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EDUCATION

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communications (Expected graduation: December 2013)

- Concentration: Journalism
- Minor: Sociology
- Member of Kappa Tau Alpha Honor Society

JOURNALISTIC EXPERIENCE

Capital News Service, Richmond, VA January 2013-present

- Wrote breaking news and features about 2013 General Assembly session for more than 70 newspapers and websites across Virginia
- Scooped other statehouse reporters on stories about Interstate 95 tolls and bills cracking down on texting while driving
- Enhanced stories with photos, videos and other multimedia
- Used Twitter, Facebook and other social media tools to publish news and promote stories

IPad Journalism, Richmond, VA January 2013-present

- Reported using iPad and mobile technology to produce multimedia packages
- Trained in social media with focus on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and iPad apps

The Commonwealth Times, Richmond, VA August 2012-Present

- Staff Writer for News Section
- Reported on breaking news, sustainability and parking. Story on parking sparked debates from students and faculty.

VCU Public Affairs Intern, Richmond, VA May 2012-August 2012

- Wrote feature and hard news stories
- Assisted on photo and video shoots
- Completed databases in Microsoft Excel

Mesh Media, Richmond, VA November 2011-present

- Wrote album reviews for The Horn
- Reported and wrote columns for Shafer Bird
- Rising Editor of Shafer Bird

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Libbie Market ,Richmond, VA January 2011-present

- Cooked breakfast, lunch and dinner

- Served Customers
- Prepared Pre Packaged Goods
- Put Together Catering Orders

Lakewood Manor, Richmond, VA, July 2005-January 2011

- Cooked breakfast
- Served residents in independent living, assisted living and healthcare

Catering by Jill, Richmond, VA, March 2007-May 2009

- Cooked and served food at catering events

Other Skills

- Highly experienced in Microsoft Word, Prezi, Microsoft Excel, WordPress, AP style, Google Search Skills, Scribble Live, FOAI Requests, Storify, and Collaborative Work
- Additionally trained in Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, Audition and Premiere.

 [chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com)

State could take over failing schools

by CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE, SAM ISAACS • FEB. 28, 2013

RICHMOND – Gov. Bob McDonnell got what he asked for: a state-run school board to take over failing schools.

“I’m asking you to approve a bold initiative to establish a statewide Opportunity Educational Institution to provide a high-quality education alternative for children attending any chronically underperforming public elementary or secondary school,” McDonnell said in his State of the Commonwealth speech on the opening day of the 2013 legislative session.

That request was granted during the session’s final days when the House joined the Senate in passing Senate Bill 1324. The legislation, proposed by Sen. Ryan McDougle, R-Mechanicsville, now goes to the governor to be signed into law.

SB 1324 would set up a state-operated unit to take over schools that have been denied accreditation or have been warned for three years. A school loses accreditation when educational benchmarks are not met for four consecutive years.

Currently, six Virginia schools would be eligible for the takeover; two of them are in Petersburg. The bill is set to take effect after the 2013-14 school year.

The bill passed the House, 64-34, on Feb. 20. It previously squeaked by in the Senate after Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling cast a tie-breaking vote.

McDonnell issued a statement after the measure won final approval.

“I am pleased with the bipartisan recognition in the General Assembly that we can no longer tolerate chronically failing schools in Virginia,” he said.

“With today’s vote in the House, Virginia sends a message that the status quo is not acceptable in chronically failing schools. We have laid out a clear path to turn around those schools and provide the students who attend them with the world-class educational opportunities they deserve, he said.

Delegate Kirk Cox, R-Colonial Heights, voted in favor of the bill. He is the House majority leader and has had a career in education spanning more than two decades.

Cox said the bill is a necessary tool to ensure students get a strong education.

“For too long, our commonwealth has tolerated chronically underperforming schools that have failed to educate and prepare our children for future success. We will now have the ability to get experts into our failing schools to turn them around and give children at these schools the chance to receive a top-quality education,” he said.

Though it passed, the bill had its share of critics. Delegate Kaye Kory, D-Falls Church, opposed the legislation.

“I have many problems with the concept and the legislation,” Kory said. She cited, for example, “the lack of public involvement anywhere in the takeover process.”

“The Education Opportunity Institute board is appointed, not elected. Also, the funding for the school taken over by the EOI is largely comprised of local school systems dollars appropriated by the EOI,” Kory said. “There is no precedent in Virginia for the state taking over schools without the locality’s consent and appropriating the locality’s tax dollars as well.”

The Education Opportunity Institute received a budget of \$150,000, far less than McDonnell initially proposed. A renegotiation could happen before the bill gets his signature.

Original URL:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/topic/va-vg-state-could-take-over-failing-schools-20130228,0,5077323.story>

 progress-index.com

General Assembly moves to crack down on texting while driving

by SAM ISAACS (CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE)

RICHMOND - Members of the House and Senate are optimistic that at least some of the 10 bills to crack down on texting while driving will make it past the legislative deadline called crossover day.

At the start of the session, three such bills were filed in the Senate and seven in the House. If a bill has not made it out of the House or Senate by tomorrow, it is left on table for the year. Beginning tomorrow, the House can consider only bills approved by the Senate, and the Senate can consider only legislation passed by the House.

