Florida 26: Can Local Politics Trump Partisanship?

By Jacob Rubashkin

Republicans are putting Tip O'Neill's "All politics is local" to the ultimate test in Florida. GOP strategists generally believe that their path back to the House majority lies in districts carried or narrowly lost by President Donald Trump in 2016. Florida's 26th is not one of those districts; it voted for Hillary Clinton by 16 points.

But this South Florida constituency, created after the 2010 redistricting cycle, offers some hope to the GOP. It's shown a willingness to vote for Republicans down ballot, and the national party was able to land a top-tier recruit to take on freshman Democrat Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, something Republicans have struggled to do in some more competitive districts nationwide.

With Florida yet again playing host to a competitive presidential contest, this district is going to receive significant attention from outside groups, which have already begun to reserve TV ad time in Miami.

While it's not integral to Republicans' slim pathway to taking back the House, the 26th will be an early test on election night of whether star GOP recruits can beat expectations despite an unfavorable situation at the top of the ballot.

Lay of the Land

The 26th District is the southernmost congressional district in the country. Created after the 2010 census, and redrawn mid-decade to be more Democratic after a court battle, the 26th encompasses the southern tip of the Florida peninsula, including the southern portion of Miami-Dade County and all of Monroe County through the Florida Keys.

The district is 72 percent Hispanic/Latino, 15 percent Non-Hispanic White, and 10 percent Black. Nearly 38 percent of the district is of Cuban origin, the largest single demographic group, and 49 percent of the district is foreign-born. The CityLab Density Index classifies it as an urban-suburban mix, and 29 percent of the district's residents have bachelor's degrees or higher.

Democrats hold a 6 percent voter registration edge over Republicans,

2020 House Ratings

Toss-Up (2R, 4D)

GA 7 (Open; Woodall, R)	NY 11 (Rose, D)
IA 3 (Axne, D)	OK 5 (Horn, D)
IL 13 (Davis, R)	SC 1 (Cunningham, D)

Tilt Democratic (10D, 1R)	Tilt Republican (6R)
CA 21 (Cox, D)	MN 1 (Hagedorn, R)
CA 25 (Garcia, R)	NJ 2 (Van Drew, R)
GA 6 (McBath, D)	PA 1 (Fitzpatrck, R)
IA 1 (Finkenauer, D)	PA 10 (Perry, R)
IA 2 (Open; Loebsack, D)	TX 22 (Open; Olson, R)
ME 2 (Golden, D)	TX 24 (Open; Marchant, R)
MN 7 (Peterson, DFL)	
NM 2 (Torres Small, D)	
NY 22 (Brindisi, D)	
UT 4 (McAdams, D)	
VA 7 (Spanberger, D)	

	GOP	DEM
116th Congress	201	233
Currently Solid	174	202
Competitive	27	31
Needed for majority		218

Lean Democratic (8D, 1R)	Lean Republican (6R, 1L)
CA 48 (Rouda, D)	MI 3 (Open; Amash, L)
IL 14 (Underwood, D)	MO 2 (Wagner, R)
KS 3 (Davids, D)	NE 2 (Bacon, R)
NJ 3 (Kim, D)	NY 2 (Open; King, R)
NJ 7 (Malinowski, D)	NY 24 (Katko, R)
TX 7 (Fletcher, D)	OH 1 (Chabot, R)
TX 23 (Open; Hurd, R)	TX 21 (Roy, R)
TX 32 (Allred, D)	
VA 2 (Luria, D)	

Likely Democratic (9D, 2R)	Likely Republican (9R)
AZ 1 (O'Halleran, D)	AZ 6 (Schweikert, R)
CA 39 (Cisneros. D)	FL 15 (Spano, R)
FL 26 (Mucarsel-Powell, D)	IN 5 (Open; Brooks, R)
NH 1 (Pappas, D)	MI 6 (Upton, R)
MI 8 (Slotkin, D)	MT AL (Open; Gianforte, R)
MI 11 (Stevens, D)	NC 8 (Hudson, R)
NC 2 (Open; Holding, R)	NY 1 (Zeldin, R)
NC 6 (Open; Walker, R)	TX 10 (McCaul, R)
NV 3 (Lee, D)	WA 3 (Herrera-Beutler, R)
PA 8 (Cartwright, D)	
PA 17 (Lamb, D)	

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

Presidential Battlegrounds: North Carolina

By Ryan Matsumoto

One of the biggest upsets in the 2008 presidential election was when President Barack Obama carried the state of North Carolina, which had not voted for a Democrat for president since Jimmy Carter in 1976. Since 2008 however, the state has proved elusive for Democrats, voting Republican in the next two presidential elections and three Senate elections. As Democrats look ahead to 2020, North Carolina remains a state of interest especially because of its potentially decisive Senate race.

North Carolina in Recent Elections

North Carolina has consistently voted to the right of the nation in recent presidential elections. In 2008, Obama won the state by three-tenths of a percentage point while winning nationally by 7 points. In 2012, Mitt Romney won North Carolina by 2 points while losing nationally by 4 points. In 2016, North Carolina voted for Trump by 4 points while Hillary Clinton won the national popular vote by 2 points.

Put another way, North Carolina was 7 points more Republican than the nation in 2008, 6 points more Republican than the nation in 2012, and 6 points more Republican than the nation in 2016.

North Carolina has been competitive in recent downballot elections. The *Inside Elections* Baseline score, which measures average partisan performance in North Carolina over the past four election cycles, is 50.1 percent Republican and 48.9 percent Democratic.

The 2018 Midterm Elections

In 2018, North Carolina had a "blue moon" election where no statewide elections were on the ballot except for judicial contests. Blue moon elections occur every 12 years in North Carolina.

The two statewide judicial contests on the ballot with one Democrat running against one Republican were for seats on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. In the race for seat 1, Democrat John Arrowood defeated Republican Andrew Heath by 2 points. In the race for seat 3, Democrat Allegra Collins defeated Republican Chuck Kitchen by 2 points as well. This is about what we would expect from a state that voted 6 percentage points more Republican than the nation in 2016 in the context of a D+9 national environment.

