



# JOSHUA COLE

**VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES | DISTRICT 28**  
**2021: [RUNNING](#)**

In 2017, Joshua Cole proudly ran for the Virginia House of Delegates to represent Virginia's 28th District, becoming the first African-American and youngest person to receive any party's nomination. In a hard-fought race, Joshua finished less than 100 votes shy of having the honor of representing the 28th District. In 2019, he came back and finished the job – becoming one of the youngest members elected to the Virginia General Assembly.

Raised in the 28th, Joshua has lived in Fredericksburg and Stafford County his entire life. A product of the Stafford County Public School system, Joshua was raised by a single mother. His experience dates back to 2005, when he was appointed by the then-Speaker of the House, the Honorable William J. Howell, as a Page for the Virginia House of Delegates. That same year, he was chosen as the Governor's Page. Delegate Cole has served on Stafford County Public Schools Superintendent's Equity, Diversity and Opportunity Committee. He is a member of the Greater Fredericksburg Area Interfaith Council and the former President of the Stafford County NAACP. In 2020, he was elected as one of the five DNC representatives from Virginia. He currently serves as an Associate Pastor at Union Bell Baptist Church in South Stafford and the Chairman of the House of Clergy for the Union of Charismatic Orthodox Churches.

Clear in all of this work is Joshua's commitment to the communities of the 28th District. Joshua knows not only what it takes to live here, but what it means to build a home in Fredericksburg and Stafford County. He understands the excruciating drive along I-95 that is the bedrock of so many constituent commutes. He's seen first-hand the ever-increasing cost of living in this community, and has sat with hardworking friends and neighbors, proud Virginians, who simply want to find a way to raise their family in the same town in which they grew up.

Joshua was appointed by the Speaker of the House to serve on the State Commission on Youth, Autism Advisory Council, the Rappahannock River Basin Commission, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission, and others. He serves on the House Committees on Education, Public Safety and Chesapeake, Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Read more on [Joshua's website](#).

## **On The Issues**

### **Healthcare For All**

Joshua believes unequivocally that healthcare is a human right, not a privilege. Last year, Democratic legislators pushed through Medicaid expansion, but Republicans tacked on work-requirements. Now, they've got a job to finish: repeal the work requirements and pass Medicaid-for-All so every Virginian can see a doctor.

### **Fix Our Broken Transportation System**

The HD28 area remains the worst traffic hotspot in the country and shows no sign of letting up. The district needs a Delegate who will actually put forward the legislation to end this traffic nightmare, not just talk about the issue.

### **Protect Reproductive Freedom**

Every year, conservatives in Richmond try to strip Virginians of their reproductive liberties. Joshua will block any attempt to criminalize abortion, silence victims of assault, restrict birth control or repeal existing laws limiting freedoms.

### **LGBTQ Equality**

For too long, the LGBTQ community has been marginalized and discriminated against. Joshua will fight for equality for the LGBTQ community and remain committed to ending bullying and violence. Joshua will continue to support any legislation that supports equality for the LGBTQ community

### **Make Housing Affordable For All**

Eviction rates across the district are far above the national average. In 2016, landlords evicted 1 out of 27 residents in Fredericksburg. When an unexpected car repair can mean destitution, we need a change. Joshua will fight for rent control and to end homelessness.

### **End For-Profit Mass Incarceration**

Our criminal justice system desperately needs reform. The failed "War on Drugs" caused levels of incarceration unseen in our history, with imprisonment disproportionately affecting Blacks and Latinos. We must reform our law enforcement, end monetary bail, and legalize marijuana.

## Legislative Accomplishments

In Richmond, Joshua has taken a people first approach to policy making. In his first term, he voted to increase access to affordable healthcare, raise the minimum wage and make community college tuition free.

Joshua has been a fierce advocate for progressive policy. He has taken on big issues like Climate Change, voting to protect our natural resources and hold big businesses accountable. He supported legislation that would reign in polluters and set higher standards for clean air and water quality. Joshua also patroned historic legislation that will rename Jefferson Davis Highway to Emancipation Highway.

