Inside Elections

Nathan L. Gonzales

AUGUST 4, 2022

VOLUME 6, NO. 15

Illinois 17: Open Seat **Opportunity**

By Jacob Rubashkin

In 2020, Rep. Cheri Bustos was on the ascendancy. Held up as a model for how Democrats could win back the working class white voters they lost to Donald Trump, Bustos received votes for Speaker of the House, and was picked to helm the House Democrats' campaign arm as the party anticipated making significant gains.

Two years later, Democrats have a diminished, not expanded, House majority, Bustos is headed for the exits, and - despite the best efforts of the Illinois state legislature — her seat could be filled by a Republican after all.

The battle for Illinois' 17th District binds together several threads playing out in races across the country. It's an open seat — one of many Democrats are defending. It was substantially altered by redistricting either "artfully" or "torturously," depending on who you ask. It features a GOP nominee who nearly pulled off an upset in 2020 and is back and better prepared for Round 2. And it's chock full of both the suburbs and the exurbs that have been the featured political battlegrounds of the past decade.

The 17th is one of 14 competitive districts where the Democratic incumbent is not seeking re-election. And it's one of nine districts Joe Biden would have carried in 2020 with no Democratic incumbent in 2022, such as Rhode Island's 2nd, Pennsylvania's 17th, and New York's 3rd, where the incumbent's decision not to run again makes the race much more precarious for the party.

Democrats already faced steep odds in the fight to hold the House, and having to battle on territory that typically leans their way only makes the path more challenging.

The Lay of the Land

The old 17th District was the rare seat Trump won twice yet was still held by a Democrat in Congress. Nestled in the northwest corner of the state, the district ran from Wisconsin south along the Iowa border to Henderson County. Anchored by the Quad Cities, it also jutted east to

Continued on page 8

This issue brought to you by

CA 22 (Valadao, R)

CA 27 (Garcia, R)

CO 8 (Open, New)

IL 17 (Open; Bustos, D)*

MI 3 (Open; Meijer, R)#

MI 7 (Slotkin, D)

MI 8 (Kildee, D)

MN 2 (Craig, DFL)

NH 1 (Pappas, D)

CA 47 (Porter, D)

NV 1 (Titus, D)

NV 4 (Horsford, D)

IL13 (Open; Davis, R)

NC 1 (Open; Butterfield, D)

NY 3 (Open; Suozzi, D)

NY 18 (Open; Maloney, D)

OR 5 (Open; Schrader, D)

RI 2 (Open; Langevin, D)

CA 13 (Open; Harder, D)

CO 7 (Open; Perlmutter, D)

AZ 4 (Stanton, D)

CA9 (Harder, D)

CA 49 (Levin, D)

CT 5 (Hayes, D)

GA 2 (Bishop, D)

IL6 (Casten, D)

IN 1 (Mrvan, D)

MD 6 (Trone, D)

NC 6 (Manning, D)

NC 14 (Open, New)

NY 4 (Open; Rice, D)

NM 3 (Leger Fernandez, D)

NH 2 (Kuster, D)

IL14 (Underwood, D)

IA 3 (Axne, D)



2022 House Ratings

Toss-Up (11D, 5R) KS 3 (Davids, D) NY 19 (Open; Delgado, D)

ME 2 (Golden, D) WA8 (Schrier, D) OH 1 (Chabot, R) NC13 (Open, R) OH 9 (Kaptur, D) NJ 7 (Malinowski, D) PA7 (Wild, D) NM 2 (Herrell, R) PA 8 (Cartwright, D) Tilt Democratic (7D, 2R) Tilt Republican (3D, 2R) NV 3 (S. Lee, D) AZ 6 (Open; Kirkpatrick, D) NY 22 (Open; Katko, R) CA 45 (Steel, R) PA 17 (Open; Lamb, D) NY 1 (Open; Zeldin, R) VA7 (Spanberger, D) OH 13 (Open; Ryan, D) TX 15 (Open; V. Gonzalez, D) Lean Democratic (9D, 1R) Lean Republican (3D, 3R) TX 28 (Cuellar, D) AZ 1 (Schweikert, R) AZ 2 (O'Halleran, D) MI 10 (Open; Levin, D)* NE 2 (Bacon, R) NY 2 (Garbarino, R) WI 3 (Open; Kind, D) Likely Democratic (18D) Likely Republican (5D, 10R) AK AL Special (Vacant, R)

VA 2 (Luria, D)

CA3 (Open; McClintock, R) CA 40 (Kim, R) CA41 (Calvert, R) FL 5 (Rutherford, R) FL 7 (Open; Murphy, D) FL 13 (Open; Crist, D) FL 15 (Open; Franklin, R) FL 27 (Salazar, R) GA6 (Open; McBath, D) IA1 (Miller-Meeks, R) IA 2 (Hinson, R) MT 1 (Open, New)

