

VOTER GUIDE
NOVEMBER 2017 ELECTIONS – STATEWIDE RACES
League of Women Voters of the Richmond Metropolitan Area, Inc.
P.O. Box 25492
Richmond, VA 23260-5492
www.richmond.va.lwvnet.org

The information in this Voter Guide was obtained by the League of Women Voters (LWV) using www.Vote411.org (Downloaded October 8, 2017)

The League of Women Voters of Virginia obtained information for all races and candidates. Questions for each race were formulated. Candidates were contacted by email and they submitted their answers electronically in their own words. No editing was done by the League.

The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any candidate or political party. The League is nonpartisan. The League hopes this information is helpful to citizens as they prepare to vote on November 7, 2017.

Virginia Governor

Description:

The **Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia** serves as the chief executive of the Commonwealth of Virginia for a four-year term. The Virginia Governor cannot serve two consecutive terms. The Governor appoints cabinet members who serve as advisors and administrators of several state agencies. The Governor presents a budget proposal to the General Assembly. Legislators recommend changes in Virginia law for the Governor's analysis and action in favor or opposition.

Biographical Information:



Name: [Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie](http://www.edforvirginia.com/)

Party: Republican

Website: <http://edforvirginia.com/>

Experience: Ed Gillespie is a business owner and a longtime conservative leader. The son of an Irish immigrant, he grew up working in his parents' grocery store. Ed started his career as a Senate parking lot attendant and eventually worked his way up to become Counselor to President George W. Bush. He is a former Chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia and the Republican National Committee.



Name: [Clifford D. Hyra](#)

Party: Libertarian

Phone: (804) 823-7979

Website: <http://cliffhyra.com>

Education: B.S. Aerospace Engineering, magna cum laude, Virginia Tech J.D., magna cum laude, George Mason University School of Law

Experience: Lifelong Virginia resident, father of four, small business owner and law firm partner.



Name: [Ralph S. Northam](#)

Party: Democratic

Phone: (804) 592-1106

Website: <http://www.ralphnortham.com>

Education: I'm a proud graduate of public schools on Virginia's Eastern Shore. I went to VMI and served as an Army doctor during the Gulf War.

Experience: I'm a lawmaker & doctor, & for 18 years I've served as the volunteer medical director at a kid's hospice, seeing some of the toughest people I have ever met. Now, more than ever, Virginia needs a governor who will make sure every Virginian has economic opportunity, no matter who they are or where they live. That will always be my number one priority.

Questions:

Q#1: *What changes in the process of redistricting would you support and why?*

[Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie](#): - no response

[Clifford D. Hyra](#): We should establish an independent redistricting commission with non-partisan criteria, to remove the conflict of interest that politicians have when they draw their own districts. The commission should be given specific criteria to use for drawing the maps, that prohibit them from using political data and make voting districts fair, keep communities together, and avoid rigging elections.

[Ralph S. Northam](#): One of the first bills I signed onto in 2008 was redistricting reform, and I have fought for it for a decade. One of my first acts in legislative session will be to send down a bill to create a

nonpartisan redistricting commission. I will also veto any redistricting bill that is not the product of a bipartisan or non-partisan redistricting commission.

Q#2: *How would you promote healthcare coverage that is adequate, affordable and accessible for all Virginians?*

Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie: A healthy Virginia is vital for our economy to grow and prosper. The cost of Virginia's healthcare safety net programs are rising rapidly. Ed will work to reduce healthcare costs and make sure patients are in charge of healthcare decisions.

Clifford D. Hyra: Repeal the Certificate of Public Need laws that prevent the opening of new medical facilities, to stimulate competition between health providers. Give more power to nurse practitioners, physician's assistants and mid-level dental providers to fill in for doctors and dentists, especially in rural areas where healthcare providers are scarce. Repeal restrictive mandates for health insurance coverage.

Ralph S. Northam: With the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association reaffirming its proposal to cover the state's portion of Medicaid expansion, we have a funding mechanism. Both the medical community and the public favor passing it. Let's bring the GOP to the table to get this done. No matter what DC does, I will fight to cover those with pre-existing conditions and ensure access to reproductive health care.

