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## Candidates for U.S. Congress, Eleventh District of Virginia\*

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

*\*Democratic candidate Lori Alexander did not return her questionnaire in time to be included on our website.*



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**Leslie Byrne (D)**

<http://www.byrneforcongress.org>

**1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.**

Transportation and education. Commuting is an enormous concern in our district. As a member of Congress, I obtained the first federal funding for Rail-to-Dulles. I support the Tyson's tunnel for Metro expansion and will fight for sufficient funding to complete the project. No Child Left Behind is failing our students. We must train more highly qualified teachers, improve student-teacher ratios, build increased flexibility into the program, and fully fund NCLB so states and localities can meet those standards. I helped pass the first full funding of Head Start, and I am committed to doing the same for NCLB.

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

The war and our economy. We must end the occupation in Iraq. I was against this war before the invasion, and I am just as committed now to getting out and bringing our troops home. That's why I joined over 50 congressional candidates in endorsing "A Responsible Plan for Ending the War in Iraq" ([www.responsibleplan.com](http://www.responsibleplan.com)). The war is hurting our economy. We have spent over \$1 trillion since the invasion, the price at the pump is fast approaching \$4 a gallon, and most of us are seeing the value of our greatest financial asset—our home—continuing to decline.

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

Teddy Roosevelt- He was our first "environmental" president and broke up the oligarchy that controlled the United States. A living political figure I admire is civil rights leader Julian Bond: He has spent five decades fighting for civil rights for all Americans, and through it all he has lived his life with great dignity and integrity.



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**4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 11<sup>th</sup> District.**

Experience and effectiveness . From the Virginia House of Delegates, to the state senate and the U.S. Congress, I have 13 years of experience in our greatest legislative bodies, and I know how to get results for Northern Virginia—whether it's securing transportation funding or helping pass the Family and Medical Leave Act. If elected I would begin with two years seniority, and be first in line for a seat on the transportation committee. I have passed tax relief measures and strong environmental laws.

I will continue to fight for our present and future generations.

**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.**

When I arrived in 1971, sprawl was just starting. It spread from inside the beltway until now it runs all the way to the West Virginia line west and down to Stafford and Caroline counties to the south. Growth was thought to bring an ever increasing tax base to localities but what wasn't clearly understood is that the infrastructure costs would outstrip the ability of counties to pay for such growth. The environmental impacts have been enormous. Divorcing transportation from land use policies does not work.

**6. Fill in the following blanks:**

a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was The Best American Mystery Stories 2007.

b) My favorite television show/movie is The Wizard of OZ.

c) In my spare time I love spending time with my grandchildren and playing golf.



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**Gerry Connolly (D)**

<http://www.gerryconnolly.com>

**1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 11th Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.**

The two biggest challenges facing the 11th Congressional District are transportation and the economy. On transportation, I'll continue to advocate for transit-oriented, mixed-use development so we can give citizens choices beyond the automobile. We need federal funding for Rail to Dulles, a secure funding source for Metro and increased investment in overall transportation infrastructure. The economy in Northern Virginia is still strong, but is facing some major challenges stemming from the nationwide economic crisis. As Chairman of Fairfax County, I've helped bring quality jobs with good benefits to our region. In Congress, I'll look to do the same.

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

The War in Iraq and the economy are the two biggest challenges facing the United States. I've been opposed to the war from the beginning and will work to bring our troops home. I support a phased withdrawal of combat troops and will vote against any open-ended military commitment in Iraq. On the economy, we have to put our nation's fiscal house in order. As Chairman of Fairfax County, I've balanced our budget every year. Congress should do the same. I've championed a proposal to buy up foreclosed properties in an effort to promote affordable housing and stem the foreclosure **(response cut due to space limitations)**.

**3. Name a political figure (either local or national) you greatly admire and explain why.**  
(Maximum 100 words)

In my formative years the two most inspiring figures were Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy. They fought for justice and displayed enormous courage. They continue to inspire and inform me in my public life.



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**4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 11th District.**

I believe my extensive local government experience and my foreign policy experience make me uniquely qualified to represent the 11th District. On the local level, I've represented this area for nearly 14 years. I have a record of getting things done and understand how federal legislation can affect us at the local level. Before serving in elected office, I spent ten years advising the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee on foreign policy, specializing in the Middle East. Given the need for our nation to repair credibility abroad, I think this experience can be especially useful in Congress, repairing the damage **(response cut due to space limitations)**.

**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 since 1976 and have seen many changes. One of the most striking changes we've experienced is the substantial growth in our diversity. When I moved here, Northern Virginia was a relatively homogenous community. Today, we have citizens from all corners of the globe who speak every language you can imagine. In Fairfax, we've been able to capitalize on that diversity and strengthen our community. Our crime rate is at an all-time low, our schools are the best in the nation and we're the economic engine for the entire Commonwealth. We've shown that a welcoming, tolerant **(response cut due to space limitations)**.

**6. Fill in the following blanks:**

a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was "The Coldest Winter" by David Halberstam.

b) My favorite television show/movie is The Lion in Winter.

c) In my spare time I love to read, walk and spend time with my family.



