

NJ-09 District Primer

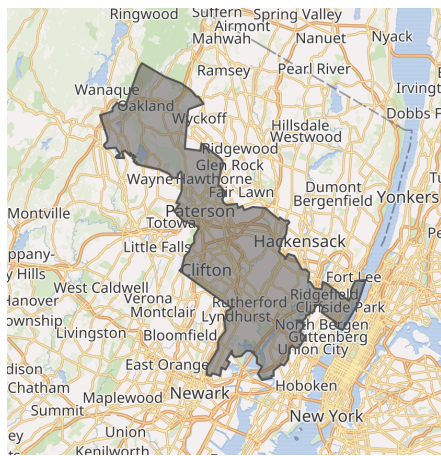
In 2024, Democrat **Nellie Pou** won this seat by **12,575** votes. **That's close!** With a winning margin of *just three votes* per precinct, we can't afford to lose a single vote. With your help, we're going to **HOLD** this key seat and secure a Democratic House majority in 2026.

Key dates
Filing Deadline: March 23
Primary: June 2
Midterms: November 3

Recent Election Results

2024 Presidential Election	2024 House Election	2022 House Election
Trump: 140,858 (49.2%) Harris: 137,598 (48.1%)	Nellie Pou (D): 130,514 (50.8%) Billie Prempeh (R): 117,939 (45.0%)	Bill Pascrell (D): 82,457 (55.0%) Billy Prempeh (R): 65,365 (43.8%)

District Facts & Stats



Largest Cities

- Paterson: ~160,000
- Clifton: ~90,000
- Passaic: ~70,000

Geography

NJ-09 occupies a narrow, irregular slice of the north part of the state from Prompton Lakes and the suburb of Franklin Lakes southeast to Paterson and Clifton, including Teaneck and parts of Kearny and Secaucus. The district abuts the Hudson River. It is connected to New York City (where many residents work) by the George Washington Bridge and a train system.

Citizenry

The district (~772K) is very diverse. It is 41% Hispanic, 37% white, 8% Black and 9% Asian. 55.7% of households speak a non-English language at home, primarily Spanish. The northern part of the district includes relatively wealthy, white, right-leaning NYC bedroom communities. South Paterson is home to a large Arab-American community (25K), while a 1300-household community of Orthodox Jews lives in Passaic Park.

The Local Vibe

ICE has been active and unpopular in the district. Large numbers of demonstrators have come out in Passaic against ICE raids. In 2025, Trump sued Paterson for its sanctuary policies and even attempted to terminate the Gateway Project, a rail tunnel connecting Manhattan and NJ.

Cuts to Medicaid and SNAP have hit the district hard. In Passaic County, 25% of residents rely on Medicaid (NJFamily Care), including 43% of children and 22% of seniors. One in five households relies on SNAP.

Resistance groups in the district include Indivisible Rutherford which participated in one of the first No Kings protests, and an Elizabeth based chapter of Make the Road, a regional progressive organization focused on the rights of Hispanic immigrants and workers.

Sign up for another event: mobilize.us/swingleft

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Key Issues

- **Transportation:** For the many district residents who commute to NYC, road and rail safety and congestion are extremely important. The Gateway Project means a lot to them.
 - **Human Trafficking:** Due to its population density and location on the I-95 corridor, New Jersey cities like Paterson, in Passaic County, are especially vulnerable to this criminal activity.
 - **Immigration:** Federal immigration enforcement activities have residents on edge and angry.
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About the Candidates

Nellie Pou | Democratic Incumbent

The first Latina elected to the House from New Jersey, Nellie Pou's working-class parents arrived from Puerto Rico in 1953. Born in Paterson, Pou attended Kean University in NJ and served as the City of Paterson's Director of Human Services before being elected to the NJ Assembly and then to the NJ Senate. She was elected to represent NJ-09 in the US House after the death of the incumbent, Bill Pascrell (D) in 2024. In Congress, Pou serves on the House Committees for Homeland Security and for Transportation and Infrastructure, and on four subcommittees: Counterterrorism and Intelligence, Aviation, Highways and Transit, and Water Resources and Environment. She has deep roots in the district and has proved a popular candidate, winning her elections by large margins.

Issues: Rep. Pou has been extremely vocal in her opposition to Trump's attempt to cancel the Gateway Tunnel Project which is critical for commuters. She has also taken up the cause of flight safety, as Teterboro Airport is in her district and Newark Airport is a hub for many of her constituents. In her first term in Congress, she sponsored a number of bills, notably including the PLATE Act, which would require ICE and CBP agents to display the license plates on their federally-funded vehicles. As a state legislator, she sponsored a law to broaden the definition of, and increase the penalties for, human trafficking.

Republican 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:

Tiffany Burress is a Black personal injury lawyer married to a former NY Giants player. After getting support from the NJ Republican party in January 2025, she has faced attacks from a Republican former candidate.

Rosemary Pino, is a Latina public official in Clifton, a daughter of Ecuadorean immigrants, and a Rutgers graduate. She ran unsuccessfully for the Clifton school board in 2011. The organization she founded, Latino Leaders for Clifton, endorsed Nellie Pou in 2024.

Billy Prempah, who has been the Republican candidate in the last two elections, suspended his campaign in December 2025.

The contrast: It is clear from the bills Rep. Pou has sponsored, both as NJ-09's representative and as a member of the state legislature, that she is focused on the concerns of her constituents, from transportation and commuter worries to the predatory behavior of ICE agents in the district. She has fought back aggressively against Trump's vindictive attempts to punish the district for its sanctuary policies. Meanwhile her opponents have so far mainly engaged in infighting, proving that they are not ready to lead.