

Zachary Klosko

Nimble multi-platform journalist with newsroom engineering experience

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Skills (bold denotes expert proficiency)

Journalism: Copy Editing, Reporting, Interviewing, Research, Fact-checking, Adobe Premiere Pro, Adobe Audition, Social Media, WordPress, Microsoft Excel, CMS, SEO

Engineering: Audio Engineering, Linux, Bash, Python, HTML, CSS, JavaScript

Interpersonal: Collaborative, punctual, multitasking, ethical, active listening, sense of humor

Experience

Digital Journalist at *VCU Capital News Service* Jan. 2021 – Present

- Published over half a dozen times across Virginia, including The Associated Press, VPM, and The Washington Post
- Covered the Virginia General Assembly for print, web and social media
- Assisted editors with fact-checking and general editing
- Research, interview and write compelling stories on tight deadlines

Broadcast Engineer at *WRIR 97.3 FM* March 2020 – Present

- Optimize essential applications, servers, network for efficiency
- Produce Linux and audio editing training videos for volunteers
- Optimize production studios for sound clarity and user-friendliness
- Respond to support tickets, and troubleshoot equipment and computer issues

Documentation Writer and Frontend Web Developer for *Libertime OSS* April 2020 – Jan. 2021

- Wrote and edited application documentation
- Redesigned the project's website using modern web technologies
- Created features for application frontend using JavaScript, HTML and CSS

Multimedia Producer for *Chi Alpha Campus Ministries* *GMU Chapter: June 2019 – Aug. 2019,*

- Created videos for Facebook, Instagram and YouTube
 - Hosted and produced the Richmond chapter's weekly podcast
 - Contributed graphics for the Richmond chapter's Instagram
- Richmond Chapter: Aug. 2019 – March 2020*

Education

B.S. in Mass Communications from *Virginia Commonwealth University* in 2021

Concentration in Digital Journalism

NEWS →

Delegate Plans to Reintroduce Quarantine Pay Bill Next Session



Presented by



Written by
VCU CNS

October 13 2020,
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Elizabeth Guzman at a press conference earlier this year. (Photo: Craig Carper/VPM News)

This article by Zachary Klosko is posted as part of VPM's partnership with Capital New Service

Del. Elizabeth Guzmán, D-Woodbridge, said she is no stranger to the struggles of low-paying jobs. Guzmán said she immigrated to the United States from Peru as a single mother and worked multiple minimum wage jobs just to be able to pay rent and care for her daughter.

Guzmán has a mission to secure better financial benefits

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for minimum wage workers, but she said it's not going as planned.

Guzmán's [House Bill 5116](#) was killed in a Senate committee during the Virginia General Assembly special session after being passed by the House. The General Assembly is currently meeting to tackle the state budget and other issues that have come up due to COVID-19.

The bill would have mandated quarantine pay for employees of businesses with more than 25 workers. It would require public and private employers to provide paid quarantine leave that could be immediately used by the employee, regardless of how long they had been employed. The paid quarantine leave could be used for the employee's health care needs or for care of a family member with an illness or health condition related to COVID-19.

Guzmán said she's frustrated, but she plans to introduce the bill again during the next legislative session.

"Most of the arguments that I heard was because businesses are hurting and it was not the right time," Guzmán said. "I think it's like we hear a lot about businesses but we don't hear about the working class and who's going to be, you know, fighting for them."

Guzmán introduced a [bill](#) in the spring session before the coronavirus to require employers to provide paid sick leave for employees. After the Committee on Appropriations killed that bill, Guzmán introduced her current bill as an effort to keep advocating for worker's rights.

Kim Bobo, executive director for the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, said her organization is in favor of Guzmán's bill. Bobo said paid sick days and getting paid a minimum wage are basic standards employers should be able to provide for their employees without government assistance.

"We really don't believe that public funds should be used to subsidize employers providing such a basic core standard as paid sick days," Bobo said. "We will not include anything like that in a bill going forward."

Being able to take paid time off can have a larger impact on the community because workers don't have to choose between their families' well-being and a paycheck, Bobo said.

"They will stay home when their children are sick and they won't send their kids to school sick, which is what happens right now," she said.