Q#3: *Explain your top three priorities if elected?*

Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie: It's time for a plan to get Virginia growing again with across-the-board policy reforms that cover taxes, regulation, education, transportation, healthcare and public safety. Ed has and will continue to put forward a serious and substantive vision for Virginia to create jobs, raise take-home pay and help people lift themselves out of poverty. This includes, "Cutting Taxes for ALL Virginians", "FAITH in our Government", and his "Effectiveness + Efficiency Government for ALL Virginians" Plan.

Clifford D. Hyra: First, give Virginians meaningful tax reform, eliminating the state income tax on the first \$60,000 of household income to provide \$3,000 in tax relief for the average Virginia family each year. Second, reform our draconian drug laws and criminal justice system, ensuring those struggling with substance abuse receive the help they need instead of incarceration and a criminal record. Third, eliminate absurd occupational licensing requirements and burdensome business regulations and taxes.

Ralph S. Northam: We need to push back against reckless policies coming out of Washington, especially on the economy and healthcare. Just as importantly, the folks I hear from around Virginia want a good job that they can support their family with. To do that, we have to continue expanding the circle of opportunity for Virginians who need access to affordable and quality health care, who want their children to have access to a world class education system and who want to raise their families in safe communities.

Q#4: *What would you support, such as new or changed regulations, for improving and preserving our environment, such as air and water quality, land preservation, mitigation of recurrent flooding, etc*

Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie: Ed will work to protect our environment, champion agriculture -- Virginia's first industry -- and redouble efforts to expand exports and open new markets for Virginia products. He will work to expand the production of safe, reliable and affordable energy in the Commonwealth, including the development of oil and natural gas reserves off our deep sea coast and stopping the regulatory assault on our coal sector.

Clifford D. Hyra: I support more competition in the electric power sector to make room for independent power producers and solar co-ops, and incentives for investment in a smart electric grid that is capable of handling the intermittent power generation of wind and solar. I also support land use reform to encourage smart growth and walkable, mixed-use development. Incentives to local government, developers and property owners should be aligned with respect to environmental impacts of new development.

Ralph S. Northam: As a Chesapeake Bay native, I'll defend Virginia from offshore drilling and cuts to Bay cleanup funds. I'll retool the Department of Environmental Quality to protect our natural resources and hold polluters accountable, and I'll invest in clean energy to reduce our impact on climate change and create new, high paying jobs. I'll also create an environmental justice task force to address threats in vulnerable communities, in areas like energy infrastructure siting, air quality and drinking water.

Q#5: *How confident are you that the current requirements for financial disclosure and reporting by candidates and elected officials meet the standards for ethics and transparency? What changes, if any, do you support?*

Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie: - no response -

Clifford D. Hyra: Current financial disclosure requirements in Virginia are pretty good. Information relating to donors and expenditures are readily available to the public. I do not support restrictions to freedom of speech, including political speech, so strong disclosure rules are essential. One related change we should make is to forbid politicians from using campaign donations for their own personal use.

Ralph S. Northam: As governor, I'll fight for disclosure from all outside groups that seek to influence Virginia's elections. There is bipartisan support for these reforms –Montana just enacted a similar bipartisan measure. There has been interest from the Republican side of the aisle in Virginia as well. Virginia's gubernatorial elections are always awash with dark money. This year will probably see even more.

Virginia Lieutenant Governor

Description:

The **Lieutenant Governor** is a constitutional officer of the Commonwealth of Virginia who is elected every four years along with the Governor and Attorney General. The governor and lieutenant governor are elected separately and thus may be of different political parties. The lieutenant governor serves as the President of the Senate of Virginia and is first in the line of succession to the governor; in the event the governor dies, resigns, or otherwise leaves office, the lieutenant governor becomes governor. Unlike the governor, the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia may run for re-election.