> NY 11 (Malliotakis, R) PA1 (Fitzpatrick, R) TN 5 (Open; Cooper, D)

NY 17 (S. Maloney, D)		GOP	DEM	
OR 4 (Open; DeFazio, D)	Solid	187	167	
OR 6 (Open, New)	Likely/Lean/Tilt	26	38	
TX 34 (Gonzalez, D/Flores, R)	Total	213	205	
	Toss-up	1	7	
	Needed for majority	21	8	
# moved benefiting Democrats, * moved benefiting Republicans Takeovers in Italics				

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Report Shorts

Alaska

Inside Elections

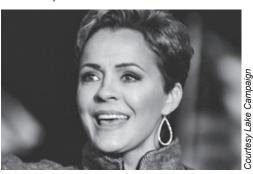
At-Large District Special. A July 20-25 poll from Alaska Survey Research indicates a competitive race to succeed the late Rep. Don Young. Pollster Ivan Moore found Democrat Mary Peltola in front with 41 percent, followed by Republicans Nick Begich III (30 percent) and Sarah Palin (29 percent). The election will use ranked choice instant runoff voting, so the candidate in last place will be eliminated and their votes redistributed based on voters' second preference. If Palin places last, then Begich looks set to beat Peltola, 55-45 percent. But if Begich places behind Palin, it's a much closer race: Peltola leads Palin, 51-49 percent, on account of the former governor's deep unpopularity. Likely Republican.

Arizona

Senate. Venture capitalist Blake Masters won the GOP primary with 39 percent followed by solar energy CEO Jim Lamon (29 percent) and state Attorney General Mark Brnovich (18 percent). Masters will face Democratic Sen. Mark Kelly in one of the most important Senate races in the country, in a state Biden won very narrowly in 2020. Masters has the national environment in his favor but Kelly had a 16-to-1 cash advantage in mid-July. Toss-up.

Governor. Former local news anchor Kari Lake leads former Arizona Board of Regents member Karrin Taylor Robson in a close race for the

GOP nomination. Lake is stridently pro-Trump and a major promoter of false stolen election theories; she could make it more difficult for Republicans to hold the governorship. GOP Gov. Doug Ducey is term-limited



Kari Lake

and could not seek re-election. The GOP nominee will face Democratic Secretary of State Katie Hobbs, who dispatched former Nogales Mayor Marco Lopez, 73-22 percent in the Democratic primary, in the general election. Toss-up.

1st District. Embattled GOP Rep. David Schweikert survived a competitive primary challenge from wealthy insurance executive Elijah Norton, 44-34 percent. Another Republican, gym chain owner Josh

Barnett, received 22 percent, so the congressman benefited from having multiple opponents dividing votes against him. Business consultant Jevin Hodge won the Democratic nomination and faces a difficult general election race, even though Biden would have won the district with 50 percent. Lean Republican.

2nd District. Retired Navy Seal Eli Crane won the GOP primary with 34 percent and will face Rep. Tom O'Halleran, one of the most vulnerable Democratic incumbents in the country, in the general election. Army veteran/state Rep. Walt Blackman, who had some previous controversial statements and was viewed as a potential liability for the GOP, finished second with 24 percent. Trump would have won the newly-drawn district with 53 percent, so Crane should defeat O'Halleran in this environment. Lean Republican.

4th District. The GOP race between restaurant owner/Marine Corps veteran Kelly Cooper and former Arizona Bankers Association CEO/ former Phoenix Suns senior vice president Tanya Wheeless is too close to call. The GOP nominee will face Democratic Rep. Greg Stanton in a race that is on the edge of the House battleground, considering Biden would have won the district with 54 percent in 2020. Likely Democratic.

6th District. Former state Sen. Kirsten Engel defeated state Rep. Daniel Hernandez 60-34 percent in the Democratic primary. Hernandez was the intern who aided Rep. Gabby Giffords after she was shot at a constituent event in 2011. Juan Ciscomani, a former senior advisor to Gov. Doug Ducey, won the GOP primary with 47 percent in the open seat race to replace Democratic Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, who is not seeking re-election — Ciscomani benefited from a burst of late spending from the Kevin McCarthy-aligned Congressional Leadership Fund. This is a top GOP pickup opportunity in a district Biden would have won with just 49.3 percent. Tilt Republican.

