

Inside Elections

with

Nathan L. Gonzales

Nonpartisan Analysis

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A Potential Split Decision in the 2024 Elections

By Nathan L. Gonzales & Jacob Rubashkin

Republicans and Democrats should be prepared to be energized and saddened by the 2024 election results. With Vice President Kamala Harris at the top of the Democratic ticket, the race against former President Donald Trump is close again. And the fights for control of the Senate and House are close as well. That means a split decision is possible in November.

A Harris victory coupled with Republican control of the Senate is within reason. Democrats might even add on a new House majority and could still lose the Senate. It's also possible Republicans sweep all three. But if there is indeed a split decision, both parties will declare a mandate and decline to address deeper party problems that could inhibit future growth.

Presidential

The presidential race could go either way. The shape of the new battlefield still slightly favors Harris as it veers more into GOP territory. But the vice president is virtually even with Trump in the core swing states including Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

The debate probably didn't sway dedicated supporters but we'll know in a few days whether it persuaded many independents. Harris is rated with an advantage in states combining for 226 electoral college votes compared to 219 for Trump. It looks like Harris has the narrowest advantage on the road to 270, but it wouldn't take much for the dynamic to shift.

Senate

Republicans are likely to gain 1-3 seats. And with our rating change in Montana from Toss-up to Tilt Republican, Republicans have a more straightforward path to gain control. The GOP needs a net gain of two seats for a majority, but can control the chamber by gaining one seat and winning the White House. For Democrats, there's no realistic path to maintain control of the Senate without Harris being elected president, because they will need Vice President Tim Walz to break tie votes after losing West Virginia.

House

Democrats need a net gain of just four seats to win a majority, and our current likely range is Democrats +5 to Republicans +5. But after another handful of rating changes, Republicans are still slight favorites to hold the House. They need to win just two of the 13 toss-up races while Democrats need to win 12 of 13, if the other races end as expected. A district-by-district slugfest isn't pretty, but Democrats would prefer it over Biden tanking their chances. A close fight for the House also means control might not be known for weeks, when vote counting is completed across the country.

2024 Senate Ratings

Toss-Up (1)

Brown (D-Ohio)

Tilt Democratic (4)

AZ Open (Sinema, I)
MI Open (Stabenow, D)
Casey (D-Penn.)
Rosen (D-Nev.)

Tilt Republican (1)

*Tester (D-Mont.)**

Lean Democratic (1)

Baldwin (D-Wis.)

Lean Republican

Likely Democratic (1)

MD Open (Cardin, D)

Likely Republican (1)

Cruz (R-Texas)

Solid Democratic (14)

CA Open (Butler, D)
DE Open (Carper, D)
NJ Open (Helmy, D)
Cantwell (D-Wash.)
Gillibrand (D-N.Y.)
Heinrich (D-N.M.)
Hirono (D-Hawaii)
Kaine (D-Va.)
King (I-Maine)
Klobuchar (D-Minn.)
Murphy (D-Conn.)
Sander (I-Vt.)
Warren (D-Mass.)
Whitehouse (D-R.I.)

Solid Republican (11)

IN Open (Braun, R)
UT Open (Romney, R)
WV Open (Manchin, I)
Barrasso (R-Wyo.)
Blackburn (R-Tenn.)
Cramer (R-N.D.)
Fischer (R-Neb.)
Hawley (R-Mo.)
Ricketts (R-Neb.)
Scott (R-Fla.)
Wicker (R-Miss.)

Takeovers in *Italics*, # moved benefiting Democrats, * moved benefiting Republicans

CALENDAR

Sept. 25	Potential NBC News Presidential Debate
Oct. 1	CBS News Vice Presidential Debate
Oct. 15	Third Quarter FEC Filings Due
Oct. 22	NBA Season Begins
Oct. 24	Pre-election FEC filings Due
Nov. 5	Election Day

Trump, Harris Face Off with the White House on the Line

By Nathan L. Gonzales

The first, and potentially only, debate between former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris is in the books. While it will be at least a few days or more to know how the Philadelphia faceoff played with voters, there are at least a handful of key points and initial takeaways. (And this is after watching the debate without being on Twitter/X.)

The race was close before the debate and I expect it to be close after the debate. We can't forget that the vast majority of Americans have already decided who they are voting for in this election. Neither Trump nor Harris said or did anything on Tuesday night that would cause their supporters to leave at any significant level. But that doesn't mean the debate is inconsequential. A shift of just a couple percentage points among independent voters in Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and North Carolina could make the difference in the race.

This was the performance Democrats were waiting for. Spot polls aside, it's too early to measure how effective Harris was during the debate. But it's clear this was the performance Democrats were hoping Biden would give on June 27 and hoped the vice president would give on Tuesday. She stood side-by-side with Trump, defended herself from some of his attacks while trying to cast a vision for the future, and even launched some attacks of her own. Her performance doesn't guarantee victory in November, but I don't think many Democrats walked away disappointed.

Both candidates avoided some key questions. Both Trump and Harris sidestepped some key questions from the moderators that independent voters probably wanted to hear answered. Harris didn't directly answer questions about changing positions on some policies, whether people are better off now than they were a few years ago, and about bearing any responsibility for the tragic exit from Afghanistan. Trump didn't answer questions about why he told Senate Republicans to abandon the bipartisan immigration bill, how specifically he would deport millions of undocumented immigrants, whether he regretted anything about his actions on Jan. 6, and if he wanted Ukraine to win the war with Russia. Trump also refused to acknowledge his 2020 election loss. All of these questions have the potential to hurt each of their candidacies and both candidates declined to take advantage of the big opportunity and stage to answer those important questions.

There was a clear contrast in style. Harris set the tone from the beginning by walking across the stage to shake Trump's hand. In the side-by-side shots, Harris was watching and listening to Trump and reacting to his statements. In contrast, Trump stared ahead, mostly with a blank stare, but sometimes with a scowl or a smirk. Harris was calm and mostly serious with an occasional smile thrown in to couple with her attempts to mix in optimism and hope. Trump often had an elevated tone and seemed more angry. This was the contrast Democrats were hoping for, even though it's too early to know whether it will matter.

Trump delivered his attacks. Like an open fire hydrant, Trump was incessant in his attacks. He seemed to cover most of his greatest hits from countless attacks about immigrants and the border to former Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam's comments on abortion, Harris' comments on fracking, to alleged gun confiscation, predictions of World War III and the financial activities of Hunter Biden, the president's son. Trump's amplification of false allegations of pet consumption by immigrants may have sounded strange to voters not buried in the online conversation over the previous 48 hours. Once again, Trump painted a dire picture of the country, hoping voters want to turn the page from Biden and Harris. After nearly 10 years on the national political stage, Harris is hoping voters want to turn the page from Trump.

