



A message from WAMU 88.5 General Manager Caryn G. Mathes

Reports are circulating that the U.S. House of Representatives could take action as early as next week to eliminate federal funding for public broadcasting.

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Alexandria Considers Ordinance Legalizing Public Breastfeeding

Michael Pope

January 31, 2011 - In Virginia, Alexandria City Council members will soon consider a proposal that would legalize breastfeeding in public. The effort began because some city employees were concerned they didn't have a place to breastfeed at City Hall.

At St. Elmo's Coffeehouse in the Del Ray section of Alexandria, mothers aren't afraid to breastfeed their newborn infants in public.

But, as Reasa Currier explains, it has led to some tense moments.

"Every mom has had people look in curiosity and also, just... 'Why are you feeding your child in a coffee shop?'" she says.

Alexandria City Council Member Rob Krupicka worries that the city's indecent exposure ordinance might be used to discourage women from breastfeeding in public. That's why he and another council member have proposed an amendment to the ordinance that would make it clear that breast feeding in public is legal.

"I don't think anyone's ever been brought up on it, but if you're trying to send a message that our community is family-friendly, an easy place for the city to start is to get rid of this antiquated ordinance that clearly has no place in modern society," Krupicka says.

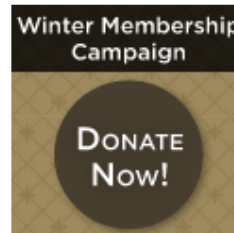
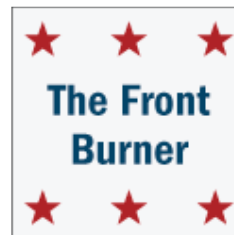
One of the main reasons Krupicka says he wants to encourage breastfeeding is that it helps to combat childhood obesity. Alexandria has the highest rate of childhood obesity in Northern Virginia.

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