded.

Serving alongside people who are dedicated to making our Commonwealth an even better place to live, work, and raise a family is one of the greatest privileges of this job. I am honored to continue the work of strengthening our communities and building a brighter future for all Virginians.

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you in the 36th district!

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read 'Stella Pekarsky', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stella Pekarsky

Senator, District 36



Richmond Updates

Budget News

After months of negotiations, the Virginia Budget Conference Report has passed, marking an important bipartisan step forward for the Commonwealth. The House and Senate reconvened for a special session on Monday, June 22 to decide on a budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The proposed budget passed the Senate in a 23-16 vote.

On Monday, June 29 the general assembly voted to approve the Governor's amendments.

This budget compromise reflects the priorities of working families and will help move Virginia forward. I am proud of the work my colleagues and I have accomplished these last few months.

It includes:

- **\$137.6 million** for *Child Care Subsidy Program slots*,
- **\$1.5 billion** in *raises for public school teachers*,
- **\$110 million** for *Higher Ed*,
- **\$60 million** for *Housing / Housing Trust Fund*
- **Over \$230 million** for *WMATA and NVTC funding*
- **\$135 million** in *SNAP funding*

Among the bills signed is legislation that allows Virginia to **rejoin the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, known as RGGI**. This saves customers money by investing in energy efficiency and flood prevention programs.

The budget agreement also sets aside hundreds of millions of dollars as a hedge against federal and economic uncertainty, with major investments aimed at protecting Virginians' healthcare.

That includes:

- **\$200 million** for the *state employee healthcare fund*,
- **\$350 million** in prep of *Congress' Medicaid cuts*
- **\$150 million** to *bring down health insurance premium costs for Virginians*

In addition, this budget imposes an electricity consumption tax on data centers which raises an additional **\$1.2 billion** for the Commonwealth.

The budget report also paves the way for a safe, legal, and regulated retail cannabis market in Virginia beginning July 1, 2027, with **revenue directed toward early childhood education, K-12 schools, and behavioral health services.**

We will continue working to make sure data centers and other major corporations contribute their fair share. While the Senate has been fighting to repeal the data center tax break, the House and Governor would not agree. So while we have made progress, we have still not gone far enough.

New Laws go Into Effect

Starting July 1st, 2026 all legislation passed in the 2026 Regular Session of the General Assembly will go into effect. Topics include more regulations on marijuana and hemp, an increase in minimum wage, and much more.

Read more about the new legislation [here](#).

District News



Congratulations 2026 Graduates!

