

# Know Before You Go: IL-06 District Primer

*March 2018 • Researched, summarized, and edited by Swing Left's all-volunteer research team!*

**In the last election, Republican Peter Roskam won 59.2% of the vote in 2016.** With your help, we're going to win this seat for Sean Casten in 2018.

## About the Incumbent

**Introduction:** Republican Peter Roskam has represented IL-06 since 2007, currently serving his sixth term in Congress. From 2011 to 2014 he served as the Chief Deputy Whip, ranking fourth among House Republican leaders. Roskam previously had a 14-year career in the Illinois State Senate and House of Representatives, holding elected office in the state since 1993.

**Issues:** According to his website, Roskam's primary campaign goals include defeating ISIS, repealing and replacing Obamacare, and tax reform. He is also staunchly pro-life and against same-sex marriage.

**Committees:** Roskam is currently the chairman of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Tax Policy, is a co-chair of the House Republican Israel Caucus, and sits on the Health Subcommittee. According to his biography, Roskam was "at the center of the investigation into the IRS after it was revealed the agency was targeting Americans for their personal, religious, and political beliefs," though ultimately the FBI and the Department of Justice found no evidence of wrongdoing.

**Strengths:** For the past six election, Roskam has run on a variety of unwavering positions, rallying his base around his pro-life stance, support for the NRA ties, tax-code reform initiatives, and a "pro-business" mindset.

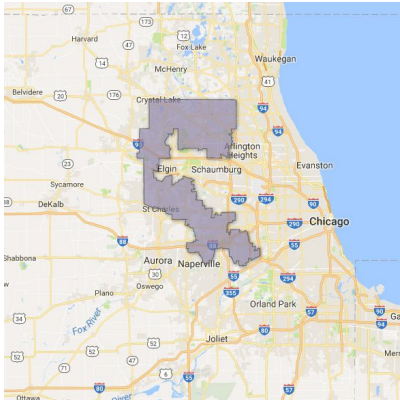
**Potential Weaknesses:** Roskam has voted in line with Trump 97.4% of the time, supporting the American Health Care Act, banning the use of federal funds for health coverage that includes abortion, and repealing environmental protections. In 2006, Roskam called climate change "junk science," earning an environmental rating of 10% from the League of Conservation Voters. Roskam also supported Trump's travel ban on Muslim-majority countries and the suspension of the U.S. Refugees Admission Program. Rep. Roskam has received a 0 from the Human Rights Campaign and currently has a 3% rating from the League of Conservation Voters.

## About the Challenger

**Introduction:** Sean Casten is a scientist and clean energy advocate who co-founded Recycled Energy Development LLC ("RED") whose mission was to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the recovery of otherwise wasted energy. He is also the former chairman of the U.S. Clean Heat and Power Association. He resides with his family in Downer's Grove, IL.

**Issues:** Casten will champion a number of clean energy initiatives. Casten supports an assault weapons ban, banning access to weapons for people who have been convicted of domestic violence or who are under a restraining order, and registration, licensing and insurance for gun ownership. Casten is in favor of pro-immigration measures like formally approving DACA, closing private immigration detention centers and limiting ICE's involvement in local law enforcement issues. Casten is pro-choice and vows to make access to birth control easier and more affordable. Casten also supports paid family leave. Casten wants to protect and expand the ACA. He aims to reinstate the individual mandate and is in favor of true universal healthcare. Casten is in favor of expanding the Pell Grant and changing the rules to allow people to refinance their student loans at the current interest rate and also for insolvent Americans to discharge their student loan debt. Sean supports LGBTQ rights and supports the Employment Non-discrimination Act and the Equality Act, banning the use of conversion therapy, and supports transgender rights.

**Strengths:** Casten is a young progressive candidate who is a political outsider. Casten has come out strong in favor of progressive agendas for the aforementioned issues.



## IL-06: Facts & Stats

### Largest Cities

- Naperville: 145,058
- Elgin: 112,105
- Wheaton: 53,585
- Crystal Lake: 40,635
- St. Charles: 33,685
- West Chicago: 27,086

### 2016 Presidential Election

- Clinton: 177,578 (50.2%)
- Trump: 152,909 (43.2%)

### 2016 House Election

- Roskam (R): 208,555 (59.2%)
- Howland (D): 143,591 (40.8%)

### 2014 House Election

- Roskam (R): 160,278 (67.1%)
- Mason (D): 78,465 (32.9%)

## IL-06: Better Know a District

### Issues

The most important issues in IL-06 include:

- **Schools:** Property taxes are among the highest in the state, with four of the top five highest paying counties represented in the 6th.
- **Health Care:** As many as 60,725 constituents in the 6th district will lose healthcare if the ACA is repealed – more than any other district in the state.
- **Tax reform:** The mean income in IL-06 is \$120,000, so building a less complicated tax code is a high priority for many citizens.

### Citizenry

The 6th district is majority white (83.4%) but also contains above-average populations of Asian-Americans (9%) relative to the rest of the state. Nearly half of the population 25 or older has a bachelor's degree, compared with 34% nationally. Educational services, health care, and social assistance makes up the largest occupational sectors, with a low unemployment rate of 4.4%. Many in the district commute to Chicago for work.

### Elections

The district has been represented by a Republican since 1972, and Roskam has won his last six elections by comfortable margins. Turnout in the last general election was 69%, compared with just 49.9% in the most recent midterm. However, the district voted for Obama in 2008. The district has shifted from "Likely Republican" to "Lean Republican" in recent months.

### Geography

The district is small but contains a few major cities that are the hubs of real estate and commerce including Algonquin and Barrington in McHenry County, St. Charles, South Elgin, and Dundee in Kane County, and Naperville and West Chicago in DuPage county.