

Congressman J. Randy Forbes
Virginia's Fourth Congressional District
Official Biography
111th Congress

Placed prominently on the wall of Congressman Randy Forbes' Washington office is a framed copy of the Declaration of Independence surrounded by portraits of the fifty-six founding fathers who signed the document asserting our nation's freedom. Frequently when Randy is in our nation's capital, he can be found personally escorting constituents through his office to tell the story of how this powerful document and its signatories serve as reminder of the sacrifices that were made during birth of our nation and the weight of responsibility on elected officials to preserve the freedom for which so many have fought and died.



Since his constituents elected him to Congress in 2001, one of Randy's key priorities has been to protect and defend our nation. As Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee, Randy is tasked with ensuring that our men and women in uniform have the equipment, facilities, and training to be the most effective military in the world. Randy's position - the minority party's equivalent of Chairman - is central in developing the nation's long-term strategies to meet our future security needs. As a result of his work on behalf of our military, in 2009, Randy became one of only a few individuals to have been honored with the highest civilian award offered by both the United States Army and the United States Navy.

In a time of broken government and stale ideas, Randy has focused on legislative solutions that have proven to be refreshing alternative to the status quo. His much-hailed New Manhattan Project for Energy led the *Wall Street Journal* to ask: "Why is Randy Forbes all alone? ... The surprising thing is that there aren't 100 Randy Forbes out there, issuing similar calls to arms to seize this moment and finally cure the country's oil addiction." The *Virginian Pilot*, similarly, commented: "Outrage won't solve the nation's energy troubles, or safeguard jobs. For that, you need something else, something Forbes is displaying: Leadership."

Randy has rejected Washington political rhetoric and has instead focused on solutions-based leadership to tackle issues such as economic recovery, health care, tax reform and government spending. In health care, Randy has introduced proposals to protect seniors and individuals with preexisting conditions from health insurance cancellation, to harness the potential in ethical stem-cell research, and to double the investment the federal government is making in research to cure diseases such as cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. His work has earned him the award, "Guardian of Seniors' Rights." In addition, Randy has introduced legislation to improve efficiency in government agencies, and he has been named a "Hero of Taxpayers". Instead of abandoning sound fiscal policy in the face of economic challenge, Randy was one of only 17 Members of Congress to vote against each stimulus and bailout package under both the Bush and Obama Administrations.

Randy founded and chairs the Congressional Prayer Caucus and has led this group of bipartisan Members in national efforts to protect prayer and our nation's spiritual history. He is known as a skilled orator on the Judiciary Committee and, as the former Ranking Member of the Crime Subcommittee, Randy is often called upon to lead the debate on national issues such as gang crime or immigration reform. As founder and

chairman of the Congressional China Caucus, Randy has introduced legislation to combat Chinese espionage and is frequently tapped as a national commentator on Sino-American relations. Groups as diverse as the US Chamber of Commerce, the NAACP, the National Taxpayers Union, and the American Farm Bureau Federation have all recognized the work Randy has done in Congress - a testament to Randy's independent problem-solving and focus on bipartisan solutions.

While Randy's legislative proposals have received significant national and local attention, Randy's commitment to improving quality of life for his constituents has been the hallmark of his career in Congress. Randy places a high-priority on partnering with community leaders and elected officials of all political persuasions to bring about greater economic prosperity, increased educational opportunities, safer communities, and improved local transportation and infrastructure for the Fourth District. His work to position Fort Lee through the last BRAC round led to the arrival of nearly 12,000 jobs in the Chesterfield/Tri-Cities area and his work as founder and chairman of the Congressional Modeling & Simulation Caucus has elevated Hampton Roads as a premier destination for high-paying tech jobs.

Working in Washington has not changed Randy's enthusiasm for serving those that elected him. *Richmond Times Dispatch* noted Randy has "earned a reputation for constituent service" for his ability to cut through red tape and for his unparalleled constituent communications. Randy publishes a weekly email newsletter with over 30,000 subscribers that includes commentary and as well as factual information on the issues before Congress.

Randy has long worked under the belief that transparency is a key condition of good government. In addition to his unparalleled work to inform and solicit input from his constituents, Randy was one of the first members of Congress to publish appropriations requests to his website, causing the *Richmond Times Dispatch* to call him, "an admirable example for openness." His website was selected by the Congressional Management Foundation as one of the best websites in Congress and was specifically commended for offering constituents a "clear understanding of his work in Congress".

A life-long resident of Virginia, Randy began his career in private law practice helping small and medium-sized businesses and ultimately became a partner in the largest law firm in southeastern Virginia. From 1989-2001, he served the Commonwealth of Virginia in the General Assembly. As a member of the House of Delegates, he served 7 years, quickly establishing himself and serving as the Floor Leader until his election to the State Senate in 1997. One year later, he became the Senate Floor Leader. He served in the State Senate for 3 1/2 years, until his election to the U.S. House of Representatives. Randy was chief patron of some of Virginia's most important legislation ranging from state funding for school construction to the abolition of parole.

Randy graduated from Great Bridge High School in Chesapeake in 1970. He was valedictorian of his 1974 class at Randolph-Macon College. In 1977, Randy graduated from the University of Virginia School of Law.

Randy attends Great Bridge Baptist Church, where he has taught adult Sunday school for over 20 years. He was born and raised in Chesapeake, Virginia where he still resides with his wife Shirley. He and Shirley have been married since 1978 and have four children: Neil, Jamie, Jordan, and Justin.