In congressional elections, Democrats failed to capture any of the three seats that were considered takeover targets, although they were

2020 Presidential Ratings
(Electoral Votes)

Toss-Up (66)

Arizona (11)	Florida (29)	Nebraska 2nd (1)	North Carolina (15)
Wisconsin (10)			

Tilt Democratic (36)		Tilt Republican (1)	
Michigan (16)	Pennsylvania (20)	Maine 2nd (1)	

Lean Democratic (14)		Lean Republican (22)	
Minnesota (10)	New Hampshire (4)	Georgia (16)	Iowa (6)

Likely Democratic (8)		Likely Republican (56)	
Maine At-Large (2)	Nevada (6)	Ohio (18)	Texas (38)

Solid Democratic (210)	Solid Republican (125)	
California (55)	Alabama (9)	Tennessee (11)
Colorado (9)	Alaska (3)	Utah (6)
Connecticut (7)	Arkansas (6)	West Virginia (5)
Delaware (3)	Idaho (4)	Wyoming (3)
D.C. (3)	Indiana (11)	
Hawaii (4)	Kansas (6)	
Illinois (20)	Kentucky (8)	
Maine 1st (1)	Louisiana (8)	
Maryland (10)	Mississippi (6)	
Massachusetts (11)	Missouri (10)	
New Jersey (14)	Montana (3)	
New Mexico (5)	Nebraska At-Large (2)	
New York (29)	Nebraska 1st (1)	
Oregon (7)	Nebraska 3rd (1)	
Rhode Island (4)	North Dakota (3)	
Vermont (3)	Oklahoma (7)	
Virginia (13)	South Carolina (9)	
Washington (12)	South Dakota (3)	

270 needed to win

	GOP	DEM
2016 Results	304	227
2020 Ratings	**204**	**268**
Toss-up	66	

 # moved benefiting Democrats,
* moved benefiting Republicans

lower-tier opportunities since they all voted for Trump by at least 9 points in 2016. In the 2nd District, based in the suburbs of Raleigh, Republican Rep. George Holding defeated Democrat Linda Coleman by 5 points. In the 13th District (based in the Winston-Salem - Greensboro - High Point metropolitan area), Republican Rep. Ted Budd defeated Democrat Kathy Manning by 6 points. Democrats were most optimistic about their chances in the 9th District (which includes the southern suburbs of Charlotte and several rural counties) because of their star recruit Dan McCready, but he ultimately lost to Republican Dan Bishop by 2 points in the "redo election" in September 2019.

One important note is that a new congressional district map will be used for the 2020 election cycle because the previous one was struck down as an unconstitutional gerrymander by state judges. The new map is expected to yield two additional seats for Democrats, making it easier for them to maintain control of the House of Representatives in 2020.

Demographics

North Carolina is a fairly racially diverse state at 63 percent Non-Hispanic White, 22 percent Black, 10 percent Hispanic or Latino, 3 percent Asian, 2 percent American Indian/Alaska Native, and 2 percent two or more races. Like other Southern states, North Carolina politics is racially polarized, with Trump winning white voters 63 percent to 32 percent and Clinton winning black voters 89 percent to 8 percent, according to exit polls. Trump did exceptionally well with white voters without a college degree, winning them 69 percent to 25 percent.

According to Census estimates, 31 percent of adults in North Carolina have a bachelor's degree or higher, roughly the same as the country as a whole. Median household income in the state is $52,413, lower than the nationwide median of $60,293.

Increasing Democratic Strength in Metropolitan Areas

Democrats' political base in North Carolina includes the major metropolitan areas of Charlotte, Raleigh-Durham, and Winston-Salem - Greensboro - High Point, as well as several heavily African-American rural counties in the northeastern part of the state.

Wake County, which includes the capital of Raleigh and some surrounding suburbs, is now estimated to be the largest county in the state by population. It voted for Clinton by 20 points, a substantial improvement over Obama's margin of 11 points four years earlier. Much of this Democratic improvement is probably because 52 percent of adults in Wake County have a bachelor's degree or higher, the second highest percentage statewide. Neighboring Durham County, which is 37 percent black and includes Duke University, voted for Clinton by 60 points. Nearby Orange County, which includes UNC Chapel Hill, voted for Clinton by 50 points. These three counties are part of the region known as the "Research Triangle," where major universities, tech companies, and a highly educated workforce are contributing to a growing economy.

Mecklenburg County, which includes the city of Charlotte and its suburbs, is the second-largest county in the state by population. It voted for Clinton by 29 points, an improvement over Obama's 22-point margin from four years earlier. Similar to the counties in the Raleigh-Durham area, Mecklenburg is fairly well-educated - 45 percent of its adults have a bachelor's degree or higher. The affluent neighborhoods south of downtown Charlotte demonstrate Democrats' increasing strength with college-educated white voters. After an already large swing toward the Democrats in 2016, these voters continued shifting

left in the 9th District congressional election. After Trump won the Mecklenburg County portion of the 9th District by 3 points, McCready won it by 13 points in 2019.

Turnout Trends

Turnout trends in North Carolina probably helped Trump more than Clinton in the 2016 election. Overall, about 5 percent more votes were cast in 2016 than in 2012. However, the change was not evenly distributed across the state's 100 counties.

Turnout increased from 2012 to 2016 in Democrats' metropolitan base counties. Wake County cast 8 percent more votes, Durham County cast 6 percent more votes, Orange County cast 7 percent more votes, and Mecklenburg County cast 5 percent more votes. Democrats are hoping for even stronger turnout increases from these areas in 2020, especially since Raleigh-Durham and Charlotte are two of the fastest growing areas of the state.

2020 Senate Ratings

Toss-Up

Collins (R-Maine)	Tillis (R-N.C.)
McSally (R-Ariz.)	

Tilt Democratic	**Tilt Republican**
Gardner (R-Colo.)	

Lean Democratic	**Lean Republican**
Peters (D-Mich.)	KS Open (Roberts, R)
	Daines (R-Mont.)
	Ernst (R-Iowa)
	Jones (D-Ala.)

Likely Democratic	**Likely Republican**
	Cornyn (R-Texas)
	Loeffler (R-Ga.)
	Perdue (R-Ga.)

