

VA-02 District Primer

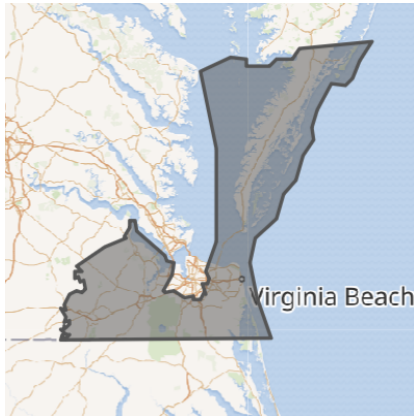
In 2024, Republican Jennifer Kiggans won this seat by 15,972 votes—that’s just 6 votes per precinct. *That’s close!* If we can persuade just a handful of voters per precinct, we can win this year. With your help, we’re going to **FLIP** this key seat and secure a Democratic House majority in 2026.

Key dates
Filing Deadline: May 26
Primary: August 4
Midterms: November 3

Recent Election Results

2024 Presidential Election	2024 House Election	2022 House Election
Harris: 203,279 (49.3%) Trump: 204,307 (49.5%)	J. Kiggans (R): 207,368 (50.7%) M. Smasal (D): 191,666 (46.9%)	J. Kiggans (R): 153,328 (51.6%) E. Luria (D): 143,219 (48.2%)

District Facts & Stats



Largest Cities

- Virginia Beach, pop. 459,470
- Chesapeake, 249,422
- Suffolk, 94,324

Geography

A U-shaped district in coastal Virginia, VA-02 includes significant parts of the Hampton Roads metropolitan area, the southern end of the Delmarva Peninsula, and an adjacent portion of the mainland. The highly urban district encircles Norfolk, Portsmouth, Hampton, and Newport News, including all of their outlying suburbs as well as the cities of Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, and Suffolk.

Citizenry

This majority white district has a substantial Black population (~22%). The district’s residents are disproportionately military servicemembers or veterans; 13% of adults are veterans, over double the U.S. average and over 1.5 times the average for the state of Virginia.

The Local Vibe

VA-02 has acutely felt the effects of the Trump administration despite its relative wealth. The district contains the highest density of federal civilians outside the D.C. area, and its dominant employers are the U.S. military and its defense contractors. Residents have been particularly susceptible to workforce cuts under DOGE.

The district is also home to a substantial number of ongoing offshore wind projects which are now in jeopardy due to capricious Trump policies. It is also adjacent to the Port of Virginia, which has suffered significant reductions in cargo volume and subsequent layoffs due to the Trump tariff regime.

Renée Nicole Good, shot to death by ICE in Minneapolis early this year, was a graduate of an area university. The district has responded with a number of anti-ICE demonstrations.

Key Issues

- **Threats to federal employees and veterans:** Federal workforce cuts and ongoing erosion of veterans healthcare and benefits have disproportionately impacted the district's residents, many of whom are veterans. This is felt particularly acutely with cuts to personnel in the Veterans Administration.
 - **Cuts to the safety net:** 130,000+ residents of the district are enrolled in Medicaid, with an estimated 20,000-30,000 at risk of losing their benefits due to cuts stashed in the "Big Beautiful Bill."
 - **Environmental problems:** Offshore wind energy projects and efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay have both run into significant hurdles from the Trump administration's bizarre anti-green policies.
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About the Candidates

Jen Kiggans | GOP Incumbent

Incumbent **Jennifer Kiggans** was first elected in 2022, when she defeated then-Rep. Elaine Luria (D) in the midterm election. Kiggans serves on the House Armed Services Committee, the House Committee on Natural Resources and the House Committee on Veterans Affairs. She is a Navy veteran and a geriatric nurse practitioner. In spite of her vote for HR 1 (Trump's Big Beautiful Bill, which slashed federal benefits across the board), she positions herself as fighting for better housing and healthcare for active military, claims to protect veterans' access to health care (including mental health), and maintains that the budget bill has not caused people to lose Medicaid coverage nor has it made it harder for them to feed their families. Although she claims to defend the district economy and veterans' needs, she has done nothing to stop the cuts to VA hospitals and the firing of federal workers, many of whom are also veterans. She votes with Trump 100% of the time.

Democratic Challenger(s)

We have identified the following front-runner among those on the primary ballot; we'll know more after the primary election on August 4.

First elected to the House in 2018, **Elaine Luria** is fighting to make a comeback in VA-02. While in office, she was Vice Chair of the House Armed Services Committee and voted twice to impeach Trump. She was a member of the House Select Committee which investigated the January 6 insurrection. Warned that she might lose her seat for this, she said, "I'm doing the right thing. The American people need to know what happened that day."

Luria joined the Navy at age 17, graduated from the Naval Academy in 1997, and earned a master's degree in engineering management from Old Dominion while deployed. After 20 years of service in the Navy, she started a family business which created community jobs and donated over \$50,000 to charity.

In Congress, Luria was instrumental in passing the PACT act, increasing the access to care for veterans with health conditions related to toxic exposures such as burn pits. Luria understands that the green economy is key to her district's prosperity and security, saying that "lowering energy prices and protecting our environment is crucial to our regional economy and our way of life in Coastal Virginia."

Luria is a 2026 Red-to-Blue candidate selected by the DCCC to receive campaign support. She has secured endorsements from a swathe of national and local leaders and organizations including Sens. Mark Warner and Tim Kaine, Gov. Abigail Spanberger, Emily's List, Giffords, VoteVets, and the Black Economic Alliance. As of June 30, her campaign had \$3.5 million in cash on hand.

Luria faces several competitors in the Democratic primary, of whom the strongest is **Nila Devanath**, a lawyer and doctor running on a broadly progressive platform. **Bill Fleming** and **Patrick Mosolf** are also running.

Sign up for another event: mobilize.us/swingleft

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