Biographical Information:



Name: Justin E. Fairfax

Party: Democrat

Phone: (703) 672-0791

Website: <http://www.fairfaxforlg.com>

Education: J.D., Columbia Law School, Columbia Law Review; A.B., Public Policy Studies, Duke University

Experience: Counsel, Venable LLP; Former Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Deputy Coordinator of the Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Task Force; 2013 Candidate for Attorney General of Virginia, earned The Washington Post endorsement and more than 48% of the statewide democratic primary vote; Vice-Chair, Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC



Name: Jill H. Vogel

Party: Republican

Education: Jill received her J. D. from the DePaul University School of Law after completing her undergraduate studies at the College of William and Mary.

Experience: Jill Vogel has a proven record of getting results throughout her ten years of service in the Senate of Virginia. As a entrepreneur, Jill started her own successful small business, becoming a nationally-recognized ethics attorney while balancing her duties as a citizen legislator with her responsibilities as a working mom with children in school.

Questions:

Q#1: *What changes in the process of redistricting would you support and why? (400 characters)*

Justin E. Fairfax:

I support nonpartisan redistricting in Virginia. As Lt. Governor, I will work with nonpartisan groups to ensure that the voices of the people do not get drowned out by biased and unfair redistricting. I would also review the constitutionality of any legislation passed by the General Assembly on redistricting and advocate for a non-partisan process for redrawing districts.

Jill H. Vogel:

In Virginia's Senate, I have taken the lead on redistricting reform by introducing legislation and a constitutional amendment requiring districts be fair, compact, and contiguous, as well as prohibit drawing any district to favor a specific person or political party. As Lieutenant Governor, I will continue to support good government policies like the redistricting reforms I proposed in the Senate.

Q#2: *How would you promote healthcare coverage that is adequate, affordable and accessible for all Virginians? (400 characters)*

Justin E. Fairfax:

I will fight to expand Medicaid in Virginia. Currently there are 400,000 Virginians who could receive healthcare coverage under Medicaid expansion. Failing to expand Medicaid has cost Virginia \$10.4 billion and 30,000 jobs. I also support expanding health insurance premium tax credits to more Virginians. More people who work should receive high-quality health insurance as an employment benefit.

Jill H. Vogel:

Although most health care policy is now set in Washington following the passage of the Affordable Care Act, Virginia itself can lower costs through compromise on COPN reform, cutting red tape, reducing abusive lawsuits against doctors, expanding telemedicine, fostering healthier lifestyles through education, and ensuring our universities can graduate an appropriate number of medical professionals.

Q#3: *Explain your top three priorities if elected? (500 characters)*

Justin E. Fairfax:

Economic security for all Virginians: Increase the minimum wage, fill 175,000 well-paying "middle-skills" jobs, and ensure equal pay for equal work. Education: Make higher education affordable, refinance high-

interest student loan debt, provide universal Pre-K, and improve our K-12 public education system. Criminal justice reform: Reform juvenile justice, end the "school-to-prison pipeline," prioritize rehabilitation, reduce recidivism rates, and restore the voting rights of returning citizens.

Jill H. Vogel:

If elected Lieutenant Governor, my top three priorities will be improving our economy through policies which foster job creation and a return to economic growth, strengthening our ethics and transparency laws to restore integrity and trust in public service, and seeking greater efficiency and better outcomes in our delivery of core government services such as transportation, education, and public safety through evidence-based reforms which allocate resources where they do the most good.

Q#4: *What would you support, such as new or changed regulations, for improving and preserving our environment, such as air and water quality, land preservation, mitigation of recurrent flooding, etc.? (500 characters)*

Justin E. Fairfax:

I will prioritize the development and use of renewable energy sources, such as through the Virginia Offshore Wind Development Authority. We also need to dedicate a steady state-level funding source for Chesapeake Bay restoration. I support efforts for Virginia to join regional efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and plan for rising sea levels, because we are already seeing flooding events in Hampton Roads.