Solid Democratic	**Solid Republican**
NM Open (Udall, D)	TN Open (Alexander, R)
Booker (D-N.J.)	WY Open (Enzi, R)
Coons (D-Del.)	Cassidy (R-La.)
Durbin (D-Ill.)	Capito (R-W.Va.)
Markey (D-Mass.)	Cotton (R-Ark.)
Merkley (D-Ore.)	Graham (R-S.C.)
Reed (D-R.I.)	Hyde-Smith (R-Miss.)
Shaheen (D-N.H.)	Inhofe (R-Okla.)
Smith (D-Minn.)	McConnell (R-Ky.)
Warner (D-Va.)	Risch (R-Idaho)

	GOP	DEM	
116th Congress	53	47	Rounds (R-S.D.)
Not up this cycle	30	35	Sasse (R-Neb.)
Currently Solid	13	10	Sullivan (R-Alaska)
Competitive	10	2	

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

However, turnout decreased from 2012 to 2016 in the seven majority-black counties in the rural northeastern part of the state (Bertie, Hertford, Edgecombe, Northampton, Halifax, Vance, and Warren). Each of these counties voted for Clinton by more than 20 points, but each of them also cast between 3 and 8 percent fewer votes than they did in 2012. At least part of this can be explained by population decline. According to Census estimates, each of these counties lost population from 2010 to 2019 even as the statewide population grew by 10 percent. According to *The News & Observer*, a major reason for the decline in population is a lack of economic opportunity in the area.

On the flipside, turnout increased substantially in many of the state's heavily Republican counties. Total votes cast increased by 10 percent or more in 14 counties from 2012 to 2016, with 13 of these counties voting for Trump by double-digits. Brunswick County saw the largest increase, casting 19 percent more votes in 2016 than it did four years earlier. It is 82 percent Non-Hispanic White and voted for Trump by 28 points. It also happens to be the county with the largest percent increase in population from 2010 to 2019, with 33 percent growth. The county includes several suburbs of the city of Wilmington as well as many beachside communities.

Overall, turnout increased 5 percent in the median Trump county while decreasing 1 percent in the median Clinton county. Statewide voter file data also suggests that Trump benefited from a decline in Democratic turnout, especially among black voters. According to Dr. Michael Bitzer, a professor of politics and history at Catawba College, turnout among registered Democrats decreased from 70 percent in 2012 to 68 percent in 2016, while turnout among registered Republicans increased from 73 percent to 75 percent. Additionally, turnout among registered black voters decreased from 70 percent to 64 percent while turnout among registered white voters increased from 68 percent to 71 percent. It is important to note however, that 64 percent black turnout in 2016 was still higher than 59 percent black turnout from 2004.

Increasing turnout among black voters will be crucial for Democratic success in North Carolina this November, although it may be difficult to match the strong numbers Obama produced in 2008 and 2012 as the first black president. Biden did very well with black voters in the Democratic primaries, but may potentially benefit from an African-American woman on the ticket as the vice presidential nominee. Democrats could also potentially benefit if the George Floyd protests energize more young black voters to engage with the political process.

An Important Senate Race

As discussed earlier, North Carolina voted 6 percentage points more Republican than the nation in both the 2016 and 2012 presidential elections. Democrats are hopeful that population growth in the Charlotte and Raleigh-Durham metropolitan areas, continued gains with college-educated whites, and increased black turnout will help move North Carolina to the left. Still, there is a decent chance that North Carolina will vote several percentage points to the right of other high-profile battleground states such as Wisconsin, Arizona, and Florida.

Nonetheless, expect to see heavy investment and attention to the Tar Heel State throughout the campaign cycle. Even if North Carolina doesn't ultimately emerge as the tipping-point state, there is a very good chance that it will be decisive in the battle for the Senate majority. Democratic Sen. Doug Jones will likely struggle to win re-election running in a presidential year in Alabama against an opponent not named Roy Moore. If he loses, Democrats will need to flip four seats to win the Senate majority if Biden defeats Trump. Polling has looked very good for Democrats so far in Colorado and Arizona, and Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine looks very vulnerable now that she has lost some of her bipartisan appeal in a Clinton state. North Carolina will be a prime candidate for the fourth flip to put Democrats over the top given that other potential targets are all states that voted for Trump by larger margins.

Early Polling

Early polling in North Carolina suggests the state will be competitive again in 2020. According to the RealClearPolitics average through June 4, Biden led Trump by eight-tenths of a percentage point. In the RealClearPolitics average through June 4 for the Senate election, Democrat Cal Cunningham led Republican Sen. Thom Tillis by two-tenths of a percentage point.

The Bottom Line

North Carolina promises to be an exciting battleground state this November, with important races for president, senate, and governor. Although the state leans Republican relative to the nation, it will likely be important given Trump's expected Electoral College advantage and the dynamics of the battle for the Senate. If Biden ultimately wins North Carolina and Cunningham wins the Senate race, there is a very good chance we will see a Democratic trifecta at the federal level next year. **IE**

Candidate Conversation

Courtesy Montclair State University

Brigid Callahan Harrison (D)

New Jersey's 2nd District — Rating: Tilt Republican

Interview Date: May 20, 2020 **(via Google Meet)**

Date of Birth: May 21, 1965; Camden, New Jersey

Education: Stockton Univ. (1988); Rutgers (M.A. 1990); Temple Univ. (Ph.D. 1996)

Elected Office: None; First run for office

Current Outlook: Harrison is the frontrunner for the Democratic nomination to take on party-switcher Jeff Van Drew, but faces a well-funded challenge from teacher Amy Kennedy, the wife of former Rhode Island Rep. Patrick Kennedy. Harrison has secured endorsements from NJ power players such as Sen. Cory Booker and party boss George Norcross, and will have the optimal position on the primary ballot because she was endorsed by several county parties.

Evaluation: Harrison approached the race with the clinicism of a political science professor (she is one), and was frank about the advantages she had as the machine candidate. There's clearly bad blood between her and Kennedy, and that's reflected in the rough-and-tumble nature of the campaign so far. If she does win the primary, she'll face a tough fight against Van Drew, who bucked his old party on impeachment and then became a Republican to avoid a primary challenge (likely from Harrison). Donald Trump won the district 51-46 percent in 2016, so this is a race to watch.

Report Shorts

Hawaii's 2nd District (Northern Oahu and all other islands) Open; Tulsi Gabbard, D, ran for president. The primary isn't until August but pilot/state Sen. Kai Kahele is the likely Democratic nominee and likely new Member of Congress in this Democratic district when no other serious Democratic candidates filed for the race. Current rating: Solid Democratic.

Indiana's 1st District (Northwestern Indiana) Open; Peter Visclosky, D, not seeking re-election. Frank Mrvan, the North Township Trustee endorsed by the outgoing congressman, won a narrow victory with 34 percent in a crowded field of a dozen Democrats. His closest competitor, Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., received 29 percent. Mrvan is now the likely next member of Congress from this district that Hillary Clinton won by 13 points (54 percent). Current rating: Solid Democratic.

