

Danica Roem for VA-13

WHY IS THIS RACE IMPORTANT?

Hillary Clinton won this district in the 2017 Presidential election, so it is theoretically winnable for another democratic candidate.

Put simply, there is no bigger threat to most things progressive Americans care about in The Virginia House of Delegates than the incumbent in this race, Del. Bob Marshall. **This guy, who has been nicknamed by political writers in Virginia as “Sideshow Bob,” above all others, must go.**

Women’s reproductive rights, equality, reasonable immigration policies or gun-control measures, you name it: Bob Marshall is on the gross side and isn’t afraid to talk publicly about it. He preaches, on his website, to the media, and through legislation, an extreme conservative ideology that is not in line with what most reasonable, rational, and, dare we say, sane Virginians want.

For example, in a 1989 article in the Boston Globe, Marshall railed against abortion even in instances of incest, saying that it is “voluntary,” in some cases. He similarly said he was against abortion even in instances of rape, saying in [the same article](#), “Your origins should not be held against you [referring to the victim’s unborn child]. The woman becomes a sin-bearer of the crime, because the right of a child predominates over the embarrassment of the woman.”

In another somewhat shocking example of this legislator’s willingness to take extreme and controversial stances on issues, after the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Marshall presented legislation that would actually require teachers and staff to carry concealed handguns in public schools.



Similarly, this is THE race to get involved with if you support basic LGBTQ rights. On his website, Marshall proudly proclaims, “Judges who have declared Marriage to be between two men or two women obviously think they are smarter than Moses or Jesus Christ.” In 2016 he introduced a bill saying transgender individuals must use the bathroom of the gender listed on their “original” birth certificates. And after the federal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy was removed, Marshall proposed banning gays and lesbians from serving in the Virginia National Guard. He then took to the media making a series of offensive, homophobic and often factually incorrect statements on the subject of gays in the military.

DISTRICT RESOURCES

Websites

Register to Vote in Virginia:

elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/index.html

Manassas Park: www.cityofmanassaspark.us

Prince William County: www.pwcgov.org

Newspapers

www.bullrunobserver.info

www.washingtonpost.com

PAST RESULTS

2015 Election Results

Bob Marshall (R)	7,147	56.10%
Donald Shaw (D)	5,592	43.90%

2016 Election Results

Hillary Clinton (D)	15,206	54.45%
Donald Trump (R)	11,193	40.08%

CANDIDATE RESOURCES

Candidate: Danica Roem

SDP ActBlue link: https://secure.actblue.com/donate/sd_va13

Her website: <https://danicaroom.ngpvanhost.com>

Her Facebook: facebook.com/danicafordelegate

Her Twitter: <https://twitter.com/pwcdanica>

2017 TIMELINE

October 16: Deadline to register to vote (general)

October 31: Deadline to request absentee ballot

November 7: [General Election](#)

ABOUT THE CANDIDATE

Danica was born in Manassas, VA, and she went to elementary, middle, and high school there. She attended college in Western New York and returned to her home shortly after graduation to become a reporter with the Prince William Times. While working at the paper, she began hormone replacement therapy, changed her name, gender and byline and, in her words, “no one cared. It was great. I could just keep doing my job.”

As a reporter, she covered sports games at every public high school in the county. She also covered poverty, homelessness, crime, education, business, development, and she was particularly involved in the issue of transportation. Her job was to know enough about the issues to hold elected officials accountable for what they did or did not do about them.

Danica learned to listen to what people were saying and understand their reasoning, regardless of her own opinions. She carried this commitment to objectivity with her as the news editor of the Montgomery County Sentinel in Rockville, MD, where she worked until 2016 when she left to run for office. She wants to bring a reporter’s sensibility

to politics. As an elected official, she intends to listen, first and foremost, and craft public policy based on research and what she is hearing from her constituents.

Danica is also a stepmother and cares deeply about ensuring that families and children of all backgrounds feel safe and are protected from bullying and discrimination.

DANICA ON THE ISSUES

Traffic

Danica sees this as a top issue in the 13th District. She wants to fix Route 28 at find a cost-effective way to extend the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) to Innovation Technology Park. She is opposed to tolling roads in Virginia because it is form of double taxation and would require the public to give up general access roads for private companies to profit from toll revenue. She also opposes the Bi-County Parkway and Dominion Virginia Power’s proposed above-ground power towers, which were conceived without asking residents and without first forming a consensus.

