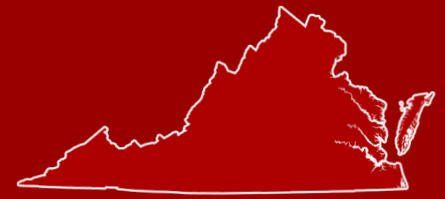


# 2008 Overview

OF VA CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGNS



Virginia FREE provides summaries of key races in Virginia for the United States Congress. This is the first in a series of reports to be provided in the days and weeks ahead to give VAFREE members an inside look at campaigns for the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate this year. As always, detailed information about the districts, the candidates, their campaign finances, and their positions on important business is found online in the members-only area at <http://www.vafree.com>.

It is extremely difficult to beat an incumbent member of the U.S. House of Representatives in Virginia. It has happened just twice in the past 25 years: when Jim Moran ousted Stan Paris in 1990, and Tom Davis beat Leslie Byrne to capture Virginia's newest congressional district, the eleventh, in 1994. (Before that, you have to go back to 1982 when Norman Sisisky beat Bob Daniel, and Rick Boucher beat William Wampler.)



Since the year 2000, when current districts were first drawn, Virginia's incumbent congressmen have won reelection with an astonishing average of 71% of the vote while outspending major-party challengers by nearly four to one. The advantages of incumbency have been all but insurmountable.

Despite the odds, eight of Virginia's 11 incumbent U.S. Representatives have major-party opposition this year and six of seven incumbent Republicans face Democratic challengers.

The last time Democrats contested every one of Virginia's U.S. House races was 1990. Before that, it was 1974, the year Watergate forced President Nixon to resign and left the GOP vulnerable. This year, it's the embattled Bush White House, a faltering economy, an unpopular war, and shifting demographics that have prompted challengers to take on incumbent congressmen who are rarely challenged. If past performance is a reliable indicator, it is a stretch to assume that any Virginia incumbents will be retired at the ballot box. But it is a difficult climate for Republicans. Virginia's Republican U.S. Rep. Tom Davis spelled it out for his colleagues:

"The political atmosphere facing House Republicans this November is the worst since Watergate and is far more toxic than the fall of 2006 when we lost thirty seats (and our majority) and came within a couple of percentage points of losing another fifteen seats. Whether measured by polls, open seats, money, voter registration, generic ballot, Presidential popularity or issues, our party faces a steep climb to maintain our current numbers."



No doubt there will be excitement and drama in this year's contested races as several formidable challengers have emerged and are waging strong, well-funded campaigns. And, with shifting demographics altering the complexion of districts that are nearing the end of their 10-year life span, a few contests probably will be very close. In addition, at least two new faces are guaranteed to join the Virginia delegation in Washington as U.S. Senator John Warner and U.S. Rep. Tom Davis both retire from Congress after long and distinguished careers.

If Virginia has seen a dearth of close House races, our Senate contests are a different story. Recent U.S. Senate races in Virginia have been fiercely competitive. George Allen ousted incumbent Chuck Robb with 52% of the vote in 2000, and then lost in his first bid for reelection to Jim Webb by less than one percentage point in 2006. Retiring incumbent John Warner, first elected in 1978 with a mere 50% of the vote, was returned to Washington by wide margins until managing just a five-point victory over Mark Warner in 1996.

Mark Warner is having another go at the John Warner Senate seat this year, and his broad appeal across party lines and deep pockets give him a decided advantage over former Governor Jim Gilmore, who has faded from the limelight in recent years and is struggling to fund his campaign.

Nationally, experts widely agree that the outlook for Republicans is bleak. In the Senate, there are 35 seats up this year, with 23 held by the GOP. Only 15 are truly competitive, and 13 of those are GOP seats. So Republicans have much more territory to defend, and if they could manage to break even in competitive races, they would still have a net loss of six seats.

According to Kiplinger.com:

Our latest survey of Senate races shows the GOP certain to lose one seat (Virginia), very likely to lose one other (New Mexico), and in real danger of losing two more. (Colorado and New Hampshire). Two others are at best a toss-up (Mississippi and Minnesota). And Republicans have only a slight lead in Alaska, Maine, and Oregon. Even some Republicans who should be shoo-ins (John Cornyn in Texas, Pat Roberts in Kansas, Liddy Dole in North Carolina and Mitch McConnell in Kentucky) face challengers who are getting uncomfortably close in recent polls.”

In the House, national political pundits predict GOP losses ranging from 10 to 20 seats.

