



## A fighter in the 52nd

Editorial

Potomac News

Wednesday, November 9, 2005

It was the most expensive House of Delegates race in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Two hours after the polls had closed, Democrat Hilda Barg held a 15-vote lead over Republican Jeff Frederick for his 52nd District seat. More than a million dollars was spent and both candidates were praying for votes from a single precinct and a few absentee ballots.

In Florida, it would be a landslide. Here in Prince William County, it's a nail biter.

Then suddenly, a 313-vote swing came in from the Washington-Reid precinct in Frederick's favor. Re-election was assured. It's probably not the way Frederick planned it out when he first entered politics a couple of years ago, but for a freshman delegate targeted by the governor and the Democratic Party of Virginia, it was sweet success.

Barg, 72, is nearing the end of her political career while Frederick no doubt sweated it out Tuesday night hoping he wouldn't become a political has-been at 30.

Frederick's victory - still unofficial late Tuesday night - should not be overlooked for its significance. This was a targeted race by state Democrats. Barg had name recognition, a track record as a veteran county supervisor and a hefty campaign bank account working in her favor.

Working against her: Name recognition, a track record as a veteran county supervisor and a hefty campaign bank account. She also faced an aggressive young lawmaker who is proving himself as an effective and persuasive campaigner. In two years, Frederick has defeated Delegate Jack Rollison and Supervisor Hilda Barg. Either one of those wins is no small feat.

Targeted for defeat by Mark Warner, Frederick quickly took aim at Barg's record on the Prince William Board of County Supervisors. During her tenure, the county has experienced excessive residential growth. Fair, or unfair, as a member of the board of county supervisors, Barg took some hits from Frederick on this front. This was backed up by the Frederick campaign's persistence in pointing out Barg's reliance on big donors - many of them developers. It proved to be an effective strategy.

This victory for Frederick could represent a hurdle successfully cleared by his Republican colleague, Delegate Scott Lingamfelter, R-31st, District, two years ago. Lingamfelter, himself a freshman lawmaker in 2003, faced former Democratic Delegate David Brickley. Lingamfelter won that race easily and wasn't challenged by Democrats this year.

It remains to be seen if the closeness of Frederick's re-election will tempt Democrats to target him again. Having poured this much money into a 2 percentage point loss, the Democrats might look elsewhere in 2007.

**This story can be found at:** [http://www.potomacnews.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WPN%2FMGArticle%2FWPN\\_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1128768032436&path=!news!opinion](http://www.potomacnews.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WPN%2FMGArticle%2FWPN_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1128768032436&path=!news!opinion)

[Go Back](#)