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Candidates for U.S. Congress, Eighth District of Virginia* (in alphabetical order)

Please note that responses were edited to conform to a requirement that they be limited to 100 words or less.



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Mark Ellmore (R)

<http://www.markellmore08.com/>

1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 8th Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

High taxes and transportation are the two biggest issues pressing our residents here in Northern Virginia. We need to cut taxes and become more disciplined with our discretionary spending at the federal level. Our dollars need to go to better uses such as improving transportation in the region. Due to congestion we are seeing a decline in the quality of life for our citizens. We need to increase mass transportation and reduce gridlock.

2. Name the two biggest challenges facing the United States, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

The two biggest challenges facing the United States are also very relevant to Northern Virginia. We have a weakening economy, causing higher gas prices and an overall skyrocketing cost of living. National security and securing our borders are also a top priority so we can keep America safe from harm. My son is in the US Air Force serving overseas and my nephew just returned from Iraq.

3. Name a political figure (either local or national) you greatly admire and explain why.

Over the past year, I've been lucky enough to meet with over 40 Congressmen from around the country, including Congressman Issa(R-CA) and Congressman Eric Cantor(R-VA). They have all been great mentors to me and helped me better understand how Congress functions. I would have to say that Bobby Jindal, the Governor of Louisiana, is someone I look up to. His loyalty to his constituents is exemplary and that is something I hope to model myself after when I'm in Congress.

4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 8th District.

As an executive in the banking industry with over 25 years experience here in Northern Virginia, I have helped countless families achieve the dream of home ownership and fiscal responsibility. I understand the individual needs of our community and have developed strong ties all over Northern Virginia throughout my career.



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5. How long have you lived in northern Virginia, and how has it changed since that date? Explain why those changes have been to the benefit or detriment of local residents.

I have lived in Northern Virginia for 50 years now. Since I was born and raised here, it has changed into a dynamic and diverse community that is now the pillar of economic success for Virginia.

6. Fill in the following blanks:

a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was Back to Basics for Republican Party. It reminds me of the core principles I believe in: liberty, freedom, and a society in which the individual can prosper.

b) My favorite television show/movie is _____.

c) In my spare time I love to golf and exercise. It's important to stay healthy and enjoy the outdoors.



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Matthew Famiglietti (D)

<http://www.matthedemocrat.org/>

1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 8th Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

Transportation

We must expand the reach of our mass-transit systems. Commuters would be more likely to use public transportation on the weekends if there were a monthly metro pass. This would reduce congestion, fumes and wear and tear on our roads.

We must provide safe pedestrian access. Everyone should be able to walk to the doctor, dentist, grocery store, drug store, library, and school. We must require sidewalks in all new communities. Stop building new government offices in locations that are only accessible by car. Government should be setting the example!

Healthcare

We need a single-payer national health care system. **(remainder cut due to requirement that responses be 100 words or less)**

2. Name the two biggest challenges facing the United States, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

Ending the war in Iraq

We are not welcome guests in Iraq. Keeping our troops in the area only makes the situation worse. We need to immediately begin withdrawing American combat troops. The Iraqis have had adequate time to get their political act together.

I would push for a summit of the nations in the area to solve the problems in the area. It is not for America to be a global cop. The nations in that region must solve the problems. Remaining in Iraq is not in our national interest or in our national security interests.

Rebuilding the economy

(remainder cut due to requirement that responses be 100 words or less)



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3. Name a political figure (either local or national) you greatly admire and explain why.

I admire Robert F. Kennedy because Senator Kennedy had the great ability to blend liberal idealism with practicality. He was able to bring together black and white, rich and poor, young and old. I believe it is a tragedy that Robert Kennedy did not live to become President. I am convinced that his Presidency would have ranked up there with Washington and Lincoln. I believe that if Robert Kennedy had been President our country today would be a nation of great wealth as well as compassion and opportunity for all Americans – something which I am striving for in this campaign.

4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 8th District.

FDR was a great leader in part because of his disabilities. I have lived with and overcome my disability, which gives me a unique perspective on the needs of others. My experience as an advocate, first for myself and then for individuals with severe physical and emotional disabilities, makes me uniquely qualified.

Too often political leaders talk too much and listen too little. My ability to listen to different opinions without being judgmental or quick to condemn another person for their beliefs will help me make wiser decisions affecting the 8th Congressional District and the country as a whole.

5. How long have you lived in northern Virginia, and how has it changed since that date? Explain why those changes have been to the benefit or detriment of local residents.

I moved to Northern Virginia in December of 1999. While some of the area's growth has been positive, much has been unplanned or poorly managed. We have not adequately addressed the issue of public transportation or affordable housing. We have not provided more walkable communities. We have not built a sense of community within our neighborhoods. We are, after all, referred to as the *Commonwealth* of Virginia. We seem to be missing some of the *common* in our wealth.



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6. Fill in the following blanks:

a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was Broken Government by John Dean.

b) My favorite television show/movie is 1776.

c) In my spare time I love to watch baseball.



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Jim Moran (D)

<http://www.jimmoran.org/>

1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 8th Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

Maintaining our region's economic vitality and diversity requires affordable housing, sustained full employment, an efficient public transit system, an educational system that develops every child's full potential from pre-K through college and a sufficient nurturing of our precious natural environment. We should devote the resources now being misspent in Iraq to meeting these needs as well as reducing the indebtedness of future generations. I believe that the federal government must play an indispensable role in enabling individuals and their communities to maximize their economic and educational opportunities while preserving an even higher quality of life for their children and grandchildren.

