# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FALLS CHURCH

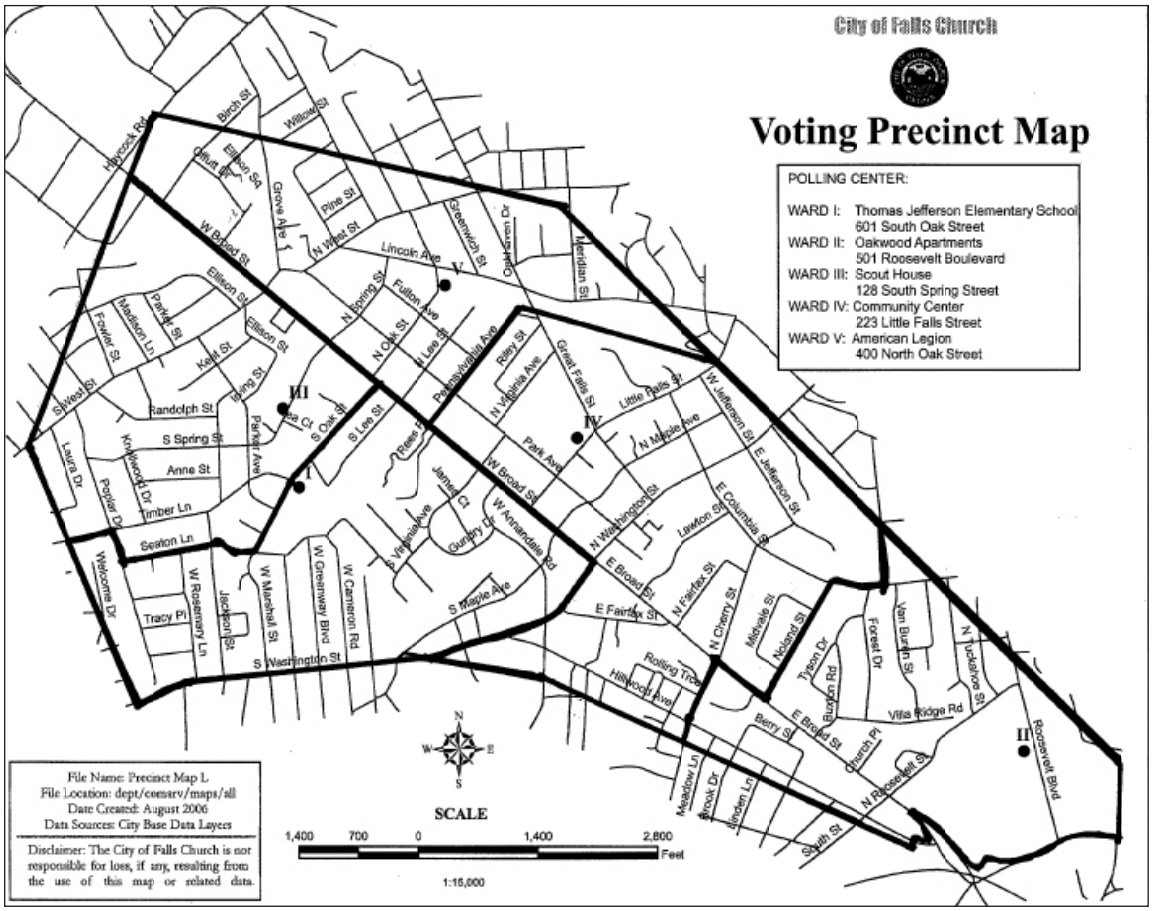
The League of Women Voters®

## FALL 2010 VOTERS' GUIDE

## GENERAL AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2010
## POLLS OPEN 6:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M.

### THE CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

The City of Falls Church was incorporated as an independent city in 1948. It is now home to nearly 12,000 people who live within its 2.2 square miles. Falls Church is part of Virginia's 8th Congressional District, which also encompasses Arlington County, parts of Fairfax County, and the City of Alexandria. Falls Church operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The City has its own school system and police department and provides for its own water services. Falls Church also has its own district court, but combines with Arlington County to make up the 17th Judicial District of Virginia; there is one Circuit Court for the two municipalities, which is located in Arlington. The Falls Church school system is comprised of four schools: Mt. Daniel Elementary School (K-1), Thomas Jefferson Elementary School (2-4), Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School (5-7), and George Mason High School (8-12), with a combined enrollment of 2,094. The City's fiscal year begins July 1 and ends June 30 of each year. A complete list of city services and information can be found at: ***www.fallschurchva.gov.***




### ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The League of Women Voters of Falls Church (LWVFC) produced this Voters' Guide to help citizens in the City of Falls Church choose the representative for Virginia's 8th congressional district and decide three proposed amendments to the Commonwealth's constitution. The 8,400 registered voters who live within the City of Falls Church are eligible to vote at the appropriate polling place for their residence:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ward One** | **Thomas Jefferson School**<br>601 South Oak Street |
| **Ward Two** | **Oakwood Apartments**<br>501 Roosevelt Boulevard |
| **Ward Three** | **Scout House**<br>128 South Spring Street |
| **Ward Four** | **Falls Church Community Center**<br>223 Little Falls Street |
| **Ward Five** | **American Legion Post**<br>400 North Oak Street |

Polling places are accessible to persons with disabilities. The polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

For additional information on the November 2, 2010 elections, voter registration, absentee voting, or where to vote, please contact the Falls Church Office of Voter Registration & Elections at 703-248-5085, ***vote@fallschurchva.gov,*** or visit ***www.fallschurchva.gov.*** You can also contact the Virginia State Board of Elections at 800-552-9745 or visit ***www.sbe.virginia.gov.***

### IDENTIFICATION REQUIRED TO VOTE

Officers of Election are required to ask voters for identification. Acceptable forms of identification can be any ONE of the following:

- Virginia voter identification card
- Valid Virginia driver's license or special identification card issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles
- Military identification card
- Any federal, state, or local government-issued identification card
- Valid employee or student identification card containing your photo
- Utility bill or other piece of mail received at voter's voting address

If you do not have an acceptable form of identification, you may in some cases complete an Affirmation of Identity form BEFORE you can vote.

LWVFC joined with other local leagues in the 8th congressional district to send a questionnaire to all candidates whose names were qualified to appear on the November 2, 2010 ballot. Biographies and responses to the questions appear as written by the candidates and are not edited except to comply with Voters' Guide style and stipulated word limitations. The candidates' original responses are on file with the League of Women Voters of Arlington. Candidates are listed in the order in which their names will appear on the ballot, as determined by the Virginia State Board of Elections.

LWVFC is a nonpartisan organization, founded in 1951, whose purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government. The League of Women Voters does not support any political party or candidate. For additional information on the League of Women Voters of Falls Church, please visit ***www.lwvfallschurch.org.*** You may also find comprehensive, nonpartisan information on the November 2, 2010 elections on the League of Women Voters' website, ***www.VOTE411.org,*** sponsored by the LWV Education Fund.

**CANDIDATES FOR THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRSENTATIVES – 8TH DISTRICT ON NEXT PAGE**

## UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### THE OFFICE

**TERM:** Two years
**SALARY:** The current salary for Members is $174,000. The salary for the Speaker is $223,000, and the salary for the Majority and Minority Leaders is $193,400.
**DUTIES:** Legislative powers, with responsibility for making laws, raising revenue and adopting the federal budget; sole power of impeachment

### BIOGRAPHY AND QUESTIONS

**BIOGRAPHY:** Background provided by each candidate.

### THE QUESTIONS

What are the most important actions you would take to improve our **ECONOMY?**
How do you propose to **BALANCE** the need to provide affordable energy with the need to protect the environment and natural resources?
What other **ISSUE** is important to you?

## UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES – 8th DISTRICT (VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN ONE)

### J. Patrick Murray

***Republican – Challenger***

**BIOGRAPHY:** Colonel Patrick Murray served in numerous armor, intelligence and diplomatic assignments throughout the world. A Russian speaker and Iraq war veteran, he also served as Military Representative to the UN Security Council. After 24 years in the Army, Murray seeks to serve as the Congressional Representative from Virginia's 8th District.
**ECONOMY:** Out of control spending by Congress has made our economy worse and jeopardized our children's economic future. We need to reduce deficit spending and the $13 Trillion national debt, provide certainty for businesses to create jobs by maintaining our existing tax structure for 6 years, provide investment incentives for small business and eliminate unreasonable regulatory impediments to economic growth.

Longer term, we need bipartisan agreement on entitlement reform to maintain the strength of social security, Medicare and Medicaid, as well as private sector strength.
**BALANCE:** Green energy technologies are the future, but our energy and national security problems are today. We need a balanced "all of the above" energy policy to eliminate our dependence on petro-dictators who would distort our foreign policy objectives. Combined with traditional sources, we need a national policy of developing solar, geothermal, wind, nuclear and other environmentally friendly energy sources. This will allow an orderly and economically sustainable transition away from less environmentally friendly sources.
**ISSUE:** We live in a very dangerous world made even more so with the immediate prospect of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons.

