

CA-22 District Primer

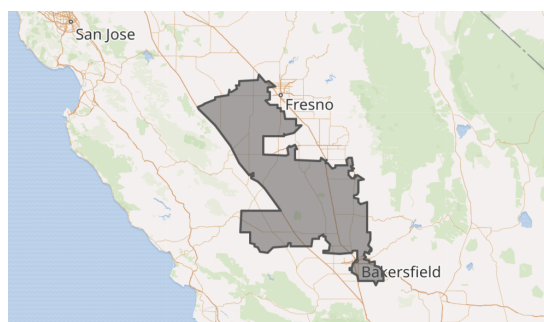
In 2024, Republican David Valadao won this seat by 11,461 votes. *That's close!* Dems lost this district by just 7 votes per precinct. If we can persuade just eight voters per precinct, we can win this year. With your help, we're going to **FLIP** this key seat and secure a Democratic House majority in 2026.

Key dates
Filing Deadline: March 6
Primary: June 2
Midterms: November 3

Recent election results

2024 Presidential Election	2024 House Election	2022 House Election
Harris: 79,359 (45.8%) Trump: 89,469 (52.6%)	Valadao (R): 89,484 (53.4%) Salas (D): 78,023 (46.6%)	Valadao (R): 52,994 (51.5%) Salas (D): 49,862 (48.5%)

District Facts & Stats



Largest Cities

- Bakersfield: 403,555
- Hanford: ~60,000
- Delano (deh-LAY-no): 53,198

Geography

A Q-shaped district in the southern part of the San Joaquin Valley, CA-22, includes parts of three counties: Kings, Tulare, and Kern. Kern is the largest, encompassing Bakersfield, the county seat. The southern part of Hanford, the district's second-largest city, located in Kings County, is in the district; the northern part is not. Post-Prop 50, the district encompasses more of urban Bakersfield and fewer rural areas.

Citizenry

In this majority-Hispanic district, the median age is 30.2, and the median annual household income is \$56.6K. 83% of residents are US citizens. Agriculture is a leading source of employment.

The Local Vibe

Key local concerns include crime, homelessness, and opioids. On July 1, statewide gasoline tax increases stoked fears of higher prices at the pump.

There are ICE prisons in Bakersfield and McFarland. In January 2026, ICE descended on places where day laborers and field workers gather. Agents in unmarked SUVs rounded up people in vans outside a Home Depot and gas station that serves a breakfast popular with field workers who work in nearby citrus groves. The raids have disrupted the citrus harvest, with downstream negative impacts on growers and consumers.

In October 2025, hundreds turned out for a No Kings rally in Bakersfield. Smaller protests have occurred outside the ICE office in Bakersfield.

Sixty percent of residents report speaking a language other than English at home. Of these languages the most common are Spanish, Tagalog, and Punjabi.

Sign up for another event: mobilize.us/swingleft

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Key Issues

- **Threats to essential services:** Thousands in the district rely on CalFresh (SNAP) for food. Two-thirds of residents in the district rely on Medicaid. Kern Medical, a local hospital, relies heavily on Medicaid funding.
 - **An absentee rep:** David Valadao rarely meets constituents face-to-face, and they've noticed this neglect.
 - **Environmental problems:** Due to agriculture and oil businesses, air quality in the district is poor; water shortages are a problem, especially near Bakersfield.
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About the Candidates

David Valadao | GOP Incumbent

Born in 1977 in Hanford, **David Valadao** is a lifelong Central Valley resident. His family emigrated from the Azores in 1969. He graduated from Hanford High and briefly attended the College of the Sequoias in Visalia. He is married with three children. They live in Hanford.

Valadao served in the State Assembly before he was elected to represent CA-22 in Congress. Throughout his six terms in Congress, he has served on the powerful House Appropriations Committee.

The son of a dairy farmer, Valadao has deep ties to local agriculture.

Issues: Valadao has a poor record on immigration and women's rights including the right to abortion. He has voted to rescind Title IX protections and to restrict abortion access for US servicemembers. In 2017, he voted to repeal the ACA. Although Valadao was one of two Republicans who voted to impeach Donald Trump for the second time, in 2021, he votes with Trump/MAGA 98.3% of the time.

The contrast: David Valadao's voting record reflects his alignment with both powerful agricultural and energy interests and with Trump/MAGA's reactionary, anti-democratic politics. He is clearly out of step with his constituents, who are concerned with matters of affordability, public safety, and the threat to democracy posed by the Trump regime.

Democratic challenger(s)

There are several possible candidates; we'll know more after the primary election on June 2. Until then, we've identified these front runners:

Dr. Jasmeet Kaur Bains: Born in 1985 in Delano to Punjabi Sikh immigrants from India, **Dr. Bains** of Delano is a family physician. A Democrat, she has represented District 35 in the California Assembly since 2022. A moderate Democrat, she lives with her family in northeast Bakersfield. She is the first South Asian American woman and the first Sikh American to be elected to the Assembly.

Randy Villegas: A progressive Democrat and a professor of political science at the College of the Sequoias, Villegas grew up in Kern County and now serves as a Visalia Unified School Board Trustee. He is the son of Mexican immigrants and the first in his family to earn a Ph.D. He is endorsed by Leaders We Deserve.