Jill H. Vogel:

In Virginia's Senate, I have a strong record of supporting land conservation as well as the clean air and water vital to our health, our quality of life, and our economy. If elected, I will continue my work on land conservation and protecting our water quality. I will also work to reduce barriers and prepare for a future where research and innovation reduce our environmental impact through greater adoption of market-rate clean energy technology and development of Virginia's renewable resources.

Q#5: *How confident are you that the current requirements for financial disclosure and reporting by candidates and elected officials meet the standards for ethics and transparency? What changes, if any, do you support?*

Justin E. Fairfax:

I support campaign finance reform in Virginia. Disclosure and reporting by candidates is not sufficient. We do not have contribution limits for state and local campaigns unlike 38 other states and federal campaigns. Unlimited campaign contributions can lead to special interests having undue influence and so I will support legislation that seeks to set contribution limits in state and local races.

Jill H. Vogel:

Financial disclosure is essential for transparency and I have proudly worked to strengthen ethics in general. I wrote legislation banning personal gifts from lobbyists and special interests, as well as banning the use of campaign funds for personal expenses. I also introduced the Constitutional amendment for independent redistricting, ensuring voters choose their leaders, not the other way around.

Virginia Attorney General

Description:

Attorneys General are elected for a four-year term and have no term limits. The Attorney General is second in line for succession to the Governor. The AG provides legal services to the Commonwealth's agencies, boards, commissions, colleges and universities and defends the interests of Virginians and the Virginia government. When requested by local Commonwealth's Attorneys the AG may assist with specialized prosecutions. Resources are offered for consumer protection, identify theft prevention, internet safety, and many other public safety measures to provide for secure communities.

Biographical Information:



Name: [John D. Adams](#)

Party: Republican

Phone: (804) 496-1876

Website: <http://www.johnadamsforva.com>

Education: University of Virginia School of Law, JD, Managing Editor, Virginia Law Review, 2003
Virginia Military Institute, BA, Economics, 1996

Experience: -Navy veteran, Former federal prosecutor in Richmond, prosecuting violent criminals, white-collar felons and corrupt public officials. Clerk for the U.S. Supreme Court, Associate counsel in the Bush White House, Department Chair at McGuireWoods, one of the nation's largest law firms.



Name: [Mark R. Herring](#)

Party: Democratic

Phone: (804) 477-3438

Website: <http://herringforag.com>

Education: Bachelor's and a master's degree from the University of Virginia. Graduated with honors from the University of Richmond School of Law.

Experience: Mark Herring has served as Attorney General of Virginia since January 2014. Prior to that, he represented Loudoun and Fairfax counties in the Virginia Senate and served as a member of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors.

Questions:

Q#1: *What proposals would you support for reform of sentencing and incarceration?*

John D. Adams: As a former federal prosecutor, I have seen first hand the importance of our judicial system, as well as the impact committing a crime has on someone's life. Job one of the attorney general is keeping Virginians safe. That includes getting serious about the dramatic rise in violent crime and gang activity we are seeing in communities around Virginia. But we also must be proactive to keep people from committing crimes in the first place and ensuring that those who have are ready to be productive members of society after they have served their time. While it is now the attorney general's job to advance legislation, I will defend laws passed by the General Assembly to address this issue.

Mark R. Herring: In the area of criminal justice reform, I would support proposals such as increasing the felony larceny threshold, removing barriers to unemployment such as driver license suspension when court fees and costs are not fully paid off, increased Rehabilitation and Prevention in our Juvenile Justice Programs to reduce recidivism, and automatic restoration of rights.

Q#2: *Explain how you would proceed if legislation was proposed or passed that resulted in conflict between federal and Virginia state law.*

John D. Adams: The number one job of the attorney general is to be Virginia's lawyer. That means defending the laws passed by the legislature, even if the attorney general disagrees with them. Our current attorney general has repeatedly ignored the laws of Virginia or turned on his client – the Commonwealth of Virginia. It also means advising the Virginia General Assembly through the legislative process. If they are considering passing a law that violates the Constitution, I will do my best as a lawyer to give them good advice and ensure that laws that are passed are Constitutional. Finally, I will stand up to federal overreach, regardless of who is in power in Washington, D.C.