As the US military departs Iraq, Iran has clear designs on expanding influence. We must use all our instruments of national power (diplomatic, information, military and economic) to ensure Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons. If they do, it will fuel a Middle East arms race and destabilize the region as well as provide an existential threat to Israel.

I agree with President Obama that the war in Afghanistan is in our nation interest. We therefore need to ensure we provide full support for our servicemen and women deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan to accomplish their mission. It is in our national interest to ensure that Afghanistan does not become safe-haven for training and operations for Al Qaeda.
**CONTACT:** www.MurrayForCongress.com
campaignmanager@MurrayForCongress.com 703-888-6625

### James P. "Jim" Moran, Jr.

***Democrat – Incumbent***

**BIOGRAPHY:** Congressman Moran has dedicated his life to public service in Northern Virginia. He sits on the Appropriations Committee, serving as Interior and Environment Subcommittee Chairman. He chairs the Animal Protection Caucus, Congressional Health Prevention Caucus, the New Democrats Trade Task Force and serves on the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee.
**ECONOMY:** Arlington's unemployment rate is 4 percent, 4.4 percent in Alexandria and 4.7 percent in Fairfax County – all less than half the national average. This is due to our region's emphasis on quality schools, a healthy living and recreational environment, an inclusive society, exceptional local governance, as well as the positive effect of the federal government. Companies are looking to move to Northern Virginia because of its strong economy, highly skilled workforce and diverse, enlightened communities. In just the past two years, major corporations like Northrop Grumman and SAIC have decided to relocate here. To keep our economy growing and our unemployment low, we need to continue investing in education, public transportation and workforce housing.
**BALANCE:** As Chair of Interior and Environment Appropriations, I have successfully fought off efforts to restrict EPA's ability to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act, as well as blocking offshore drilling off the Atlantic Coast. I also support an increased gas tax whose revenue would be put into public transit. It is imperative that we begin the transition to clean, renewable sources of energy such as wind, solar and geothermal energy. Off Virginia's coast, there's enough wind to power the entire state.
**ISSUE:** As Chair of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, I have worked very closely with the U.S. Humane Society, the ASPCA and other like minded groups to ban internet puppy mills, the gathering and slaughter of wild horses, dog and cock fighting, animal crush videos and recently successfully passed the "Truth in Fur Labeling Act" which requires garment manufacturers to disclose the use of fur, due to the fact that a recent Humane Society investigation revealed that most garments labeled as "faux" fur were made with imported dog fur. I strongly support preventing the inhumane treatment of cows, pigs and poultry on industrial farms.
**CONTACT:** www.jimmoran.org
mmoran@moranforcongress.org 202-299-0064

### J. Ron Fisher

***Independent Green – Challenger***

**BIOGRAPHY:** Family man, civic-minded progressive activist, Captain USNavy (retired). Director of a nonprofit: DFPA.org dedicated to improving fire safety. President of a small business that hires disabled veterans: VetsSS.org. Honors graduate of the Naval Academy; Masters in Business Management from Central Michigan. Pro-choice and supporter of government funded embryonic research.
**ECONOMY:** Provide employment opportunities for all at living wages that, in particular, provide: Vital public and social services; Affordable housing, healthy food and clean water; Education and training; Comprehensive Medicare for all. Other employment opportunities are listed below and in WeThePeopleNow.org

Provide funding for above by: Nationalizing the Federal Reserve and operating it as an agency of the government providing low or no interest loans directly to small and medium size businesses and not the large banks; Recouping over $23.7 trillion provided or committed to financial institutions; Seizing large insolvent financial institutions and operating them as GOCOs; Freezing all foreclosures and evictions; Outlawing trading of derivatives, adjustable rate mortgage, naked short sales and unregulated hedge funds; Limiting interest rates to 4% on all secured mortgages and loans and 6% on unsecured loans and retroactive to the origination of the mortgage, credit card or loan; Re-implementing the equivalent of the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933.

