

Rob Tompkins

Potential Democratic Candidate

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Candidate Statement

Technologist, caregiver, and athlete with 15 years of leadership in open-source software governance, federal innovation, and entrepreneurial ventures. A survivor of the Virginia Tech shooting, lifelong advocate for healthcare access, and caregiver to a quadriplegic parent on Medicaid, I bring both lived experience and proven leadership to Congress. As the descendant of Virginians who fought to establish this free country, my mission is to build a safer, fairer, and more resilient America — where families are supported, communities are strong, and innovation works for everyone.

Key Issues and Vision

Gun Safety & Public Safety - Common-sense reform informed by lived experience.

Healthcare & Disability Policy - Expand and reform Medicaid and healthcare access, grounded in my role as a long-term caregiver.

Technology & Cybersecurity - Strengthen national security and digital resilience through open governance, innovation, and secure infrastructure.

Environmental & Outdoor Access - Protect natural resources, expand outdoor recreation, and invest in resilient infrastructure for future generations.

Democracy & Transparency - Bring open-source values of accountability, collaboration, and transparency to American governance.

Political & Community Leadership

Member & Vice President, Jakarta EE Relations, Apache Software Foundation - Led global governance for thousands of contributors, building consensus across diverse stakeholders.

Caregiver & Advocate - Power of attorney for a quadriplegic parent since 2009, navigating Medicaid and disability services firsthand.

Gun Violence Survivor - Lived through the 2007 Virginia Tech school shooting, later mentoring students on resilience and community healing.

Volunteer Service - Supporter of the Autism Society of Central Virginia. Trailbuilder and Cycling Mentor with RVAMore and Richmond Cycling Corps.

U.S. Freestyle Kayaking Team - (2000, 2001, 2007) Represented the United States overseas in Freestyle Kayaking - finishing 6th, 8th and 8th in the world.

Professional Experience

Principal Engineer — Naborforce

- Led systems connecting families with eldercare support, combining innovation and compassion in technology.

Staff Consultant — Vertical Relevance

- Designed secure ISO 20022 real-time payment systems for FIS, strengthening financial infrastructure.

Senior Systems Engineer — NASA Fornax Project

- Built scalable astrophysics data platforms on AWS, supporting national research and innovation.

Capital One — Engineering Leadership Roles

- Top open-source strategy leader, software supply chain security engineer, and cloud modernization at enterprise scale.

Passages Adventure Camp — Site Director

- Directed outdoor leadership programs in paddling, climbing, and zip-line adventures; led expeditions to New River Gorge

EDUCATION

University of South Carolina - *M.S. Mathematics*

Columbia, SC | 2009

Virginia Tech - *B.S. Mathematics & B.S. Engineering Science and Mechanics*

Blacksburg, VA | 2007

Honours and Achievements

- US Kayaking Team - 6th, 8th, and 8th in the world at freestyle kayaking.
- Climbed El Capitan in Yosemite in 2005
- Virginia's Blue Ridge Enduro MTB Series Winner 2021

Selected Talks and Publications

- *ApacheCon 2020, Apache RoadShow 2019* — “From No Open Source Experience to PMC of Commons and Apache Member.”
- *All Things Open 2019* — “Insecurities and Vulnerabilities.”
- *ApacheCon 2017* — “Introducing Commons Text.”
- *Open Source Community Governance the Apache Way* (IEEE, 2021).
- Research in mathematics and computer science published in peer-reviewed journals.