There were specific plays for key states. From Trump's multiple references to fracking to Harris talking to Polish Americans during the Ukraine discussion or bringing up former Sen. John McCain during the health care section, both candidates made specific plays for key states including Pennsylvania and Arizona.

This is a new race. Tuesday's debate demonstrated the new dynamic of the race. For most of the cycle, Trump and his campaign were running circles around Biden. Harris showed on Tuesday that this is now more of an even fight, and is sometimes a step ahead of Trump. She delivered a host of attacks that often forced Trump to spend time defending his own record during the debate rather than the former president being able to focus solely on being on offense. That doesn't guarantee victory for Harris, but it's an entirely different dynamic than the Biden downward spiral.

It's OK to wait before declaring a debate winner. Even though instant analysis is expected and rewarded, it's not as important as how voters react. But Trump's post debate tour through the spin room felt more like a cleanup than a victory lap.

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810 7th Street NE, Washington, DC, 20002
202-546-2822



Nathan L. Gonzales
Editor & Publisher
nathan@insideelections.com
@nathanlgonzales



Jacob Rubashkin
Deputy Editor
jacob@insideelections.com
@jacobrubashkin



Bradley Wascher
Contributing Analyst
bradley@insideelections.com
@bradwascher

Will Taylor
Production Artist
will@insideelections.com

Stuart Rothenberg
Senior Editor
stu@insideelections.com

@InsideElections [facebook.com/InsideElections](https://www.facebook.com/InsideElections) [YouTube.com/@InsideElections](https://www.youtube.com/@InsideElections)

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House Report Shorts

Alaska.

At-Large District. Mary Peltola, D, re-elected 55%. Trump 53%. Republicans got the one-on-one matchup against Peltola (rather than a messy three-way fight) but not with the candidate preferred by national strategists or Trump. There's still uncertainty about what two minor candidates will fill out the ballot. Two Republicans who would have made the ballot have removed their names from contention, and the state Democratic Party is suing to prevent another Democratic candidate (in prison in New York) from taking one of those spots. Peltola had a serious cash-on-hand advantage over opponent Nick Begich on July 31, \$2.8 million to \$172,000, and Democrats currently have a significant spending advantage heading into the final two months of the race, with \$9.6 million in TV reservations compared to \$5.5 million for Republicans. Peltola has two positive ads on air, plus backup from cryptocurrency group Fairshake, which is set to spend nearly \$2 million on her behalf. Another outside Democratic group is on air with an anti-Begich ad (the first of the cycle). The NRCC independent expenditure has two ads featuring veterans hitting Peltola that do not mention Begich. A Cygnal poll commissioned by Begich and the NRCC found Peltola leading by 1 point, but the congresswoman topping 50 percent in the recent primary can't be dismissed. Move from Tilt Democratic to Toss-up.

Arizona.

1st District (Northeastern Phoenix and Scottsdale) David Schweikert, R, re-elected 50%. Biden 50%. Democratic strategists are confident that their nominee, former state Rep. Amish Shah, has turned on the fundraising jets after posting the weakest hauls of the several Democrats who sought the nomination last month. He'll need it to compete in the Phoenix media market, one of the most crowded and expensive in the country this year. Tilt Republican.

2nd District (Northeastern Arizona) Eli Crane, R, elected 54%. Trump 53%. Former Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez is a different kind of candidate than Democrats typically run. The district is 20 percent Native American, and those voters (66 percent of which are Navajo) are a key Democratic constituency. With Nez already having built-in relationships there, his allies hope he can focus his resources on winning over white voters in Pinal and Yavapai counties instead. But he'll have to overcome the partisanship of the district and avoid nationalizing the race. Move from Solid Republican to Likely Republican.

6th District (Southeastern Arizona and eastern Tucson area) Juan Ciscomani, R, elected 51%. Biden 49.3%. Former state Sen. Kirsten Engel went on offense in the first debate of the general election, hitting Ciscomani on his ties to the Patriot Academy, a leadership program that promotes "biblical citizenship" and "constitutional defense." The Patriot Academy is also at the center of a DCCC independent expenditure ad backed by a six-figure buy currently airing in the district. Democratic strategists are increasingly bullish on this race after writing it off last cycle. Tilt Republican.

California.

9th District (Stockton area) Josh Harder, D, re-elected 55%. Biden 56%. The NRCC remains bullish on Stockton Mayor Kevin Lincoln, and began airing a hybrid ad this past week, backed by \$200,000. Harder has yet to go on TV but typically outperforms the top of the ticket. Harder

2024 House Ratings

Toss-Up (8D, 5R)

AK AL (Peltola, D)*	NE 2 (Bacon, R)
CA 13 (Duarte, R)	NC 1 (Davis, D)
CA 27 (Garcia, R)	NY 4 (D'Esposito, R)
CO 8 (Caraveo, D)	OR 5 (Chavez-DeRemer, R)
MI 7 (Open; Slotkin, D)	VA 7 (Open; Spanberger, D)
MI 8 (Open; Kildee, D)	WA 3 (Perez, D)
NM 2 (Vasquez, D)	

Tilt Democratic (6D, 1R)

CA 47 (Open; Porter, D)
ME 2 (Golden, D)*
NY 22 (Williams, R)
OH 13 (Sykes, D)
OH 9 (Kaptur, D)
PA 7 (Wild, D)
PA 8 (Cartwright, D)

Tilt Republican (12R)

AZ 1 (Schweikert, R)	NJ 7 (Kean Jr., R)
AZ 6 (Ciscomani, R)	NY 17 (Lawler, R)
CA 22 (Valadao, R)	NY 19 (Molinaro, R)
CA 41 (Calvert, R)	PA 10 (Perry, R)#
CA 45 (Steel, R)	VA 2 (Kiggans, R)
IA 1 (Miller-Meeks, R)#	
IA 3 (Nunn, R)	

Lean Democratic (4D)

CT 5 (Hayes, D)	NY 18 (Ryan, D)
IL 17 (Sorensen, D)	
MN 2 (Craig, DFL)	

Lean Republican (5R)

CO 3 (Open; Boebert, R)	NY 1 (LaLota, R)
MI 10 (James, R)	WI 3 (Van Orden, R)#
MT 1 (Zinke, R)	

Likely Democratic (16D, 2R)

