

LEGISLATOR

US Representative


DON BEYER (D-VA-08)**IN OFFICE**

Up for re-election in 2016


1st Term


Elected in 2014


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BGOV BIOGRAPHY

By Madeline McMahon, Bloomberg News

Don Beyer, the owner of car dealerships and former lieutenant governor, hitched his wagon early to Barack Obama's presidency.

He held several positions in Obama's first presidential campaign in 2008 and raised almost \$500,000 for the Democratic candidate. He went on to serve on Obama's Commerce Department transition team, and later spent four years as Obama's ambassador to Switzerland and Lichtenstein.

Beyer is vocal in his support for Obama's most controversial accomplishment. "I feel strongly that the president needs our support for the new health care reform law," he said on his campaign website.

He has said the welfare of federal workers in northern Virginia is a paramount concern.

Political Path

Beyer became the state's lieutenant governor in 1990, building on the name recognition that came with his family's Volvo dealerships and his work in local civic affairs.

As lieutenant governor he pushed for bringing technology industries to the state and helped ease the tax code to accommodate high-tech research and development. He's also responsible for writing the plan for legislation to revise Virginia's welfare system when he was chairman of Virginia's Poverty and Welfare Reform Commission from 1994-95.

In 1997, after two terms as lieutenant governor, Beyer lost the governor's race to Republican Jim Gilmore. When Gilmore released a popular proposal to eliminate Virginia's automobile tax, Beyer responded with a weaker plan, and he lacked the endorsement of Doug Wilder, the Democratic governor under whom he had served.

For the next decade he retreated into behind-the-scenes roles on other campaigns. He worked as finance chairman on Democrat Mark Warner's 2001 gubernatorial campaign and served as treasurer for Howard Dean's unsuccessful 2004 bid for the Democratic presidential nomination. After Dean withdrew from the race, he joined Democratic nominee John Kerry's

team, becoming the chairman of the campaign's Virginia arm.

Beyer considered running for Virginia Senate in 2008 until Warner announced his candidacy. With Moran retiring in 2014, he saw his opening.

Most of the candidates in the Democratic primary ran farther to the left than Beyer, whose background in business and record as a pragmatist placed him in the middle of the crowded field.

Early Years

Beyer was raised in Washington, attending Gonzaga High School. He joined his father's car dealership after graduating from Williams College, and with his brother Mike, he grew the business to nine dealerships.

He was known for the quirky, pun-heavy radio ads he wrote for his Volvo dealership.

He became chairman of the National Volvo Retailer Advisory Board and the American International Automobile Dealers Association.

Personal Notes

Beyer has an eclectic array of interests and goals, ranging from hiking the entire Appalachian Trail to psycho-cybernetics, according to the Washington Post.

Published Oct. 7, 2014

BIO FROM REPRESENTATIVE'S WEBSITE

From the Representative's Website

Congressman Don Beyer is serving his first term as the U.S. Representative from Virginia's 8th District, representing Arlington, Alexandria, Falls Church, and parts of Fairfax County. He serves on the House Committee on Natural Resources and is a member of the New Democrat Coalition. He was the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia from 1990 to 1998, and was Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein under President Obama.

Rep. Beyer's signature work as lieutenant governor included advocacy for Virginians with disabilities and ensuring protections for Virginia's most vulnerable populations as the Commonwealth reformed its welfare system in the mid-1990s. Rep. Beyer was Virginia's Democratic nominee for governor in 1997.

After leaving office, Rep. Beyer spent fourteen years as Chair of Jobs for Virginia Graduates, a highly successful high school dropout prevention program, and was active for a decade on the board of the D.C. Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. As Chair of the Virginia Economic Recovery Commission, he helped pass permanent pro-business reforms and was co-founder of the Northern Virginia Technology Council.

President Obama nominated Rep. Beyer to serve as Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein in 2009. He used his position to advocate for stricter sanctions to compel Iran to begin nuclear disarmament discussions. As Ambassador, Rep. Beyer was integral to US Department of Justice efforts to halt the abuses of Swiss bank secrecy by wealthy Americans.

Rep. Beyer has spent four decades building his family business in Northern Virginia after a summer job at a car dealership in 1974. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Williams College with a Bachelor of Arts with the Highest Honors in Economics and was elected Phi Beta Kappa. He was Salutatorian at Gonzaga College High School in Washington, DC and named a Presidential Scholar by President Lyndon Johnson.

Rep. Beyer has four children and two grandchildren. He and his wife Megan live in Alexandria, Virginia.

PERSONAL PROFILE

COMMITTEES

[House Committee on Natural Resources](#)

Birthdate

06/20/1950

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Birthplace

Trieste

Education

Bloomberg GOVERNMENT

Joint Economic Committee	Political Party	Democratic Party	Williams College
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology			Bachelor's Degree 1972
CAUCUSES	Marital Status	Married	
Congressional Friends of Liechtenstein Caucus	Spouse	Megan	1990 - 1998 Lieutenant Governor, State of Virginia 2009 - 2013
Congressional Progressive Caucus	Residence	Alexandria, VA	Ambassador:Switzerland, United States of America 2014 - 11-04-2014
New Democrat Coalition	Family	4 children; 2 grandchildren	Candidate:Democratic Party 11-05-2014 - 01-06-2015 Member-Elect:Virginia, (US)House of Representatives 01-06-2015 - Present Representative:Virginia, (US)House of Representatives