Bobo isn't the only supporter of Guzmán's bill. Eighty-three percent of Virginians support paid time off mandates, according to a recent [YouGov poll](#) commissioned in part by the Interfaith Center.

Del. Chris Head, R-Roanoke, voiced his concerns during the bill's third reading on Sept. 10. Head said Guzmán's bill largely mirrors federal legislation.

"This bill is going to cause businesses who might hire people to think twice about it," Head said. "It's going to raise their expenses for hiring people, and it's going to end up hurting many of the very people that you're trying to

help with this legislation.”

The Department of Labor and Industry estimated the bill would cost the department over \$46,000 in 2021 and an additional \$92,000 in 2022, according to the [bill's impact statement](#). The Department of Medical Assisted Services estimated the costs at \$28.8 million for fiscal year 2021 and \$29.8 million for fiscal year 2022. The bill would last until July 1, 2021, or until Gov. Ralph Northam's state of emergency for the coronavirus pandemic expires.

Guzmán said she isn't deterred. After Northam and first lady Pamela Northam announced they tested positive for COVID-19 on Sept. 25, Guzmán said she needed to quarantine at home. She had visited a school with the first lady just a few days prior.

“Listen, there are 1.2 million Virginians out there that, if they were in the same situation that we are today, they would continue to go to work, because they don't have a dime,” Guzmán said firmly. “Please pass the message to the governor and the first lady.”

Correction: An earlier version of this article misattributed the source. It has been corrected.

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Delegate celebrates passage of limited paid leave bill

Amended bill mandates paid sick leave for some in-home health care workers

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BY [ZACHARY KLOSKO](https://www.virginiabusiness.com/byline/zac) | CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE [[HTTPS://WWW.VIRGINIABUSINESS.COM/BYLINE/ZAC](https://www.virginiabusiness.com/byline/zac)]

RICHMOND, Va. — After four years and multiple bills, Del. Elizabeth Guzmán, D-Woodbridge, is on the cusp of being able to secure paid leave for some Virginia workers.

“It feels really good,” Guzmán said. “I think about the amount of people who are going to get this benefit and how they will have peace of mind to stay home and take care of family members if they are unwell.”

The Virginia Senate passed an amended version of the delegate’s legislation that mandates paid sick leave for some in-home health care workers. The substitute bill heads back to the House, where the initial bill passed on a 54-46 vote. Guzmán said she will encourage delegates to approve the substitute and send the amended bill to Gov. Ralph Northam.

Guzmán took to Twitter after the Senate’s 21-18 vote to express her excitement.

“Thank you!!” Guzmán [wrote on Twitter](#)

[\[https://twitter.com/guzman4virginia/status/1365000449430933505\]](https://twitter.com/guzman4virginia/status/1365000449430933505). “We did it!!”

[House Bill 2137](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?212+sum+HB2137) [<https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?212+sum+HB2137>] originally offered the benefit to many essential workers, including first responders, retail workers, cleaning workers, teachers, jail and prison employees and transportation workers.



Del. Guzman, D-Woodbridge, stands with Biden supporters raising support for workers rights for essential workers. (Photo courtesy Elizabeth Guzman)

The bill advanced from the House with an amendment for small businesses; [it did not \[https://www.princewilliamtimes.com/news/virginia-house-advances-del-elizabeth-guzmans-paid-leave-bill-for-essential-workers/article_e46781fc-6731-11eb-9a67-fbbd5410c6de.html\]](https://www.princewilliamtimes.com/news/virginia-house-advances-del-elizabeth-guzmans-paid-leave-bill-for-essential-workers/article_e46781fc-6731-11eb-9a67-fbbd5410c6de.html) apply to retail businesses with fewer than 25 employees. The Senate later amended the bill to only offer the benefit to in-home health care workers who serve patients with Medicaid coverage.

The substitute [still requires \[https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?212+ful+HB2137S2+hil\]](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?212+ful+HB2137S2+hil) employers to set aside one hour of paid leave for every 30 hours worked. Employees must work at least an average of 20 hours per week or 90 hours per month to qualify. Once covered, workers will be allowed paid leave if they are sick or if they need to care for a sick family member. Unused sick leave can be carried over to the year after it was earned.

The amended bill will protect 25,000 workers, according to a press release by Guzmán.

Guzmán says her work is not done.