AL 2 (Open; Moore, R)	NV 4 (Horsford, D)
CA 9 (Harder, D)	NV 3 (Lee, D)
CA 49 (Levin, D)	NY 3 (Suozzi, D)
IN 1 (Mrvan, D)	OH 1 (Landsman, D)
KS 3 (Davids, D)	OR 4 (Hoyle, D)
LA 6 (Open; Graves, R)	OR 6 (Salinas, D)
MI 3 (Scholten, D)	PA 17 (Deluzio, D)
NH 1 (Pappas, D)#	TX 34 (Gonzalez, D)
NV 1 (Titus, D)	TX 28 (Cuellar, D)

Likely Republican (8R, 3D)

AZ 2 (Crane, R)#	NC 13 (Open, Nickel, D)
CA 3 (Kiley, R)	NC 14 (Open; Jackson, D)
CA 40 (Kim, R)	PA 1 (Fitzpatrick, R)
FL 13 (Luna, R)	TX 15 (De La Cruz, R)*
FL 27 (Salazar, R)	WI 1 (Steil, R)
NC 6 (Open, Manning, D)	

Dropped from List

NH 2 (Open; Kuster, D)#	Solid	188	177
	Likely/Lean/Tilt	28	29
	Total	216	206
	Toss-up		13
	Needed for majority		218

Takeovers in *italics*. # moved benefiting Democrats. * moved benefiting Republicans

also had a \$3.3 million to \$620,000 cash-on-hand advantage on June 30 and begins the fall in a strong position according to private data. Likely Democratic.

13th District (Mid-Central Valley) John Duarte, R, elected 50%. Biden 54%. Former state assemblyman Adam Gray hit the airwaves a few weeks ahead of Duarte with two spots burnishing his bipartisan credentials, including one that featured multiple Republican law enforcement officers. House Majority PAC is also airing an abortion-focused negative ad in English and Spanish. Duarte and his allies at the

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Congressional Leadership Fund will begin airing TV ads later this month — Duarte also spent upward of \$120,000 out of his official House office to air a campaign-style ad in the district, a legal practice as long as it occurs more than 60 days before an election. Toss-up.

22nd District (Southern Central Valley and eastern Bakersfield area) David Valadao, R, re-elected 52%. Biden 55%. We're at the point in the cycle where Democrats are increasingly confident they will defeat Valadao. It's familiar territory for both parties, and the Republican has won all but one of his tough races. There are always going to be national strategists skeptical of former state Assemblyman Rudy Salas, and while the Democrat still trailed Valadao in cash-on-hand on June 30, he kicked up his fundraising into high gear, doubling Valadao's haul from April through June. Republicans are currently set to outspend Democrats over the final two months of the race, with deep-pocketed crypto group Fairshake making the difference. But TV is cheap in this media market. Harris may have a harder time reaching Biden's 2020 mark in this district compared to some competitive seats in Southern California. Tilt Republican.

45th District (Western Orange County) Michelle Steel, R, re-elected 52%. Biden 52%. Much like last cycle, this race is again devolving into a fight over identity. Steel's opponent, consumer rights and personal injury attorney Derek Tran, has staked his campaign strategy on winning over traditionally Republican Vietnamese-American voters in the district. Tran's parents are Vietnamese refugees and he has described himself as fluent in Vietnamese. But Republicans have publicized his use of an interpreter in some Vietnamese language appearances and interviews, and GOP strategists are confident that Democrats are overestimating his support among the Vietnamese-American community. Tilt Republican.

Colorado.

3rd District (Pueblo area and Western Slope) Open; Lauren Boebert, R, running in 4th District. Trump 53%. Even without the controversial Boebert as the GOP nominee, Democrat Adam Frisch's massive bank account (\$3.9 million on June 30 compared to GOP nominee Jeff Hurd's \$156,000) and residual name ID from last cycle make this race worth watching. Trump should win the district handily at the top of the ticket, but Democrats may try to boost two minor party candidates in an effort to lower the share of the vote Frisch needs to win. Republicans are confident they will win because of the partisanship of the district, but the race is currently close and the GOP has work to do to boost Hurd's profile. Lean Republican.

8th District (Northern Denver suburbs and Greeley area) Yadira Caraveo, D, elected 48%. Biden 51%. A quiet race may be heating up as Caraveo is on TV with an economy-focused ad, the start of \$2.8 million in TV reservations over the next two months. Fairshake, the cryptocurrency advocacy group backing both Democrats and Republicans this cycle, is airing a TV ad in English and Spanish applauding Caraveo for voting to fund more Border Patrol agents. The GOP's Congressional Leadership Fund just started airing ads in the district, but state Rep. Gabe Evans and his allies at the NRCC aren't due to begin advertising on air until October. The Libertarian nominee dropped out and endorsed Evans; many Republicans blamed Caraveo's 2022 victory on the Libertarian in that race, who took 4 percent of the vote. Evans is dealing with an embarrassing story after reporters uncovered a series of anti-Semitic and Q-Anon posts made by his political director; Evans fired her this week. Toss-up.

Connecticut.

5th District (Northern Fairfield County and northwestern Connecticut) Jahana Hayes, D, re-elected 50%. Biden 55%. Hayes frustrates some Democrats because of her mediocre fundraising and lack of urgency about her re-election, but she starts the final stretch of the race with the advantage against Republican George Logan. While Logan has some qualities of a strong candidate, Hayes could be bailed out by Democratic outside groups and Harris running strong at the top of the ticket. Lean Democratic.

Delaware.

At-Large, Open; Lisa Blunt Rochester, D, running for Senate. Biden 59%. State Sen. Sarah McBride unofficially wrapped up the nomination months ago but officially won the Democratic primary with 80 percent of the vote. She'll be the first openly transgender member of Congress in history. Solid Democratic.

Florida.

13th District (Part of St. Petersburg and suburbs) Anna Paulina Luna, R, elected 53%. Trump 53%. The anti-tax Club for Growth publicized a survey from WPAi from Aug. 28-29 that showed Luna leading opponent Whitney Fox by 5 points, 48-43 percent. This was likely in response to a St. Pete Polls survey for the tipsheet *Florida Politics*, which found Fox leading Luna by 4 points. If there's any seat Democrats seriously contest in Florida, it's this one. Likely Republican.

Iowa.

1st District (Southeastern Iowa) Marianne Miller-Meeks, R, re-elected 53%. Trump 50%. Democrats are more enthusiastic about this race than they have been in years. House Majority PAC recently



Courtesy Bohannon Campaign

Christina Bohannon

announced plans to spend \$2.2 million to boost former state Rep. Christina Bohannon in her rematch against Miller-Meeks, and private polling shows the race within a point or two. Move from Lean Republican to Tilt Republican.

