

Know Before You Go: CA-45 District Primer

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Clinton won this district, and 24% of registered voters didn't vote. With your help, we'll drive up turnout and turn this seat blue in a district where President Trump is unpopular.

About the Incumbent

Introduction: **Republican Mimi Walters** has represented California's 45th congressional district since 2015. A long-time politician, Ms. Walters served as a member of the city council of Laguna Niguel from 1996 to 2004, including a brief period as mayor in 2000, as a member of the California state assembly from 2005 to 2008, and as a member of the state senate from 2009 until she was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives to replace retiring Republican John Campbell in 2014.

Prior to entering politics, Ms. Walters worked for Drexel Burnham Lambert, an investment bank which has since filed for bankruptcy, and Kidder, Peabody & Co., an investment bank, brokerage and trading firm which was acquired.

Issues: Ms. Walters has done little to make herself stand out in her short time in Congress, voting the party line at nearly every turn including opposing a woman's right to choose, denying climate change, and opposing same-sex marriage and LGBT protections.

She has been ambiguous in her public statements on the President's executive order to ban immigration from seven Muslim majority nations, after condemning such an act in principle in 2015.

Recent Elections: Ms. Walters won her 2014 race by 30 percent and her 2016 race by 18 percent..

Potential Weaknesses: Despite a moderate district that Trump lost, Ms. Walters has, since his inauguration, voted with President Trump 98% of the time, including having supported H.R. 1628 to defund key parts of the Affordable Care Act, S.J.Res.34 which expressed support for the repeal of an FCC rule barring internet providers from sharing data on customers' activities, and H.R.1180 to allow employers to offer employees time off instead of pay for overtime.

About the Challenger

Introduction: **Democrat Katie Porter** is a consumer protection attorney who fought for California families when she won \$18 billion from big banks after the mortgage crisis under the appointment of then California AG Kamala Harris. Currently a UCI law professor, Porter was a student of Elizabeth Warren at Harvard and went on to write several books with the Senator.

Issues: Katie Porter is endorsed by End Citizens United because of her commitment to not taking big corporate money or corporate PAC donations. Porter also wants to repeal the Republican tax plan that hurts families while benefiting the super wealthy. She believes in Medicare for all and wants to fix the damage done by repealing the ACA. To protect the environment, she will fight against big oil and industry. She advocates for common sense gun safety laws.

Strengths: Incumbent Mimi Walters is heavily funded by special interests (oil, finance, telecom, etc.). Porter's refusal of corporate and PAC money makes her stand out. Porter supports a woman's right to choose, another direct contrast to the incumbent. Porter is endorsed by the Brady Campaign, while Walters earns an "A" rating from the NRA. Porter says she will fight back against Trump's agenda and the district went against Trump by 5.4% in 2016. Quite a few Trump voters seem disappointed in his policies, and with Walters voting 98% of the time with Trump, this should swing disillusioned Republicans Porter's way.



CA-45: Facts & Stats

Largest Cities

- Irvine, 258,386
- Orange, 141,420
- Mission Viejo, 96,701
- Tustin, 82,717
- Anaheim Hills, 55,036

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton, 48%
- Trump, 45%

2016 House Results

- Walters, 182,618, 59%
- Varasteh, 129,231, 41%
- Total registered: 411k
- Registered, didn't vote: 99k (76% turnout)

2014 House Results

- Walters, 106,083, 65%
- Leavens, 56,819, 35%

CA-45: Better Know the District

Geography

CA-45 is located in the middle of Orange County, about 12 miles inland from the beach and covering the western Santa Ana Mountains. Like other districts in the LA metropolitan region, CA-45 is very suburban, with each city running into another and connected by residential roads and freeways.

Citizenry

CA-45 is predominantly Caucasian (55.5%), with a significant Asian minority (20.9%). However, a significant minority also claim Hispanic ethnicity (18.4%). This district is fairly wealthy, with a median household income of \$91,600 per year; about 60-70% of households earn at least \$75,000/year. This may make for constituents who lean fiscally conservative. Lastly, this district is fairly well educated, with 69.7% of residents holding at least a bachelor's degree.

Elections

The district has been represented by a Republican since 1982, who, like other nearby districts, typically win by at least 20-30 percentage points. Mimi Walters has represented the district since 2014. Though she defeated her Democratic challenger by 30% points in 2014, she won by only 17% points in 2016. Republican victory margins have shrunk since 2008, from greater than 30% points to about 20% point or less. Notably, this district went for Obama in 2008 and Clinton in 2016 by small margins (Romney defeated Obama by a somewhat larger margin in 2012 here).

Economy

There is no particularly dominant industry in CA-45, but over half of the population hold white collar jobs such as management (15%), sales (14%), administrative work (13%), and finance (8%).

Tourism

There isn't much for tourism within the confines of CA-45 itself, though several beaches are nearby, such as Newport Beach and Laguna Beach (though the beaches themselves are in CA-48). There are several parks for hiking and mountain biking in the district, however. Importantly, the University of California, Irvine, lies within CA-45, and is a major public research university. UCI attracts many visiting researchers and academics from across the state and nation across its many departments (a type of professional tourism); UCI is a critical part of the lifeblood of this district.