Indiana's 5th District (Northern Indianapolis suburbs) Open; Susan Brooks, R, not seeking re-election. State Sen. Victoria Spartz beat out 15 candidates for the GOP nod, winning a decisive 40 percent of the vote; second-place finisher Beth Henderson received just 18 percent. Spartz put $750,000 of her own money into the campaign and also received significant outside support from the Club for Growth. She'll face former state Rep./2016 LG nominee Christina Hale, who defeated 2018 Democratic nominee Dee Thornton 39-28 percent. Democrats believe Spartz has vulnerabilities that could make this suburban seat a sleeper in the fall. Democratic Sen. Joe Donnelly narrowly carried it in 2018 while losing statewide and Donald Trump carried it with 53 percent in 2016. Current rating: Likely Republican.

Iowa Senate. Joni Ernst, R, elected 2014 (51%). Despite some last-minute handwringing, DSCC-backed Theresa Greenfield easily cleared the 35-percent threshold to win the nomination and avoid a runoff in the Democratic primary, earning 48 percent to defeat second-place finisher Michael Franken (25 percent). Over the next few weeks, we'll see whether the primary actually helped Greenfield establish and raise her statewide profile ahead of the general election — a similar dynamic to North Carolina. This race has already seen millions of dollars in outside money, and will likely see tens of millions more over the next five months. Democrats believe this race will break into the top tier of competitive Senate races, but Ernst will be hard to beat. Current rating: Lean Republican.

Iowa's 1st District (Northeastern Iowa) Abby Finkenauer, D, elected 51%. In one of the least surprising results of Tuesday, former TV news anchor/state Rep. Ashley Hinson won the GOP primary with 78 percent and will face Democratic Rep. Abby Finkenauer in the general election. Current rating: Tilt Democratic.

Iowa's 2nd District (Southeastern Iowa) Open; Dave Loebsack, D, not seeking re-election. Former state Sen./2018 LG nominee Rita Hart was unopposed for the Democratic nomination in the race to replace Democratic Rep. Dave Loebsack, who is not seeking re-election. On the Republican side, ophthalmologist/frequent candidate/state Sen. Marianette Miller-Meeks won the primary 48-37 percent over former Illinois Rep. Bobby Schilling. Current rating: Tilt Democratic.

Iowa's 3rd District (Des Moines and southwestern Iowa) Cindy Axne, D, elected 49%. Former Rep. David Young won the GOP primary with 70 percent, setting up a rematch with Democratic Rep. Cindy Axne. This is the type of race Republicans need to win in order to make a dent in the Democratic majority nationwide, but it's evidence of the GOP's struggle. On May 13, Axne had $2.6 million in the bank compared to $1 million for Young. Current rating: Toss-up.

Iowa's 4th District (Northwestern Iowa) Open; Steve King, R, defeated in primary. Republicans lost an incumbent but gained some peace of mind as Rep. Steve King finally went down to defeat. He lost to state Sen. Randy Feenstra 46-36 percent on Tuesday in the primary and by a wide enough margin to avoid the contest going to a convention.

Courtesy Iowa State Senate

Randy Feenstra

President Donald Trump carried the 4th 61-34 percent in 2016, yet King narrowly won re-election in 2018, 50-47 percent over Democrat J.D. Scholten, demonstrating that King's presence and problems were major factors in making the seat vulnerable for the GOP. Scholten is running again and is a credible candidate, but will have a decidedly more difficult race against Feenstra. That's why with King's loss, the rating of the race changes.

King's loss is also a win for the GOP baseball team because it will likely keep Scholten off the field for the annual congressional game. Scholten is a former professional pitcher who has been training to get his velocity back up to 87 miles-per-hour. Move from Tilt Republican to Solid Republican.

Kansas Senate. Open; Pat Roberts, R, not seeking re-election. With the passing of Monday's filing deadline, we can finally say it: Mike Pompeo is not running for the U.S. Senate and Republicans are in danger of losing a seat in Kansas.

Even though the former congressman and current U.S. Secretary of State consistently downplayed the idea publicly, the rumors persisted privately for months, fueled in part by some of Pompeo's movements behind the scenes. Pompeo's bid was viewed as a necessity in order to prevent former Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach from winning the GOP Senate nomination and jeopardizing a seat Republicans have held for 100 years.

Without Pompeo, Kobach's nomination in a crowded field of contenders is a real possibility. He faces 1st District Rep. Roger Marshall, plumbing company owner Bob Hamilton, and others in the August 4 primary. State Senate President Susan Wagle, who was always considered a lower-tier candidate, dropped out a few days before the filing deadline. Kobach is viewed as a headache for Republicans because he lost the 2018 gubernatorial race in Kansas by 5 points.

We're not changing the rating of the Kansas Senate race in the wake

of Pompeo's decision because we've been expecting this situation since January. The current reality looked like a real possibility five months ago, when we changed the rating from Solid Republican to Lean Republican.

A recent poll by Civiqs for Daily Kos (D), conducted online May 30-June 1, wasn't as good for likely Democratic nominee Barbara Bollier as it might appear. She was running virtually even with all of the main GOP candidates including 42-41 percent against Kobach, 41-40 percent against Hamilton, and 41-42 percent against Marshall. But Democratic voters have already

Roger Marshall

Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call

consolidated and GOP voters are divided between multiple options, including two without statewide name ID. Democrats' best, and maybe only, bet continues to be against Kobach. Current rating: Lean Republican.

Maryland's 5th District (Southern Maryland and outer Prince George's County). Steny Hoyer, D, re-elected 70%. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer defeated Justice Democrats-backed Mckayla Wilkes (and three other candidates) in the Democratic primary 74-17 percent. In the shadow of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's victory over Joe Crowley and even Dave Brat's victory over Eric Cantor, this race started to get some attention in the days leading up to the election. For some context, Hoyer won the 2018 Democratic primary 84-16 percent over retired Air Force common chief master sergeant Dennis Fritz and the 2016 primary 76-14 percent over LGBTQ activist Kristin Beck.

Even though Ocasio-Cortez and Brat (and Feenstra) get considerable attention for their historic victories, the result in the 5th District is more evidence that defeating an incumbent in the primary is the exception rather than the rule. Current rating: Solid Democratic.