3rd District (Des Moines and southwestern Iowa) Zach Nunn, R, elected 50%. Trump 49%. Both Nunn and his Democratic opponent Lanon Baccam are engaged on the airwaves, as are their outside allies. Voters saw eight ads in the district this week, including abortion-focused ads from House Majority PAC and Baccam himself, discussing his wife's stillbirth, positive ads from Nunn and supporting super PACs Fairshake (a pro-crypto group) and With Honor Fund II (which supports veterans in both parties). The NRCC is also airing a negative ad on Baccam. The Iowa state Supreme Court declined to reinstate the Libertarian nominee after a GOP-led panel removed him from the ballot. Tilt Republican.

Maine.

2nd District (Northern Maine) Jared Golden, D, re-elected 53%. Trump 52%. Golden's campaign is running an ad that features a Navy veteran highlighting the Democrat's work on veterans' issues, including

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with then-President Trump. Roughly 10 percent of the 2nd District’s population has veteran status, and Golden has long benefitted from his profile as a straight-talking Marine. It’s a contrast he’s continuing to make against opponent Austin Theriault, a state representative who drove in NASCAR. Theriault and the NRCC have a coordinated ad introducing the Republican on air as well. Golden has a history of overperforming the ticket but this appears to be his toughest race yet. Move from Lean Democratic to Tilt Democratic.

Maryland.

6th District (Western Maryland and northwestern D.C. exurbs) Open; David Trone, D, ran for Senate. Biden 54%. A nonpartisan poll from Maryland pollster Patrick Gonzales (no relation to Nathan) found former state Del. Neil Parrott leading Democratic nominee April McClain Delaney by 2 points, 41-39 percent, but that’s likely a function of name recognition; Parrott’s is twice as high as Delaney’s after running for the seat unsuccessfully in 2020 and 2022. The partisanship of the seat — and a strong GOP Senate campaign from former Gov. Larry Hogan — means that McClain Delaney can’t take this race for granted. Democratic strategists are waiting for her to open up her ample pocketbook and self-fund a negative campaign against Parrott. Likely Democratic.

Michigan.

7th District (Lansing area and northwestern Detroit exurbs) Open; Elissa Slotkin, D, running for U.S. Senate. Biden 50%. Former state Sen. Tom Barrett released a poll taken Aug. 27-29 showing him leading his Democratic opponent, former state Sen. Curtis Hertel, by 5 points, 48-43 percent. The survey was in the field after Hertel, whose name ID is still a fair bit lower than Barrett’s, began airing positive ads, but before the Democrat and his allies at House Majority PAC began running negative ads against Barrett. The two open Michigan seats are developing into some of Democrats’ trickiest holds this cycle. Toss-up.



Tom Barrett

Courtesy Michigan State Senate

Montana.

1st District (western Montana) Ryan Zinke, R, elected 49%. Democrat Monica Tranel released a poll done by Impact Research showing her trailing Zinke by 2 points, 46-44 percent, with a Libertarian taking 4 percent. The release included two previous polls, from February and May, that showed Zinke with a wider lead. Republicans are still not convinced this race is in the top tier, but acknowledge there’s work to be done. Democrats have reserved \$4.1 million in expensive Montana TV time to boost Tranel in the fall. Lean Republican.

Nebraska.

2nd District (Greater Omaha area) Don Bacon, R, re-elected 52%. Biden 52%. Bacon and Democratic opponent Tony Vargas are

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Likely New Members of the Next Congress

Candidates Who Won Primaries in Solid or Likely Takeover Races

STATE	DISTRICT	NAME	PARTY
AZ	3rd	Yassamin Ansari	D
AZ	8th	Abe Hamadeh	R
CA	29th	Luz Rivas	D
CA	30th	Laura Friedman	D
CA	31st	Gil Cisneros	D
CO	5th	Jeff Crank	R
DE	AL	Sarah McBride	D
FL	8th	Mike Haridopolos	R
GA	3rd	Brian Jack	R
IN	3rd	Marlin Stutzman	R
IN	6th	Jefferson Shreve	R
IN	8th	Mark Messmer	R
KS	2nd	Derek Schmidt	R
MD	2nd	Johnny Olszewski	D
MD	3rd	Sarah Elfreth	D
MN	3rd	Kelly Morrison	DFL
MO	1st	Wesley Bell	D
MO	3rd	Bob Onder	R
MT	2nd	Troy Downing	R
NC	6th	Addison McDowell	R
NC	8th	Mark Harris	R
NC	10th	Pat Harrigan	R
NC	13th	Brad Knott	R
NC	14th	Tim Moore	R
ND	At-Large	Julie Fedorchak	R
NH	2nd	Maggie Goodlander	D
NJ	3rd	Herb Conaway	D
NJ	9th	Nellie Pou	D
NY	16th	George Latimer	D
OH	2nd	David Taylor	R
OR	3rd	Maxine Dexter	D
SC	3rd	Sheri Biggs	R
TX	12th	Craig Goldman	R
TX	18th	Sylvester Turner	D
TX	26th	Brandon Gill	R
TX	32nd	Julie Johnson	D
UT	3rd	Mike Kennedy	R
VA	5th	John McGuire	R
VA	10th	Suhas Subramanyam	D
WA	5th	Michael Baumgartner	R
WA	6th	Emily Randall	D
WI	8th	Tony Wied	R
WV	2nd	Riley Moore	R
CA	Senate	Adam Schiff	D
DE	Senate	Lisa Blunt Rochester	D
IN	Senate	Jim Banks	R
NJ	Senate	Andy Kim	D
UT	Senate	John Curtis	R
WV	Senate	Jim Justice	R

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fully engaged on the airwaves, as are allied outside groups. The Mike Johnson-aligned Congressional Leadership Fund is once again hitting Vargas on the airwaves for voting to raise his salary as a state legislator (Nebraska currently pays legislators \$12,000 a year) while the Hakeem Jeffries-aligned House Majority PAC is airing an abortion-focused ad. Vargas himself is on the airwaves earlier than last cycle with a public safety-focused spot, looking to defuse the attacks that helped Bacon defeat him in 2022. Bacon, a retired Air Force general, is highlighting his own work for service members. Toss-up.

New Hampshire.