Accomplish additional actions outlined on WeThePeopleNow.org
**BALANCE:** Build energy efficient transportation systems, based primarily on rail, nationwide; Develop and implement non-polluting alternative energy sources and energy conservation measures; Cut military spending by 90% (the US military is the biggest hydrocarbon user in the world); Nationalize BP; Reuse, recycle and/or compost everything; Retool factories to build rail, rail cars, electric cars and hybrid buses.
**ISSUE:** Ending U. S. Wars by: Ordering immediate, unilateral cease fire in Iraq and Afghanistan; Halting all attacks and covert operations in Pakistan and elsewhere; Ceasing all military aid; Apologizing to the people of the Mideast; Mounting massive relief efforts and implement "Marshall Plans" in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Pakistan; Orderly withdraw all US troops and contractors from the Mideast and ultimately the world; Returning troops to the U.S. to provide leadership, training, logistics and technical personnel for a new WPA and Civilian Conservation Corps.
**CONTACT:** RonFisherForCongress.com
Fisher@WeThePeopleNow.org 703-725-7849

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS ON NEXT PAGE**

## COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS – VOTE YES OR NO

The Virginia General Assembly has approved each of the following three proposed amendments to the Constitution of Virginia at two of its regular sessions separated by a general election. The amendments, as ballot questions, are now submitted to voters for adoption. The explanations for each amendment are provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia State Board of Elections. For additional information on the proposed constitutional amendments, visit the State Board of Elections website: ***www.sbe.virginia.gov.***

### PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT #1

**Article X, Taxation and Finance.**
**Section 6, Exempt Property.**

**QUESTION:** Shall Section 6 of Article X of the Constitution of Virginia be amended to authorize legislation that will permit localities to establish their own income or financial worth limitations for purposes of granting property tax relief for homeowners not less than 65 years of age or permanently and totally disabled?

**EXPLANATION**

**PRESENT LAW**

Under the Constitution, the General Assembly may give localities the power to grant full or partial exemptions from real estate taxes to persons 65 years of age or older or for persons permanently and totally disabled. The exemption applies to owner-occupied property used as the sole dwelling of such persons. The exemption is currently available only to such persons who bear "an extraordinary tax burden" in relation to their income and financial worth.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

The proposed amendment (i) removes the requirement that tax exemptions are available only to such persons who bear "an extraordinary tax burden," and (ii) gives the General Assembly authority to permit localities to determine their own income or financial worth limitations for tax exemptions for persons 65 years of age or older or for persons permanently and totally disabled.

### PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT #2

**Article X, Taxation and Finance.**
**Section 6-A, Property tax exemption for certain veterans.**

**QUESTION:** Shall the Constitution be amended to require the General Assembly to provide a real property tax exemption for the principal residence of a veteran, or his or her surviving spouse, if the veteran has a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability?

**EXPLANATION**

**PRESENT LAW**

Currently, the Constitution does not grant real estate tax exemptions specifically to veterans. However, the Constitution does allow the General Assembly to give localities the power to grant full or partial exemptions from real estate taxes to persons 65 years of age or older or for persons permanently and totally disabled who "bear an extraordinary tax burden" in relation to their income and financial worth. This exemption applies to owner-occupied property used as the sole dwelling of such persons.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

The proposed amendment would require the General Assembly to pass a law exempting from local taxation the principal residence owned and occupied by any veteran with a one hundred percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability. The veteran's surviving spouse could continue to claim the exemption so long as he or she does not remarry and continues to occupy the home as his or her principal residence.

### PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT #3

**Article X, Taxation and Finance.**
**Section 8, Limit of tax or revenue; Revenue Stabilization Fund.**

**QUESTION:** Shall Section 8 of Article X of the Constitution of Virginia be amended to increase the permissible size of the Revenue Stabilization Fund (also known as the "rainy day fund") from 10 percent to 15 percent of the Commonwealth's average annual tax revenues derived from income and retail sales taxes for the preceding three fiscal years?

**EXPLANATION**

**PRESENT LAW**

The Revenue Stabilization Fund (also known as the "rainy day fund") is used to offset shortfalls in anticipated revenues in any given year, and thus is designed to provide a cushion in the event of an economic downturn. The Constitution currently limits the Fund to 10 percent of the Commonwealth's average annual tax revenues from income and sales taxes for the preceding three fiscal years.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

The proposed constitutional amendment increases the maximum size of the Fund from 10 percent to 15 percent of the Commonwealth's average annual tax revenues from income and sales taxes for the preceding three fiscal years.


*The Fall 2010 Voters' Guide was prepared by:*

**League of Women Voters of Falls Church**

P.O. Box 156

Falls Church, VA 22040

www.lwvfallschurch.org

The League of Women Voters®