Maryland's 7th District (Baltimore and western suburbs) Kweisi Mfume, D, elected April special election 74%. Democrat Kweisi Mfume won the April 28 special election to replace the late-Rep. Elijah Cummings, but that was just to serve the remainder of the term. Mfume secured the nomination for the general election with 78 percent in the Democratic primary on Tuesday against a field that included former state Democratic Party chairwoman Maya Rockeymoore Cummings (9 percent), the late congressman's widow. Mfume first served in Congress from 1987 to 1996 and is back for his second stint. Current rating: Solid Democratic.

Montana Governor. Open; Steve Bullock, D, running for Senate. The stage is set for the most competitive gubernatorial election in the country. Republicans are trying to win this seat for the first time in 20 years; their champion is Rep. Greg Gianforte, who lost the governor's race in 2016 and took a quick detour through Congress before coming back for a second shot. The wealthy tech executive, who crashed onto the national stage by assaulting a reporter the night before he won his

2017 special election, handily dispatched state Attorney General Tim Fox in the primary, 53-27 percent, and will face Democratic Lt. Gov. Mike Cooney, who defeated businesswoman Whitney Williams 55-45 percent in the primary.

Montana is hosting a competitive Senate race featuring outgoing Democratic governor Steve Bullock, and a House race that some operatives believe will become competitive too, so the state will be awash with outside spending come fall. At the moment, it's Republicans' best shot at flipping a governor's mansion this cycle. Current rating: Toss-up.

Montana Senate. Steve Daines, R, elected 2014 (58%). There wasn't any suspense in the primaries and the matchup is officially set between the first-term senator and Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock. Bullock made statements and took issue stances during his brief presidential run that would normally be liabilities in Montana. But the governor's job approval rating is high as the face of the coronavirus response in a state with limited infections and deaths, and it's not clear whether the GOP attacks will resonate or be relevant. This race is competitive and could become more vulnerable if the GOP messaging stalls. Current rating: Lean Republican.

Montana's At-Large District, Open; Greg Gianforte, R, not seeking re-election. For the fourth time this decade, Montana's lone congressional seat is open, as incumbent Greg Gianforte is forgoing re-election to run for governor. The Democratic primary was won by 2018 nominee/former state Rep. Kathleen Williams, who lost by 4 points last cycle. In the GOP primary, state Auditor Matt Rosendale defeated Montana Secretary of State Corey Stapleton 48-33 percent. Rosendale lost the 2018 Senate race to Democratic Sen. Jon Tester by 3.5 percent, but is the favorite in this race. Current rating: Likely Republican.

New Mexico Senate. Open; Tom Udall, D, not seeking re-election. Rep. Ben Ray Luján won the Democratic nomination without opposition and is the favorite to succeed retiring Democratic Sen. Tom Udall. Luján currently represents the 3rd District and was chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee last cycle when Democrats won the majority. In the general election, the congressman will face former meteorologist Mark Ronchetti, who won the GOP primary with 56 percent. Hillary Clinton won the Land of Enchantment by 8 points and there's no indication the president will do much better this November. And on May 13, Luján had $2.7 million in the bank compared to $430,000 for Ronchetti. Current rating: Solid Democratic.

New Mexico's 2nd District (Southern New Mexico) Xochitl Torres Small, D, elected 51%. Democrats got their preferred opponent when 2018 GOP nominee Yvette Herrell defeated energy executive Claire Chase 45-32 percent in one of the nastiest primaries in the country. Herrell is viewed by both Democrats and Republicans as the weaker general election candidate even though she lost by just 1.8 percent in the 2018 open seat race. Freshman Rep. Xochitl Torres Small starts out with a massive financial advantage ($3.1 million to $71,000 in the bank on May 13). Current rating: Tilt Democratic.

New Mexico's 3rd District (Northern New Mexico) Open; Ben Ray Luján, D, running for Senate. Attorney Teresa Leger Fernandez emerged from a crowded Democratic field with 42 percent of the vote in the primary, and is the likely next member of Congress from this

Democratic district being vacated by Rep. Ben Ray Luján. Fernandez's closest competition was former CIA officer Valerie Plame, who received 25 percent. Plame's high name recognition and hard-charging advertisements allowed her to build up a sizable financial advantage, but she was dogged by accusations of anti-Semitism because she retweeted an article in 2017 that blamed Jews for America's wars. Fernandez secured endorsements from Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and EMILY's List, and is the heavy favorite in the fall. Current rating: Solid Democratic.

Ben Ray Luján

Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call

Pennsylvania's 1st District (Philadelphia's Bucks County suburbs) Brian Fitzpatrick, R, re-elected 51%. Democrats failed to recruit a top-tier challenger to take on Fitzpatrick, just one of three Republicans running in districts won by Hillary Clinton (49 percent here in 2016). But that doesn't mean he's out of the woods yet. Despite outspending primary opponent Andy Meeham 13-to-1, Fitzpatrick won just 57-43 percent, a worrying sign for any incumbent. In November, Fitzpatrick will face Bucks County official Christina Finello, who has struggled to fundraise, but the battle for Fitzpatrick's seat will really be carried out at the top of the ticket. If the presidential race turns into a Biden landslide in suburbs, Fitzpatrick could find himself washed away. Current rating: Tilt Republican.

Pennsylvania's 7th District (Lehigh Valley and southern Monroe County) Susan Wild, D, elected 53%. Republicans got their desired candidate, Lisa Scheller, through a competitive primary; she narrowly defeated former Lehigh county commissioner Dean Browning 52-48 percent. Now the recovering heroin addict and aluminum company CEO will face freshman Democrat Susan Wild, who starts the race with a financial edge ($1.5 million to $274,000 in the bank on May 13) in this expensive Philadelphia media market. Clinton won the district by just 1 point in 2016. Current rating: Solid Democratic.

8th District (Scranton/Wilkes-Barre and northeastern Pennsylvania) Matt Cartwright, D, re-elected 55%. Republicans were excited about the candidacy of Earl Granville, an Army veteran who lost a leg in Afghanistan. But as he struggled to raise money, former Trump administration official Jim Bognet emerged as the frontrunner. On Tuesday, Bognet just barely won with 28 percent, fending off a surprising challenge from the relatively unknown Teddy Daniels (25 percent), who had less than $30,000 in the bank on May 13 but came within 1400 votes of winning the nod. Granville finished third (24 percent). Even though Cartwright was a target last cycle and won convincingly, Republicans are taking another look, particularly with Trump's 53 percent win in 2016. On May 13, Cartwright had a $1.9 million to $176,000 cash advantage over Bognet and the overall advantage in the race. Current rating: Likely Democratic.