1st District (Eastern New Hampshire) Chris Pappas, D, re-elected 54%. Biden 52%. Former executive councilor Russell Prescott won a competitive GOP primary with just 26 percent and will face Pappas in the general election. Steelworks fabricator Hollie Noveletsky finished second with 24 percent, followed by Manchester Alderman Joseph Levasseur (23 percent) and four others. Prescott, who trailed the congressman in available campaign funds \$2.1 million to \$412,000 on Aug. 21, is the underdog in a race that isn't getting much attention with Harris performing like a more normal Democrat at the top of the ticket. Shift from Lean Democratic to Likely Democratic.

2nd District (Western and northern New Hampshire) Open; Ann Kuster, D, not seeking re-election. Biden 54%. Attorney Maggie Goodlander won the Democratic primary 63-37 percent over 2016 gubernatorial nominee Colin Van Ostern in one of the most bitter clashes of the cycle. Kuster came off the sidelines to endorse Van Ostern and accused Goodlander of being against abortion rights, which could have been potentially fatal in a Democratic primary. Now Goodlander will face Lily Tang Williams, who won the GOP primary with 36 percent. Business consultant Vikram Mansharamani finished second with 27 percent. Williams is the former chairwoman of the Colorado Libertarian Party and will be the underdog in a race that is unlikely to see the outside investment from the GOP necessary for Williams to win. Move from Likely Democratic to Solid Democratic.



Maggie Goodlander

Courtesy Goodlander Campaign

New Jersey.

9th District (Urban North Jersey and western New York City suburbs) Vacant following the death of Bill Pascrell (D). Party leaders selected state Sen. Nellie Pou as the new nominee following Pascrell's death. She will be the next member of Congress from this district. Solid Democratic.

New York.

17th District (Lower Hudson Valley) Mike Lawler, R, elected 50%. Biden 54%. Former Rep. Mondaire Jones is on the airwaves for the first time this fall, with a healthcare-focused spot that also incorporates biographical elements. Jones is buying TV time week-to-week so it's

unclear how large this expenditure is, but he spent more than \$1.3 million on broadcast in the first two weeks of September. This is a crucial moment for the Democrat, who has struggled to gain ground against Lawler and won't have the Working Families Party line this fall. Plus, Harris is likely to underperform Biden's 2020 mark in this district, meaning Lawler has to win over fewer crossover voters. Tilt Republican.

19th District (Southeastern upstate New York) Marc Molinaro, R, elected 51%. Biden 51%. Molinaro caught some heat from his fellow Hudson Valley Republican, 17th District Rep. Mike Lawler, after he promoted on Twitter conspiracy theories about Haitian immigrants stealing and eating cats and dogs in Ohio. Democrats are increasingly confident about flipping this seat, especially with Riley's strong fundraising (he had a \$1.4 million cash-on-hand advantage over the incumbent on June 30). But Molinaro is a favorite of the Mike Johnson-aligned Congressional Leadership Fund, which is set to pump more than \$8 million on the airwaves to defend him this fall. Tilt Republican.

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2024 Presidential Ratings (Electoral Votes)

Toss-Up (93)			
Arizona (11)	Georgia (16)	Michigan (15)	North Carolina (16)
Pennsylvania (19)	Wisconsin (10)	Nevada (6)	
Tilt Democratic (0)		Tilt Republican (0)	
Lean Democratic (15)		Lean Republican (31)	
Minnesota (10)	Nebraska 2nd (1)	Florida (30)	
New Hampshire (4)		Maine 2nd (1)	
Likely Democratic (15)		Likely Republican (63)	
Maine Statewide (2)		Iowa (6)	Texas (40)
Virginia (13)		Ohio (17)	
Solid Democratic (196)		Solid Republican (125)	
California (54)	New York (28)	Alabama (9)	Nebraska 1st (1)
Colorado (10)	Oregon (8)	Alaska (3)	Nebraska 3rd (1)
Connecticut (7)	Rhode Island (4)	Arkansas (6)	North Dakota (3)
Delaware (3)	Vermont (3)	Idaho (4)	Oklahoma (7)
District of Columbia (3)	Washington (12)	Indiana (11)	South Carolina (9)
Hawaii (4)		Kansas (6)	South Dakota (3)
Illinois (19)		Kentucky (8)	Tennessee (11)
Maine 1st (1)		Louisiana (8)	Utah (6)
Maryland (10)		Mississippi (6)	West Virginia (4)
Massachusetts (11)		Missouri (10)	Wyoming (3)
New Jersey (14)		Montana (4)	
New Mexico (5)		Nebraska Statewide (2)	
		GOP	DEM
		2020 Results	232 306
		2024 Ratings	219 226
		Toss-up	93
		Needed to Win	270

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Oregon.

4th District (Southern Willamette Valley and southern coast) Val Hoyle, D, elected 51%. Biden 55%. Hoyle is airing an abortion-focused attack ad hitting GOP opponent Monique DeSpain on her support for the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. It's a sign that Hoyle is taking her race seriously after Republicans went on air with ads discussing Hoyle's relationship to a legally embattled marijuana company. Likely Democratic.

Pennsylvania.

10th District (Harrisburg and York areas) Scott Perry, R, re-elected 54%. Trump 51%. National Democrats are taking a real swing at Perry for the first time in four years, and party strategists believe former WGAL anchor Janelle Stelson is the candidate to take on the former Freedom Caucus chairman. Stelson has been running on the trust she built up in the area over 20 years as a nonpartisan journalist, and she's beginning to flex some financial muscle over the cash-strapped Perry, laying down a \$1.6 million ad buy for September and October while the DCCC chips in another \$800,000. Perry has reserved just \$91,000 in TV ad time so far, and his allies at the Club for Growth and Freedom Caucus will spend another \$250,000 on his behalf. House Majority PAC, the Democratic super PAC, is poised to spend \$2.4 million against Perry in August. The most intriguing development of the race came recently, when a low-profile GOP super PAC, Eighteen Fifty Four Fund, reserved \$2.3 million in TV ads for October in this media market. Democratic polling has this race tied, or even with Stelson slightly ahead. Move from Lean Republican to Tilt Republican.

Texas.

15th District (Rio Grande Valley to the outer San Antonio metro area) Monica De La Cruz, R, elected 53%. Trump 51%. While Democrat Michelle Vallejo is running a sharper and better-funded campaign than last cycle, this district doesn't appear ripe for a pickup. Trump looks likely to carry the seat, and De La Cruz will probably have a hefty financial advantage in the final weeks of the race (including support from pro-cryptocurrency group Fairshake). While Democrats' House Majority PAC has \$2 million in TV ad reservations in the Rio Grande Valley, it's ultimately more likely that money goes toward defending vulnerable Rep. Vicente Gonzalez than boosting Vallejo. Move from Lean Republican to Likely Republican.