Kansas

Governor. State Attorney General Derek Schmidt won the GOP nomination with 80 percent of the vote and will face Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly in one of the best Republican takeover opportunities in the country. A conservative independent candidate recently submitted signatures to appear on the fall ballot, which could make life slightly easier for Kelly, but those have to be verified first. Kelly benefitted from a thirdparty candidate in 2018, winning with just a 48-percent plurality. Toss-up.

Amendment 1. A statewide initiative to remove the right to an abortion from the state constitution was soundly defeated, 59-41 percent. *Continued on page 3*

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Continued from page 2 It also likely sparked high turnout, which could reach closer to what general election turnout was in 2018. That would be a good sign for Democrats, who are hoping that reaction to the Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision and reversal of *Roe v. Wade*



Derek Schmidt

will alter what was looking like a dismal set of midterm elections. **3rd District.** Admanda Adkins easily won the Republican primary with 77 percent and will face Democratic Rep. Sharice Davids in a rematch of their 2020 race that Davids won by 10 points. Biden would have won the district with 51 percent in 2020, although by a more narrow margin than the district where the two candidates faced off last cycle. This could also still be a more challenging cycle for the congresswoman. Toss-up.

Maryland

Governor. Author and former nonprofit CEO Wes Moore won the Democratic primary with 33 percent of the vote, edging past former Secretary of Labor/former DNC chairman Tom Perez (30 percent) and state comptroller Peter Franchot (21 percent). Moore's big margins in

Baltimore City, as well as Prince George's and Baltimore counties were too much for Perez to surmount. Persistent stories calling into question aspects of Moore's biography didn't seem to drag the former Army captain down, and he benefited



Courtesy Moore Campaigr

Madi

Wes Moore

from being the only Black candidate in the top tier following the exit of former Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker from the race. If elected, Moore will be Maryland's first Black governor, and only the fifth Black governor in American history.

On the GOP side, state Del. Dan Cox outpaced former state Secretary of Commerce Kelly Schulz, 52-44 percent. Cox was endorsed by former President Donald Trump, promotes the unfounded claim that the 2020 election was stolen, organized buses to the Jan. 6 rally that precipitated the insurrection, and spoke at a conspiracy theory conference. Schulz was endorsed by popular outgoing Gov. Larry Hogan.

While Republicans have had success this century winning Maryland gubernatorial races, they've done so with moderate, low-key candidates in Hogan and Bob Ehrlich. Cox is not cut from the same cloth, and won't be able to appeal to the Democratic voters who crossed the aisle to vote for Hogan and Ehrlich in 2002, 2014, and 2018.

The last time Republicans won an open seat, in 2014, Hogan outhustled then-Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown, who was weighed down by the rocky rollout of the state's health care exchange. But in 2022, Moore is the clear favorite against Cox. Move from Lean Democratic to Likely Democratic.

1st District. Former state Del. Heather Mizeur won the Democratic primary over former diplomat David Harden. But a court tossed out the Democratic-drawn map that made the 1st District highly competitive, and instead approved a map that kept it heavily Republican. So while Mizuer is a serious candidate, she's also a sizable underdog against Rep. Andy Harris in November. Trump would have carried the new 1st by 14 points, 56-42 percent. Solid Republican.

4th District. Former Prince George's County state's attorney Glenn Ivey won the Democratic primary for this seat over former Rep. Donna Edwards, who represented the district from 2008 to 2017. Ivey, who previously ran here in 2016 but lost to outgoing Rep. Anthony Brown, led Edwards by 16 points, 51-35 percent, with about 70 percent of the vote counted. The race saw significant outside spending from AIPAC: \$5 million to support Ivey and oppose Edwards. A more progressive pro-Israel group, J Street, tried to make up the difference with a six-figure buy but it wasn't enough.

Brown handily won the Democratic primary for state Attorney General. The 4th District race is Solid Democratic.

6th District. Matthew Foldi, a 25-year-old reporter for the conservative *Washington Free Beacon* and a former staffer for GOP Super PAC Congressional Leadership Fund, captured a raft of high-profile endorsements from the likes of House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, House GOP Conference Chairwoman Elise Stefanik, Gov. Larry Hogan, and Donald Trump, Jr. But the Montgomery County native was never a good fit for the more rural, Western Maryland district.

