



The Sierra Club Endorses McKay and Walkinshaw in the Fairfax County Democratic Primary on June 11; Incumbents Foust and Storck Also Receive Club Support

The Sierra Club has endorsed **two candidates running in the Democratic primary on Tuesday, June 11 – Jeff McKay for Board Chair and James Walkinshaw for the Braddock District**. We urge all of our members in Fairfax County to vote in this important Democratic primary election, which involves competitive races for five seats on the Fairfax Board of Supervisors, including the Chair of the Board (elected county-wide) and Supervisors for four individual Districts (Braddock, Hunter Mill, Lee, Providence). This election will result in the largest turnover on the County Board in years.

Election experts have stated that this is **arguably the most important election in Fairfax County in a generation**. No Republicans have filed to run in many of these races, and therefore, the primary will ultimately decide who represents Fairfax County voters in these races. Given the stakes, this is the first time the Sierra Club has considered making endorsements in a Fairfax County primary.

Our strong endorsement for Jeff McKay is based the experience of many Sierra Club members working with him during the past two years, on a review of his energy and environmental record, and his responses to the Sierra Club's questionnaire and interview. His leadership has been demonstrated in a number of actions, including:

- Co-sponsoring the Board's adoption of the Fairfax Green Initiatives
- Securing funding for the Community-Wide Energy and Climate Action Plan and many other clean energy, climate and environmental initiatives;
- Expanding the number of buildings covered by the forthcoming solicitation for solar on county buildings and schools; and



- Lobbying at the state level for the Solar Freedom legislation.

The Groups concluded that McKay has a strong commitment to move the county forward in an aggressive manner to tackle the urgent climate crisis. We believe that his ability to navigate the complicated budget and legislative processes and build strong working relationships with the County's delegation to the General Assembly and members of regional and state organizations is also critical to progress in combatting climate change. Following our endorsement, *The Washington Post* echoed many of these leadership qualities in [its endorsement](#) of Jeff McKay.



Our endorsement of James Walkinshaw is based on his in-depth knowledge and experience on environmental, energy, and climate issues and his commitment to make climate issues a top priority. He currently serves as the Chief of Staff to U.S. Congressman Gerry Connolly and has worked with the Connolly for 12 years.

Finally, we have endorsed two incumbent candidates, Supervisors John Foust and Dan Storck. Neither candidate has primary opponents, but they received early endorsement from the Sierra Club because of their outstanding records. Foust and Storck have been at the forefront in leading the Board of Supervisors to accelerate and intensify action on climate and clean energy issues in recent years. They led the Fairfax Green initiatives resolution on February 5, 2019 (with the support of Jeff McKay) and they also have been the driving force to strengthen energy efficiency and renewable energy action by the county government and schools.

In the initial phase of this process, the political endorsement team in Northern Virginia led by Great Falls Group political chair Alex Rough and Mount Vernon Group political chair Dean Amel distributed detailed policy questionnaires to all candidates and conducted interviews with all candidates who responded. As is the case in all Sierra Club endorsements, local election endorsements follow a two-step process that involves both the local Group and the state Chapter.

The Sierra Club considered endorsements in the other districts with open primaries, but did not ultimately issue endorsements because many of the candidates had similarly good positions on the environment.

If you are not available to vote in-person on June 11, you can vote at the Government Center or by mail before that time (if you meet the necessary criteria). See <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee> for the early voting locations and times.

This content originally appeared in the June 2019 issue of the Mount Vernon Sierran, the Mount Vernon Group's quarterly newsletter. For more information about the Mount Vernon Group, please visit virginia.sierraclub.org/mvg/.