

# The Voter

Virginia Peninsula MAL Unit Of The League Of Women Voters



The League of Women Voters of Virginia, a nonpartisan political organization of men and women, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The Virginia Peninsula MAL Unit of the League of Women Voters of Virginia covers the areas of Hampton, Newport News and Poquoson in Hampton Roads.



## Voter Guide for Virginia Senate District 2

The Virginia Peninsula will be publishing Voter Guides for each of the races. We feel that this gives voters the opportunity to hear candidate's thoughts on various issues as well as giving contact information where voters can research the candidates in their elections. For more information go to [www.lwvpeninsula.org](http://www.lwvpeninsula.org)

## Virginia Senator District 2 Forum

**October 28st 6:30 p.m.**

Hampton City Hall

Council Chambers 8th Floor

22 Lincoln Street

Hampton, VA

## Voter Information for General Election

**Election Date:** November 8, 2011

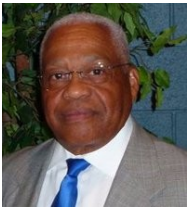
**Poll Hours :** 6 a.m.—7p.m.

**Voter Registration Deadline:** Oct 17, 2011

**Absentee Ballots :**The deadline for requesting the application is **November 1**. Absentee ballots must be received by the local Office of Elections by 7 p.m. on **November 8**.

**What is Your Voting District:** Due to recent redistricting voter in our area have been relocated to different districts. Some of the voter cards that were sent out to our area did not show the new districts. To verify your voting districts go to the Voter Information section of the Virginia State Board of Elections website [www.sbe.virginia.gov](http://www.sbe.virginia.gov) and click on "what's on my ballot" to see all your voting district information.





Thomas Harmon

Website : <http://www.tomharmonforvasenate.com/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Tom-Harmon-for-VA-Senate/188102734578805>

**In light of this year's controversies about drawing the lines of Virginia's legislative districts, would you support legislation or a Constitutional Amendment to require future redistricting decisions to be made by using a nonpartisan process? What specific measures do you believe are most likely to achieve nonpartisan redistricting plans for Virginia?**

**First let me say that although elections have consequences, in the case of redistricting in this past year's iteration. Politics has trumped purpose. The purpose of districts and precincts are to provide communities inclusion so that all voters with common interests have the power of self-determination in those districts and precincts. They shouldn't be drawn to maintain political power for individuals or party. Someone needs to be held accountable for actions taken that affect so drastically our fundamental right to vote and be represented. So many times, partisan redistricting efforts have proven to backfire on those trying to gain advantage. It would not be appropriate to turn over such an important task to an agency or group that cannot be held accountable. As imperfect as it may be, our elected officials must take responsibility to do the right thing in this and many of their other duties. We, the People need make our representatives aware of what we expect of them and to hold our representatives accountable for the votes and actions they take, including on outrages redistricting efforts.**

**Many localities in Virginia have voiced concern regarding unfunded mandates required by the state. Some people have expressed that if the state wants to pursue a project then they should pay for it. The economy has already made an impact on locality budgets. What is your opinion regarding the unfunded mandates required by the state?**

**In many cases, it is the Mandate that is more of the problem. Our Legislators must do a better job of determining what the role of government is and what is better left to the private sector and to individual responsibility. For those things that are truly the responsibility of government, the state should provide for the funding for the functions they require of local governments.**





Thomas Harmon

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**The General Assembly will be looking at lifting the ban on Uranium Mining this year. The state has seen how the economy can take an unexpected negative turn and affect the availability of funding for projects. With this in mind, what do you see as a viable option for an exit strategy for the mining operation? This could cover items such as cleaning up after a contamination incident or just reclaiming the mine once the drilling has ended.**

Any mining, whether for coal or Uranium or gold, must be done in a safe and responsible manner. There is no better incentive and control on business than that of profiting from providing fellow citizens goods and services. Awarded contracts for the mining can be issued on the condition that proper disposition of mines are safe and suitable to the surrounding community.

**Payday (car title) loans have been an issue for the General Assembly for several years. What is your opinion on our current payday loan regulations? Do you support or oppose the existence of the payday loan industry in Virginia. What is your opinion regarding the current cap on interest and fees?**

The concept of government supporting or opposing the “existence” of an industry is troubling. Our country was built on the concept of “find a need and fill it” and entrepreneurship. If individuals want to start a business to satisfy the need of people to borrow money by lending money, they should be afforded the opportunity to make a profit (or to lose money) in providing that service. There are laws against “loan sharking” and restrictions on interest rates and fees can be appropriate. People must take responsibility for their own actions. Caveat Emptor, let the buyer beware, has to be a part of the equation. People find themselves in difficult situations, many times due to their own actions. However, people also must be protected against unscrupulous persons or businesses that would take undue advantage of their circumstance. People should be allowed to borrow money for whatever their purposes might be, provided they have the ability to repay their loan. If they choose to provide their automobile as collateral for the loan they must accept the risk of possibly losing that collateral should they fail to repay the loan. Competition and fair treatment of customers is a hallmark of successful businesses. People should have the opportunity to choose with whom and where they do business. At 12% our cap is not the lowest or highest in the country. The question really is if it’s the government’s business to decide what businesses exist and if there is a market for said businesses.