Pennsylvania's 10th District (Harrisburg and York) Scott Perry, R, re-elected 51%. It looked like a potential upset early on, but state Auditor Eugene DePasquale won the Democratic nomination with 63 percent and will face Scott Perry in the general election. The congressman's campaign has been slow to take shape and he only recently started raising considerable money. In addition, a large chunk of the district was new to him prior to the 2018 election. Democrats got the candidate they wanted, so now it's up to them to prove that Perry is as vulnerable as they say he is. Current rating: Tilt Republican.

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CALENDAR

Candidate Conversation

Courtesy Mike Broihier for Senate

Mike Broihier (D)

Kentucky Senate — Rating: Solid Republican

Interview Date: May 27, 2020 (via Google Meet)

Date of Birth: March 7, 1962; Racine, Wisconsin

Education: Rutgers (1984)

Elected Office: None; First run for office

Current Outlook: Broihier is one of three Democrats vying to take on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. The juggernaut in the June 23 primary is Amy McGrath, also a retired Marine and the DSCC-endorsed candidate who is one of the top Democratic fundraisers in the country. McGrath has made missteps that make Broihier and state Rep. Charles Booker, who is also running, believe she's vulnerable. But the two men run the risk of splitting voters looking for an anti-establishment, progressive alternative, and they're both being outraised 100-to-1. Whoever wins the Democratic nomination will start as a distinct underdog against McConnell in a state President Donald Trump won by 30 points in 2016.

Evaluation: Broihier retired from the Marine Corps after 21 years in 2005 as a lieutenant colonel, with active duty service in Korea and Somalia and work in Afghanistan as a defense contractor. He and his wife settled in Kentucky and currently operate an asparagus farm. He's also been a schoolteacher and a newspaper editor. Broihier is down to earth and candid in conversation and his resume is a contrast to McConnell. But he is also running on an unabashedly liberal platform that includes Universal Basic Income and touts support from Indivisible Kentucky. He exuded the confidence and energy of Andrew Yang's presidential campaign (and has been endorsed by Yang and has some of his key staff). But that wasn't enough for Yang to win then and doesn't look like enough for Broihier to win now.

Continued from page 1

36-30, with the balance having no party affiliation. That advantage is concentrated in Miami-Dade, where 87 percent of the district's voting population resides and Democrats hold a 7-point edge, while Republicans hold a 7-point edge in Monroe, which holds just 13 percent of the district's voters and was won by Trump in 2016.

In 2018, Mucarsel-Powell defeated GOP Rep. Carlos Curbelo, 51-49 percent. Curbelo, who was considered a rising star in the party, first won election in 2014 against incumbent Democrat Joe Garcia, 51.5-48.5, and defeated Garcia again in 2016 by a wider 53-41 percent margin.

Democratic Sen. Bill Nelson won the district 54-46 percent over Rick Scott in 2018 while losing by 0.1 percent statewide. Democrat Andrew Gillum won the district 53-46 percent while losing by 0.4 percent statewide.

In 2016, Hillary Clinton carried the district 57-41 percent, and in 2012 Barack Obama won the slightly more Republican version of the district 55-44 percent. The presidential margin this year is likely to have a considerable impact on Republicans' chances of defeating the congresswoman.

The Incumbent

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell was born in 1971 in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and immigrated to America with her mother at age 14. She attended Pomona College (California), graduating in 1992 with a degree in political

science, and received a master's degree in international political economy from the Claremont McKenna Graduate University four years later.

Prior to her election to Congress, Mucarsel-Powell worked in non-profit development, serving

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell

Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call

in various positions at Florida International University in Miami and its affiliated medical school until 2011, and operated a consulting firm focusing on nonprofits.

Mucarsel-Powell first entered politics in 2016, when she challenged GOP state Sen. Anitere Flores in the 39th state Senate district, which overlaps significantly with the 26th Congressional District. Mucarsel-Powell lost that election by 8 points, 54-46 percent while Clinton won it 54-43 percent.

Two years later, she challenged Curbelo, a Republican with a moderate image who was known to break with his party on issues such as climate change. Curbelo, who had support from some left-leaning organizations such as Everytown for Gun Safety, was a top Democratic target as one of the few Republicans in districts carried by Clinton. While her 2016 state Senate campaign focused on education, Mucarsel-Powell focused her 2018 effort on healthcare, hammering Curbelo for his votes in 2017 to repeal Obamacare and pass the tax cut bill.

In a race that saw significant outside spending on both sides, Mucarsel-Powell eked out a 50.9-49.1 percent victory, a margin of just 4,119 votes.

In Congress, Mucarsel-Powell serves on the Judiciary and Transportation and Infrastructure committees. She is a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Progessive Caucus, and the New Democrat Coalition.

The Mucarsel-Powell campaign team includes 76 Words for media, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research for polling, Resonance Campaigns for direct mail, and campaign manager Andrew Markoff, who previously managed Kathleen Williams' congressional campaign in Montana.

The GOP Challenger

Carlos Giménez was born in 1954 in Havana, Cuba, and came to South Florida in 1960 following the Cuban Revolution, residing since then in Miami-Dade County. After attending Christopher Columbus High School, he became a firefighter in the City of Miami in 1975. He eventually earned an associate's degree in general studies from Miami Dade Community College in 1984, and a bachelor's degree in public administration from Barry University in Miami in 1999. He also participated in a non-degree program for government officials at Harvard in 1993.

In 1991, Giménez was appointed chief of the Miami Fire Department, where he oversaw nearly 700 personnel and was the youngest person ever to hold that position. In 1992, he was the city's emergency manager during Hurricane Andrew.

In 2000, Giménez was appointed by City of Miami Mayor Joe Carollo to be city manager, a position in which he served until 2003 and during which time the city's bond rating moved from "junk" to "investment grade."

In 2004, he defeated former City of Miami Mayor Xavier Suarez 61-39 percent in a race for Miami-Dade County Commission and was uncontested for re-election in 2008.

