

Know Before You Go: CA-49 District Primer

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In the last election, Republican Darrell Issa won this district by only 1,621 votes (less than 1%).

That's really close! With your help, we're going to win this seat for the Democrats in 2018.

About the Republican Candidate

Introduction: Republican Diane Harkey is running to replace the retiring Darrell Issa for Representative of CA-49. Since 2014, she represented the Fourth District on the CA Board of Equalization. From 2009-2014, Harkey served in the California State Assembly for the 73rd District. She has 30 years in banking and finance, including time at Security Pacific, Bank of America, and Guaranty Bank. She also served as mayor of Dana Point from 2006-2007.

Issues: Harkey's supports government reform, lower taxes and less regulation. She wants to "decrease the tax burden, expand the economy and secure the border." As of June, 2018, she didn't have an issues section on her website.

Strengths: Harkey is a long-term resident of Southern California, representing Orange and San Diego Counties for many years. She supports higher per-student spending and has voted for legislation that allows students more access to community colleges. For fiscally conservative voters, her advocacy for taxpayer and business interests will appeal. She is seen as a financial expert and has focused on making California's job market more competitive.

Potential Weaknesses: With fallout from the 2007- 2008 recession and mortgage crisis still fresh, Harkey's background in finance and banking could be a liability. Harkey as an "A" rating from the NRA, angering voters who seek common sense gun reforms. In the State Assembly, Harkey was absent 78 days and missed more than 1,700 votes. In the 2016 election, one of her senior campaign operatives posted a meme to Twitter of a hangman at the gallows saying "I'm Ready for Hillary"; Harkey had no comment. In 2009, her husband and his company were found guilty of running a Ponzi scheme and paid \$10 million in damages. Harkey invested in the business and allegedly used profits for her campaign. The Los Angeles Times reported that she received thousands of dollars from a PAC funded by companies with issues before the Board of Equalization, in an apparent effort to skirt campaign finance laws.

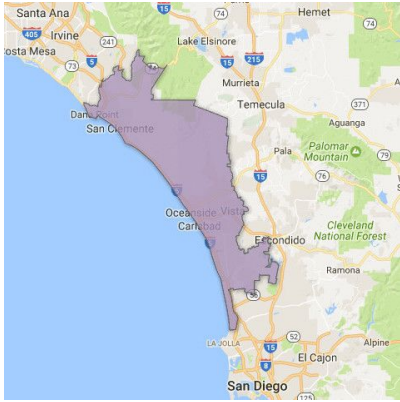
About the Democratic Challenger

Introduction: Democrat Mike Levin will be running against Republican Diane Harkey for CA-49. After finishing law school at Duke, Levin served as Executive Director of the Democratic Party of Orange County, and has worked as an attorney focused on environmental and energy regulatory compliance and government affairs.

Issues: Levin has been part of the clean energy industry for decades, focusing on sustainability and climate change. He earned endorsements from the Sierra Club and the California League of Conservation Voters. Levin has detailed ideas to cut carbon emissions, reduce fossil fuel usage, and combat global warming. Levin has promised campaign finance reform and puts all options on the table, including a Constitutional amendment. Levin also supports Medicare for All, affordable higher education, preventing gun violence, protecting Social Security, a woman's right to choose, and a \$15 federal minimum wage.

Strengths: Levin specifically talks about nuclear waste from the San Onofre nuclear station, which voters will be concerned with since it was decommissioned after a leak. His focus on the environment might be especially important to coastal voters since Trump wants to restart offshore drilling in California. An endorsement by Adam Schiff should appeal to the "resistance" which rallied at Issa's office for more than a year, as will Levin's outspoken opposition to the Trump administration and its policies. Levin not only wants Medicare for all but opposes the ACHA which may have caused 36,400 residents in CA-49 to lose coverage.

Potential Weaknesses: During the Primary, another Democrat ran attack ads about Levin, claiming he was an oil lobbyist and worked for Countrywide foreclosing on homes, but Levin rebuked those claims and the California League of Conservation Voters actually made a statement against the attacks.



CA-49: Better Know the District

Geography

The 49th district stretches along the coast from northern San Diego into southern Orange County. It swings inland to less affluent towns and rural agricultural areas. Camp Pendleton, a Marine Corps base, sits in the middle, just south of Oceanside. To the north of Oceanside is the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS). About 3.6 million pounds of nuclear waste remains on site; residents are concerned about leakage. The district includes the following communities: Carlsbad, Encinitas, Vista, Oceanside, Del Mar, Camp Pendleton, Solana Beach and Rancho Santa Fe in San Diego County and San Clemente, Dana Point, San Juan Capistrano, and Ladera Ranch in Orange County.

CA-49: Facts & Stats

Population Centers

- Oceanside, 175,000
- Carlsbad, 113,000
- Vista, 101,000
- San Clemente, 66,000
- San Juan Capistrano, 35,000
- Dana Point, 34,000

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton: 159K (51%)
- Trump: 136K (43%)

2016 House Results

- Applegate (D): 154K (50%)
- Issa (R): 156K (50%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 77K
- Eligible, not registered: 140K

2014 House Results

- Peiser (D): 65K (40%)
- Issa (R): 98K (60%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 198K

Citizenry

The district's demographics range from extremely wealthy enclaves and affluent suburban communities to blue collar neighborhoods, both Anglo and Latino, and immigrant laborers living in the canyons. In the affluent communities, the majority of people drive everywhere, leaving the limited bus system to elderly, disabled, and lower-income people. Casual interactions that can occur on public transit and in pedestrian-friendly areas don't happen, rendering minorities and lower-income people less visible. San Diego County has the fifth-highest homeless population in the United States. The annual count identified 8,692 persons as homeless, 876 of whom (10%) were in CA-49.

Higher Education

Colleges include for-profit Brightwood College (Vista); two community colleges, Mira Costa and Saddleback; Scripps Research Institute, a graduate biomedical research institution. The University of California San Diego (partially in CA-49) and U.C. Irvine (north of CA-49) are potential sources of volunteers.

Industries

Nearly half of CA-49's workforce (51.4%) earns more than \$3,333 per month; 30.8% make between \$1,251 and \$3,333 per month, and 17.7% earn \$1,250 or less. The top three job categories are healthcare and social assistance (11.3% of workforce), accommodation and food services (10.6%), and professional, scientific, and technical Services (10.4%). These are followed closely by retail trade (10.2%), educational services (9.2%), and manufacturing (8.6%).

Tourism

Southern California is home to excellent surfing beaches. Legoland and the nearby San Diego Zoo and Wild Animal Park attract families. North County is home to a growing craft beer scene. San Onofre State Park is one of the top money-makers in the state park system; it holds a 50-year lease from the Department of the Navy (Camp Pendleton), set to expire in 2021. It's not known whether the military will renew the lease and allow the park to remain open to the public.