

## *Albo emerges as top Dem target*

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### **Body**

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By William C. Flook

Examiner Staff Writer

Defeating Virginia Del. Dave Albo seemed such a long shot in 2007 that Democrats didn't field a candidate in the suburban D.C. district. Two years later, the state party is investing heavily in knocking off the veteran Republican delegate.

The suburban Fairfax County district, which includes parts of Springfield and Lorton, is widely seen one of the best hopes for a Democratic pickup this year.

Albo represents one of several Republican-held House of Delegates districts that broke for Barack Obama last year. And he faces an opponent -- nonprofit executive Greg Werkheiser -- who came within fewer than 800 votes of beating him in 2005. After lagging Albo in the cash race, the Democrat raised \$114,000 in July and August, twice as much as his opponent.

But Albo, a moderate who has bucked his party's anti-tax orthodoxy by proposing to raise revenue locally for transportation, has successfully navigated a politically shifting constituency for 16 years, surviving as other Northern Virginia House districts turned from the GOP.

The race so far has focused heavily on transportation, and how Northern Virginia can keep its tax dollars from disappearing downstate.

"I'm the guy who actually has done something about the funding formula rip-offs," Albo said, pointing to his opposition to tax increases that gave the same poor return on its money.

Werkheiser argues Albo's claims are undercut by a voting record that hews closely to the House Republican leadership. Albo, he said, is "saying one thing in the district and he's voting a different way when he gets down to Richmond."

"We can do better," he said. "We can certainly do better than 16 years of failing to change the landscape for roads and schools."

## Albo emerges as top Dem target

Despite an expensive governor's race, the Democratic Party of Virginia is devoting substantial resources to Werkheiser. Democrats need to win six new seats to take a majority in the House.

The DPV and its House Democratic Caucus political action committee have contributed more than \$80,000 worth of direct mail, research and administrative services to Werkheiser since January, according to campaign finance reports.

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