Mark R. Herring: If legislation is proposed that is in conflict, I would work with the General Assembly and Governor to amend or alter that language so it is no longer in conflict. When Virginia law is in conflict with federal law or the Constitution, the Attorney General needs to chart a course to resolve those issues. During my time we've dealt with several complex issues related to this, most notably the state's prohibition on same-sex marriages. Virginia ended up being a leader in that effort, and we worked to ensure every individual's rights were protected and won in every court we argued in.

Q#3: *Explain any changes to the VA Constitution that you would favor or oppose.*

John D. Adams: Changes to Virginia's Constitution take place legislatively and at the ballot box, not in the Attorney General's office. The role of the attorney general is to defend the laws passed by the citizens through their elected representatives in the General Assembly and enforce the rule of law. Our current Attorney General has politicized the office and substituted his own will for that of the people. I will not use the Office in such a manner.

Mark R. Herring: I believe Virginia should include language to ensure non-partisan redistricting. Elections shouldn't be decided by the politicians who draw the lines, they should be decided by the people.

Q#4: *Explain your top three priorities if elected.*

John D. Adams: 1. Get the politics out of the office. I'm running for attorney general because of what I see is the over-politicization of the office by our current attorney general. Mark Herring has spent the last four years advancing his own personal political agenda, rather than representing the citizens of Virginia. 2. Provide the best legal representation possible for the Commonwealth of Virginia. I am not a politician and have never run for office. As a Navy veteran, former federal prosecutor, and lawyer in private practice at one of the largest law firms in Virginia, I will use my experience outside of politics to be the best possible lawyer for Virginia. 3. Bring together local, state and federal law enforcement officials and stakeholders to keep our children and communities safe. This includes working to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic and rising violent crime in neighborhoods across Virginia.

Mark R. Herring: My number one priority is to keep Virginians and their families safe. That means continuing and bolstering our efforts to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic, achieve justice for victims

of sexual and domestic violence by ending the backlog of untested rape kits, and crack down on violent gangs. Second is to protect consumers, seniors, veterans, military families, and students from fraud and scams. I'm proud that my Medicaid Fraud Unit was rated best in the nation by the Office of the Inspector General, and my team and I were able to recover nearly \$100 million in relief for veterans and military families. We also won the largest Fraud Against Taxpayers Act settlement in Virginia history, recovering more than \$63 million. Third is to defend the rights & civil liberties of all Virginians. I'm proud that I was able to help lead the fight to bring marriage equality to Virginia and the fight against President Trump's Muslim ban. We started an initiative to respond to the rise of hate crimes in Virginia, because Virginia is and must remain an open and welcoming place for all. We've also worked to strengthen the relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve, especially in communities of color. I look forward to continuing efforts like these in my next term.

Q#3: *What are the most important changes needed in Virginia to ensure voting access for all qualified Virginians?*

John D. Adams: As Attorney General, I will work to protect the civil liberties of all Virginians by protecting the integrity of our electoral process. The General Assembly has passed a voter ID law to do just that, and as Attorney General I will defend that law when it comes under attack.

Mark R. Herring: The right to vote is fundamental, and as Attorney General, I'm committed to doing everything I can to defend people's right to vote and to expand access to the ballot box. I believe we need to make voting easier in Virginia, not harder. That's why, as a state senator, I authored and supported legislation to do things like expand early voting and make it easier to vote absentee. Also, as a state senator, I opposed policies like voter ID laws. As Attorney General, I've supported the efforts of our Governor Terry McAuliffe to restore the voting rights of thousands of Virginians. So many of those Virginians have come up to me as I travel across the state to let me know how much it means to them to have had their rights restored. I would like to see our General Assembly take action to make the restoration of voting rights automatic after an individual has served his or her time and paid restitution. I also supported the decision of Governor McAuliffe to reject requests by President Trump's commission on voting for the personal information of millions of Virginians. Governor McAuliffe saw that commission for what it is, an attempt to suppress the vote with false and unsubstantiated claims of widespread voter fraud.