“I will continue to fight as lieutenant governor, I will continue to fight as a delegate,” Guzmán said. “Whichever role I’m in, I will continue to fight.”

Guzmán is running for lieutenant governor. Among others in the race, she is facing Del. Hala Ayala, another Democrat from Prince William County. If successful, Ayala or Guzmán would become the first Latina to serve in the role.

If signed into law, those covered will begin to accrue paid leave hours on July 1.

Capital News Service is a program of Virginia Commonwealth University’s Robertson School of Media and Culture. Students in the program provide state government coverage for a variety of media outlets in Virginia.

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'There Is No Context': General Assembly Votes To Remove Byrd Statue

🕒 February 24, 2021 👤 News Editor 📁 News 💬 0



Harry Flood Byrd served as Virginia's governor from 1926 to 1930 and as a U.S. senator from 1933 to 1965. Photo courtesy of Capital News Service

Zachary Klosko, *Capital News Service*

The Virginia General Assembly has voted to remove the statue of former U.S. Sen. Harry F. Byrd Sr. from Capitol Square, the area around the Virginia State Capitol.

[House Bill 2208](#), introduced by Del. Jay Jones, D-Norfolk, instructs the Department of General Services to place the statue in storage until

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the General Assembly chooses its final location. The bill passed the House in late January on a 63-34 vote, while the Senate approved the measure Tuesday on a 36-3 vote.

Byrd served as state governor from 1926 to 1930 and U.S. senator from 1933 to 1965. His massive resistance campaign pushed for Southern states to **reject** the ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education*, cutting off state funding and closing schools that tried to integrate.

Jones called the statue a reminder of the institutional racism in Virginia during the bill's first committee hearings. Sen. Jennifer McClellan, D-Richmond, echoed Jones' sentiments during the bill's final reading on the Senate floor.

"When I was an intern working for the first African American governor and walked past that statue every day, I knew I was his worst nightmare," McClellan said. "I feel it every time I walk past it."

McClellan spoke of the pain African Americans have endured in Virginia due to Byrd's disenfranchisement of Black voters and the dehumanization that Byrd cast on them.

"There is no context that could be placed on a statue on Capitol Square, the ultimate public park with public art, that could erase the pain that Harry Byrd and his legacy invokes for African American Virginians," McClellan said.

Sen. Jill Vogel, R-Warrenton, gave a speech on the Senate floor portraying Byrd as a humble, industrious man who worked in the apple business, **saved a local newspaper** and improved Virginia's highway infrastructure. Vogel described Byrd's "massive resistance" campaign against school integration in the 1950s as a stain on an otherwise remarkable career.

"That is a great stain on his career and a great embarrassment," Vogel said. "But he was a man of a certain time in a certain era."

Vogel asked the senators to "look at the whole man and consider that we are each a sum of all our parts, the good and the bad."

Sen. Richard Saslaw, D-Springfield, pushed back on Vogel's request, saying probably 100,000 students if not more were kept out of school for years due to Byrd's push for segregation.

"I just don't see how we can overlook the fact that all of these children ... were kept out of school for four years," Saslaw said. "I think that we should not be honoring people to that degree in Capitol Square."

Del. Wendell Walker, R-Lynchburg, introduced a [bill](#) last year to remove Byrd's statue. Walker later pushed for his bill to be removed.

Walker voted against HB 2208 during its final reading in the House on Jan. 27.

The push to remove statues of Confederate leaders accelerated after protests began following the death of George Floyd last May. Floyd died in the custody of a Minneapolis police officer who has been charged with second-degree murder.

The Department of General Services estimated the statue's removal will cost approximately \$250,000, according to the bill's [impact statement](#). Storage costs are estimated at \$7,000 per year until the final home of the statue is determined.

Byrd's statue was erected in Richmond's Capitol Square in [1976](#) after his death in 1966. The bipartisan vote to remove it comes on the eve of the 65th anniversary of Byrd's massive resistance campaign, according to the [Virginia Museum of History and Culture](#).

Sens. Amanda Chase, R-Chesterfield, Mark Obenshain, R-Harrisonburg, and Vogel were the only senators to vote against the bill.

Rita Davis, council to Gov. Ralph Northam, spoke of Northam's support for the bill during committee hearings. Northam is expected to sign the bill.

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