

# Former Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni Enters the Race for Virginia's 10th Congressional District

*"Peace, Progress, and Prosperity"-- if we collectively agree to stay true to our core Democratic values and principles, we will achieve these end goals.*

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- Today, Atif Qarni, the former Virginia Secretary of Education, declared his candidacy for Virginia's 10th Congressional District,

bringing a seasoned perspective of public service to the forefront of the 2024 congressional race.



Qarni expressed his deep respect for the incumbent Congresswoman. "I want to begin by offering my sincere gratitude to Congresswoman Wexton for her years of dedicated service to Virginians. I was devastated to hear about her battle with progressive supranuclear palsy and I continue to pray for her and her family during this incredibly difficult time."

Qarni stated that his campaign is driven by a core belief in fostering inclusive communities – where safety and recognition enable individuals to flourish. "I am announcing my candidacy for Congress fueled by the belief that when individuals and communities feel safe, affirmed, and included, they will thrive and prosper."

Qarni explained that the campaign slogan of "Peace, Progress, and Prosperity" reflects the end goals that can be achieved when "we collectively stay true to our core Democratic values and principles."

Qarni stated that public service is his lifeblood. "From the commitment I made at 18 years old to join the United States Marines, to working with students and families as a classroom teacher in Prince William County, to furthering education advancements as the Commonwealth of Virginia's Secretary of Education, to currently serving as a professor at George Mason University, my whole life has been dedicated to serving the people." Qarni further emphasized that a high-quality education system is the best way to economically and socially empower individuals and

communities.

Qarni shared his perspective on the district's demographics. "The diverse diasporas—racial, religious, and ethnic groups—exemplify the beauty of American pluralism. I embrace all communities that live in the district, recognizing that our collective strength is derived from our diverse viewpoints, values, and lived experiences."

Qarni stated that, if elected, his priorities will support education, safety, and the inherent dignity of all Americans. "As your representative in Congress, I promise my unwavering commitment to protecting women's reproductive rights, ensuring gun safety laws are in place to protect families and children, supporting infrastructure investments, protecting Americans from threats at home and abroad, fighting climate change, protecting LGBTQ+ students in schools, ensuring people get higher wages and affordable housing, and improving the educational system at every level (pre-k through post-grad)."

As a combat veteran who served in the Middle East during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Qarni announced his candidacy for Congress on Veterans Day intentionally. "As a veteran, I have done a lot of soul searching and reflecting on my own experiences from war and I am deeply concerned about the Israel-Hamas conflict and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza," Qarni stated.

Speaking on the conflict, Qarni provided his perspective as a military veteran. "The October 7th attacks by Hamas were horrific, with over 1,400 Israelis killed and nearly 200 hostages taken. The victims of these attacks should not be forgotten or reduced to a data point. The fear Israelis feel of another attack is very real."

Qarni stated that the Israeli government's military response to the Oct 7th attacks is also horrific. "With its siege on Gaza, over 10,000 civilians have been killed (including 4,000 children) by the Israeli military and thousands more injured to date. The victims of these attacks should also not be forgotten or reduced to a data point."

Qarni criticized the Israeli military strategy, citing that surgical strikes against Hamas operatives could have significantly reduced civilian casualties in Gaza. Qarni further asserted that "collective punishment against the over 2 million Gazan civilian population—cutting off water, food, electricity, and communications—is simply inhumane."

Qarni called on Democrats to not remain silent on this issue. "The attacks on innocent civilians in Israel and Gaza – stuck between "leaders" who are more invested in war than peace – is unacceptable."

"As a Democrat, I call for an immediate ceasefire and prompt negotiations for the release of hostages held by Hamas, including American citizens," Qarni declared. If elected, Qarni stated he would vote against any unconditional military aid for any war effort that fails to protect civilians. "Injustice must be called out and addressed—even with our allies."

Qarni also expressed concern with the rise of extremist ideology in the region, should the conflict extend. "It is my firm belief that sending money to the war effort will only fuel more extremist ideology in the region, which is counter to our national security interests."

Instead, Qarni favored the U.S. playing a constructive role in the region, by providing humanitarian relief and investing in infrastructure efforts, such as building schools, hospitals, roads, etc. "When people feel safe and economically empowered, they are less vulnerable to extremist ideologies and political exploitation."

Qarni cautioned that the conflict is already affecting security at home. "Since October 7th, we have seen a dangerous rise in Antisemitic, Anti-Muslim, and Anti-Arab hate speech and crimes. As Americans, we must have zero tolerance for language or behavior that promotes any violence against the other. Our communities must come together to condemn such acts. We are always stronger when we stand together."

"In the coming days, I will provide updates on my campaign, building grassroots and collective support." Qarni invited the community to join him on this journey and visit the campaign website: [www.qarniforcongress.com](http://www.qarniforcongress.com).

Press

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