

Know Before You Go: FL-07 District Primer

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In the last election, Democrat Stephanie Murphy won this district by only 10,456 votes (3%). That's too close! With your help, we're going to keep this seat for the Democrats in 2018.

About the Incumbent

Introduction: Democrat Stephanie Murphy represents FL-07, after unseating long-term incumbent John Mica in 2016. Rep. Murphy's victory represents the "blue-ing" of the rural parts and conservative parts of FL-07, despite Central Florida being mostly Republican. A refugee from Communist Vietnam, Murphy served as a national security specialist in the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense. Working on counterterrorism, foreign military relations, and strategic planning, she received the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service. Prior to her public service, Murphy was a strategy consultant at Deloitte Consulting. Murphy holds an M.S. in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and a B.A. in Economics from the College of William and Mary. She lives in Winter Park with her husband and two young children.

Issues: Murphy is a vocal proponent of fighting climate change, improving national security, spurring economic growth, and protecting the rights of seniors, service members, and women.

Committees: Murphy is a member of the House Armed Services Committee and Small Business Committee, and a member of the Blue Dog Caucus, the Bipartisan Working Group, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, the Future Forum, and the New Democrat Coalition.

Strengths: Murphy is the first Vietnamese-American to serve in either chamber, making her a hero to the Asian Americans who live in the district. Murphy has unique insight into security and introducing the "Protect the National Security Council from Political Interference Act of 2017." In addition, Murphy has a strong environmental voting record.

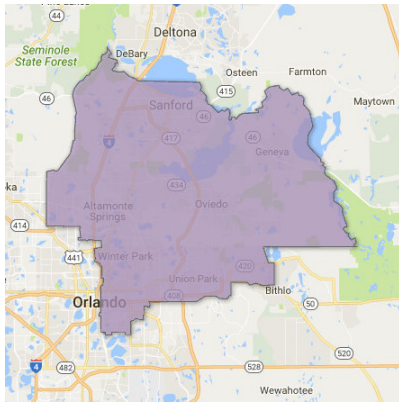
About the Challenger

Introduction: Republican Mike Miller has represented District 47 in the Florida House of Representatives since 2014. In 2015, Miller was assigned to the House Ways and Means committee. Miller has a Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Florida, and an MBA from the Crummer Graduate School of Business at Rollins College. Miller is married and has two children.

Issues: Miller has worked to cut state spending and reduce services to residents, and he supports voucher schools that drain state money from public schools. He supported a \$1 billion tax cut that primarily benefited businesses, and he supports legislation that bans taxes on internet purchases. He supports strengthening penalties for drug dealers but not measures to help those who are addicted. His positions on other issues are unknown, but his campaign website stresses his "strong, conservative record," leaving the details unspecified.

Strengths: Miller enjoys the support of the National Republican Party' NRCC which will be a great benefit to his campaign's fundraising. His willingness to cut taxes is likely to appeal to FL-07 voters. Miller was named a "Young Gun" by the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC), qualifying him for their "top level" of campaign support for his run.

Potential Weaknesses: Unlike his opponent, who is running on a clear and coherent platform, Miller is narrowly focused on budgetary issues and has no broader vision or concrete policy proposals to offer constituents.



FL-07: Facts & Stats

Population Centers

- Orlando, 244,930
- Deltona, 85,420
- Alafaya, 82,340
- Sanford, 54,170
- Apopka, 43,140

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton: 187K (51%)
- Trump: 160K (44%)

2016 House Results

- Murphy (D): 182K (51%)
- Mica (R): 172K (49%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 130K
- Eligible, not registered: 122K

2014 House Results

- Neuman (D): 73K (32%)
- Mica (R): 144K (64%)
- Other: 10K (4%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 218K

FL-07: Better Know the District

Overview

FL-07 is a major urban center of central Florida, centered on the tourism and hospitality industries, with many theme parks located in and near Orlando. The Walt Disney World Resort is by far the district's largest private-sector employer, with thousands of other jobs in various large healthcare systems. The district is also home to the University of Central Florida — the nation's second largest university.

Citizenry

The district's population is around 700,000 and growing. The unemployment rate of Seminole and Orange County FL were less than 5% in April 2015. The median household income, \$51,000, is roughly average. There are pockets of affluence (Winter Park, College Park, and the Maitland area), though most of Metro West Orlando and the rural areas of Seminole County are impoverished. FL-07 has a significant Hispanic population (19%) and African American population (10%), and is otherwise largely white.

Recent Events With National Resonance

Recent tragic news items include the death of Master Sgt. Debra Clayton, an officer killed in the line of duty in January 2017; the Pulse Nightclub shooting of 2016, the deadliest incident of violence against LGBT people in US history; and the 2012 shooting and killing of Trayvon Martin, in Sanford, FL. These events have brought to the forefront questions about gun control, police violence, violence against police, and support of the LGBT community.

2016 Election

The district was Democratic U.S. House district dating back to the 1950s until John Mica (R) was elected in 1993, serving until he was beaten in 2016 by Stephanie Murphy (D). Murphy benefited from a 2015 court-ordered redistricting to narrowly beat the long-serving incumbent, 51.5% to 48.5%. Murphy's candidacy was heavily supported by the DCCC, who donated over \$3.6M (compared to \$1.7M invested by the National Republican Campaign Committee). Mica put little effort into the election; he joked to Politico about not having a campaign manager and launched canvassing activities a mere two weeks before Election Day. Meanwhile, Murphy's well-funded campaign ran over \$3 million worth of ads, including one in which President Obama told her personal story: a daughter of Vietnamese refugees who rose to become a Department of Defense analyst after 9/11. Murphy's campaign portrayed Mica as soft on gun control — an unpopular position just after the Pulse nightclub shooting — and too supportive of President Trump.

Voter Registration Opportunities

FL-07 offers many opportunities for registration of new voters amongst naturalized citizens, recently-arrived Puerto Ricans, college students, and previous non-voters. Like much of the Sun Belt, the district has also benefited from population growth driven by northern transplants: Metro Orlando grew 2.2% in 2014 alone, including 26,000 new residents in Orange County.