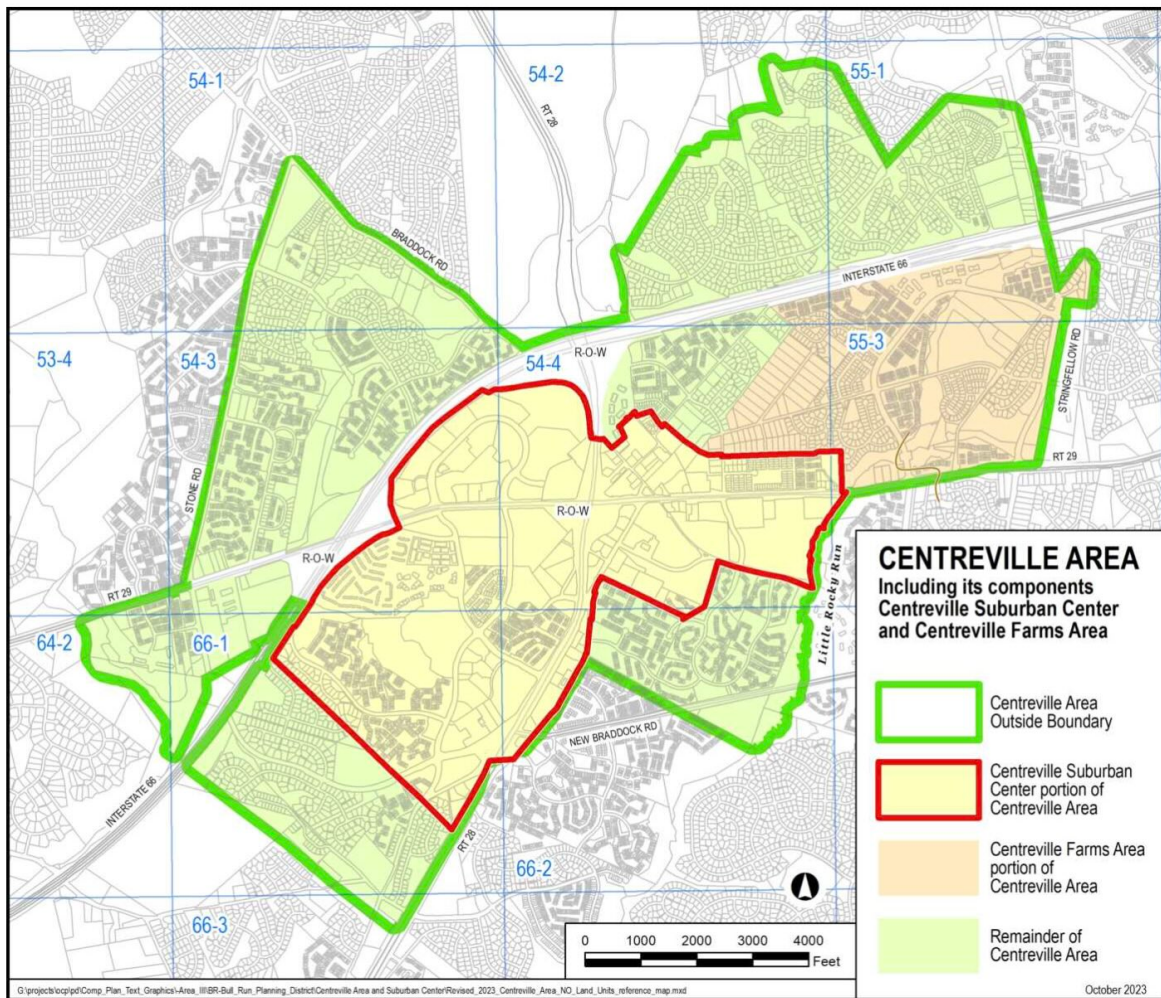
Congrats to the class of 2026 from:

- Chantilly High School
- Centreville High School
- Oakton High School
- Robinson Secondary School
- Westfield High School
- Thomas Jefferson High School

Also, congrats to all of the 2026 college graduates from District 36!

I cannot wait to see all you accomplish in the future!

FFXNOW: Fairfax County Board Approves New Vision for Centreville



Map of the Centreville planning study area (via Fairfax County)

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved a long-term vision for Centreville that includes better transit options, improved walkability, more mixed-use development, and new affordable housing projects. The plan hopes to support community growth, while maintaining Centreville's unique character. Click [here](#) for more information.

ArtsFairfax Project Support Grant



The [ArtsFairfax FY27 Project Support Grant Application](#) is now open and will close July 15, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. The grant aims to support established and emerging arts

organizations, and promote the visual and performing arts across Fairfax County. Project Support Grants are awarded in four grant subcategories, including Arts in Education, Opportunity, Partnerships, and Arts Access.

Applications Close
July 15

Chantilly Regional Library Co-Location Project Community Meeting: July 16



Fairfax County is in the very early concept stage of exploring the possibility of redeveloping the Chantilly Regional Library site to include a new regional library, affordable housing, and a new technical operations facility. No final plan or design has been created at this stage. The County is beginning the public input process to better understand community priorities, questions, and concerns.

Register for the July 16 meeting [here](#).

Upcoming Events

The United States 257th Army Band: July 2

Celebrate Independence Day week with a patriotic performance by The United States 257th Army Band, from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm at the Fairfax County Government Center. Click [here](#) for more information.

60th Annual Independence Day Parade: July 4



Virginia's largest Independence Day parade features a patriotic flyover, a special 250th anniversary helium balloon, floats, marching units, and community groups winding through downtown. Click [here](#) for more information!

Fairfax County Summer Entertainment Series



The Fairfax County Park Authority Summer Entertainment Series has kicked off and is featuring 124 performances through 10 local series at 20 venues from June 24 to August 29. Click [here](#) for more information on the times and locations of the events.

