

Know Before You Go: UT-04 District Primer

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

In the last election, Republican Mia Love won this district by only 35,000 votes (13%).

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

About the Incumbent

Introduction: Republican Mia Love was born in Brooklyn, New York, the daughter of Haitian immigrants. Raised in Connecticut, she graduated from the University of Hartford with a degree in Fine Arts and has converted to the Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) faith. She has three children.

Career: Love served two terms as City Councilwoman (2004-2010) and one term as Mayor (2010-2014), before an unsuccessful run for congress in 2012 against Democratic incumbent Jim Matheson. When Matheson retired in 2014, Love ran again, this time successfully, positioning herself as a fiscal conservative with Libertarian leanings. She was elected to a second term in Congress in 2016. Love is the first black Republican woman elected to Congress, and is currently the only Republican member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Committees: She sits on the House Financial Services Committee and the Select Investigative Committee for Infant Lives, and is a member of the bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus.

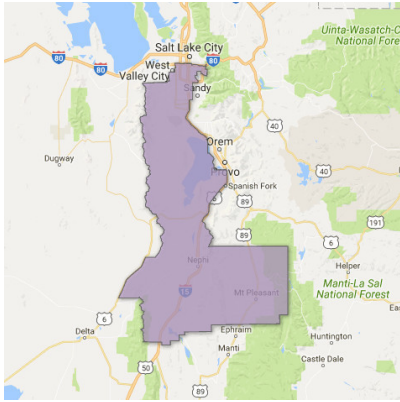
Issues: Love is a concealed-carry permit holder and gun owner, is strongly anti-abortion, and opposes the EPA, environmental regulation, and Obama's designation of Bears Ears National Monument. Love tends to focus on a national conservative agenda rather than issues that are of local interest. In the 2016 election, 89% of her campaign funding came from out of state, and 99% from outside the district. Despite distancing herself from Trump during the 2016 election, she has so far voted in support of his agenda 96% of the time. Seen as a rising star among conservatives, she was asked to speak at the 2012 RNC and is mentored by House Speaker Paul Ryan.

About the Challenger

Introduction: Democrat Ben McAdams is the current mayor of Salt Lake County. He is known as a collaborative and pragmatic leader, seeking advice and solutions from many communities within and around Salt Lake. McAdams, 43, is a member of the Church of Latter Day Saints, and has four children with his wife Julie. He attended University of Utah and Columbia Law School, beginning his legal career at law firms in New York and Utah before entering politics as Mayor Ralph Becker's legislative liaison for two years prior to his election to the Utah State Senate, representing Utah's 2nd senate district from 2010-2012. He resigned after winning election as Salt Lake County Mayor, and was then re-elected as mayor in 2016. McAdams was selected at the 2018 Utah Democratic Convention with 72% of votes, narrowly winning the Women's Caucus endorsement by 4 votes as well as the Stonewall Caucus.

Issues: While centrist and fiscally conservative, McAdams had the most liberal voting record during his time in the Utah State Senate, and has steadily sought to improve aspects of American life that are challenges in many states. As mayor, McAdams quietly posed as a homeless person for 2-3 days to study Salt Lake City homeless experiences, facilities, and services, subsequently encountering some turbulence within his constituency over the sites of new homeless shelters. He has also worked on public-private partnerships for pre-K education and employment based drug treatment programs. He's also championed LGBT anti-discrimination policies for Salt Lake, which have been adopted statewide.

Strengths: In March, 2017, 57% of Salt Lake County voters have a favorable opinion of McAdam. McAdams has said he will not support Nancy Pelosi as majority leader should Democrats retake the house in November.



UT-04: Facts & Stats

Population Centers

- Salt Lake City, 188,000
- West Valley City, 131,000
- West Jordan, 106,000
- Sandy, 89,000
- Millcreek, 62,000

2016 Presidential Results

- Clinton: 90K (45%)
- Trump: 108K (55%)

2016 House Results

- Owens (D): 113K (41%)
- Love (R): 148K (54%)
- Other: 14K (5%)
- Registered, didn't vote: 231K
- Eligible, not registered: 115K

2014 House Results

- Owens (D): 67K (46%)
- Love (R): 75K (51%)
- Other: 2K (3%)

UT-04: Better Know the District

Citizenry

Utah's 4th Congressional District was created after the 2010 Congressional Elections. It is a mix of urban, suburban, and rural cut from the center of the State and includes parts of Salt Lake, Utah, Juab, and Sanpete counties. According to the 2010 census, there are roughly 760,000 people living in the district, 85% of whom identify as White. 122,000 (16%) identify as Hispanic — the second largest demographic. The median average income in 2010 was \$67,632.

Growth & Air Quality

Residents are concentrated in the more liberal-leaning, northern end of UT-04, which includes most of Salt Lake City and a number of rapidly growing cities in Utah County. This growth has raised concerns about sprawl. Air pollution, trapped by the surrounding mountains, is already a major problem in the area — and top political concern — and continues to worsen with a growing population. The character and demographics of UT-04 are also changing as migrants from other areas of Utah as well as from out of state settle here.

Economy

UT-04's economy is driven in part by a tech boom along the Wasatch Front. Outside of tech, the economy relies on a mix of healthcare, higher education, banking, defense contracting, and other government-related work. Agricultural, manufacturing, and energy-sector jobs also play a role in UT-04's economy, especially in the southern (and more rural) parts of the district. Here, the population thins out and becomes more conservative.

The Church

As in all of Utah's districts, The Church of Latter-Day Saints (LDS or Mormon) plays a large role in the UT-04 community and, by extension, in politics. While the LDS community has historically supported Conservative Republican candidates, they may be willing to break with the current administration on specific issues, especially the Muslim ban, which is reminiscent of a painful history of religious discrimination towards members of the LDS faith. There may also be resistance towards policies that burden or exclude those living in poverty. Senator Sanders won the Utah Democratic primary by a large margin (77.2% to 19.8%), possibly showing that a more progressive agenda has traction.

Healthcare

Utah refused the Medicaid expansion as part of the ACA and a local political fight on the issue has continued since. According to the Indivisible research document, UT-04 had a 29% decrease in the uninsured rate since the Affordable Care Act took effect, and has 41,600 marketplace enrollees