Monica De La Cruz

Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call

Virginia.

2nd District (Suburban Hampton Roads) Jen Kiggans, R, elected 52%. Biden 50%. Democratic and Republican strategists remain divided on whether Navy veteran Missy Cotter Smasal poses a threat to Kiggans this fall. Republicans are confident in Kiggans' position despite the

possibility that Harris could carry the district, and see Smasal as a weak and underfunded opponent (the Democrat had just \$600,000 in the bank on June 30 compared to \$2.5 million for Kiggans). Democrats are more bullish on Smasal; main Democratic super PAC House Majority PAC has reserved \$2.4 million in ad time in the Norfolk media market for this fall. Tilt Republican.

5th District (Charlottesville and western Southside Virginia) open; Bob Good, R, lost re-nomination. Trump 53%. Some of Good's supporters are vowing to write him in for the general election rather than vote for state Sen. John McGuire, who defeated Good in the GOP primary by a few hundred votes. McGuire's general election opponent, executive coach Gloria Witt, had just \$36,000 in the bank on June 30, and the district is Republican enough that a significant chunk of voters would have to write in Good to make things interesting. But it's enough of a worry that Gov. Glenn Youngkin is rallying with McGuire next week to help him shore up support. Solid Republican.

7th District (Southern D.C. exurbs) Open, Abigail Spanberger, D, running for governor. Biden 52%. The GOP's Congressional Leadership Fund earmarked another \$2.3 million for this race, a sign they believe attorney and veteran Derek Anderson can defeat the better-funded Eugene Vindman, the retired Army lieutenant colonel and whistleblower running as the Democratic nominee. Toss-up.

Washington.

3rd District (Southwestern Washington) Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, D, elected 50.4%. Trump 51%. This race looks like it will be neck and neck until Election Day. The district's partisanship favors Republican Joe Kent, but even though his operation is more professionalized than last cycle he still lags badly in fundraising and hasn't attracted support from the Congressional Leadership Fund. Kent will get some air cover from the NRCC, which has warmed to him since he ousted GOP Rep. Jaime Herrera-Beutler from Congress two years ago by finishing ahead of her in the all-party primary. Even still, Gluesenkamp Perez and her allies at House Majority PAC are currently set to outspend their GOP counterparts by two-to-one over the final two months of the race. Kent, who was pilloried by Democrats for his ties to white supremacists in 2022, is currently airing an ad that looks to soften his image. Toss-up.

Wisconsin.

1st District (Southeastern Wisconsin) Bryan Steil, R, re-elected 54%. Trump 50%. This race is still at the edge of the battlefield but has seen an increase in TV spending, with Democratic nominee Peter Barca hitting Steil on the airwaves about abortion and IVF; Steil responded with an ad saying he "always supported IVF" and calling Barca a "lying career politician." Trump will probably carry this district, which gives Steil a cushion, but Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin may do well here too. Likely Republican.

3rd District (Southwestern Wisconsin) Derrick Van Orden, R, elected 52%. Trump 51%. Van Orden and the NRCC are airing a coordinated ad featuring a passel of cute goats and the Republican's many grandchildren, repeating a tactic the retired Navy SEAL used in 2022 to soften his gruff image. Opponent Rebecca Cooke is also on the air, with an abortion-focused attack ad. This race could be getting more competitive for Democrats. Move from Likely Republican to Lean Republican.



Senate Report Shorts

Arizona. Kyrsten Sinema (I) not seeking re-election. The anti-tax Club for Growth will spend \$12 million to boost GOP nominee Kari Lake, even as other national Republicans keep their distance from the controversial former newscaster. The Club and Lake's own campaign publicized polls in August showing the race against Rep. Ruben Gallego within the margin of error, but those surveys are rosier than nonpartisan public polling. And even with the Club's investment, Democrats are set to outspend Republicans on the airwaves by 3-to-1. Tilt Democratic.

Redfield & Wilton Strategies for The Telegraph, Sept. 6-9 (LVs) — General election ballot: Gallego over Lake, 48% - 42%.

Morning Consult, Aug. 30-Sept. 8 (LVs)(online panel) — General election ballot: Gallego over Lake, 49% - 41%.

Maryland. Open; Ben Cardin (D) not seeking re-election. Democrats are finally on offense against popular former Gov. Larry Hogan in an effort to tie him to the national GOP. Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks and her allies at Women Vote!, the super PAC wing of EMILY's List, are spending a combined \$4 million on TV ads through the first two weeks of September reminding voters that Hogan could deliver the Senate majority to Republicans. It's Alsobrooks' best line against the former governor, who is still well-liked in the state. He has his own commercials running emphasizing his bipartisan credentials, including his decision to send the Maryland National Guard to the Capitol on Jan. 6, and his refusal to support Trump. Likely Democratic.

Morning Consult, Aug. 30-Sept. 8 (LVs)(online panel) — General election ballot: Alsobrooks over Hogan, 48% - 43%.

Gonzales Research, Aug. 24-30 (LVs)(live caller) — General election ballot: Alsobrooks over Hogan, 46% - 41%.

Michigan. Open; Debbie Stabenow (D) not seeking re-election. Democratic Rep. Elissa Slotkin continues to have a narrow lead over former Rep. Mike Rogers even as Michigan remains stubbornly close for Harris in the presidential election. And Slotkin is slated to receive significantly more help from outside groups — \$28 million from Senate Majority PAC, the DSCC, and progressive group Protect Progress — than Rogers, whose allies at the NRSC and Great Lakes Conservative Fund have reserved just \$10 million in advertising time for the fall. But the closeness of the presidential race in the Wolverine State, plus the fact that this is an open seat, mean it will be competitive till the end. Tilt Democratic.

Morning Consult, Aug. 30-Sept. 8 (LVs)(online) — General election ballot: Slotkin over Rogers, 49% - 40%.

co/efficient (R) for Americans for IVF, Sept. 4-6 (LVs)(mixed mode) — General election ballot: Slotkin over Rogers, 39% - 38%.

YouGov for CBS News, Sept. 3-6 (LVs)(online) — General election ballot: Slotkin over Rogers, 48% - 41%.