In 2011, Giménez ran for Mayor of Miami-Dade County following the recall of incumbent Carlos Alvarez. In the nonpartisan two-stage election, he placed second in the first round of voting and advanced to a runoff with fellow Republican/Hialeah Mayor Julio Robaina, whom he defeated by a narrow 51-49 margin.

In 2012, Giménez easily won re-election in the first round of voting with 54 percent, his closest competition, GOP county commissioner Joe Martinez, received 30 percent. In 2016, Giménez was forced into a runoff against fellow Republican Raquel Regalado, a member of the Miami School Board, and won 56-44 percent. Giménez also made headlines that cycle when he crossed party lines to endorse Hillary Clinton for president.

But he quickly reconciled with the victorious Trump, whose Doral Resort sits in Miami-Dade County. Giménez attended Trump's inauguration and has since tied himself closely to the president. Giménez timed his entry into the race to coincide with a visit from Trump to South Florida, and the president quickly endorsed him on Twitter the same day.

Giménez's campaign is managed by Nicole Rapanos, who previously served as Curbelo's campaign manager for the 2014 cycle. Rounding out his team are general consultant Cam Savage of Limestone Strategies, pollster Dave Sackett of the Tarrance Group, and Convergence for media.

How It Plays Out

Republicans are very optimistic about Giménez's chances. They argue that his long career in public service, combined with his shared experience as a Cuban exile and blue-collar credentials as a firefighter make him a great fit for the district.

As the two-term mayor of Miami-Dade County (which includes several municipalities such as the city of Miami), Giménez enjoys a level of name recognition rivaling or even exceeding that of Mucarsel-Powell, which is rare for challengers. He's highly visible — often the face of the area's hurricane response — and since the onset of the coronavirus

pandemic he has maintained a heavy media presence.

Giménez has tied himself to Trump, but he's not necessarily going to try and win on national issues. It's a delicate balancing act, with one Republican strategist noting that he needs to win every Trump voter in the district just to have a shot at victory. But he'll have to win over a sizable number of Joe Biden voters as well, and the key to that, Republican operatives believe, is through issues specific to South Florida and Giménez's long track record of fiscal responsibility.

Republicans emphasize Giménez's fiscal chops, focusing on his time as city manager, which began as the city navigated financial peril in the late '90s and early '00s, and on the property tax cut he championed in his first term as mayor; Giménez says it saved taxpayers $1.9 billion.

Republicans also play up his nonpartisan credentials. His office is technically nonpartisan, and one Republican strategist said he has done a good job staying above the fray of local political bickering (Giménez and city of Miami Mayor Francis Suarez, also a Republican, are frequent sparring partners in the press, however). Several Republicans also hold up his shift in allegiance from Clinton to Trump as a potential strength; they believe it not only burnishes his nonpartisan image, but also puts him in step with much of the older Cuban community in the district which Republicans believe has warmed to Trump.

But the nonpartisan nature of Giménez's office cuts both ways; he has never appeared on the ballot as a Republican before, and now he will do so next to a GOP presidential candidate who will lose this district. Republicans concede that Giménez's favorability numbers will take a hit once Mucarsel-Powell and outside groups re-introduce him to the district as a Republican.

For her part, Mucarsel-Powell is going to continue to focus on healthcare, environmental protection, and gun violence, the three dominant themes from her successful 2018 campaign.

Democrats believe she stacks up well against Giménez in all three areas. On healthcare, they will look to contrast her support for Obamacare with President Trump's efforts to repeal the law, using Giménez's support for Trump as a cudgel on the issue. They will also take Giménez to task for his handling of coronavirus — Giménez favors fewer restrictions on business activities during the pandemic than do other mayors, which Democrats say puts the health of Miamians at risk. But because the pandemic is ongoing, it is too early to say how voters will judge Giménez's performance on the issue.
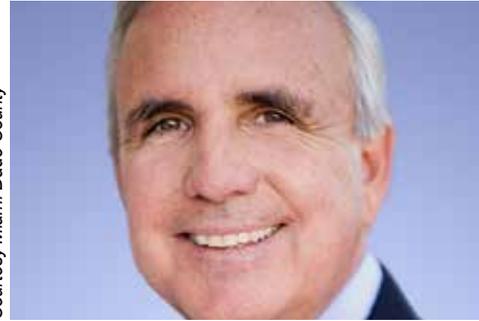
On the environment, Democrats point to Mucarsel-Powell's work in securing $200 million for Everglades restoration in the FY2020 federal budget, and will contrast that with Giménez's support for a $1 billion tollway project they say will harm the Everglades (a Florida judge recently recommended the government pull the project unless it provided "adequate data or analysis" showing the project would not harm the wetlands).

And on gun violence, Mucarsel-Powell has a compelling personal story: her father was shot and killed in Ecuador when Mucarsel-Powell was 24, a trauma she has spoken about at length and which was the subject of her closing ad last cycle.

Republicans are still looking to litigate issues surrounding Mucarsel-Powell's husband, Robert Powell. During the 2018 cycle, the NRCC ran ads attacking Powell over his relationship to a Ukrainian oligarch, Igor Kolomoisky. Republicans say that line of messaging was not as effective as it could have been because it was unfocused and tried to include too many disparate attacks against Mucarsel-Powell, but could be more

salient if handled correctly. Democrats say that it's a dead issue that voters didn't care about in 2018 and certainly don't care about in the midst of civil unrest and a health crisis.

Republicans have also seized on news that Robert Powell's employer, Fiesta Restaurant Group, a public company, received $15 million in loans from the Paycheck Protection Program while Mucarsel-Powell was advocating against large corporations receiving loans. But the company eventually returned the loan, and even the NRCC press release on the issue acknowledged that Robert Powell was one of 10,000 employees at the group.

Courtesy Miami-Dade County

Carlos Giménez

Republicans will use the two issues to further a narrative that Mucarsel-Powell is only looking out for herself, not for her constituents.

Several Democratic strategists said that Giménez's long tenure in government will be picked apart throughout the campaign with the end goal of painting him as "Corrupt Carlos Giménez."

Giménez's relationship as mayor to developers and construction companies will be major points in the race. In particular, Democrats will highlight his ties to the firm that built a footbridge at Florida International University that collapsed in 2018, killing 6 people. Giménez's sons worked for the company, as did his wife's cousins, and Giménez continued to support contracts for the company after the collapse.