**What is the issue that you are currently most passionate about that you would like to bring to the public's attention? What are your goals in relation to this issue? What do you perceive as the obstacles to overcome in order for you to champion this issue?**

Entrepreneurship and the ability to start a business, especially a small business, are very important. Regulations that make starting a business difficult need to be analyzed and revised to the maximum extent reasonable to encourage and facilitate the ability of entrepreneurs to start their business and create jobs. The availability of funding, whether it is access to loans, or utilization of existing funding programs, should not be hindered by government. Gaining a Republican majority in the Virginia Senate will eliminate most of the obstacles to achieving success in allowing people to control their lives and expand our economy.

## Virginia Peninsula MAL League of Women Voters of Virginia



### Senator Mamie Locke

Website : <http://senatorlocke.com>

Twitter : [twitter.com/SenatorLocke](https://twitter.com/SenatorLocke)

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mamie-Locke/109585875761594?v=info>

**In light of this year's controversies about drawing the lines of Virginia's legislative districts, would you support legislation or a Constitutional Amendment to require future redistricting decisions to be made by using a nonpartisan process? What specific measures do you believe are most likely to achieve nonpartisan redistricting plans for Virginia?**

I do believe future redistricting decisions should be made through the use of a nonpartisan commission. I have supported this measure each time it has come through the Senate of Virginia. This measure will not pass as long as there is strident opposition in the House of Delegates.

**Many localities in Virginia have voiced concern regarding unfunded mandates required by the state. Some people have expressed that if the state wants to pursue a project then they should pay for it. The economy has already made an impact on locality budgets. What is your opinion**

Having come out of local government, I understand the concern regarding unfunded mandates. Whenever there is a policy placed on local governments that requires revenue, the state should provide the funding.

**The General Assembly will be looking at lifting the ban on Uranium Mining this year. The state has seen how the economy can take an unexpected negative turn and affect the availability of funding for projects. With this in mind, what do you see as a viable option for an exit strategy for the mining operation? This could cover items such as cleaning up after a contamination incident or just reclaiming the mine once the drilling has ended.**

The exit strategy should be developed before any consideration is given to lifting the ban. Since this is a very serious matter, all issues should be on the table, including the state's role in such an operation. At this point it is not clear what the exit strategy should be since there has been no viable discussion on the issue or the state's role. To outline an exit strategy now would be pure conjecture and premature.

**Payday (car title) loans have been an issue for the General Assembly for several years. What is your opinion on our current payday loan regulations? Do you support or oppose the existence of the payday loan industry in Virginia. What is your opinion regarding the current cap on interest and fees?**

I oppose the existence of the payday and car title lending industry in Virginia as currently allowed to operate. My first option would be to repeal the Payday Loan Act of 2002 (I have introduced legislation to do so). Should that not occur then there should be a cap on interest rates and fees at 36%. I have also introduced legislation requiring this. Legislation has failed to leave the Commerce and Labor Committee.

**What is the issue that you are currently most passionate about that you would like to bring to the public's attention? What are your goals in relation to this issue? What do you perceive as the obstacles to overcome in order for you to champion this issue?**

The issue that I am most passionate about is education (K12 and higher), most especially early childhood education. It is better to reach a child on the front end than try to repair him/her (or incarcerate) on the back end. Early childhood education should be viewed as an investment in Virginia's future workforce. An investment at this level can positively impact the reduction in dropouts, cost of juvenile detention, and lack of a qualified workforce. General fund dollars should not be diverted to transportation, private schools, or other non general fund activities as it reduces the funds available for K12 and other general fund expenses. I have supported increases in funding for all levels of education and was the champion for increasing Virginia Pre-School Initiative (VPI) funding the last time an increase occurred. The greatest obstacle is those who are hostile to public education and support for the same.

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Other Upcoming Forums



The video of the Forum for Virginia Senate District 2 will be posted on the website a few days after the forum. Virginia Peninsula League of Women Voters website ([www.lwvpeninsula.org](http://www.lwvpeninsula.org)) or you can also follow us on twitter. ([twitter.com/vplwv](https://twitter.com/vplwv))

**Voter Guides and Debate Videos at [www.lwvpeninsula.org](http://www.lwvpeninsula.org)**

- Virginia Senate District 1 Candidates : Senator John Miller & Mickey Chohany
- Virginia House District 93 Candidates : Delegate Robin Abbott & Mike Watson
- Virginia House District 94 Candidates : Gary West & David Yancey

***Please no campaign shirts or buttons in Forum.***

***The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan non-profit organization.***



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