

John Bell for VA-87

WHY IS THIS RACE IMPORTANT?

- * All 100 seats in the Virginia House of Delegates are up for election in 2017.
- * Republicans hold 66 of the 100 seats.
- * Every seat counts towards flipping the Virginia legislature blue.
- * GOP leaders say many districts—including those won by Clinton—remain Republican strongholds for state elections.
- * In 2015, only 21 Democrats ran against GOP lawmakers. This year, Democrats plan to challenge 45 GOP incumbents—including 17 lawmakers whose districts voted for Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016.

LINKS

Local Democratic Party

www.pwcdems.com

www.facebook.com/Prince-William-County-Democratic-Committee-221672771197188/

www.loudounDemocrats.org

www.facebook.com/LoudounDemocrats

Newspapers

<http://www.loudountimes.com>

<http://potomaclocal.com>

<http://www.insidenova.com>

PAST RESULTS

2015 Election Results

John Bell (D)	8,203	49.93%
Chuong Nguyen (R)	7,883	47.98%

2016 Election Results

Hillary Clinton (D)	22,634	59.64%
Donald Trump (R)	13,272	34.97%

ABOUT THE CANDIDATE



Candidate: John Bell

SDP ActBlue link: https://secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/sd_va87

His website: www.johnbellfordelegate.com

His Facebook: www.facebook.com/johnbellforvirginia

His Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DelegateJBell>

Ballotpedia: [https://ballotpedia.org/John_Bell_\(Virginia\)](https://ballotpedia.org/John_Bell_(Virginia))

2017 TIMELINE

May 22: Deadline to register to vote (primary)

June 6: Deadline to request absentee ballot (primary)

[June 13: Primary election](#)

October 16: Deadline to register to vote (general)

October 31: Deadline to request absentee ballot

[November 7: General Election](#)

BACKGROUND INFO

Delegate John Bell is a retired member of the United States Air Force. He served almost 26 years before retiring as a Major in 2007. During his Air Force career, John served as a Finance Officer all over the world, including tours in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. His ability to build consensus among diverse participants produced savings and cost reductions throughout the world, including \$200 million saved annually from his work in Iceland.

John enlisted in the Air Force in 1981 after graduating from high school. He was consistently recognized during this enlisted career as an outstanding performer and was named the #1 Non Commissioned Officer out of over 5,000 assigned to the Far East in 1992. After completing his bachelors degree in Business Administration and graduating Summa Cum Laude (while serving full time in the Air Force) from Regis University, he was selected for Officer Training School. At Officer Training School, John finished in the Top 10% of graduates and was named a Distinguished Graduate. John was also a Distinguished Graduate of Squadron Officer's School and was named the U.S. Air Force's 2006 Outstanding Contributor to Financial Management and Comptrollership. In addition to his Bachelor's degree, John also has an MBA (finance emphasis) and a Masters in Organizational Development from George Washington University.

John is married and lives in South Riding in Loudoun County with his wife Margaret (also retired Air Force). Margaret is a realtor and is an avid supporter of animal rescue. They have five children and have a proud tradition of military service with one child (John) having served six years in the Air Force and two in the Air National Guard (Danielle, Josh).

2015 Campaign

Elections for the office of Virginia House of Delegates took place in 2015. Bell defeated Nguyen (R) and Suojanen (L) in the general election.

2013 Campaign

Bell ran in the 2013 election for Virginia House of Delegates District 87. He was defeated by incumbent David Ramadan (R) in the general election on November 5, 2013.

JOHN ON THE ISSUES

Full-Day Kindergarten for Every Student

"Northern Virginia sends more tax dollars to Richmond than any other region in Virginia, yet the education funding we receive has not kept up with our needs. Despite being one of the wealthiest counties in the United States, Loudoun County still does not have full-day kindergarten for all

students. I have been a consistent advocate for full-day kindergarten, and I will work with the Board of Supervisors to bring more of our money back to Loudoun and Prince William so that our children can experience the world-class education they deserve."

Lowering Greenway Tolls by Ending Corporate Ownership

"Each year brings a new increase in tolls on the Dulles Greenway, with no end in sight. The only permanent solution that will bring real relief to families in the 87th District is to buy the road from its current owners. We can do this by issuing bonds and taking advantage of our current low interest rates. With the savings from road maintenance and snow removal and the cost of the taxes the owners currently pay, we could institute distance-based pricing and reduce the cost of tolls dramatically. This would be at no cost to the taxpayers and would allow the people to control their own fate going forward."

Promoting Economic Development

"Northern Virginia needs to continue to attract new businesses so that we can diversify our economy and provide our children with access to good-paying jobs. We need to explore public-private partnerships so that we can encourage and grow green industries and reduce the cost to government. We also need to invest in growing industries such as cybersecurity and green technology so that we don't have to rely as much on the federal government for jobs and investment in Northern Virginia."

Finding Cost-Effective Transportation Solutions

"I favor prioritizing transportation investments to relieve choke points to both maximize taxpayer dollars and produce the most benefit for Northern Virginia families. I am also a strong advocate of innovative solutions like bus rapid transit and ride-sharing programs like Slugging, and I would like to institute a greater ride-sharing program in the western Loudoun corridor, at no cost to taxpayers. The Commonwealth Transportation Board and VDOT need to accelerate projects that reduce congestion, especially in some of the most traffic-clogged areas of Loudoun and Prince William."