State Del. Neil Parrott, the GOP's 2020 nominee here, won handily — 64-14 percent — in a result that aligned with private polling from earlier in the *Continued on page 4*

Candidate Conversations

Candidates recently interviewed by Inside Elections

	,
Jevin Hodge (D)	Arizona's 1st District (July 19, 2022)
Chris Deluzio (D)	Pennsylvania's 17th District (July 19, 2022)
Don Davis (D)	North Carolina's 1st District (July 19, 2022)
Bridget Fleming (D)	New York's 1st District (July 19, 2022)
Wiley Nickel (D)	North Carolina's 13th District (July 19, 2022)
Katie Hobbs (D)	Arizona Governor (July 12, 2022)
Michael Franken (D)	Iowa Senate (June 29, 2022)
Evan McMullin (I)	Utah Senate (June 27, 2022)
Brad Finstad (R)	Minnesota's 1st District (June 14, 2022)
Allan Fung (R)	Rhode Island's 2nd District (June 14, 2022)
lison Gesiotto Gilbert (R)	Ohio's 13th District (June 14, 2022)
Bob Healey Jr. (R)	New Jersey's 3rd District (June 14, 2022)
Bo Hines (R)	North Carolina's 13th District (June 14, 2022)
Kevin Kiley (R)	California's 3rd District (June 14, 2022)
J.R. Majewski (R)	Ohio's 9th District (June 14, 2022)
Brian Maryott (R)	California's 49th District (June 14, 2022)
Zach Nunn (R)	Iowa's 3rd District (June 14, 2022)
Tom Patti (R)	California's 9th District (June 14, 2022)
Jeremy Shaffer (R)	Pennsylvania's 17th District (June 14, 2022)



race. Parrott will face Democratic Rep. David Trone once again, though this time the district is less favorable to Democrats. Under the old lines, Biden carried the 6th by 23 points, but under the new lines he would have won it by just 10 points. The personally wealthy Trone just cut himself a check for \$10 million in preparation for the general election. Likely Democratic.

Michigan

Governor. Conservative commentator Tudor Dixon won the GOP nomination with 40 percent atop a field of candidates that did not include a handful of top contenders, who had failed to even make the ballot due to fraudulent signatures. Dixon will face Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in what should be a GOP takeover opportunity after Biden's narrow victory in 2020. But Republicans are still playing catch up from the primary fiasco. Tilt Democratic.

3rd District. Rep. Peter Meijer became the latest GOP incumbent who voted to impeach Trump to lose in the primary. He was unseated by former Trump administration official John Gibbs, 53-47 percent, who will now face attorney/2020 Democratic nominee Hillary Scholten. Biden would have won the newly-drawn district by 8 points (compared to the old district that Trump won by 3 points), giving Democrats a legitimate opportunity to win the seat, particularly with the more moderate Meijer out of the picture. Move from Toss-up to Tilt Democratic.

7th District. Former Army helicopter pilot/state Sen. Tom Barrett was unopposed for the GOP nomination and will face Democratic Rep. Elissa Slotkin in the general election. Biden would have won the district with 50 percent, giving the congresswoman a tiny bit of breathing room, but this will be a tough hold for Democrats. Tilt Democratic.

8th District. Former Immigration and Customs Enforcement official/ Fox47 news anchor Paul Junge easily won the Republican primary with 54 percent, more than 30 points ahead of the next candidate. While Junge lost a close race to Slotkin in 2020, he'll face Democratic Rep. Dan Kildee in this redrawn district that Biden would have won with 50 percent. Kildee is already airing a negative TV ad full of opposition research on Junge. Tilt Democratic.

10th District. After two consecutive unsuccessful statewide runs, Republican John James is coming to Congress. He won the GOP nomination with nearly 90 percent and will face Democrat Carl Marlinga, a former Macomb County judge, in a district Trump would have won with 50 percent. In this political environment, that should be more than enough for James and Democrats haven't been particularly optimistic about this race for a while. Move from Tilt Republican to Lean Republican.

11th District. Rep. Haley Stevens defeated fellow Rep. Andy Levin 60-40 percent in one of the last member vs. member primaries of the

cycle. Stevens had support from more moderate groups including Democratic Majority for Israel and AIPAC, while Levin was backed by Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren and the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Biden would have



Haley Stevens

won the district with 59 percent, so Stevens is the heavy favorite against Republican Mark Ambrose. Solid Democratic.

13th District. State Rep. Shri Thanedar placed first among a crowded field of Democrats with 28 percent, followed by state Sen. Adam Hollier (24 percent) and Michigan Civil Rights Commissioner Portia Roberson (17 percent). John Conyers III (the son of the late longtime Detroit Rep. John Conyers) was running a distant fourth with 9 percent. Biden would have won the Detroit-area seat with 74 percent, so the Democratic nomination is critical. This will be the first time since the 1950s that Detroit does not have a Black representative in Congress. Solid Democratic.