Montana. Jon Tester (D) elected 2006 (49%), 2012 (49%), 2018 (50%). A bipartisan poll conducted for AARP showed Republican Navy SEAL veteran Tim Sheehy at 51 percent and leading Tester by 6 points. That looks like the upper-end of Sheehy's advantage, but it's clear that the senator is trailing in the race with seven weeks to go. Tester is no stranger to over performing an average Montana Democrat and winning

close races, but this is his toughest challenge yet. Whether it's statewide surveys or polls in the competitive 1st Congressional District (which covers half of the state), Tester is not hitting the marks he needs to win. Democrats are confident that new, upcoming attacks against Sheehy will disqualify him with enough voters. But there's already been tens of millions of dollars spent on TV ads in Montana over the last year and Tester is playing from behind.

Even though Trump is likely to win Montana by 12-15 points, Tester still has a chance of winning. He could make up the few points necessary to win or baffle the pollsters like GOP Sen. Susan Collins of Maine in 2020. But to continue to call this an even toss-up is understating the senator's challenge to winning a fourth term. Shift from Toss-up to Tilt Republican.

FabrizioWard (R)/David Binder Research (D) for AARP, Aug. 25-29 (LVs) (mixed mode) — General election ballot: Sheehy over Tester, 51% - 46%.

Pennsylvania. Bob Casey, Jr. (D) elected 2006 (59%), 2012 (54%), 2018 (56%). A survey conducted by CNN and SSRS found a tied race between Casey and former Bridgewater CEO Dave McCormick,



Courtesy McCormick Campaign

Dave McCormick

with both candidates receiving 46 percent. That's the best poll for McCormick all cycle, and for now, it's still an outlier, with Casey holding a mid-to-high single digit lead in most other public polling. McCormick's allies at super PAC Keystone Renewal

plan to shell out another \$62 million to support his candidacy over the final seven weeks of the election, and the McConnell-aligned Senate Leadership Fund has another \$13 million in reservations. Democratic outside groups have \$40 million in fall reservations. Tilt Democratic.

Morning Consult, Aug. 30-Sept. 8 (LVs) — General election ballot: Casey over McCormick, 49% - 40%.

co/efficient (R) for Americans for IVF, Sept. 4-6 (LVs) — General election ballot: Casey over McCormick, 45% - 36%.

YouGov for CBS News, Sept. 3-6 (LVs)(online) — General election ballot: Casey over McCormick, 48% - 41%.

CNN/SSRS, Aug. 23-29 (LVs) — General election ballot: Casey and McCormick tied at 46%.

Nevada. Jacky Rosen (D) elected 2018 (50%). The switch from Biden to Harris at the top of the Democratic ticket has revitalized the party in Nevada — Biden trailed Trump in the FiveThirtyEight average by 6 points when he dropped out of the race, while Harris is tied. But throughout it all Rosen has maintained a steady lead over her opponent, retired Army captain Sam Brown. The anti-tax Club for Growth is backing Brown on the airwaves but Democrats look like they will maintain a significant spending advantage over the final weeks of the race. The Schumer-aligned Senate Majority PAC has reserved \$29 million

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from now until Election Day on the airwaves compared to just \$12 million from the NRSC. Tilt Democratic.

Redfield & Wilton Strategies for The Telegraph, Sept. 6-9 (LVs)— General election ballot: Rosen over Brown, 47% - 39%.

Morning Consult, Aug. 30-Sept. 8 (LVs)— General election ballot: Rosen over Brown, 50% - 40%.

Texas. Ted Cruz (R) elected 2012 (56%), 2018 (51%). Democratic nominee Colin Allred has begun his biggest paid media push yet, shelling out \$4 million across broadcast, cable and streaming networks in the first two weeks of September. He's aired nine different ads since the beginning of the month, including positive and negative messages in English and Spanish. Cruz has contrast and negative ads on air as well, attacking Allred on the border and, in Spanish, on transgender policy. Cruz has reserved \$9.5 million in TV ads from now until the election, while Allred is reserving time in smaller increments. The Republican

maintains a mid-single digit lead, and Harris likely needs to chip away at Trump a bit more to bring Allred into striking distance. Likely Republican.

Morning Consult, Aug. 30-Sept. 8 (LVs)(online panel)— General election ballot: Cruz over Allred, 47-42%.

Emerson College for The Hill, Sept. 3-5 (LVs)(mixed mode)— General election ballot: Cruz over Allred, 48-44%.

YouGov for University of Texas, Aug. 23-31 (RVs)(online)— General election ballot: Cruz over Allred, 44% - 36%.

Virginia. Tim Kaine (D) elected 2012 (53%), 2018 (57%). Harris has begun to separate from Trump in Virginia, with the latest polling showing her advantage similar to Biden's in 2020. That probably forecloses any chance of an upset by Navy veteran Hung Cao. Solid Democratic.

Washington Post/George Mason University, Sept. 4-8 (LVs)(live caller/text-to-web)— General election ballot: Kaine over Cao, 53% - 41%. **IE**

Governor Report Shorts

Delaware. Open; John Carney Jr. (D) term-limited. Newcastle County Executive Matt Meyer won the important Democratic primary 47-37 percent over Lt. Gov. Bethany Hall-Long and is the heavy favorite to win over Republican Mike Ramone in November. The last Republican to win a gubernatorial election in the First State was Mike Castle in the 1980s. Solid Democratic.

New Hampshire. Open; Chris Sununu (R) not seeking re-election. Former Manchester mayor Joyce Craig won the Democratic primary 48-42 percent

over Executive Councilor Cinde Warmington and will face former Sen. Kelly Ayotte in the general election. Ayotte, who lost re-election in 2016 after voicing disapproval of Trump after the release of the Access



Joyce Craig

Courtesy Craig Campaign

Hollywood tape, won the GOP primary 63-34 percent over former state Senate president Chuck Morse and others. New Hampshire is the only gubernatorial race rated as a toss-up in the country. Democratic prospects for taking over the governorship after eight years of Sununu improved with Harris presumably doing better than Biden at the top of the ticket. Toss-up.

North Carolina. Roy Cooper (D) term-limited. GOP Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson continues to face a stream of embarrassing news stories, as he has for much of the last year. A Democratic opposition research group released recent audio of Robinson saying he wanted to ban abortion at "zero" weeks — publicly Robinson says he supports the state's current 12-week ban but has previously advocated for a total ban with no exceptions. State Attorney General Josh Stein regularly polls

2024 Gubernatorial Ratings

Toss-up (1)	
NH Open (Sununu, R)	
Tilt Democratic (1)	Tilt Republican
NC Open (Cooper, D)	
Lean Democratic	Lean Republican
Likely Democratic (1)	Likely Republican
WA Open (Inslie, D)	
Solid Democratic (1)	Solid Republican (7)
DE Open (Carney, D)	IN Open (Holcomb, R)
	MO Open (Parson, R)
	ND Open (Burgum, R)
	WV Open (Justice, R)
	Cox, R (Utah)
	Gianforte, R (Mont.)
	Scott, R (Vt.)