Democrats will also point to an ongoing controversy surrounding the $770 million "Baylink" monorail project — they argue there was a pay-to-play scheme in which Giménez steered a lucrative deal to Malaysian corporation Genting Group. A recent county ethics report "concluded that the evidence its investigators gathered was insufficient to level charges of ethics violations, [but] the findings of this report create serious concern regarding the integrity of this corridor project," according to the Miami-Dade inspector general.

Giménez denies any wrongdoing. And it's an open question whether Democrats can corral a winding story that involves wiped burner phones, missing schedules, and a trip to Hong Kong. Similar to the difficulty in litigating Robert Powell's Ukrainian connections, voters may not be receptive to complex stories of international intrigue in the midst of a pandemic and recession.

Primarily, Democrats will seek to bind Giménez tightly to President Trump, for the simple reason that if every voter who votes against Trump also votes against Giménez, Giménez will lose handily. Democrats have an opportunity to reintroduce Giménez to voters in a partisan context and hope that gravity takes it from there. Giménez, who has welcomed Trump and has offered to host the RNC as it moves from Charlotte, makes it easier for Democrats to do so than Curbelo, who assiduously maintained his independence from the president.

Geographic and Demographic Battlegrounds

Republicans say that Cuban-Americans, who make up nearly 38 percent of the district, have warmed to Trump since 2016 due to his hardline stance against the governments of Cuba and Venezuela. That

thawing, they believe, underscores the difference between the larger Hispanic population in the US, which tends to vote heavily Democratic, and the unique dynamics of South Florida.

Democrats acknowledge that it would be a mistake to assume the majority-Hispanic district would be a slam dunk, for the same reasons. But several Democrat strategists argue that any improvement by Trump among Cubans and Venezuelans in the district is relatively immaterial to the congressional race, because Cuban support, specifically from the older, traditionally Republican parts of that community, was already baked in for Giménez, and that Trump continues to be deeply unpopular among younger Cuban-Americans and non-Cuban Hispanics.

Giménez will need to put up major margins in the Westchester area, which one strategist described as the "bread and butter GOP voters," and is home to much of the older Cuban population in the district. He'll also need to build up his name ID in Monroe County, which is more traditionally Republican but less familiar with him.

Candidate Conversation

Courtesy Charles Booker for Senate

Charles Booker (D)

Kentucky Senate —
Rating: Solid Republican

Interview Date: May 28, 2020 (via Google Meet)

Date of Birth: October 20, 1984; Louisville, Ky.

Education: Univ. of Louisville (2007, J.D. 2010)

Elected Office: State House (2019-present)

Current Outlook: Booker is one of three Democrats running against Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. Although Amy McGrath's fundraising, name recognition, and endorsement from the DSCC makes her the undisputed frontrunner, Booker has amassed substantial support from his Democratic colleagues in the statehouse. McGrath's said enough in her brief political career as a candidate for some progressives to question her authenticity, but it would still take several lucky breaks for Booker to score the upset, including competing with retired Marine Lt. Col. Mike Broihier. If he does make it through the June 23 primary, Booker should have no trouble raising money against McConnell, who is loathed by Democrats nationwide, but he'd be a serious underdog in Kentucky, which President Donald Trump will likely win by at least 25 points.

Evaluation: Even though our interview was conducted virtually, Booker was confident and upbeat as he faces two difficult races. He faces well-financed opponents in the primary and general elections but believes his record of working on difficult issues in the legislature and in the community will overcome the financial deficit. After our conversation, Booker received some local media attention when he joined local protests to remember Breonna Taylor, an African-American woman who was shot and killed by Louisville police when they executed a "no-knock" warrant at her home. Booker is running a credible campaign but McGrath's fundraising and advertising juggernaut doesn't give him a lot of oxygen to raise money, raise his profile and make his case against her.

Democrats say that as a South American immigrant (the first to serve in Congress), Mucarsel-Powell can connect well to the 50 percent of foreign-born people in the district not from Cuba. She will also need to turn out voters in Homestead, home to much of the district's Black population, which votes overwhelmingly Democratic.

Miami Money Matters

Mucarsel-Powell had $2.2 million in the bank on March 31, compared to Giménez's $405,000. While Democrats point to Giménez's relatively tame fundraising as evidence he is not the great candidate the GOP claims he is, Republicans note Giménez stopped actively campaigning as the pandemic grew more serious (though so did Mucarsel-Powell), and say they are confident he will raise the money he needs.

This race will be expensive. The Miami media market is already one of the costliest in the country, and both the candidates as well as outside groups supporting them have to communicate on both English and Spanish TV and radio stations. Operatives familiar with the dynamics of the district say that while Spanish language advertising is not as expensive per rating point as English advertising, it is still a significant additional financial and logistical burden, with one strategist noting that each subset of the Latino population has its own sphere of media.

But several Democratic strategists suggested that the necessity of Spanish-language messaging works in Mucarsel-Powell's favor, as her hard-money edge allows her to take advantage of lower advertising rates across the board. They also believe that Mucarsel-Powell is more facile with spoken Spanish than Giménez.

In 2018, the race saw outside groups spend a combined $15 million, in addition to close to $10 million spent by the candidates themselves. In 2020, the DCCC has already reserved $1.97 million in advertising time in Miami for the fall, and the main House Democratic Super PAC, House Majority PAC, has reserved $2.8 million. While neither the NRCC nor CLF, the main House Republican Super PAC, have reserved ad time in Miami, it's still early in the cycle and that should change as fall approaches.

The Bottom Line

The two parties disagree fundamentally about this race. Democrats are confident that the partisan gravity of the presidential election will be too difficult to overcome even for the best of candidates. Republicans believe that President Trump has strengthened his position in South Florida, and that enough voters are accustomed to splitting tickets for Republicans that between a moderate Trump improvement and Giménez's omnipresence, the mayor will be able to sneak past Mucarsel-Powell.

As with many races across the country, the national environment in the fall will have a great impact on this district. If Biden continues the trend of Democratic improvement in this district, broadening Clinton's margin, this district will likely be out of reach for Republicans. But if the president's position improves in this district, it could create opportunity for the GOP.

Coaxing Giménez into this race was a coup for the national GOP, who have struggled with candidate recruitment this cycle. He is the type of legitimate, substantive candidate parties need to run in tough districts if they want to win.

With Biden maintaining a mid-to-high single digit lead nationally and a low single digit lead in Florida, partisanship gives Democrats a clear edge here. But if the race at the top of the ticket narrows, Giménez will be in a position to take advantage. **IE**