Missouri

Senate. State Attorney General Eric Schmitt won the GOP nomination with 46 percent over Rep. Vicky Hartzler (22 percent) and others. Former *Continued on page 5*

Second Quarter Senate Fundraising

Totals in key races through June 30, 2022

STATE	CANDIDATE	RAISED CYCLE TO DATE (INCL PERSONAL MONEY)	CASH ON HAND
AK	Lisa Murkowski, R	\$9.2 million	\$6.1 million
AK	Kelly Tshibaka, R	\$3.1 million	\$1.1 million
AZ	Mark Kelly, D*	\$54.1 million	\$24.8 million
AZ	Blake Masters, R*	\$5 million	\$1.6 million
CO	Michael Bennet, D	\$14.5 million	\$8.1 million
CO	Joe O'Dea, R	\$3.5 million	\$842,000
FL	Marco Rubio, R	\$34.5 million	\$14.6 million
FL	Val Demings, D	\$43 million	\$12.6 million
GA	Raphael Warnock, D	\$62 million	\$22.2 million
GA	Herschel Walker, R	\$20.2 million	\$6.8 million
MO	Trudy Busch Valentine, D*	\$3.4 million	\$698,000
MO	Eric Schmitt, R*	\$3.6 million	\$1 million
NC	Cheri Beasley, D	\$16 million	\$4.8 million
NC	Ted Budd, R	\$6.5 million	\$1.8 million
NH	Maggie Hassan, D	\$27 million	\$7.4 million
NH	Bruce Fenton, R	\$1.6 million	\$1.6 million
NH	Chuck Morse, R	\$1.3 million	\$975,000
NH	Kevin Smith, R	\$727,000	\$349,000
NH	Vikram Mansharamani, R	\$831,000	\$789,000
NH	Don Bolduc, R	\$469,000	\$65,000
NV	Catherine Cortez Masto, D	\$30.1 million	\$9.9 million
NV	Adam Laxalt, R	\$7.3 million	\$2.1 million
OH	J.D. Vance, R	\$3.6 million	\$628,000
OH	Tim Ryan, D	\$21.7 million	\$3.6 million
PA	Mehmet Oz, R	\$19 million	\$1.1 million
PA	John Fetterman, D	\$26 million	\$5.5 million
SC	Tim Scott, R	\$46.1 million	\$24.8 million
WA	Patty Murray, D*	\$14.5 million	\$6.7 million
WA	Tiffany Smiley, R*	\$7.1 million	\$2.3 million
WI	Ron Johnson, R [†]	\$17 million	\$3.6 million
WI	Mandela Barnes, D [†]	\$6.2 million	\$1.5 million
*As of Julv	13. 2022 [†] As of July 20. 2	022	



Gov. Eric Greitens, who some Republicans feared would jeopardize the party's hold on the seat if he won the primary, finished third with 19 percent after a super PAC spent late money going after him. Rep. Billy Long was fourth with 5 percent. Nurse/wealthy philanthropist Trudy Busch Valentine won the Democratic primary 43-38 percent over Marine veteran Lucas Kunce, but she'll be an underdog in the general election. Solid Republican.

1st District. Democratic Rep. Cori Bush, a member of The Squad, turned back an aggressive challenge from state Sen. Steve Roberts 70-27 percent. Roberts called for a more pragmatic approach and tried to make the case that Bush's "Defund the Police" mentality was hurting her constituents. Roberts' message lost by more than 40 points. Solid Democratic.

4th District. In the race to replace Hartzler, former news anchor Mark Alford won the GOP primary with 35 percent amidst a crowded field. Alford wasn't the choice of establishment-friendly Gov. Mike Parson (that was farmer Kalena Bruce) or the party's conservative wing (that was American Conservative Union-endorsed state Sen. Rick Brattin). Trump would have won the west-central district by 40 points, so Alford will be a member of Congress next year. Solid Republican.

7th District. In the race to replace Long, state Sen. Eric Burlison won the GOP primary with 38 percent in another crowded race. Burlison was backed by the Club for Growth and the House Freedom Caucus. Trump would have won the southwestern district by 41 points, so Burlison will be a member of Congress next year. Solid Republican.

New York

10th District. Former New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio dropped out of the crowded Democratic primary for this new district after failing to gain traction in the polls. In the three surveys released since his exit — all partisan polls sponsored by candidates — there have been three different leaders: City Councilwoman Carlina Rivera, state Assemblywoman Yuh-Line Niou, and former House Intelligence Committee counsel Dan Goldman. Former Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman and state Assemblywoman Jo Anne Simon are polling right behind. Slightly further back is Rep. Mondaire Jones, the White Plains congressman who's now running in this Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan seat after he was squeezed out of his current 17th District by DCCC chairman Sean Patrick Maloney. Solid Democratic.

