

Julie Farnam

FOR ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD

Our Arlington. Our Future.



Teaching the importance of democracy from an early age - Julie Farnam's daughter has a long history of helping with campaigns. This is a picture from 2019 when canvassing for Dan Helmer.

Arlington Even More Unaffordable

Residents to See a Sharp Increase in Taxes

Last month, the county released its proposed budget. This includes a significant tax increase. The tax increase was preceded by a steep increase in home assessment values (including missing middle-type housing), creating a double-whammy for homeowners in

Arlington. According to [an analysis completed by the Arlington County Civic Federation \(CivFed\)](#), this translates to an approximately \$582 annual tax increase for individual homes in Arlington.

But more than that, the County hasn't fully articulated how this increase will impact residents. One thing I've heard on the campaign trail is how the cost of living in Arlington is pushing out people who have lived here for a long time, especially seniors. Generally, throughout the United States, those with the lowest-incomes pay a higher share of taxes compared to the those with the highest-incomes, according to the [Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy](#). In other words, a higher percentage of income goes to taxes for those who earn less money. So while Arlington likes to tout that they are creating policies that make buying a home more affordable, namely through blanket rezoning and increasing supply, they neglect to address that they are simultaneously creating policies that make it more unaffordable for those already living here, pushing many out. This worsens inequities in our community.

According to the Arlington Community Foundation (ACF), between 2012-2018, nearly 1,000 households earning less than 30% area medium income left Arlington, many departing because they could no longer afford to live in Arlington. About 75% of the lost households were families of four or more and/or seniors. Rather than debating the positions of YIMBYs and NIMBYs, let us all focus on the **SIMBY: Stay In My Backyard**.

Further, economists analyzing the long-term impacts of Arlington's EHO/MMH policy predict that while this policy will create approximately 540 affordable housing units over the next ten years, it will push out nearly 2,100 people who will be unable to afford to live here. Builders build for profit. They will build less if building more reduces profits, a reality which is in direct contradiction to the County's supply and demand argument for supporting rezoning. Affordability requires deliberate efforts on the part of the County and cannot be exclusively dependent on developers who are solely motivated by money and profits. For-profit developers do not make business decisions out of the kindness of their hearts.

Let's make Arlington more affordable to live and stay here. Especially for people who have lived here, in some cases for decades. They want to stay. This starts with fiscal responsibility. As I've mentioned before, to do this the County must:

- Have an articulated vision for our future.
- Have a plan to realize that vision.
- Prioritize spending to execute the vision.
- Focus on "need-to-haves" over "nice-to-haves."

Arlington's FY25 budget fails to do this. Among the solutions proposed by the CivFed is eliminating the over 200 unfilled positions the County funded in FY22 and FY23, which would result in an over \$13M cost savings. I would also propose offsetting some costs by leaning on federal funding to pay for some drug treatment, youth programming, and healthcare initiatives.

Further, Arlington must address its high commercial real estate vacancy rate. This is a national trend, however, Arlington has appeared to not fully appreciate the shift in office requirements—[a shift that began several years ago, but was accelerated by the pandemic](#)—and changing demographics of people who choose to live in urban areas. This needs to be incorporated into long-term budget planning so we do not encounter situations in the future where the community is again faced with steep tax increases to cover the costs necessary to run the County.

Governance in Arlington: Julie Farnam Speaks Out

At the March 16, 2024 County Board meeting, Julie Farnam spoke out against the County Board's efforts to quash HB1225, a bill that would give Arlington the opportunity to change its governance structure. The bill was tabled until next year after County Board members lobbied against it. The people of Arlington should have the option to vote on the proposed changes. To not allow the people of Arlington to decide for themselves how they would like to be governed is in contrast to the fundamentals of democracy.

Watch Julie's remarks below.



Here are Julie's full remarks:

My name is Julie Farnam and I am running for County Board.

I was on Capitol Hill on January 6, 2021, and I saw firsthand how divided our country is and how fragile our democracy is.

