

Know Before You Go: IA-03 District Primer

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In the last election, Republican David Young won this district by only 54,000 votes (14%).

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

About the Incumbent

Introduction: Republican David Young was first elected to represent IA-03 in 2014. He won reelection in 2016 on the coattails of the state's popular longtime GOP senator, Charles Grassley, for whom Young served as chief of staff from 2006 to 2013.

Issues: In addition to positioning himself as "a diligent watchdog of Iowans' hard-earned tax dollars," Young has listed his top three priorities as national security; economic and job security; and what he refers to as constitutional security, or the protection of constitutional liberties.

Recent Elections: Young won election to the open 3rd District seat in 2014 by beating Democrat Staci Appel by 11%. He won reelection in 2016 by beating his Democratic challenger, Jim Mowrer, by over 13%.

Strengths: Young benefits from his long association with Grassley, who enjoys bipartisan support among Iowans. And while other GOP House colleagues avoided contentious town hall meetings during the February 2017 recess, Young scored points by hosting a "pop-up" town hall in Polk County. Also, unlike some of his harder-edged conservative House colleagues, he has said that President Trump should release his tax returns and that an "honest debate" about Obamacare requires an "acknowledgment that this law has definitely helped people."

Potential Weaknesses: Though only in his second term, Young has spent his entire career in Washington. He has almost no pre-political work experience. The firmness of his convictions is also open to challenge. He very publicly flip-flopped on a measure to protect LGBT rights, changing his vote from yes to no — a switch that he attributed to concerns over religious liberties. And while he now wants to keep much of the Affordable Care Act intact, he previously voted to repeal it.

About the Challenger

Introduction: Democrat Cindy Axne is a fifth-generation Iowan with roots in rural Warren county. She worked for the State of Iowa for a decade and became a community activist after she discovered unequal treatment of public school children in West Des Moines. A small business owner, she is a graduate of the University of Iowa and the Kellogg School at Northwestern University.

Issues: Axne's broadly progressive platform focuses on the needs of Iowans. She supports policies that bring good jobs, affordable, high-quality health care and education, and retirement benefits to her constituents. She supports the Affordable Care Act, the National Paid Family Leave Act, equal pay, childcare for working families, and protecting a woman's right to choose. She wants to make college more affordable through expanding Pell grants and capping interest rates on student loans. Axne supports Iowa's farmers by investing in needed infrastructure, a fairer Farm Bill, and good trade agreements, while protecting the environment so climate change does not put the food supply and farmers' livelihoods at stake. She supports R&D to clean up water supplies, improve soil for better yields, and create jobs. She is committed to protecting rural hospitals by championing Medicare and Medicaid.

Strengths: Axne is an exciting candidate who brings people together. She has traveled throughout the state, getting to know voters in meet-and-greets far beyond Des Moines. Her policy proposals are smart, detailed, and oriented toward Iowans' concerns. She has received endorsements from Emily's List, Our Revolution, the *Des Moines Register*, former Iowa Supreme Court Justice Louis Lavorato, and many local notables.



IA-03: Facts & Stats

Population Centers

- Des Moines metropolitan area, 580,913
- Council Bluffs, 62,094
- West Des Moines, 61,255
- Ankeny, 51,567
- Urbandale, 41,776

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton: 179K (45%)
- Trump: 193K (49%)

2016 House Results

- Mowrer (D): 155K (40%)
- Young (R): 209K (53%)
- Other: 27K (7%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 157K
- Eligible, not registered: 106K

2014 House Results

- Appel (D): 119K (42%)
- Young (R): 149K (53%)
- Other: 13K (5%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 241K

IA-03: Better Know the District

Geography

IA-03 encompasses the southwest corner of Iowa, from Des Moines in the northeast to Council Bluffs in the northwest and down to the southern border with Missouri. Outside of Des Moines and Council Bluffs, the district is sparsely populated.

Citizenry

IA-03 is socioeconomically mixed, with a combination of white- and blue-collar workers in industries ranging from insurance and financial services to agriculture and manufacturing. Des Moines leans liberal, and has more racial diversity; its citizens are 10% African-Americans and 12% Latino. Western and southern Iowa are noticeably more conservative and less racially diverse.

Elections

IA-03 has swung between the parties in recent presidential elections. Gore edged out Bush in 2000, but Bush narrowly defeated in 2004. The district went for Obama in both 2008 and 2012, but for Trump over Clinton in 2016, 49% to 45%. IA-03's congressional seat was held by a Democrat from 1997 to 2013, but has been Republican since then, following redistricting.

Higher Education

There are 10 colleges and universities in the district. Drake University in Des Moines, with 5,000 students, is the most prominent.

Industries

Des Moines is home to many insurance and financial services companies. Wells Fargo is the largest employer, with some 14,000 employees. There is also a large manufacturing sector, which includes animal processing. More than 51,000 government employees live in the district as well. Many remain deeply antagonized by recent legislation stripping public-sector workers of collective bargaining rights and other employment protections.

Agriculture

Iowa is still best known for agriculture. It ranks first in the United States in corn and soybean production. The state also produces 49 million hogs, or almost 32% of the nation's hog production.