Jobs

Roem wants to take care of all workers in Virginia, which means increasing the minimum wage from the federal minimum level of \$7.25 to at least \$8.75, which would match neighboring West Virginia. She knows that clearing up traffic and improving Route 28 will bring high-paying jobs to Prince William County and will make that a high priority.

Schools

Improving the education system is a key part of Roem’s platform. She plans to (1) expand access to quality public pre-kindergarten; (2) alleviate overcrowding through smarter growth, and (3) increase teacher pay so that teachers in District 13 are paid the same as teachers in the rest of Northern Virginia.

Equality

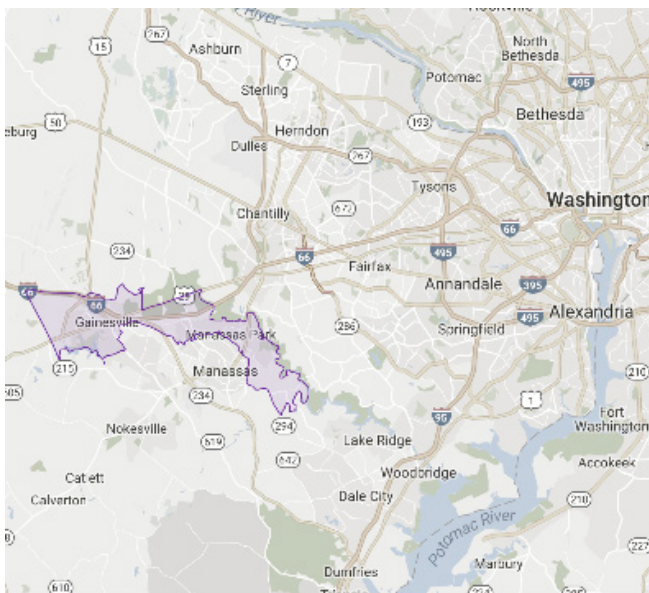
Improving our quality of life starts with equality. Roem supports the DREAM Act, civil rights, voting rights, women’s rights, LGBTQ rights, raising the minimum wage, and making health insurance more accessible and affordable for everyone.

ABOUT THE OPPONENT

There are no term limits in the Virginia House of Delegates, and Del. Bob Marshall has been elected twelve times in the past 24 years. Marshall is a Catholic. Before he was elected as a Virginia state Delegate in 1991, Marshall worked at the American Life League, an organization which, according to their own website, “opposes abortion under any circumstance and opposes all forms of contraception, embryonic stem cell research.” Wikipedia notes that Marshall served as Executive Director at the organization for a time in in the mid-1990s while he was still an elected Virginia Delegate, and even now he acts as a research consultant for the organization.

In 2017 alone, Marshall was the chief-patron of five abortion related bills. He also was a patron of a somewhat bizarre piece of legislation, HJ 549, which sought to make pornography an official public health hazard. Marshall has also authored or supported extreme anti-immigrant legislation like HB 440 from 2008, which creates a presumption of no-bail for aliens or HB 1426 that he chief Patroned in the 2017 session that proposed forbidding lawful release of non-US citizens from any jail or prison in Virginia.

ABOUT THE DISTRICT



District 13 comprises part of Prince William County and the City of Manassas Park.

HISTORY OF THE SEAT

As previously stated, this seat has been held for the last 24 years by Republican Del. Bob Marshall. Democrat Joan Munford held the seat before that, but, according to Wikipedia, it was left open during a redistricting process and Munford ran in the 12th district. In 2011, the district was again redrawn. The district became geographically much smaller and, according to Vpap.prg, lost 3.3 percentage points. Despite this, Marshall won again.

LEGISLATURE

The Virginia General Assembly is the state legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Virginia General Assembly is the oldest legislative body in the Western Hemisphere. Its existence dates from the establishment of the House of Burgesses at Jamestown in 1619. The General Assembly is a bicameral body consisting of a lower house, the Virginia House of Delegates, with 100 members, and an upper house, the Virginia State Senate, with 40 members.