12th District. Suraj Patel, the hotelier and former Obama official running an underdog campaign against Democratic titans Reps. Jerry Nadler and Carolyn Maloney, tried to pull a fast one by promoting an informed ballot poll — where voters are first read positive biographies of candidates — as if it were an initial ballot question, which is a more accurate reflection of the state the race. The informed ballot showed Patel running close to even with Maloney and Nadler, but the campaign didn't release the initial toplines so it's impossible to say if that's a true depiction of the race. A previous Patel poll showed him much further behind. Stunts like this never reflect well on a candidate's operation, and Patel remains an underdog heading into August. Solid Democratic.

23rd District. Carl Paladino, the GOP's 2010 nominee for governor whose racist comments have been condemned by everyone from the Buffalo School Board to Trump's presidential transition team, is at worst tied and at best leading in the GOP primary against state party chairman Nick Langworthy, according to two recent polls. A WPAi survey from

early July, paid for by the Paladino campaign, found him ahead of Langworthy by 30 points, 54-24 percent. But a Zeplowitz & Associates poll from early August, not sponsored by either campaign, found a much closer race, with Langworthy leading, 39-37 percent. Either one will be the heavy favorite in the fall in this Southern Tier district. Solid Republican.

Washington

Senate. It wasn't a surprise, but Democratic Sen. Patty Murray (54 percent) and Republican nurse/veterans advocate Tiffany Smiley (33 percent) finished first and second in the all-party primary and will advance to the general election. Fifty-four percent is what Murray received in the 2016 primary, the cycle she went on to win the general election 59-41 percent. But this will likely be a less favorable environment for the senator. Likely Democratic.

3rd District. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, one of 10 House Republicans to vote to impeach Trump, is in second place in the all-party primary



with just 24 percent, in a race that hasn't been called yet. She'd face Democratic auto repair shop owner Marie Gluesenkamp Perez in the general election. Since Trump would have won the district with 51 percent, getting through the

Jaime Herrera Beutler

primary was key because the general election should be easier. But the congresswoman was fortunate there was a divided field against her. Other Republican candidates combined to receive nearly 40 percent. Solid Republican.

4th District. Rep. Dan Newhouse, one of 10 House Republicans to vote to impeach Trump, is in first in the top two primary with 27 percent. He'd likely face Democratic business consultant/restaurant owner Doug White (26 percent) in November, although votes are still being counted. Six other Republican candidates combined for 47 percent, so Newhouse was fortunate to have a divided field. Trump would have won the district with 57 percent, so the general election should be easier than the primary. Solid Republican.

8th District. Democratic Rep. Kim Schrier finished well ahead of the crowded field with 48 percent of the vote. She'll face a Republican in November but the race is still too close to call. Attorney Matt Larkin, Iraq War veteran/2020 nominee Jesse Jensen and King County Councilman Reagan Dunn (son of former Rep. Jennifer Dunn) are in contention. Dunn has some serious personal baggage. Schrier received 43 percent in the 2020 primary, and went on to win the general election 52-48 percent. Toss-up.

Wisconsin

Senate. In the course of a week, the Democratic primary for Senate in Wisconsin went from being Democrats' most crowded contest of the cycle to being effectively over. One by one, Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson, Milwaukee Bucks VP Alex Lasry, and state Treasurer Sarah Godlewski all dropped out and endorsed frontrunner Mandela Barnes to take on GOP Sen. Ron Johnson in the fall. Tilt Republican.

Inside Elections Nathan L. Gonzales 2022 Redistricting Wrap-up

By Bradley Wascher

With the 2022 redistricting cycle coming to a close over the summer, we now know what all 435 congressional districts will look like this November.

As each state drew its new congressional map, *Inside Elections* profiled and rated every new district. In the process, 127 original maps, gifs, charts, and tables were created to illustrate the changes and highlight the takeaways. The finalization of the nationwide map provides a good opportunity to look back at the major storylines and themes of the redistricting process. Here are 10 takeaways:

1. Some states gained districts

Five states — Colorado, Florida, Montana, North Carolina, and Oregon — gained one seat as a result of Census reapportionment, while Texas picked up two. This continues a trend seen across recent decades, wherein states in the West and the South have generally added members to their congressional delegations.

In Montana, the addition of another district created a path back to Congress for former Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, who represented the state's at-large seat from 2015 to 2017. With current at-large Rep. Matt Rosendale staying in the new 2nd District, Zinke is running in the new 1st, located in the western part of the state. After narrowly winning the GOP primary in June, Zinke will face Democratic attorney/2020 Public Service Commission nominee Monica Tranel this November. *Inside Elections* currently rates the race as Likely Republican.

2. Some states lost districts

Seven states — California, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia — all lost a congressional representative this cycle. While states in the Midwest and Northeast have typically shed seats in recent redistricting years, this was only the second time since gaining statehood in 1850 that California did not add a district from decennial reapportionment (the other came after the 1920 census, when its delegation remained at 11 members).

