

Know Before You Go: OH-12 District Primer

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In this summer's special election, Democrat Danny O'Connor lost this seat by a whisker. With your help, we can push O'Connor to victory and win this seat for the Democrats in November!

About the Incumbent:

Introduction: Republican Troy Balderson is a lifelong conservative. Prior to the special election in 2018 Balderson served in the Ohio House of Representatives from 2009 - 2011. In July 2011, he was appointed to a vacant seat in the Ohio Senate where he served until September, 2018. Before his time in the Ohio legislature, he worked for a family-owned and operated car dealership.

Issues: Balderson is a strong supporter of President Trump's agenda. As a gun owner, he is a vocal defender of Second Amendment rights. In his past elections he was highly rated by the NRA. Balderson supports building President Trump's border wall. He also believes that the Affordable Care Act must be completely repealed. As a member of the state senate he voted against Governor Kasich's moves to bring the Medicare expansion to Ohio.

Recent Elections: Although the Special Election between Troy Balderson and Danny O'Connor took weeks to be decided, in the end Balderson did win by a narrow margin of 1,680 votes out of more than 200,000 votes cast; a margin of 0.8% in a district that Trump had won by 11%.

Strengths: Balderson's conservative views have been reflective of this district over the years.

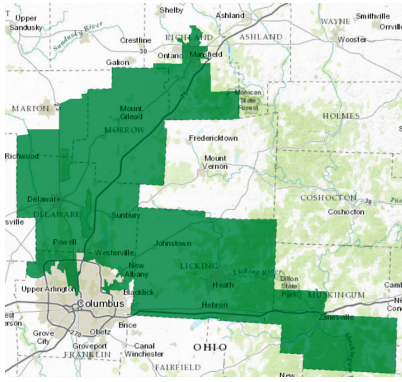
Potential Weaknesses: Although he ran an ad avowing he would protect Social Security and Medicare, Balderson said in an interview with a local paper he is open to raising the age for retirement benefits. Balderson claims to be a fiscal conservative who is concerned about the federal deficit yet he is a supporter of the Republican tax cuts which ballooned the deficit.

About the Challenger:

Introduction: Democrat Danny O'Connor grew up in rural Ohio in a family that instilled the values of service and giving back to the community. After graduating from Wright State University, O'Connor spent a year volunteering with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, serving as a legal advocate assisting veterans, immigrants and families struggling with poverty. After graduation from law school, he worked in the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office before starting a private law practice and helping to run a small business. In 2016, he was elected as Franklin County Recorder.

Issues: O'Connor is a strong supporter of expanding access to health insurance. He believes that Social Security and Medicare must be protected. He is a strong proponent of public education and believes we need to educate our citizens to prepare them for jobs in the global economy while increasing financial aid and access to community colleges and trade schools. O'Connor believes climate change must be addressed and that doing so provides opportunities to create new jobs in clean and renewable energy.

Strengths: In August, O'Connor ran in a special election in OH-12. He nearly won an upset victory in a district that substantially favored Trump. O'Connor outraised his opponent, forcing the GOP to spend nearly \$4 million on an election they should have easily won. President Trump and Vice President Pence both had to campaign to shore up their base in order to counteract O'Connor's grassroots support. In the end, O'Connor lost by just 1,680 votes in a district held by Republicans for more than 30 years. O'Connor is endorsed by AFSCME, CWA, SEIU, AFT COPE, Planned Parenthood, NEA Fund for Children and Education, Planned Parenthood, League of Conservation Voters, Human Rights Campaign and Moveon.org Political Action, to name a few.



OH-12: Better Know the District

Geography

OH-12 extends North and East from Columbus, the state Capital. It includes substantial parts of Columbus' suburbs but this large district extends out into more rural counties as well. It consists of parts of Franklin, Marion, Muskingum, and Richland Counties and all of Delaware Morrow, and Licking Counties.

Citizenry

OH-12 has a population of 781,000, of which a little more than half (50.4%) are females and just less than half (49.6%) are male. The majority of the population is white (87%), while African Americans and Asians each make up a little less than 5% of the district. According to the latest annual census data, the district's unemployment rate was an extremely low 3.1%, and the median household income was an above-average \$71,853, presumably driven by the high-income Columbus suburbs.

OH-12: Facts & Stats

Population Centers

- Newark 49,423
- Dublin 47,619
- Mansfield 46,160
- Zanesville 25,388

2018 Special Election

- O'Connor (D): 102.6k (49.3%)
- Balderson (R): 104.3k (50.1%)

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton: 42%
- Trump: 53%

2016 House Results

- Albertson (D): 113k (30%)
- Tiberi (R): 251k (67%)

2014 House Results

- Tibbs (D) : 61k (28%)
- Tiberi (R): 151k (68%)

Elections

Like other Ohio districts, OH-01 has suffered from gerrymandering. This district has consistently sent Republican candidates to the House of Representatives and in 2016, it swung Trump's way by 11 percentage points. The special election, however, was a nail-biter. O'Connor carried Franklin County by more than 22,000 votes but lost every other county by a combined total of just more than that. Delaware County, a suburb of Columbus, was the closest percentage-wise; Balderson carried the other counties by very wide margins. Perhaps spurred by Gov. Kasich's last-minute endorsement, large voter turnout in Delaware County put Balderson over the top.

Higher Education

The district includes the liberal arts colleges Ohio Wesleyan and Denison University, several small technical, community and other colleges, as well as the Methodist Theological School. Most of the main campus of Ohio State University is directly adjacent to the district, but significant amounts of student housing is in the district.

Employment

About a quarter of those employed work in educational services, health care, and social assistance jobs. Approximately 50% of the workforce are employed in professional, scientific, and management jobs. The remainder is evenly split among administrative and waste management services, retail trade, manufacturing, finance and insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing. About 13% of workers are employed by government.

Fun Facts

Two U.S. Presidents, Rutherford B. Hayes and Warren Harding, were from OH-12. The district also includes the world's largest earthen enclosure – the Newark Earthworks constructed by the Hopewell culture between 100 BCE and 500 CE.