Full July 2026 Events Calendar

Full July 2026 Public Meetings Calendar

Out & About



Senator Pekarsky and Delegate Shin at the Centerville Immigration Forum's discussion on "Exposing Wage Theft & Defending Worker Rights."

This past month has been filled with opportunities to connect with our community. I've attended numerous forums, commission meetings, public hearings, bill signing ceremonies, and grand openings. It has been a busy and exciting month!



Senator Pekarsky, fellow legislators and family joined Governor Spanberger at the Ceremonial Bill Signing for the slate of new common sense gun laws.



Senator Pekarsky at the grand opening of IKEA's Chantilly Location



(left) Senator Pekarsky, Delegate Laufer (right) and family joined Governor Spanberger at a Ceremonial Bill signing for new disability protections.



Senator Pekarsky, family and advocates at

Reminders

Early Voting is OPEN

Early voting has begun for the Aug. 4 primary elections ahead of Virginia's midterm elections this November. Check out when and where to vote below:

→ June 18 – August 1:

Fairfax County Government Center (12000 Government Center Pkwy, Conference Room 251):

- Monday-Friday: (8:00a-4:30p)
- Saturdays, July 25 & August 1: (9:00a-5:00p)
- Sundays, July 19 & July 26: (12:00p-5:00p)

→ July 25 – August 1:

Burke Centre Library (5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke 22015):

- Monday-Friday: (1:00p-7:00p)
- Saturdays, July 25 & August 1: (9:00a-5:00p)
- Sunday, July 26: (12:00p-5:00p)

Centreville Regional Library (14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville 20121):

- Monday-Friday: (1:00p-7:00p)
- Saturdays, July 25 & August 1: (9:00a-5:00p)
- Sunday, July 26: (12:00p-5:00p)

Sully Governmental Center (4900 Stonecroft Boulevard, Chantilly 20151):

- Monday-Friday: (1:00p-7:00p)
- Saturdays, July 25 & August 1: (9:00a-5:00p)
- Sunday, July 26: (12:00p-5:00p)

West Springfield Governmental Center (6140 Rolling Road, Springfield 22152):

- Monday-Friday: (1:00p-7:00p)

→ Saturdays, July 25 & August 1: (9:00a-5:00p)

→ Sunday, July 26: (12:00p-5:00p)

Absentee Voting Information:

Can't make it to the polls? [Apply to vote-by-mail](#) through 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 24.

Ballots must be delivered to the local general registrar's office by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, dropped off at one of the drop off locations in your locality (review the absentee instructions provided in your absentee ballot mailing), OR mailed in.

Mail ballots must be postmarked on or before August 4, and received by your general registrar by 12:00 p.m. on August 7.

For more information regarding the upcoming primary election and voting locations or info, you can visit the official department of elections website [here](#).

Other News



NVM: Chantilly Ikea Announces Opening Date



WUSA9: Fairfax County Schools Adopt Measure to Limit Screen time for Kids



WTOP: Fairfax Co. Seeks to Exempt Potomac River to Protect Water if Va. Declares Drought Emergency



FFXNow: Bond Referendums to Fund Parks, Human Services Projects likely Headed to Fairfax Voters



WTOP: Local leaders seek to reestablish Centreville as 'suburban center' through new long-range plan

Constituent Services

Submit Issues to VDOT



VDOT has an online form that you can complete for a list of issues, including needing a road repaired, something removed from the road, a stop sign installation, and other requests. You can find that form [HERE](#).

Contact my Office

If you need any assistance with a state agency or other concerns, contact our office directly at: senatorpekarsky@senate.virginia.gov



(804) 698 - 7636



senatorpekarsky@senate.virginia.gov



stellapekarsky.com



PO Box 231191 Centrevilla, VA 20120

I would love to hear directly from you!

Stay in the Loop!

Stay informed on what's happening in Richmond & the 36th District!

SUBSCRIBE TO MY NEWSLETTER

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you in the 36th District,

Cheers,



Stella Pekarsky

Senator, District 36

For more information, checkout my [website and socials!](#)



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