West Virginia saw the largest percentage decrease of any state over the last decade, with its population dropping by nearly 60,000, or 3.2 percent, between 2010 and 2020. This ultimately led to the dissolution of the 3rd District, setting up a member-vs.-member GOP primary in the redrawn 2nd District between Reps. David McKinley and Alex Mooney. Mooney, who had the endorsement of former President Donald Trump, defeated McKinley by 18 points, 54–36 percent, in May, and is all but guaranteed a fifth term in this Solid Republican seat.

3. Some states still only have one congressional district

With Montana gaining a second district, only six states will retain an at-large seat for the next decade: Alaska, Delaware, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming.

Of those, Delaware had the largest population (approximately 990,000), also making it the state with the highest average population per district, according to the Congressional Research Service. While North Dakota's population increased by nearly 16 percent between 2010 and 2020, the fastest growth of the six states with an at-large district, the Peace Garden State still fell at least 200,000 heads short of a second district.

All six at-large districts are uncompetitive in November. Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming are all rated as Solid Republican (although there are noteworthy GOP primaries in Alaska and Wyoming). Delaware and Vermont are Solid Democratic.

4. Not all states saw major changes

Although redistricting can, in theory, offer opportunities to redesign districts or undo instances of malapportionment, congressional lines in many states don't change all too much between cycles. In Wisconsin, for example, the reason was a mix of partisan disagreement and judicial discretion. After Democratic Gov. Tony Evers found himself at odds with the Republican-controlled state legislature, the state Supreme Court adopted a least-change map, or one that closest resembles the current arrangement.

Rhode Island is another state where the old and new congressional maps ended up being very similar, albeit under different circumstances.

There was speculation prior to the census that Rhode Island would lose a seat during reapportionment, but that did not happen. Instead, its two districts saw only minor changes — reviving a streak from decades prior — with just a few precincts moved around Providence in the final plan. For one way of looking at it, Rhode Island's new districts are, on average, approximately 99.1 percent similar to their current iterations, based on calculations from *Daily Kos Elections*.

But the new map could still lead to at least some electoral excitement, with Democratic Rep. Jim Langevin deciding to not seek re-election in the 2nd District. Between the crowded Democratic primary, the strength of likely Republican nominee Allan Fung, and the national environment favoring the GOP, the race is currently rated as Lean Democratic.

5. Democrats gerrymandered

In the lead-up to redistricting, narratives swirled that Republicans would be in the driver's seat of the process. And it made sense: early calculations showed the GOP in control of drawing approximately 187 districts nationwide (43 percent), compared to around 75 for Democrats (17 percent). But in many of the states where they did have power, Democratic mapmakers pushed for plans that sought to entrench their party's congressional advantage.

In certain states, such as Massachusetts, that simply meant solidifying existing lines. In others, including New Mexico and particularly Nevada, Democrat-passed maps could be viewed as high-risk, high-reward: some of their own incumbents are now more vulnerable, in exchange for Republicans being in even more precarious positions.

One state, Illinois, saw especially elaborate finessing. Between designing a new seat for Chicago's Hispanic population, shoring up vulnerable members in suburban outskirts, and dissolving two Republican-held districts, Democrats could potentially extend their current eight-seat advantage in Illinois to ten or even eleven.

But the outcome in Illinois wasn't completely seamless for Democrats. The redrawn map pitted two of the party's own members, Reps. Sean Casten and Marie Newman, against each other in the June primary for the new, Likely Democratic 6th District; Casten won by a comfortable *Continued on page 7*



68–29 percent. Republicans also grappled with a member-vs.-member matchup that night in the Solid Republican 15th District, where Trumpendorsed Rep. Mary Miller defeated Rep. Rodney Davis, 58–42 percent.

6. Republicans gerrymandered

As mentioned above, the GOP entered the congressional redistricting process with mapmaking control over two-in-five districts nationwide. Like Democrats, they used this to their benefit. The maps in Texas and Florida were among the most aggressive gerrymanders in the country, with those two states alone potentially netting Republicans up to six additional seats in November.

One gerrymandering tactic deployed by both Democrats and Republicans is "cracking" the other party's voters across multiple districts. This cycle, Republicans split metropolitan areas in states including Arkansas (Little Rock), Kansas (Kansas City), Oklahoma (Oklahoma City), and Utah (Salt Lake City), diffusing Democratic votes — and sometimes outright eliminating entire Democrat-held districts.

The same happened in Tennessee. Davidson County, which contains Nashville, was previously entirely confined to the deeply Democratic 5th District. The new map divides Davidson across three Republican-favored districts, pushing longtime Democratic Rep. Jim Cooper to retire, and setting the stage for a crowded GOP primary.