On the following page is a list of Virginia’s major party congressional candidates in 2008. In the days and weeks ahead, VAFREE will publish reports on these contests to give business leaders an inside look at the districts, the candidates, and their campaigns.

| <b>CD</b> | <b>Candidate</b>               | <b>Web</b>  | <b>Address</b>   |
|-----------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| US Senate | OPEN [John Warner (R) retires] |   |  |
|           | Mark Warner (D)                | <a href="http://www.markwarner2008.com/">http://www.markwarner2008.com/</a>               | 1029 North Royal Street, Alexandria VA 22314           |
|           | Jim Gilmore (R)                | <a href="http://www.jimgilmoreforsenate.com/">http://www.jimgilmoreforsenate.com/</a>     | 631 S. Washington Street Alexandria, VA. 22314         |
| 01        | Rob Wittman (R) *              | <a href="http://www.robwittmanforcongress.com/">http://www.robwittmanforcongress.com/</a> | P.O. Box 999 Montross, Virginia 22520                  |
| 02        | Thelma Drake (R) *             | <a href="http://www.thelmadrake.com/">http://www.thelmadrake.com/</a>                     | P.O. Box 61480 Virginia Beach, Virginia 23466          |
|           | Glenn Nye (D)                  | <a href="http://www.glennnye.com">http://www.glennnye.com</a>                             | PO Box 68444 Virginia Beach, VA 23471                  |
| 03        | Bobby Scott (D) *              | <a href="http://www.house.gov/scott/">http://www.house.gov/scott/</a>                     | 2600 Washington Ave. Suite 1010 Newport News, VA 23607 |
| 04        | Randy Forbes (R) *             | <a href="http://www.randyforbes.com">http://www.randyforbes.com</a>                       | PO Box 15100 Chesapeake, VA 23328-5100                 |
|           | Andrea Miller (D)              | <a href="http://andreamiller.us/">http://andreamiller.us/</a>                             | 14004 Summersedge Terrace Chesterfield, VA 23832       |
| 05        | Virgil Goode (R) *             | <a href="http://www.virgilgoode.com/">http://www.virgilgoode.com/</a>                     | 235 South Main Street Rocky Mount, VA 24151            |
|           | Tom Perriello (D)              | <a href="http://www.perrielloforcongress.com/">http://www.perrielloforcongress.com/</a>   | P.O. Box 306 Ivy VA 22945                              |
| 06        | Bob Goodlatte (R) *            | <a href="http://bobgoodlatte.com/">http://bobgoodlatte.com/</a>                           | P.O. Box 292 Roanoke, Virginia 24002                   |
|           | Sam Rasoul (D)                 | <a href="http://www.samrasoul.us/">http://www.samrasoul.us/</a>                           | 5524 Williamson Road, Unit #2 Roanoke VA 24012         |
| 07        | Eric Cantor (R) *              | <a href="http://www.ericcantor.com">http://www.ericcantor.com</a>                         | P.O. Box 17813 Richmond VA 23226                       |
|           | Anita Hartke (D)               | <a href="http://www.hartkeforcongress.com">http://www.hartkeforcongress.com</a>           | P.O. Box 206 Amissville, VA 20106                      |
| 08        | Jim Moran (D) *                | <a href="http://www.jimmoran.org/">http://www.jimmoran.org/</a>                           | 333 N. Fairfax St. Suite 201 Alexandria, VA 22314      |
|           | Mark W. Ellmore (R)            | <a href="http://www.markellmore08.com/">http://www.markellmore08.com/</a>                 | PO Box 7108 Falls Church, VA 22040                     |
| 09        | Rick Boucher (D) *             | <a href="http://www.boucherforcongress.com/">http://www.boucherforcongress.com/</a>       | 195 Park Street Abingdon, Virginia 24210               |
| 10        | Frank Wolf (R) *               | <a href="http://www.wolfforcongress.com/">http://www.wolfforcongress.com/</a>             | 14506 Lee Road Chantilly, VA 20151                     |
|           | Judith Feder (D)               | <a href="http://judyfeder.com/">http://judyfeder.com/</a>                                 | 1514 Hardwood Lane, McLean, VA 22101                   |
| 11        | OPEN [Tom Davis (R) retires]   |   |  |
|           | Gerry Connolly (D)             | <a href="http://gerryconnolly.com/">http://gerryconnolly.com/</a>                         | P.O. Box 563 Merrifield VA 22116                       |
|           | Keith Fimian (R)               | <a href="http://fimianforcongress.com/">http://fimianforcongress.com/</a>                 | P.O. Box 3131 Oakton, VA 22124-9131                    |