Takeovers in italics, # moved benefiting Democrats, * moved benefiting Republicans

double-digits ahead of Robinson but even Democratic strategists believe the final margin will be significantly narrower.

Quinnipiac University, Sept. 4-8 (LVs)(live caller)— General election ballot: Stein over Robinson, 54% - 42%.

Morning Consult, Aug. 30-Sept. 8 (LVs)(online panel)— General election ballot: Stein over Robinson, 50% - 37%.

SurveyUSA for WRAL-TV, Sept. 4-7 (LVs)— General election ballot: Stein over Robinson, 51% - 37%. **IE**

Oregon 5 Poll: Chavez-DeRemer in the Hot Seat

By Jacob Rubashkin

GOP Rep. Laurie Chavez-DeRemer enters the fall trailing a familiar Democratic opponent narrowly, according to new polling of Oregon's 5th District from Noble Predictive Insights for *Inside Elections*.

When Chavez-DeRemer flipped the Democratic-held seat in 2022, she did so as the favorite, taking advantage of a fractured Democratic Party and progressive nominee. She led in public and private polling for the last six weeks of the race.

But in an Aug. 26-28 NPI/*Inside Elections* survey, fielded entirely after the Democratic National Convention, Democratic state Rep. Janelle Bynum led Chavez-DeRemer by 2 points, 41-39 percent, within the poll's 4.8 percent margin of error. Independent candidate Andrew Aasen took 1 percent and 19 percent were undecided.

The district is rated as a toss-up by *Inside Elections*.

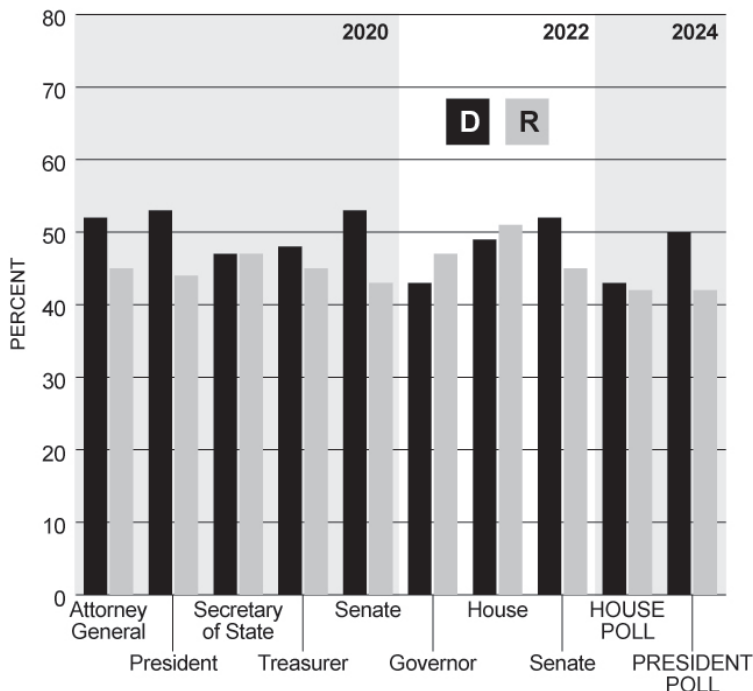
The Lay of the Land

The 5th District encompasses the suburbs southeast of Portland, part of the Willamette Valley, and even crosses the Cascades to pick up Bend and the beginnings of the High Desert in Central Oregon

The district is predominantly non-Hispanic white (79 percent) with a sizable Hispanic population (11 percent) and a smaller Asian-American population (3 percent). Just under 40 percent of residents have a four-year college degree.

Statewide Election Results & New Poll in Oregon's 5th District

Poll conducted Aug. 26-28 by Noble Predictive Insights for *Inside Elections*



Politically, the district is diverse: deep blue around Portland, bright red in rural Marion and Linn counties, and purple in Clackamas and Deschutes counties.

In 2020, Joe Biden would have carried the district by 9 points, 53-44 percent. In 2022, Chavez-DeRemer won by 2 points, 51-49 percent, while GOP gubernatorial nominee Christine Drazan carried the seat by 5 points, 47-43 percent (independent Betsy Johnson took the balance).

The House Election

The contest between Chavez-DeRemer and Bynum is set to be one of the most expensive races on the House battlefield.

Democrats believe that a lack of outside investment in 2022 doomed progressive Jamie McLeod-Skinner to her narrow loss against Chavez-DeRemer and are determined not to repeat their mistakes. Party leaders intervened in the Democratic primary to ensure that McLeod-Skinner did not win the nomination again, and are set to invest heavily in the race over the next two months.

The four major outside groups — the DCCC and House Majority PAC on the Democrats' side, and the NRCC and Congressional Leadership Fund on the GOP side — have parked \$28 million in TV ad time in the Portland media market for the fall. While some of that is likely to go to Washington's 3rd District, it also signals a heavy interest in Oregon's 5th.

Bynum and Chavez-DeRemer have faced off in two previous elections for state House, with Bynum emerging victorious in both. But the Republican's time in Congress has given her greater visibility across the district: 39 percent of voters view her favorably compared to 30 percent unfavorably. Just half of voters have an opinion of Bynum, with 28 percent seeing her favorably and 20 percent unfavorably.

The Presidential Election

Vice President Kamala Harris led former President Donald Trump at the top of the ticket in the poll. In a head-to-head matchup, Harris was ahead by 8 points, 50-42 percent. When presented with Green Party nominee Jill Stein and independent Cornel West as options, voters still broke for Harris, 47-42 percent, with 2 percent going to Stein and West each.

(Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. was not included as an option after he suspended his campaign two weeks ago, but after the poll entered the field, supporters of his nominated him in Oregon on the "We the People" line, meaning he will be on the ballot.)

Neither Harris nor Trump are popular in the district. Harris is viewed favorably by 47 percent of voters and unfavorably by 51 percent, while Trump is viewed favorably by 42 percent and unfavorably by 55 percent. Harris is significantly more popular than Biden, whose image rating is 41 percent favorable, 55 percent unfavorable.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, the Democratic nominee for vice president, has a positive image rating of 46 percent favorable and 42 percent unfavorable. Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance is much less well received at 39 percent favorable and 51 percent unfavorable.

