



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 15, 2020

Virginia Republican Loses Reelection Bid Over Gay Marriage, Immigration

First-term Congressman Denver Riggleman (shown), representing Virginia's dark blue 5th District, had nearly everything going for him. But his decision to officiate at the gay wedding of two of his campaign workers last summer, as well as his support for increased immigration, [sank his reelection bid](#).



As an incumbent he had name recognition. He had lots of money. He had endorsements from Jerry Falwell, Jr., the president of Liberty University. He had the endorsement of President Donald Trump. He was a member of the House Freedom Caucus.

During his ill-fated campaign he said, "My support for President Trump can't be tepid if I'm endorsed by him. I vote with POTUS 94.5% of the time.... I was appointed the president's campaign co-chair here in Virginia.... I have a 100% National Right to Life score and have been endorsed by the [pro-life, anti-abortion] Susan B. Anthony List with an A score. I'm a co-sponsor of the Born-Alive legislation."

All that was not enough. Riggleman lost on Saturday at a local Republican Party convention to challenger Bob Good, 42-58.

Good, a Campbell County Board member who also worked as an athletics official at Liberty University, accused Riggleman of "betraying" the values of the Republican Party with his presiding over the "wedding" last summer of two gay men who worked in his campaign.

Riggleman dug his own political grave by declaring at the time that:

My real belief is that government shouldn't be involved in marriage at all. But if it is, everybody has to be treated equally before the law.

And that is part of our Republican creed.

And it also comes down to love is love. I'm happy to join two people together who obviously love each other.

This was simply too much for the local Republicans to stomach. They arranged to have a convention rather than a primary, knowing that more conservative delegates would attend the convention. They arranged to have the convention held in Good's county.

Good, whose budget was a scant \$186,000 compared to Riggleman's \$1.6 million, hammered his opponent relentlessly: "[Riggleman] comes out as pro-gay marriage. He comes out as pro-drug legalization, and he limps down the stretch of the nomination after it becomes revealed that he's a purple progressive Republican."

It didn't help any that Riggleman's [Freedom Index rating](#) from *The New American*, affiliated with the John Birch Society, was distinctly middle-of-the-road, at just 50 percent.



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The *Washington Post's* article on Riggleman's officiating at the wedding of two of his campaign workers who happened to meet at a Log Cabin Republican event no doubt helped Good, who is perceived as a staunch cultural conservative: "The setting was a vineyard in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The dress code: a seersucker-linen-chiffon homage to the Kentucky Derby."

This is far from the Biblical demand that marriage is between one man and one woman.

CNN said the convention's results were "a test of the enduring power of cultural conservatism within the GOP, and whether an incumbent, whose libertarian streak led him to support same-sex marriage, would be punished by his party's base despite having the backing of President Donald Trump."

On the issue of immigration, [Breitbart noted](#),

In March 2019, Riggleman applauded increases to the H-2B visa program, where 66,000 blue-collar foreign workers are imported by business every year to take seasonal, nonagricultural jobs that Americans once held....

Months later, in May 2019, Riggleman co-sponsored the *Workforce for an Expanding Economy Act*, legislation that would have created the H-2C visa program. Under the plan, at least 85,000 non-college-educated foreign workers could have been imported by construction companies, hospitals, and hotels to take U.S. jobs.

In July 2019, Riggleman — along with other House Republicans — raised eyebrows with his vote for the transformative H.R. 1044 *Fairness for High Skilled Immigrants Act*....

The legislation, with support from the big business and Big Tech lobby, would have allowed Indian nationals to monopolize the U.S. employment-based green card system....

H.R. 1044 also would have ensured that outsourcing firms such as Cognizant and Infosys, as well as giant tech conglomerates such as Amazon and Facebook, have a green card system wherein only foreign workers on H-1B visas are able to obtain employment green cards by creating a backlog of seven to eight years for all foreign nationals.

Experts said H.R. 1044 effectively rewards outsourcers of American jobs with an employment-based green card system that operates solely around their needs for cheaper foreign labor.

Breitbart continued,

The establishment media have claimed Riggleman's defeat — where he lost with 42 percent to Good's 58 percent — centered around social conservatives' outrage over the Virginia congressman officiating a same-sex wedding last year. Republican Party insiders have said Riggleman's defeat is due to the party's convention nominating process.

Followers of Good's campaign, though, say the media and party insiders are willfully ignoring the issue that started the outsider's run and helped him secure victory: Immigration.

On the campaign trail, Good focused primarily on the need for less legal immigration — a break from many of the House Freedom Caucus members' libertarian/business-centric streak.

Riggleman was punished, and Bob Good is likely to take his seat following the general election in November. Good has pledged to restore "Judeo-Christian" values to Congress, is a hardliner on immigration, and wants English to be the official language of the United States.

Image: [flickr/Gage Skidmore](#)



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