



CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT

TUMAY HARDING

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, ASHBURN DISTRICT

CANDIDATE: **TUMAY HARDING**

OFFICE: **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, ASHBURN DISTRICT**

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What would you like voters to know about you?

I would like voters to know that I am one of them. What I am not is a polished politician or someone who is looking for self-glorification. I am just like one of them, a hardworking mother, daughter, sister. My husband and I work hard to achieve our family goals. I'm a fighter and when I'm told there is no other option, I do my research to find a solution, and I will do that for the people of Loudoun County.

How long have you lived in Loudoun County?

I've lived in Loudoun County for over 12 years. My parents immigrated and soon after my mother started working as a radio journalist for Voice of America in the 80s and 90s and helped fight communism through free radio broadcasts that went out to Russia and countries like Uzbekistan and that region.

I grew up in northern Virginia and I received my undergraduate degree in English Literature from George Mason University, and then I continued on to receive a master's degree in Education and Curriculum Development. I have taught in Prince William and Loudoun County public schools in special education as well as being certified to teach ELL.

My husband and I have been happily married for 20 years and we have been blessed with three daughters all of whom attended Loudoun County Public Schools. They also went to private Montessori schools, and I've also homeschooled two of our daughters. Our oldest will be attending Virginia Tech in the fall. I was also a teacher in Prince William County Public Schools and LCPS but after the Covid shutdown of schools, I decided to dedicate all my time to homeschooling my daughters.

What motivated you to run for office? Why are you interested in public service?

It was based on a very personal experience that affected my family. Over a year ago my daughter and some of her friends were sexually assaulted by a teacher in LCPS. I fought for my family and my daughters, and I fought for their friends too because I saw how difficult it was for families to take the time to fight because of jobs and single parent households. I wanted to make the teacher accountable for their mistakes, so I went through an arduous Title IX process that took almost a year. Through that process I uncovered bias and gross negligence, senior school administrators hell-bent on protecting staff over students, and indifference from the current Board of Supervisors when I begged them to take notice. I experienced first-hand an array of misguided policies and wasteful spending and now I'm ready to fight for the people of Ashburn and Loudoun County by restoring academic excellence, promoting economic growth and safeguarding our freedoms.

Why did you decide to run for Supervisor?

After going through the Title IX process, I wanted to see change. When I started my campaign, I knocked on every door possible in my neighborhood and the county just to see what issues they would like to see change, and I want to correct the mistakes that have been made. I went into this with an open heart, and I'm here to share my story with other Loudoun County residents and help them. The Board of Supervisors controls the budget, and they are using tax dollars for self-serving projects that benefit them. I want to point out the things they have done wrong, change bad policies and use the money to help people. I want to make them accountable for mistakes and fight for transparency for the people of Loudoun County.

Your opponent has been a supervisor since 2020 and has contributed to the growth in Ashburn with data centers and other projects. Do you think this has been good? What would you change?

While data centers do contribute a lot to the economy in Loudoun County as they help keep property taxes down, I firmly disagree with the way my opponent has gone about these projects. Mike Turner has repeatedly tried to make deals where he would conserve rural land out west in exchange for selling out his neighbors with an agreement for unrestricted data centers here in the east. We need to make sure we respect residents when we build new data centers, and we should utilize the process the board has been using for ensuring these centers are visually appealing and not too close to neighborhoods, not just allow unfettered building wherever and whenever. We need data centers, but we need to be responsible about how we bring them into our community.

Your opponent has also worked on things like affordable housing, infrastructure and the environment. What are your thoughts about those things for the county?

I think that we need to concentrate on what the community needs and have open conversations and ask residents what they need. They are the ones who commute and use the Greenway. They are the ones who are raising their families. I want to know what they need in our beautiful county. We need to revisit our infrastructure when it comes to traffic congestion. We have to address the traffic as it wastes so much of our residents' time and therefore stalls our economy. We must also improve our metro situation as it is not impactful in its current state and is therefore underused.

I plan to do this by having open conversations with constituents with monthly town halls just to talk with people to see what they need and would like to see change in the county. If I don't have the answer, I will research it and find a solution.

What are your top three issues?

The top three issues that I hear when talking to residents is education, safety in our schools, and a better economy. We need to get back to business and reduce wasteful spending. They are tired of the division and just want to get back to business. We just need to listen to what they are saying.

What do you think about how our tax dollars are being spent?

I believe the current board of supervisors is far too wasteful with their spending of our tax dollars, and in some cases downright abusing our dollars. The clearest example is the luxury trips taken by some supervisors and defended by my opponent. Another example is the \$11 million the school board allocated for co-ed bathrooms out of the budget allotted to the schools by the board of supervisors. I would push for the board to recommend for that money to be used for SROs for every elementary school instead, as well as fix our school incident reporting system. Cutting waste and addressing fraud and abuse will be one of my top priorities.

Who is your favorite historical or political figure?

Ronald and Nancy Reagan are my favorite historical figures because they made sacrifices for our country, and they did this in a graceful and inspiring way. They had a message of hope for a better economy, academic excellence, and safety in our schools, and to come together as a team.

What's the one-word people who know you best would use to describe you?

Fighter. During my fight against the Title IX process, I saw that people don't have access to the support they need. That is why I decided to run for supervisor to be that person in Loudoun County to fight for them, have a close relationship with constituents, and work as a team.