Protecting Virginia's Natural Beauty

“I know that I won’t be around to see most of the adverse affects of global warming and climate change, but I worry every day that my children and grandchildren will. We need to invest in alternative forms of energy, so that we can end our dependence on fossil fuels and also create new jobs and industries that will help diversify our economy. We shouldn’t give massive tax breaks to coal companies and other polluters while making it more difficult for clean energy providers to get off the ground in Virginia.”

Increasing Access to Quality Healthcare & Women's Rights

"I want my daughters and granddaughters to be able to make their own health care choices. That is why I am so disgusted by Republican efforts to close health clinics and interfere with individuals' private medical decisions. I trust Virginia's women and doctors to make those decisions, not politicians. As legislators, we need to increase access to health care, not restrict it."

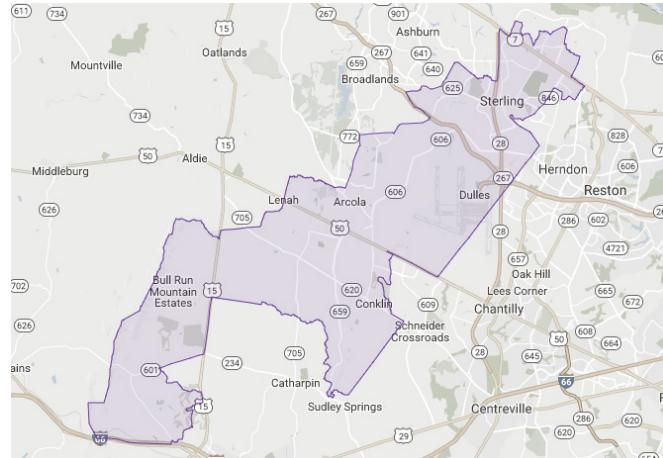
Ensuring Equal Rights for all Virginians

"Every individual deserves equal protection under our laws, and that includes our LGBT brothers and sisters. I have been a longtime supporter of marriage equality, and I am extremely proud of the progress our Commonwealth has made in recent years on this issue. However, there is work to be done to ensure that no person is discriminated against because of his or her sexual orientation or gender identity. If Virginia wants to continue to attract businesses and grow its economy, we cannot allow discrimination in any form to stand."

Taking Steps to Prevent Gun Violence

"When I served overseas in the Air Force, I frequently carried a gun on my hip in combat zones, so I respect the rights of law-abiding citizens to own a firearm. However, we need to take commonsense steps to reduce the tragedy of gun violence in our society. While closing the gun-show loophole and instituting universal background checks will not stop every death from firearms, it will be a positive move to ensure that firearms do not fall into the wrong hands."

ABOUT THE DISTRICT



Made up of Loudoun County and Prince William County.

Loudoun County constitutes a part of the 5-million-acre Northern Neck of Virginia Proprietary granted by King Charles II of England to seven noblemen in 1649. This grant, later known as the Fairfax Proprietary, lay between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers.

Between 1653 and 1730, Westmoreland, Stafford, and Prince William counties were formed within the Proprietary, and in 1742 the remaining land was designated Fairfax County. Settling of the Loudoun area began between 1725 and 1730, while it was still owned by Lord Fairfax. Permanent settlers came from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland. During the same period settlers from eastern Virginia, of English Cavalier stock, came to lower Loudoun and established large tobacco plantations.

During the War of 1812, Loudoun County served briefly as a temporary refuge for the president and important state papers. The Constitution and other state papers were brought to Rokeby, near Leesburg, for safekeeping when the British burned Washington. President Madison established headquarters at Belmont.

Today, Loudoun county is part of Virginia's third most populous county. It is part of the Washington/Arlington/Alexandria area. Loudoun County is

home to world headquarters for several Internet-related and high tech companies, including Verizon Business, Telos Corporation, Orbital Sciences Corporation, and Paxfire. Even with the modern focus, Loudoun County retains a strong rural economy. The equine industry in particular has an estimated revenue of \$78 million.

Captain John Smith discovered Prince William County during an expedition up the Potomac River in 1608. Smith found the region inhabited by Anacostan, Doeg, Iroquois, and Piscataway Indians. The first known colonial settlement was founded in 1722. In 1730, the Virginia General Assembly carved out an area approximately 2,000 square miles in size and named it Prince William County, after the second son of England's King George II.

Present day Prince William County is a thriving and diverse community. The County has a population of 364,734 people and boasts a median household income of \$88,724 as indicated by the Census Bureau's 2008 American Community Survey. It is also a "young" county with 29.3% of its population below eighteen years of age. Prince William County is Virginia's second most populous county. And has the seventh highest income of any county in the United States. It was Virginia's first majority-minority county.

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 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/politics/virginia-assembly-approves-new-legislative-maps/2011/04/07/AFRjhxC_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 (<https://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 <http://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 (<https://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 (<https://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.'"