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**Doug J. Denny (D)**

<http://www.dougforcongress.com>

**1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.**

Transportation issues and the downturn in the economy are the biggest challenges facing Virginia's 11<sup>th</sup> CD.

I will apply my extensive leadership, business, and management experience to help provide oversight of the recently revived Rail to Dulles project. I will also fight for:

- An underground metro through Tyson's Corner,
- A permanent federal funding stream for Metro
- More BRAC federal funding for transportation projects due to the Ft. Belvoir expansion
- Creating incentives for telecommuting for the federal workforce
- Secure federal funding to build an I-95 "southern beltway bypass"
- Advocate greater use of rail, light rail, **(response cut due to space limitations)**.

**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 ending U.S. involvement in the Iraq War and reversing Global Climate Change.

As an Iraq War combat veteran and national security expert, I recently released my detailed plan for ending the Iraq war by beginning a smart, phased withdrawal of our troops from Iraq. Levels would drop from 140,000 today, to 35,000 in Iraq and 35,000 in Kuwait by 2009. Following increased diplomatic engagement, the troop levels would decrease until no combat forces would be in Iraq by 2011.

Reversing global climate change will require a great commitment by our nation. **(response cut due to space limitations)**.



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

I admire Senator Barack Obama. He took on the presumptive nominee with a message of hope and change, and has persevered through tough attacks from a well entrenched political machine. He has taken tough stands on issues and has shown that he has guts and has the leadership, intellectual, managerial and communication skills necessary to lead our nation.

That is why I've endorsed him in his bid to be the President of the United States, the only candidate in my race to endorse him or any candidate for the presidency.

**4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 11<sup>th</sup> District.**

My two specific skills are my candid, straight-talking style and my extensive military and community leadership experiences. As a former military officer and career public servant, I try to be open and candid in everything I do. I live my life as if the whole world is watching. I will serve as in Congress with honor, courage, and commitment. I'm not running for Congress because I want to be *somebody*, I am running because I want to *do something*.

I was the commanding officer of a Navy fighter squadron, the President of my large Citizens' Association, a member or former **(response cut due to space limitations)**.

**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 first moved to the 11<sup>th</sup> district and Northern Virginia in 1997 (I was transferred out to Virginia Beach in 2000, returning to NOVA again in 2004). The biggest change I've seen, to the detriment of the local residents, is the horrible traffic congestion. Eleven years ago, a commute into the city was manageable but challenging. Today, the commute, either by bus, by car or by metro is approaching unbearable.

This traffic congestion is caused by too much development with too few requirements placed on builders and not enough action by federal, state, and local governments to provide more transportation **(response cut due to space limitations)**.



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**6. Fill in the following blanks (Maximum two sentences):**

**a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was** The Thumpin': How Rahm Emanuel and the Democrats Learned to Be Ruthless and Ended the Republican Revolution by Naftali Bendavid. **The most recent novel that I enjoyed was** The Da Vinci Code by Dan Brown.

**b) My favorite television show/movie is** 30 Rock and Forrest Gump.

**c) In my spare time I love to** play sports with my two young children. Jack is currently playing baseball and Rachel plays lacrosse.





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**Keith Fimian (R)**

<http://www.keithfimian.com>

**1. Name the two biggest challenges facing the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, and briefly explain how you would work to solve them.**

One of the 11<sup>th</sup> Districts biggest obstacles at present is fixing the problems with our transportation system. The average commute in our area is over an hour! There should be some common sense solutions that can be implemented to ease the congestion.

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

The war in Iraq is a huge challenge but the fact is we are there. We must look forward and come up with a sound strategy. First and foremost, we MUST take care of our troops. These courageous men and women are responsible for maintaining our freedom and prosperity, and we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Secondly, the problem of illegal immigration must be solved. Before the government should open discussion on what to do about illegal aliens in the United States, we MUST secure our borders. This is paramount. Without a secure border, we put ourselves in **(response cut due to space limitations)**.

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

I must say that after recently reading and watching more about our founding fathers, I have deep admiration for both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Their contributions to this great nation, I believe, are a large part of the reason we have been so successful thus far.

**4. Name two specific skills or experiences that make you uniquely qualified to represent the 11<sup>th</sup> District.**

I am an accountant by training and worked with the international accounting firm of Peat Marwick (now KPMG) for seven years before starting my company, US Inspect, in a room over a garage in McLean. We are now both nationwide and the nation's largest home inspection



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company. I hope to apply some of the same common sense principles to the federal government that I have learned “making a payroll” in the private sector.

**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 22 years, and have seen the rapid growth first hand. When I arrived here in 1986 (I grew up in Virginia Beach and lived in Texas, New York and Massachusetts after college) northern Virginia was much smaller and traffic was not nearly as large an issue as it is today.

Rapid growth and expansion always produce some problems, but northern Virginia has a lot to be proud of. It is considered one of the most affluent and prosperous areas in the country complimented with some of the best public schools in the country **(response cut due to space limitations)**.

**6. Fill in the following blanks (Maximum two sentences):**

a) The most recent book I read and enjoyed was Good to Great- Jim Collins.

b) My favorite television show/movie is Not much time lately!

c) In my spare time I love to spend time with my family.