

# [***Virginia Democrat in key state House race calls sharing of pornographic videos 'the worst gutter politics'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6956-TVS1-JBSS-S38Y-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; The Democratic candidate in a competitive Virginia House district denounced reports that she and her husband had performed sexual acts on a pornographic livestreaming website, describing the sharing of those videos as "the worst gutter ***politics***."

The existence of the sexually explicit videos, first reported by [*The Washington Post*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/09/11/susanna-gibson-sex-website-virginia-candidate/) on Monday, has injected a highly sensitive issue into one of the most competitive races in this fall's [*battle for control of the Virginia General Assembly.*](https://www.cnn.com/2023/09/07/politics/virginia-elections-glenn-youngkin-2024/index.html)

Susanna Gibson, a nurse practitioner, faces Republican David Owen, a retired home builder, in the 57th District, a suburban Richmond seat that is key to Democratic hopes of upending the 50-46 GOP majority in November's elections. It's one of seven competitive state House districts, according to the nonpartisan Virginia Public Access Project.

Democrats, meanwhile, are defending a 22-18 state Senate majority. The outcome of this year's legislative races could determine whether Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin can enact conservative policies, including a 15-week abortion ban, amid speculation about his potential late entry into the 2024 GOP presidential race.

Gibson, a 40-year-old mother of two young children, and her husband, a lawyer, reportedly streamed sex acts in exchange for "tips" on a livestreaming pornographic website. Those videos were recorded and then archived on another site. The Post reported it had been alerted to the videos' existence by a Republican operative. CNN has not independently verified the content of the videos.

The videos were first livestreamed on a website that is not password-protected and on which The Post reported the couple had more than 5,700 followers. Gibson's attorney, Daniel P. Watkins, said that sharing the videos violated the state's revenge porn law.

"Capturing and disseminating this content without permission is unlawful recording and it plainly violates Virginia's revenge porn statute. We are working closely with law enforcement to bring accountability to the wrongdoers," he told CNN in an email.

"This is an illegal invasion of my privacy designed to humiliate me and my family. It won't intimidate me and it won't silence me," Gibson said in a statement shared with CNN on Tuesday.

"My political opponents and their Republican allies have proven they're willing to commit a sex crime to attack me and my family because there's no line they won't cross to silence women when they speak up," she said. "They are trying to silence me because they want to silence you, and I won't let that happen."

She added: "My opponent and his allies know that the people of this district are on our side on the issues, so they're stooping to the worst gutter ***politics***. There's too much at stake in this election and I'll never stop fighting for our community."

Owen, Gibson's Republican opponent, said in a statement that he found out about the existence of the videos on Monday when The Post story was published "like everyone else."

"I'm sure this is a difficult time for Susanna and her family, and I'm remaining focused on my campaign," he said.

The Virginia House Democratic Caucus declined to comment, pointing instead to Gibson's statement.

By Eric Bradner, CNN

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