



THREATS TO DEMOCRACY: — *Race for the Virginia* — *Statehouse Edition*

LAST UPDATED: 8/30/23

There are no off years in state legislative politics, and one of the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee's top priorities in 2023 is defending our majority in the Virginia Senate and taking back control of the Virginia House.

The DLCC is committed to showing Virginians that fundamental freedoms like the right to vote are on the line as **this election will be the first time Virginians are voting for a full state legislature since 2019, as well as their first time voting on new district lines.** We know from our special election victories this year, including a historic Virginia Senate seat flip in January, that we have the opportunity this fall to build on our momentum while Republicans double-down on their extreme agenda.

Across the country, Democratic majorities in state legislatures are moving quickly to protect and expand voting rights for their constituents. Meanwhile, Republicans are echoing Trump's claims that the 2020 election was stolen, and abusing their power to restrict voting access. In Virginia, the Republican House majority has already considered multiple bills to restrict access and make it harder to vote such as [HB 1693](#), [HB 1877](#), and [HB 1947](#). This fall, the stakes could not be higher in Virginia and as our research shows, Republicans' extreme priorities are clear.

By The Numbers: Anti-Democratic Virginia Republicans

ACCORDING TO DLCC RESEARCH, AS OF 8/30/23

- ▶ Of the 51 Republicans who are current members of the legislature, **every single one** has supported anti-democracy legislation that would make it harder for Virginians to vote.
- ▶ Of the Republican candidates who are not current members of the legislature, **over 30 (over 50%) are already on the record with anti-democracy positions**, intending to support anti-voting legislation or spreading conspiracy theories related to election fraud.
- ▶ **1 in 5** Republican legislative candidates in Virginia have indicated an interest to question or challenge the results of the 2020 election.

CONTINUED ▶

- ▶ At least **3 candidates** were in D.C. on January 6th:

DEL. JOHN MCGUIRE

Running for SD-10

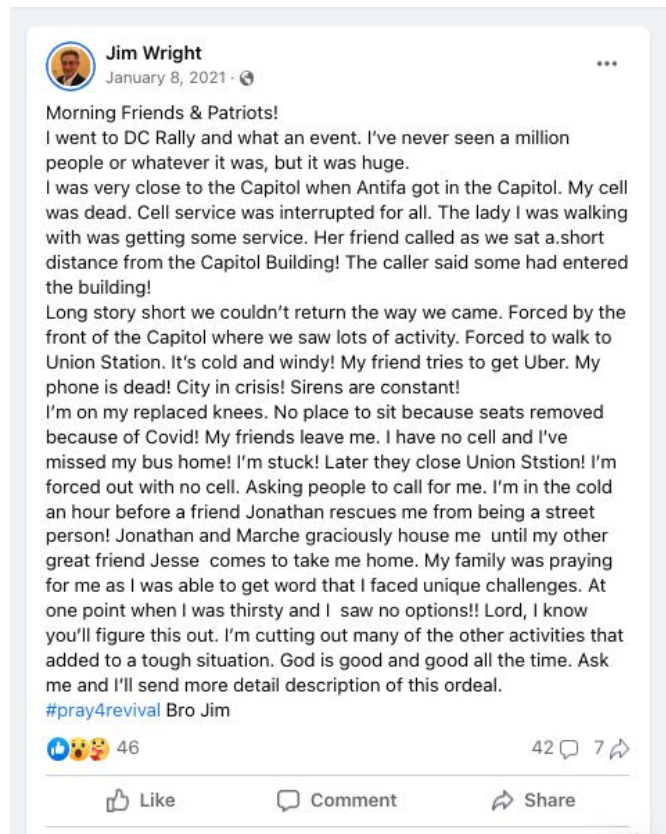
John McGuire on January 6th, Sedition Hunters, Twitter, [10/28/21](#)



JIM WRIGHT

Running for HD-88

Jim Wright, Facebook, [1/8/21](#)



PHILIP HAMILTON

Running for SD-11

Philip Hamilton on January 6, 2021; Philip Hamilton, Facebook, [1/6/21](#)



- ▶ **At least 42** currently serving Republican legislators who have supported anti-democracy legislation and are running in November’s elections have used early, absentee, or mail-in voting to cast their own ballots in at least 1 of the past 3 elections.
 - **38** of those legislators **supported** measures to restrict the time period allowed for early voting.
 - **100%** of these legislators either **supported** eliminating ballot drop boxes, or **voted against** allowing the use of ballot drop boxes.
 - **100%** of these legislators either **supported** eliminating permanent absentee voting lists, requiring voters to submit an application annually, or **voted against** establishing a permanent absentee voting list.
 - **Reps. Buddy Fowler** (running for HD-59) and **Barry Knight** (running for HD-98) both **voted against** no-excuse absentee ballots in 2020, but both appear to have used mail-in voting in Virginia since the bill passed.

