# Virginia Republican John Reid denies links to explicit social media amid calls to quit race



Republican candidate John Reid has vehemently denied any involvement with a social media account containing sexually explicit photographs—a controversy that prompted Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin to call for his withdrawal from the lieutenant governor race. Reid, the first openly gay man to seek statewide office in Virginia, rejected the governor’s demand for his resignation in a video statement, insisting on his innocence and denouncing what many see as an orchestrated attempt to oust him from the ballot.

This scandal erupted just before early voting commenced in the Virginia primaries on 2 May, coinciding with Reid becoming the sole Republican candidate after his primary opponent dropped out for health reasons. The now-deleted Tumblr account, bearing a username identical to Reid’s Instagram handle, contained explicit images of naked men—spurring unsubstantiated claims tying the account to Reid. In response, Reid branded the account a "fabrication," asserting it was a politically motivated falsehood intended to sabotage his candidacy, exploiting lingering prejudices against his sexuality.

Critically, Governor Youngkin’s call for Reid’s resignation came without presenting any credible evidence or granting Reid an opportunity to respond—actions that have drawn criticism for undermining due process within the party. Such a precipitous move reflects the deep divisions within the right-wing establishment and its struggles to reconcile conservative values with evolving cultural dynamics.

The pressure campaign against Reid intensified within Republican circles, fueled in part by religious conservatives alarmed by images showing Reid at a drag show—used as ammunition to threaten alienation of Christian voters. Yet Reid has stood firm, refusing to bow to demands that he abandon the nomination he earned through months of campaigning. His resistance embodies a broader critique voiced by those advocating for political integrity and against puritanical censorship within party ranks.

This episode also echoes past episodes where politicians, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, have faced harsh scrutiny over their private lives while the party establishment selectively enforces discipline, often to the detriment of diversity and inclusion. Observers note parallels with the case of Virginia Democrat Susanna Gibson, who lost a House of Delegates race following the release of intimate footage—raising important questions about privacy, politicization, and fairness in electoral politics.

Reid’s campaign underscores the ongoing challenges for candidates who, despite being part of the conservative movement’s broader coalition, confront resistance from its more traditionalist factions. Alongside fellow candidates from minority communities, his role in maintaining a diverse slate is pivotal even as internal party squabbles threaten unity.

As the primary vote nears, John Reid remains defiant, committed to continuing his campaign amid mounting pressures. This standoff highlights the urgent need for the right-wing opposition to champion candidates based on policy and principle rather than yielding to divisive, culture-war distractions—principles championed by Reform UK’s stance against the imposition of censorship and in favour of genuine political debate rooted in addressing the issues that truly matter to voters.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.richmonder.org/youngkin-asks-richmond-radio-host-john-reid-to-withdraw-from-lg-race-over-alleged-sexually-explicit-posts-reid-denies-are-his/> - This article confirms that Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin called John Reid to ask him to withdraw from the lieutenant governor race over allegations related to sexually explicit social media posts, which Reid denies.
2. <https://www.wtvr.com/news/local-news/john-reid-video-statement-april-25-2025> - This source provides John Reid's video response rejecting the allegations and the call for his resignation by Governor Youngkin, including Reid's statement that the accusations are a politically motivated smear.
3. <https://www.virginiascope.com/youngkin-asks-reid-to-withdraw-from-race-for-lieutenant-governor/> - This report corroborates that a Tumblr account with the same username as Reid's Instagram contained explicit photos not actually of Reid, and details the political controversy and Reid's denial of involvement, as well as the governor's call for Reid to step down.
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljG8qsk3K2k> - In this video, John Reid addresses images of him at a drag show and discusses threats he received, supporting the article's claim about pressure from religious conservatives and Reid's refusal to withdraw.
5. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/04/24/call-radio-show-host-soon-may-be-calling-lieutenant-governor/> - This article discusses the political context of John Reid's candidacy as Virginia's first openly gay statewide candidate and the challenges he faces, including overcoming media bias and intra-party opposition.
6. <https://www.wtkr.com/news/virginia-politics/youngkin-calls-for-reid-to-withdraw-after-explicit-photos-emerge> - This news piece supports the timeline that the controversy erupted just before early voting started, detailing Youngkin's demand for Reid's resignation and the controversy surrounding the explicit photos and political fallout.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/john-reid-glenn-youngkin-virginia-richmond-gop-b2739848.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data