During his first term in the legislature, Del. Joshua Cole has worked with the Democratic majority to **ratify the Equal Rights Amendment**. They have also expanded medicaid to hundreds of thousands of residents and raised the state's minimum wage to \$15 per hour. Thanks to Del. Cole and his colleagues, Virginia is **leading the way in the South** for a more progressive future.

## Why This Race Is Important

In just four years, Democrats have seen an impressive and almost unprecedented swing to majority, with more than 20 seats gained over two election cycles. With gains so recent, Republicans are eager to take advantage of this dynamic, where characteristically moderate “bellwether” districts ebb and flow to give way to national political trends, waiting for the pendulum to swing back in their favor. The 2021 House of Delegates elections are sure to be a test of Democrats’ ability to hold Trump Era gains in a post-Trump climate.

## Election Timeline

### May 17

Deadline to register to vote  
(**primary**)

### May 28

Deadline to request  
absentee ballot (**primary**)

### June 8

Election (**primary**)

### October 11

Deadline to register to vote  
(**general**)

### October 22

Deadline to request  
absentee ballot (**general**)

### November 2

Election (**general**)

## About The District

Virginia's 28th House of Delegates district is located in Stafford County and Fredericksburg. It is represented by incumbent Democrat Joshua Cole.

**Nested Congressional Districts:** VA-1: R+8

## Past Results in the the District

### 2019 HOD

Democrat: 13,334, 51.82%  
Republican: 12,294, 47.78%

### 2017 Gubernatorial

Democrat: 12,115, 51.01%  
Republican: 11,319, 47.65%

### 2017 HOD

Democrat: 11,760, 49.80%  
Republican: 11,842, 50.20%

### 2016 Presidential

Democrat: 17,847, 46.64%  
Republican: 18,267, 47.74%

## Demographics

**Population:** 84,004

**Households:** 28,209

**% Over 65:** 10.54%

**% White:** 63.2%

**% Black:** 18.0%

**% Latin:** 11.1%

**% Asian:** 3.1%

**% Mixed/Other:** 4.6%

**Median Income:** \$81,000

**% Poverty:** 6.50%

**% Unemployment:** 3.2%

**% College Grad:** 43.1%

**% High School Grad:** 49.4%

**% No HS Grad:** 7.5%

Source: [statisticalatlas.com](https://www.statisticalatlas.com)

## About the Opponent

Elementary school teacher **Tara Durant** is the Republican candidate running against Democratic Delegate Joshua Cole. She said in her [campaign announcement](#) that she was motivated to run for office because of an incident in which she felt intimidated by a Black Lives Matter protest in the summer of 2020. She is also calling for every child to return to in-person learning immediately.

## Why Virginia Is Important

**Current Control:** Democratic Trifecta (since 2020)

**Gubernatorial Election:** 2021

**Length of House of Delegates term:** 2 years

**Redistricting:** Congressional and State Legislative districts are drawn by a 16-member commission comprising state legislators and citizens

**Sister District Target:** Blue Hold

## Redistricting & Gerrymandering

The Commonwealth has long faced the consequences of political gerrymandering. District boundaries have been a hot topic of conversation in past years. In 2020, the Virginia legislature voted to create a bipartisan committee to handle the creation of new electoral maps; Bipartisan redistricting is now in the hands of a 16 member committee which was on a tight timeline to use 2020 census data to announce adjusted districts for the upcoming House of Delegates elections in November 2021. The original plan had the committee producing new maps by April 2020, but delayed census data from the federal government has made new maps in time to give the state board of elections, localities, and partisans time to effectively prepare for and hold elections unlikely. As of now, the most likely scenario remains that 2021 will see no new maps, instead districts will remain the same this year with new districts only taking effect in 2023.

## Resources

Website: <https://jgcole.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jcole4VA/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/JoshuaCole>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/JCole4VA>

SDP ActBlue Link: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/sdp-va-cole>