CONTINUED ▶

Republicans will not stop attempting to restrict access and make it more difficult to vote.

Below are positions from just some of the Republicans running in key districts that will determine legislative control next year. Many of these races also feature [DLCC spotlight candidates](#), who represent some of the best opportunities to protect and expand Democratic power in the state:

Running for the House of Delegates:

- ▶ **Baxter Ennis (HD-89)** said he [did not believe the 2020 election was over](#), and promised to [support voter ID laws](#).
- ▶ **Del. Karen Greenhalgh (HD-97)** voted in favor of legislation to [restrict ballot drop boxes](#) and [early voting](#), and [claimed](#) that “we really don’t know what happened” in the 2020 election. Rep. Greenhalgh also [spread doubt about the election process](#) in attempts to recruit “election integrity” volunteers.
- ▶ **Geary Higgins (HD-30)** [encouraged people](#) to come to a rally protesting the “stealing of the election” in 2020. Higgins was also a [speaker](#) at a November 2020 “Stop The Steal” rally that was streamed on an Oath Keeper’s YouTube channel.
- ▶ **Paul Milde (HD-64)** [spread conspiracy theories](#) about the 2020 election online, and [encouraged](#) U.S. Senators to object to the 2020 election results.
- ▶ **Andrew Pittman (HD-94)** [claimed](#) that Trump was “right” about the election and [called on “patriots” to “keep fighting.”](#) He also [amplified](#) claims that voting machines could be hacked.
- ▶ **John Stirrup (HD-21)** said he [believed](#) “too many people have easy access to voting,” and called the 45 days allowed for early voting “ridiculous.” Stirrup’s wife, Heidi Stirrup, was [banned](#) from the Justice Department Building after approaching staffers and demanding information about election fraud cases.
- ▶ **Del. Kim Taylor (HD-82)** voted in favor of measures to [limit absentee voting](#), [ban ballot dropboxes](#), and [eliminate the permanent absentee voting list](#).
- ▶ **Del. Wren Williams (HD-47)** voted to [make it harder for Virginians to cast their ballots](#) and in 2020, [traveled the country](#) helping the RNC and former President Trump “fight for election integrity in the courtroom.”
- ▶ **Jim Wright (HD-88)** said that he was “very close to the Capitol” [on January 6](#), and has claimed on multiple occasions that Trump won the 2020 election, and that there was [“clear fraud”](#) that was [“going to be found out.”](#)

CONTINUED ▶

Running for Senate:

- ▶ **Del. Emily Brewer (SD-17)** patroned legislation to restrict ballot drop boxes, voted in favor of legislation [limiting early voting](#), and [pledged](#) to support legislation reinstating voter ID laws, signature verification, and requiring mail-in ballots to be returned before election day.
- ▶ **Del. Tara Durant (SD-27)** [patroned](#) legislation to limit absentee voting to two weeks preceding an election, and voted in favor of measures to [restrict same-day voter registration](#), [eliminate the permanent absentee voting list](#), and [eliminate automatic voter registration](#).
- ▶ **Sen. Siobhan Dunnivant (SD-16)** [patroned](#) legislation to require photo ID to vote, and voted [against](#) legislation to establish a permanent, no excuse-required absentee voting list and [against](#) same-day voter registration.
- ▶ **Philip Hamilton (SD-11)** was in Washington D.C. for the [January 6](#) rally and was reported to have climbed the steps of the Capitol and moved beyond the [barricade](#).
- ▶ **Del. John McGuire (SD-10)** traveled to D.C. to [attend the January 6 rally](#), and [reposted](#) conspiracy theories about the 2020 election on social media.
- ▶ **Julie Perry (SD-36)** spread conspiracy theories about the [2020 election](#) and [2022 election](#) on social media, including [promoting](#) the movie 2000 mules. Perry also appeared to [attend](#) the November 14, 2020 D.C. protest against the election results.
- ▶ **William Carroll Woolf III (SD-30)** [stated](#) that he opposes the use of ballot drop boxes, said “we have made it so easy to vote,” and that he had “concerns with the amount of early voting that’s going on.”

Disclaimer: This research represents our best attempts to capture Republican positions on reproductive rights and abortion issues. If you have information to provide an update or correction, please contact our tipline: accountability@dlcc.org