That's why I was disheartened and alarmed when members of this board traveled to Richmond in January to lobby against a bill that would give Arlington the option to change its governance structure. This bill did not require changes, but your actions took away the ability for the voters of Arlington—the people of Arlington—to decide for themselves how they would like to be governed.

Over and over again I hear from residents and businesses that they feel like the County Board doesn't listen and that they don't have a voice. If this is a government for the people, by the people, and of the people, the people should have a say in how they want to be governed. To be clear, I'm not saying we must change our form of governance in Arlington, but I am saying the voters should be given the opportunity to decide.

To deny that right is fundamentally anti-Democracy.

I'm sure all of you will say that you support democracy, but your actions do not match your words.

It is a slippery slope and we've seen this happen on the right. Though not to the extremes we've seen on the right...yet, make no mistake, actions like this taken by Democrats also slowly erode our democracy.

I suspect you will respond that the bill has simply been tabled until next year, but it was tabled because you lobbied against it. I hope the bill is revived next year, that Arlingtonians recognize just how concerning these actions were, and that all of you, as board members and, arguably community leaders, will support, encourage, and lead residents, businesses, and workers alike to have a greater voice in how Arlington is governed.

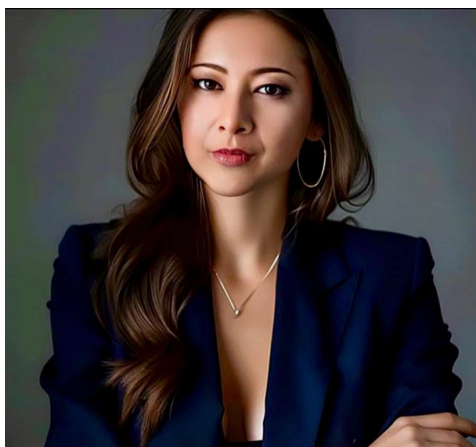
Canvassing!

We'll be out in force every weekend from now until June. Join us in helping to get Julie Farnam elected to the Arlington County Board.

[Sign Up To Canvass Here](#)



Endorsements



Mariflor Ventura

Community Activist and Business Owner

Mariflor Ventura has a long history of helping those in need in Arlington. She is the founder of Casa Mariflor, LLC, which serves immigrants families in Arlington and beyond. Ventura received recognition from the Biden-Harris administration for her volunteer work and was a previous recipient of a leadership award from the Arlington Democrats Latino Caucus for her service.

Remember on June 18th vote :

Farnam First!

Upcoming Events





Simona Cafe

April 1, 2024 at 5:00pm

Join Julie for a conversation to learn about her vision for Arlington at Simona Cafe (2507 Franklin Road).

[Sign Up](#)



Ireland's Four Courts

April 21, 2024 at 7:00pm

Join Julie for friends and fun at Ireland's Four Courts (2051 Wilson Blvd.) at 7:00pm on Sunday, April 21st.

[Sign Up](#)

Interested in hosting an event for Julie?

Let us know at julieforarlington@gmail.com!

Julie Farnam is a mom and small business owner in Arlington. She previously served as the Assistant Director of Intelligence for the United States Capitol Police during one of the most tumultuous periods in this country's history. Prior to joining the Capitol Police, Farnam served with the Department of Homeland Security for over fifteen years. She is author of the book "Domestic Darkness: An Insider's Account of the January 6th Insurrection, and the Future of Right-Wing Extremism."



Support Julie by Donating

I remain committed to helping Arlington thrive. Your donation makes that possible. Our Arlington. Our Future.

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Past Newsletters

[February 22, 2024](#): Fentanyl | Supporting those with disabilities

[February 7, 2024](#): Inequities in healthcare

[January 23, 2024](#): Drugs as a business | HB 1225: Governance in Arlington

[January 15, 2024](#): Gun safety | Growth gone wrong

[January 4, 2024](#): Housing | Domestic Darkness

[December 5, 2023](#): Saving LAC Studios

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