

Know Before You Go: CO-06 District Primer

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In the last election, Republican Mike Coffman won this district by only 31,254 votes (8.3%). That's close! With your help, we're going to win this seat for the Democrats in 2018.

About the Incumbent

Introduction: Republican Mike Coffman, a veteran of both Gulf Wars, was first elected to the House in 2008 after serving in the Colorado Legislature. He also served as the state's treasurer and secretary of state.

Issues: Coffman opposes the Affordable Care Act and is conservative on gun control, environmental protection, economic, and tax policy. Despite multiple early hard-line positions on immigration, he has recently shown flexibility. In January 2017, he sponsored the BRIDGE Act, which would protect DACA recipients ("Dreamers") from deportation for up to three years. He also opposed a ban on Muslim immigration.

Committees: Coffman serves on the House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs committees.

Recent Elections: In the 2016 cycle, Coffman defeated Democratic state senator Morgan Carroll by 8.3%. It was the most expensive congressional race in Colorado and the only one in which Americans for Prosperity, the Koch brothers' right-wing advocacy group, participated. It spent \$66,144 opposing Democrat Carroll.

Strengths: Coffman's background combines military and government experience. His natural empathy for and support of veterans presumably appeals to the district's vets, who constitute 9% of CO-06's adult population. Coffman can plausibly argue that his sponsorship of the BRIDGE Act and his opposition to Trump's Muslim ban reflect his independence from the administration.

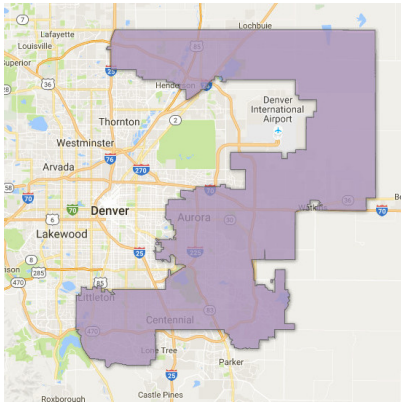
Potential Weaknesses: Coffman's opposition to the ACA could hurt him with veterans, who stand to lose coverage if the law is weakened or repealed. And his co-sponsorship of a bill to redefine rape to include only "forcible rape" could prove problematic.

About the Challenger

Introduction: Democrat Jason Crow is a first time Congressional nominee. He is a Denver attorney and a decorated Army Ranger combat veteran. Jason grew up in a working-class family and has a strong record of service. A passionate advocate for his fellow veterans in Colorado and across the nation, he served as a member of the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs and advised President Obama's reelection campaign on military and veterans' issues.

Issues: Crow supports many common-sense solutions for gun violence prevention (expanded background checks, rejecting concealed carry reciprocity, and more). While his opponent supported ACA repeal, Crow wants to work towards universal health care. He is pro-choice, supports LGBTQ equality, and believes in comprehensive immigration reform that includes clear paths to citizenship for Dreamers and military veterans. He is also committed to environmental protection and creating economic opportunities for working families.

Strengths: Crow is 39, and a father of young children. He's positioned himself as the opposite of the "status quo" and "politics as usual" that his opponent represents. He's been endorsed by many organizations, including Moms Demand Action, Vote Vets, Sierra Club, NARAL, and the Colorado AFL-CIO. A strong proponent of transparency and campaign finance reform, he has committed to refusing corporate PAC money and gun lobby money, while his opponent has taken over \$100,000 from the gun lobby (along with other corporate donations).



CO-06: Facts & Stats

Population Centers

- Aurora, 346,000 (largest suburb in Colorado)
- Centennial (partial), 110,000
- Highlands Ranch (partial), 97,000
- Parker (partial), 50,000
- Brighton (partial), 38,000
- Greenwood Village (partial), 16,000

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton: 191K (50%)
- Trump: 157K (41%)

2016 House Results

- Carroll (D): 160K (43%)
- Coffman (R): 192K (51%)
- Other: 24K (6%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 146K
- Eligible, not registered: 106K

2014 House Results

- Romanoff (D): 119K (43%)
- Coffman (R): 143K (52%)
- Other: 14K (5%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 210K

CO-06: Better Know the District

Geography

CO-06 forms a rough semicircle around Denver International Airport. The district is centered around Aurora, a populous, diverse suburb east of Denver, but also includes the more rural Brighton to the north and, to the south, a collection of suburbs including Centennial and parts of Highlands Ranch and Parker in conservative Douglas County.

Demographics

Though overwhelmingly white, CO-06 is not without ethnic and economic diversity. It includes some of the wealthiest and poorest areas of the Denver metro area. Twenty-one percent of the population is of Hispanic heritage, 9% is black, and about 14% is foreign born. In 2015, 8% of the district's residents had no health insurance, while 28% were covered by public plans.

Politics

About a third of the district's voters are registered Democrats, a third are Republican, and a third are unaffiliated. While the north and south sections of CO-06 lean conservative, more diverse Arapahoe County voted Democrat in the last three presidential elections. Nevertheless, down-ballot voting went Republican, and the GOP has won every House race since 1990.

Higher Education

Higher-education institutions in the district include the University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Campus, several community colleges, and satellite campuses of Regis and Metro State Universities. Educational attainment levels are quite high: 41% of residents over 25 have a bachelor's degree and 14% have a graduate or professional degree.

Industries

Aurora historically has had a large military presence as the home of two Air Force bases, only one of which, Buckley, remains in operation. Redevelopment of Fitzsimmons Army Hospital into a state-of-the-art medical campus has strengthened the local economy, as has metro Denver's light-rail network. Centennial and the southern suburbs contain extensive office parks as well as one of the country's highest concentrations of high-tech workers, many of whom are employed in IT, telecommunications, aerospace, defense, and biotech. Other major industries include healthcare, insurance, and aviation-related services.

Tourism

Outdoor recreation is popular, with lots of attendance at national and state parks and green spaces. The Denver area also is a significant supporter of museums and the arts. In 2016, voters renewed the metro region's 1% sales tax to support the arts and cultural institutions.