2. Name the two biggest challenges facing the United States, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

We need to end the occupation of Iraq and withdraw our troops as soon and safely as possible. The emphasis on hard power by the Bush administration needs to be replaced by smart power, using our military as a last resort and our diplomacy first and foremost. Our fiscal policy has been irresponsible, depending on borrowed money to pay for the war and tax cuts. We need to restore confidence in the dollar, stick with pay-as-you-go budget rules and let the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy expire.

3. Name a political figure (either local or national) you greatly admire and explain why.

I have great respect for Barack Obama. As editor of the Harvard Law Review he could have chosen a comfortable career in law; instead he chose to be a community organizer in Chicago. As a biracial child, he could have grown into a resentful, defiant and rebellious man; instead he chose to work for change within the system. His devotion to family and his multicultural experience are strong assets. I admire his grit and determination, enduring the grind of a Presidential campaign to make this country what it was meant to be, a moral guidepost to the world.



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4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 8th District.

Many years ago I was selected for a federally sponsored Postgraduate Program in Public Administration and Financial Management. Subsequently, I spent eight years as a civil servant in budget and fiscal policy. This professional financial management background was complemented by my local government experience – ten years on the Alexandria City Council, including five years as Mayor. My educational, professional background and years in local elective office have given me an enhanced appreciation of the fact that democracy and governance emanate from the grass roots—where the “rubber hits the road” in terms of public policy and government spending.

5. How long have you lived in northern Virginia, and how has it changed since that date? Explain why those changes have been to the benefit or detriment of local residents.

I've lived in Northern Virginia for 40 years. When I moved to Del Ray in Alexandria it was divided by race and culture. I cut my political teeth by suing 17 banks for attempting to redline the neighborhood. Since then I have seen Alexandria, Arlington, Falls Church, Reston, and most of Fairfax County grow into an inclusive, pluralistic society. We are a community that values diversity, practices tolerance and embraces change. Our schools reflect all the corners of the world. We are a creative community, attracting many of the best and brightest across the planet.

6. Fill in the following blanks:

- a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was:** Legacy of Ashes by Tim Wiener
- b) My favorite television show/movie is:** Boston Legal/Grey's Anatomy
- c) In my spare time I love to:** read newspapers, magazines, books and blogs.



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Amit Singh (R)

<http://www.amit08.com/>

1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 8th Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

Alleviating congestion and reducing gas prices are two of the biggest challenges facing the 8th district. My transportation policy ensures the most efficient routes and lowest prices by making bidding for the Dulles metro rail extension a competitive process. I would also demand that Virginia receive its fair share of the Federal Highway Trust Fund, which I would dedicate to expanding I-66 within the beltway and to better maintaining our roads.

My energy policy focuses on reducing gas prices by ending ethanol subsidies, allowing the construction of new nuclear power plants, and supporting a free market of alternative energies.

2. Name the two biggest challenges facing the United States, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.

The economy and Iraq are the two biggest challenges. My economic policy includes solutions to encourage growth like reducing the second highest corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. We can lessen the taxpayer's burden by reducing government waste through earmark reform and restructuring agencies and entitlement programs.

Success in Iraq requires us to address the economic and political aspects of the situation. Militarily we have been successful, but progress is not sustainable if we continue to ignore the other aspects. Congress must put pressure on the Iraqi government to spend their \$25 billion surplus and take ownership of Iraq.

3. Name a political figure (either local or national) you greatly admire and explain why.

I admire Representative Jeff Flake of Arizona for the principled stand he has taken in Congress and for being one of the strongest proponents of fiscal responsibility. Like Rep. Flake, I believe that we need to reduce government waste and need to reform the earmark process. Additionally, like Rep. Flake, I believe that legislation like No Child Left Behind and Sarbanes-Oxley are making it more difficult for American children and businesses to be competitive in the global economy. Furthermore, we agree that we need to use our economic power to improve relations with nations like Cuba.



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4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 8th District.

As a small business owner who works with commercial, government, and military clients, I understand the environment that many in the 8th district work in. I know how to navigate federal bureaucracies and get results while reducing inefficiency and waste.

Combine this experience with my talent as an engineer, a problem solver, and the residents of the 8th district, including our increasingly young and diverse residents, will have a representative that can create the change they want. They will have someone who can creatively and practically address the root causes of their problems and not simply treat the symptoms.

5. How long have you lived in northern Virginia, and how has it changed since that date? Explain why those changes have been to the benefit or detriment of local residents.

I have lived in Northern Virginia for over a decade and have seen how the area has become an economic powerhouse which has attracted a younger, more diverse, and more transient population. This growth and relative economic stability has created many jobs, attracted a highly-skilled local workforce, and brought many businesses to the region. However, it has led to a higher cost of living and higher price of real estate. The expense of living within the 8th district has forced many residents to move farther from work and out of the district to raise their families.

6. Fill in the following blanks:

a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was *Creating a World Without Poverty: Social Business and the Future of Capitalism* by Muhammad Yunus.

b) My favorite television show is *The Office*.

c) In my spare time I love to play basketball.