A Virginia Senate committee on Monday endorsed legislation to toughen penalties for texting while driving. The Senate Courts of Justice Committee voted 9-6 to approve a bill that would increase the fine to \$250 and make it a primary offense. That would allow police to stop and ticket anyone they spot texting behind the wheel. The fine for a second offense would be \$500.

If a motorist is charged with reckless driving as a result of texting, there would be a mandatory minimum \$500 fine. The bill is identical to one approved by a House of Delegates committee.

Texting while driving is already punishable by a \$20 fine, but it's a secondary offense. That means police can only write a ticket if they stop the motorist for another violation.

Sen. George Barker, D-Alexandria, is the chief patron of two of the Senate bills. He is hopeful about the legislation.

"We have been trying this for a few years and have been gradually making progress. I think the odds look good this year," Barker said.

Last year, his bill to increase the penalties for texting while driving passed the Senate but died in the House Militia, Police and Public Safety Committee.

This year, Barker is sponsoring Senate Bill 1160, which would increase the fine for texting while driving to \$200 for a first offense and \$500 dollars for a second offense.

The seven House bills have been folded into one - HB 1907, proposed by Delegate Rich Anderson, R-Woodbridge. One of the house bills folded into HB 1907 is HB 1495, which was sponsored by Delegate Rosalyn Dance, D-Petersburg.

HB 1907 mirrors Barker's bill: It would make texting while driving a primary offense and drastically increase the fines for an infraction. Anderson said this could be the year such a bill passes.

"It has a strong support, and a lot of people are committed to it. In prior years, there wasn't as much focus on how much of a real danger this is," Anderson said.

Delegate David Bulova, D-Fairfax, said a recent event had a strong influence on the General Assembly's attitude toward texting - a "tragedy to the highest extreme."

In May 2011, Kyle Rowley, a college student, was killed by man presumed to be texting while driving in Fairfax County. When the case went to trial this past September, the judge dropped the reckless driving charge against the driver.

The reason: The penalty for texting while driving is \$20, and the offense counts as a minor traffic infraction. The judge ruled that it could not count as reckless driving.

"The situation was shocking to the General Assembly. We were appalled," Bulova said. "You could see why the judge would rule that way. He wasn't wrong; we were."

On Friday, the House Courts of Justice Committee unanimously approved HB 1907. It is now before the full House of Delegates.

Bulova hopes the bipartisan support in the House and Senate will make 2013 the year Virginia targets texting while driving.

"We want to send a strong message that it is the driver's primary responsibility to pay attention and monitor themselves while they drive," he said.

- The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Original URL:

<http://progress-index.com/news/general-assembly-moves-to-crack-down-on-texting-while-driving-1.1439738>

 rvanews.com

Local delegate applauds McDonnell on restoring felons' rights

by RVANEWS STAFF • JAN. 11, 2013

by RVANews staff

By Sam Isaacs | Capital News Service

Delegate Rosalyn Dance of Petersburg gave Gov. Bob McDonnell a standing ovation when he announced his support for restoring the voting rights of nonviolent felons during his State of the Commonwealth address this week.

Dance, a Democrat who has championed that issue during her eight years in the House, was surprised and delighted that the Republican governor declared, "It is time for Virginia to join most of the other states and make the restoration of civil rights an automatic process for nonviolent offenders."

"When I heard him announce his support, I was stunned at first," said Dance, who represents the 63rd House District, which includes Petersburg, part of Hopewell, and parts of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, and Prince George counties.

"Then I was on my feet applauding with both Democrats and Republicans."

In recent years, the General Assembly has defeated efforts, including proposals by Dance, to return the rights to felons who have served their time. However, she believes McDonnell's support could persuade lawmakers to pass such legislation. Dance also recognized a former senator from Norfolk for her longtime advocacy of the issue.

"Sen. Yvonne Miller, who recently passed away, was a strong leader on voting rights restoration. So it is fitting that now is the time we will take the first steps into making that happen," Dance said.



Rosalyn Dance

She said that for 20 years, Democrats have been pushing for the restoration of voting rights for felons. Virginia is one of two states (the other being Kentucky) where convicted felons cannot automatically vote after they have served their time in prison. In Virginia, felons who have completed their sentences must petition the governor to have their rights restored.

Historically, Republican politicians have not looked favorably on this issue, Dance noted. But McDonnell has made restoring the civil rights of nonviolent felons a priority. During his State of the Commonwealth speech, he said his administration “has now restored the civil rights of more Virginians

than any other administration in state history.”

“While we have significantly improved and fast-tracked the restoration of civil rights process, it’s still an executive process,” said McDonnell, who is completing his fourth and final year as governor.

“As a nation that believes in redemption and second chances, we must provide a clear path for willing individuals to be productive members of society once they have served their sentences and paid their fines and restitution.”

McDonnell noted that two Republican delegates – Greg Habeeb of Salem and Peter Farrell of Henrico County – have introduced bills to address this issue.

“I urge you to support legislation for the automatic restoration of rights for non-violent felons,” the governor told a joint session of the House and Senate on Wednesday, the start of the 2013 legislative session.

Several Democrats in both the House and the Senate also are sponsoring constitutional amendments to address the matter.

Dance said that she is happy to see bipartisanship support of the issue and that she is “cautiously optimistic” about the chances for passage.

“This is a very big step,” she said. “I commend the governor and am excited to get a bill on his desk.”

Original URL:

<http://rvanews.com/news/local-delegate-applauds-mcdonnell-on-restoring-felons-rights/80731>