The House is presided over by the Speaker of the House, who is elected from among the House membership by the delegates. The members are elected for terms of two years; and these elections take place during odd-numbered years. Each member represents about 90,000 residents. District lines are drawn after the Census every 10 years so that each Delegate represents the same number of Virginians. The Speaker is almost always a member of the majority party and, as Speaker, becomes the most powerful member of the House. The House is divided into Democratic and Republican caucuses. In addition to the Speaker, there is a majority leader, majority caucus chair, minority leader, minority caucus chair, and the chairs of the several committees of the House.

The annual salary for delegates is \$17,640 per year. Candidates for office must be at least 21 years of age at the time of the election, residents of the districts they seek to represent, and qualified to vote for General Assembly legislators. The regular session of the General Assembly is 60 days long during even numbered years and 30 days long during odd numbered years, unless extended by a two-thirds vote of both houses.

From 1992-2013, the Democratic Party was the majority in the Virginia State House of Representatives for the first four years while the Republicans were the majority for the last 14 years.

Major issues facing the Virginia General Assembly in 2015 were job creation and education, the latter being especially important to Republicans; Democrats were especially focused on gun control issues. But, both parties expressed their desire to work towards improving Virginia's economy.

REDISTRICTING IN VIRGINIA

The governor signed into law a state legislative redistricting plan (www.washingtonpost.com/local/politics/virginia-assembly-approves-new-legislative-maps/2011/04/07/AFRjhrxC_story.html?utm_term=.a4ba10f9b849) on August 29, 2011. In 2014 and 2015, the legislature made attempts to modify the districts that were approved in 2011. The governor vetoed each of these bills.

On December 22, 2014, opponents of the newly drawn map filed suit in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, alleging that 12 state legislative districts constituted an illegal racial gerrymander. According to the Oyez Project at the ITT Chicago-Kent College of Law, the district court rejected this argument:

“The district court held that the plaintiffs did not establish that race was the predominant factor in the creation of 11 of the 12 challenged district. The district court also held that, although race was the predominant factor in the creation of one district, in doing so the General Assembly was pursuing a compelling state interest and its use of race was narrowly tailored to serve that interest.”

—Oyez (www.oyez.org/cases/2016/15-680), ITT Chicago-Kent College of Law

The plaintiffs appealed this decision to the Supreme Court of the United States, which agreed to hear the case (Bethune-Hill v. Virginia Board of Elections www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/bethune-hill-v-virginia-state-board-of-elections) on June 6, 2016.

In the 2015, session of the Virginia General Assembly, the state Senate passed three

nonpartisan redistricting bills, all of which died in the House.

On March 1, 2017, the Supreme Court of the United States issued its ruling (www.nytimes.com/2017/03/01/us/politics/supreme-court-virginia-house-delegates-gerrymandering.html) in Bethune-Hill v. Virginia Board of Elections, finding that the district court “employed an incorrect legal standard in determining that race did not predominate in 11 of the 12 districts.” For these 11 districts, the high court remanded the case to the district court for reconsideration. The court ruled 7-1 on the case. Justice Anthony Kennedy penned the court's majority opinion, which was joined by Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan. Associate Justice Samuel Alito concurred in the judgment, filing a separate opinion. Associate Justice Clarence Thomas filed an opinion that concurred in part with the majority opinion and dissented in part. Kennedy wrote the following in the court's majority opinion:

“The challengers first argue that the District Court misunderstood the relevant precedents when it required the challengers to establish, as a prerequisite to showing racial predominance, an actual conflict between the enacted plan and traditional redistricting principles. The Court agrees with the challengers on this point. ... The challengers submit that the District Court erred further when it considered the legislature's racial motive only to the extent that the challengers identified deviations from traditional redistricting criteria that were attributable to race and not to some other factor. In the challengers' view, this approach foreclosed a holistic analysis of each district and led the District Court to give insufficient weight to the 55 percent [black voting age population] target and other relevant evidence that race predominated. Again, this Court agrees.”

—Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy
Meanwhile, the Supreme Court affirmed the district court's ruling in the case of the remaining challenged district (District 75), arguing that the lower court's ruling was consistent with Alabama Legislative Black Caucus v. Alabama (www.nytimes.com/2015/03/26/us/justices-side-with-black-

[lawmakers-in-alabama.html](#)), a case decided by the high court in 2015. Alabama Legislative Black Caucus v. Alabama established that “where a challenger succeeds in establishing racial predominance, the burden shifts to the State to ‘demonstrate that its districting legislation is narrowly tailored to achieve a compelling interest.’”