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# Pride Month profile: Adam Ebbin

Almost 20 years have passed since Adam Ebbin first ran for the Virginia House of Delegates in 2004. The now-state senator recalls being told by a future constituent that they were excited to send an openly gay person to Richmond to “stick it to” the then Republican-majority House of Delegates.

Today, after almost three terms as a senator, Ebbin thinks that his appeal as a political candidate is his body of legislative work rather than his sexual orientation. Ebbin has seen the growth and evolution of LGBTQ+ history in Alexandria and northern Virginia and looks forward to more progress. At the same time, he reminisces about a community that he sees as diffused as it assimilated into a larger Alexandria community.

Ebbin moved to Alexandria in 1989, almost accidentally. His former college roommate and wife had bought some condos in Auburn Village and gave him a good deal. In 1991, the former registered Republican founded the Virginia Partisan Gay and Lesbian Democratic Club and became a delegate to the Virginia Democratic Convention. He first ran for the House of Delegates in 2004 and was first elected to the State Senate in 2012.

Ebbin looks back on the progress made in LGBTQ+ equality both in Alexandria and nationally with a sense of accomplishment but still reminisces about sites that served as community meeting places for the LGBTQ+ community in years gone by. Given the attraction of D.C. neighborhoods such as Dupont and Logan Circles, northern Virginia was less of a destination for LGBTQ+ people looking to meet people like themselves in the early 90s.

One exception was the French Quarter Café, formerly located at 808 King St. In 1991, the owner of the French Quarter Café, Murray Greenberg, won a lawsuit to overturn the 1934 Virginia law that prohibited the sale of alcohol to “homosexuals.” While the club closed in 1994, Ebbin remembers it fondly from a time when acceptance in the larger society was not a given.

When asked about the challenges LGBTQ+ people face in Alexandria, Ebbin quickly points to a loss of sense of community as LGBTQ+ people, couples and families have integrated into a larger Alexandria community.

Ebbin knows the fight for equality for people, LGBTQ+ and not, isn’t over. While he admits surprise that gay mar-



PHOTO/OFFICE OF ADAM EBBIN

State Senator Adam Ebbin.

riage was legalized by Supreme Court decision so quickly, the fact that the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* last year gives him a sense of unease.

As a result, he submitted legislation to overturn the Virginia constitutional amendment that prohibits gay marriage. He points out that while the Virginia code has changed, the constitutional amendment remains on the books.

When asked about the difference between Delegate Adam Ebbin and State Senator

Adam Ebbin, he says that while he’s kept the same values, representing a larger constituency has forced him to try to balance his legislative priorities.

“Elections aren’t about the candidates, they’re about the voters,” Ebbin noted.

*Historic Alexandria is excited to celebrate Pride Month this June. For more information on Pride Month in Alexandria, please visit alexandriava.gov/LGBTQ.*

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