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A history of LGBTQ+ legislators in Virginia

BY CHLOE MAZARIEGOS

In 2003, Adam Ebbin became the first openly LGBTQ+ person elected to the Virginia House of Delegates. Later, in 2011, he made history as the first openly gay person elected to the Virginia Senate. He served as president of the Virginia Partisans Gay & Lesbian Democratic Club.

The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, also known as the LGBTQ+ Victory Fund, has supported his campaigns. Their mission is to achieve equality and representation of the LGBTQ+ community in different levels of government.

Ebbin has said he believes his appeal as a political candidate comes from his body of legislative work rather than his sexual orientation. Since Ebbin was first elected, four others

openly in the LGBTQ+ community have joined the General Assembly.

Born in Arlington, Mark Sickles is delegate of the 17th District, although he now resides in Franconia. In May 2019, the “Wesley Charles Lipicky Act” was passed, which Sickles drafted, ensuring safety for students and keeping them from harm caused by motorized classroom partitions.

The third openly LGBTQ+ person elected to the General Assembly, Mark Levine, served as a delegate from the 45th District of Virginia from 2016 to 2022. He has been a gay rights activist since the 1990s. In 2009, he worked alongside Washington, D.C. Councilor Phil Mendelson to draft the District’s marriage equality law, which passed in December of that year.

Dawn Adams served as delegate of the 68th District of Virginia from 2018 to 2024, making her the first lesbian and fourth openly LGBTQ+ person to serve in the General Assembly.

In 2018, Danica Roem was elected to the Virginia Senate, becoming the first open transgender person to serve in the state legislature in the history of the United States. She currently represents the 30th District and previously represented the 13th District from 2018 to 2014. She is also the first transgender person to ever serve in both chambers of a state legislature in United States history.

Roem has advocated for the protection of LGBTQ+ youth at schools. Roem and her predecessors have helped carve the way for newer generations to



ADAM EBBIN

continue their work toward making Virginia and the United States a place where everyone feels welcome to participate in all aspects of society.

For more information on the 8th Annual Alexandria Pride Fair and the City of Alexandria LGBTQ+ Task Force, please visit alexandriava.gov/LGBTQ.

Out of the Attic is provided by the Office of Historic Alexandria.