

# OH-13 District Primer

In 2024, Democrat Emilia Sykes won this seat by 8542 votes — just two votes per precinct. **That’s close!** If we can persuade just three voters per precinct, we can win again—and by a more comfortable margin. With your help, we’re going to **HOLD** this key seat and secure a Democratic House majority in 2026.

Key dates
<b>Filing Deadline:</b> February 4
<b>Primary:</b> May 5
<b>Midterms:</b> November 3

## Recent election results

2024 Presidential Election	2024 House Election	2022 House Election
<b>Harris:</b> 195,964 (49.6%) <b>Trump:</b> 195,781 (49.5%)	<b>Emilia Sykes (D): 197,466 (51.1%)</b> Kevin Coughlin (R): 188,924 (48.9%)	<b>Emilia Sykes (D): 149,816 (52.7%)</b> Madison G. Gilbert (R): 134,593 (47.3%)

## District Facts & Stats



### Largest Cities

- Akron: 189,700
- Canton: 69,200
- Cuyahoga Falls: 51,000

### Geography

OH-13 is located in northeastern Ohio, just south of Cleveland. The district includes Summit County, a portion of Stark County, and a small part of Portage County.

### Citizenry

Of the approximately 785,020 people in this district, 76.4% are white and 12.3% are Black. 97.9% of the district’s residents are U.S. citizens, and the home ownership rate is 67.3%. A little over 5% of residents lack health insurance, while 18.3% depend on Medicaid and 15.3% on Medicare. Almost 6% of households speak a foreign language at home, chiefly Spanish. Approximately 37,000 veterans live in OH-13, or about 6% of the population. (All figures are prior to redistricting.)

### The Local Vibe

Although OH-13 has been repeatedly redistricted (2022 and 2025), its electorate has continued to favor Democrats, albeit by narrow margins. On November 3, there will also be a statewide special election to fill the rest of the 6-year term to which J.D. Vance was elected in 2022.

There have been multiple No Kings rallies in the district. In February 2026, 150 people in Akron attended a meeting to plan a response to possible ICE raids.

In March 2025, hundreds gathered in Akron to protest DOGE cuts affecting the district’s many veterans.

The 26% of district residents enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP are vulnerable to cuts to these programs resulting from Trump’s Big Ugly Bill.

## Key Issues

- **Environment:** Clean water and air are important to residents, many of whom are contending with aging infrastructure.
  - **Healthcare:** Medicaid and CHIP enrollees will lose access to health care from the cuts demanded by the Trump budget.
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## About the Candidates

### Emilia Strong Sykes | Democratic Incumbent

**Emilia Sykes** was first elected to represent OH-13 in 2022 and is the first African-American to represent this district. She previously served as a state representative for eight years and was the state House Minority Leader. In her first year as leader of the state's House Democratic Caucus, the percentage of bipartisan bills passed in the Ohio House was nearly double that of each of the previous four years. She has received numerous awards for her advocacy, including the Champion for Children award from Summit County Children's Services. She serves on the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, and on the Railroads, Pipelines, Hazardous Materials, Water Resources and Environment subcommittees of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Issues:** Following the horrific train derailment and release of toxic materials into the air and water of the neighboring Ohio town of East Palestine, Rep. Sykes introduced the bipartisan Water Preservation and Affordability Act of 2025. She helped lead a bipartisan bill to lower costs and improve clean water infrastructure for high-need communities. In 2026 she announced more than \$21 million for Street Safety in Summit County. She also called out Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy as well as Vance and Trump for their inaction on rail safety.

### The Challenger(s)

*There are several possible candidates; we'll know more after the primary election on May 5. Until then, we've identified these front runners:*

**Sandeep Dixon**, who is running as an Independent, appears to be Sykes' most credible challenger. An engineer and small business owner, he claims to support transparent pricing and standardized billing from hospitals, and he wants to eliminate taxes on Social Security and to create a worker innovation and apprenticeship fund. His fundraising has been anemic.

Also running are the following Republicans: **Margaret Briem**, a member of the Summit County Ohio chapter of the MAGA group Moms for Liberty; **Gary Coleman**, a former radio talk show host and meteorologist; **Neil Patel**, a small business entrepreneur and financial advisor; and **Kevin Siembida**, mayor of Leetonia, Ohio.

**The contrast:** Emilia Sykes has proven during her two terms as OH-13's representative that she can get things done for her district and that she will work in a bipartisan manner to do so. Her laser focus on health and safety, clean water infrastructure and transportation safety shows that the attempt by her opponents to characterize her as a "far-left radical" is simple fear-mongering as well as simply false. That she was re-elected in 2024 in a purple district shows that her constituents know that.