

Know Before You Go: CO-03 District Primer

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In the last election, Republican Scott Tipton won this district by only 53,306 votes (14.3%).

With your help, we're going to win this seat for the Democrats in 2018.

About the Incumbent

Introduction: Republican **Scott R. Tipton** was born in New Mexico but grew up in CO-03. He is a lifelong member of the Republican Party, joining Congress in 2010 after defeating Democratic incumbent John Salazar. He is 61.

Issues: Tipton's primary focus is cutting government spending and the national debt. He supports the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and favors an "all of the above" solution on energy issues.

Committees: Tipton is a member of the House Committee on Financial Services, serving as vice chairman of Financial Services Oversight Subcommittee. He previously served on the House Committee on Small Business and also on the House Committee on Natural Resources and House Committee on Agriculture.

Recent Elections: Tipton has won the district four times starting in 2010. His margins of victory increased in the first three elections, then fell in 2016 when he won by 14.3%.

Strengths: Tipton has strong roots in the district, having attended Fort Lewis College and as co-owner of Mesa Verde Indian Pottery for 35 years with his brother, Jay. Tipton's supporters refer to him as an advocate for small business who strikes a balance between environmental concerns and the value of the energy industry in Colorado.

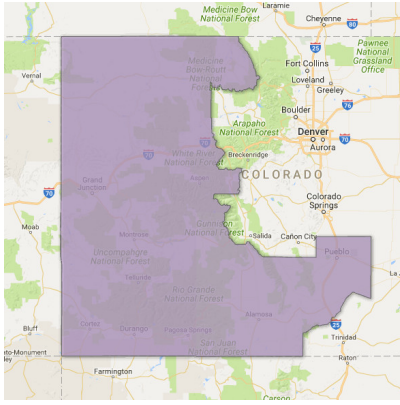
Potential Weaknesses: Tipton continues to own stocks, receive campaign donations, and benefit from the oil and gas industry while serving to regulate it. He is a traditional Republican who adheres to the party line on issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage, and his voting record is 100% aligned with Trump. By not supporting the Paris Climate Treaty because of its cost, Tipton appears to put business above his previously stated concern for the environment. CO-03 has a large Hispanic population; Tipton's support for a border wall and deportations may not be popular.

About the Challenger

Introduction: Democrat **Diane Mitsch Bush** is a longtime Colorado resident who worked for 25 years as a social science policy researcher, a university professor, and a community advocate for ranching families and conservation groups before being elected to public office. She served for 10 years as a Routt County Planning Commissioner and then served as a member of the Colorado House of Representatives beginning in 2012.

Issues: Diane Mitsch Bush made the rural economy and the region's environment top issues during her primary campaign. She supports preserving family agriculture and protecting Colorado's public lands, air, water, and wildlife by converting to clean, renewable energy. Additionally, she is a strong supporter of public education, increasing teacher pay and reducing student debt burden. Also, she supports universal single payer health care as a means to ensure everyone has access to high quality health care. She supports campaign reform and has taken the No Corporate PAC Pledge.

Strengths: Diane Mitsch Bush has been immersed in local environmental and agricultural issues for many years. In 2017 she was awarded the Legislator of the Year by Rocky Mountain Farmers Union and the Colorado Livestock Association for her work on farming and ranching. A strong advocate for unions, her work in the state legislature for workers' rights and safety led to an endorsement from the Colorado AFL-CIO. She has been endorsed by a number of high profile Democratic Colorado politicians such as former U. S. Senators Mark Udall and Ken Salazar and former Governor Bill Ritter. And, she is endorsed by numerous organizations including Emily's List for her tireless advocacy for the people of her district.



CO-03: Better Know a District

Geography

District 3 is an expansive, 129,377 sq km area, ranging from Pueblo on the Front Range, south through Durango in the Four Corners, and north to the border through the Western Slope including Grand Junction. It includes 29 full counties and portions of three other counties. Much of the district is rugged wilderness containing many small towns spread out over mountain passes.

Citizenry

Pueblo has a large Hispanic population and the largest union presence. Pueblo and Grand Junction are economically depressed cities with significant drug use and addiction. There are two federally recognized Native American tribes in the southwestern part of the district: the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain tribes. Ski towns have a large seasonally dependent transient populations including second-home owners. Colleges also bring in a temporary population of students that can almost double a town's population. Although the district is, in the main, rural and poor, it includes pockets of great wealth. Pitkin County, where Aspen is located, boasts the seventh-highest per-capita income in the country.

Elections

District 3 is solidly Republican in presidential elections, with the Republican nominee winning by a comfortable percentage in every election from 2000 to 2016. Trump won the district in 2016 with 52% of the vote, to Clinton's 40%. Congressional elections regularly switched between Democratic and Republican representatives until a 13-year Republican hold on the district's seat began in 1992. The seat shifted back to the Democrats in 2004 with the election of John Salazar. In 2016, Salazar lost to Tipton by 4%. That election had 2% each go to Independent and Libertarian candidates. Pueblo and the neighboring counties of Huerfano and Conejos are examples of areas that flipped, supporting Obama in 2012 and then Trump in 2016.

Higher Education

There are 17 small colleges and universities in the district, with Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction being the largest with 10,000 students. Students are a great voter registration opportunity!

Industries

Major economies in District 3 range from outdoor recreation, oil and gas, agriculture, construction, education, health care, and renewable energy.

Tourism

Tourism is a significant contributor to the district's economy. Telluride is known for its yearly music and film festivals, while Aspen is host to ESPN's Winter X Games. Popular activities include hiking, mountain biking, fishing, hunting, rafting, skiing, hot springs, and camping. Nationally protected areas located in District 3 include Mesa Verde National Park, Grand Mesa National Forest, Dinosaur National Monument, and Chimney Rock National Monument.

CO-03: Facts & Stats

Population Centers

- Pueblo 109,412
- Grand Junction 58,566
- Pueblo West 29,637
- Clifton 19,889
- Durango 18,006
- Fruita 12,761
- Steamboat Springs 12,260

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton: 151K (40%)
- Trump: 196K (52%)

2016 House Results

- Schwartz (D): 151K (40%)
- Tipton (R): 204K (55%)
- Other: 19K (5%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 167K
- Eligible, not registered: 93K

2014 House Results

- Tapia (D): 100K (36%)
- Tipton (R): 163K (58%)
- Other: 18K (6%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 233K