But redistricting wasn't always smooth in states where Republicans had control. In Missouri and New Hampshire, the final two states to enact new lines this cycle, the process was drawn out by GOP infighting over how hard to push, eventually producing maps that were largely status-quo in both cases.

7. Maps were thrown out

While it may seem like most of the high-profile gerrymanders this cycle came from Republicans, there's an important caveat: many of the prominent Democratic gerrymanders were struck down.

Legal challenges during the redistricting process are nothing new, and this cycle proved no different. Judges played a role in deciding the fate of maps in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, three familiar faces in recent redistricting cases. Overall, according to the Brennan Center for Justice, 72 cases in 26 states have been filed against congressional and state legislative maps on the basis of being racially discriminatory and/or partisan gerrymanders, as of July 25.

Had it not been rejected, the initial map in New York would have given Democrats the potential to flip three seats without sacrificing any of their own, partially balancing out GOP gains in other large states. But a Republican lower court judge ruled against the plan, the state's Court of Appeals upheld the decision, and a special master was tapped to draw a remedial map.

The final approved map in New York contains up to eight competitive districts — along with major changes in Manhattan and Brooklyn. The new 12th District combines the Upper East Side and Upper West Side, meaning big-league Reps. Jerry Nadler and Carolyn Maloney will be on the same ballot in the August 23 Democratic primary. That leaves Nadler's former 10th District, also heavily reconfigured, as an open seat, with a deep Democratic field that includes freshman Rep. Mondaire Jones and a slew of other progressives.

But New York's plan wasn't the only to pass and then fail. The initial lines in Maryland were also thrown out, unraveling a map that would have put the state's sole GOP-held seat in play, and replacing it with a map that makes Democratic Rep. David Trone's 6th District more competitive. The initial GOP-drawn plan in North Carolina was also struck down in the courts and replaced with a more competitive map (which will only be in effect for 2022).

8. Minority representation improved in some states, but not in others

One legal concern raised against some of the new maps is that they are unfairly drawn on the basis of race. At the heart of the discussion is the Voting Rights Act, which seeks to give racial groups equal opportunity in electing their preferred candidates. Although Black and Hispanic representation improved in a few states, both communities remain underrepresented elsewhere.

To be sure, Hispanic-favored districts were created in California and Colorado, two states whose lines were drawn by independent redistricting commissions, as well as Illinois . But not every state had such outcomes. For example, no new seats were designed to represent Hispanic, Black, and Asian communities in Texas, despite those groups contributing overwhelmingly to the state's population growth since 2010. Nevada's 1st District, which previously had a Hispanic plurality, is now predominantly white.

Black voters in the South also won't receive as much representation as they could have. In Florida, Democratic Rep. Al Lawson's heavily Black 5th District was effectively eliminated, while Black voters in the Orlando area are now divided between the 10th and 11th districts.

In Louisiana, many Democrats advocated for the creation of a second heavily Black seat: the state is 33 percent Black, but just one of its six seats (17 percent) is majority Black. Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards even vetoed the plan passed by Republican mapmakers on these grounds. But following a veto override in late March, and a court decision later stayed by the Supreme Court, the 2nd District will remain the state's only majority-Black seat.

There were also legal pushes to add a second heavily Black district in Alabama, a state where approximately one-quarter of the population is Black but only one of its seven districts elects a Black member. However, in February, the Supreme Court ruled there was not enough time before the midterms to enact a new map.

9. There are fewer competitive districts

One final theme throughout the 2022 redistricting cycle is the loss of competitive districts. There are many different ways to measure competitiveness, but most tell a similar story.

The prime example — we've been saving this one for last — is Texas. Under the outgoing map, 14 of the state's 36 current congressional districts (39 percent) voted within 10 points for either President Donald Trump or Joe Biden in 2020. But under the new map, only three districts out of 38 (8 percent) would have voted within the same margin for either candidate. Similar patterns exist when tightening the band from 10 points to 5 points.

More broadly, there are also fewer competitive districts nationwide. Across all states' new maps, only 34 districts would have voted for either Biden or Trump within 5 points, which is 17 fewer compared to the outgoing maps.

This trend is not new for 2022: the number of competitive districts has been dwindling for decades. And in many cases, the Toss-up and Tilt seats aren't being replaced by Lean or Likely seats; they're being replaced by safe seats.



pick up parts of Rockford and Peoria.

The district was one of several Driftless Area seats that shifted hard against Democrats over the past decade, as working class white voters without college degrees fled the party. Trump carried it by 1.6 points, 49.7-48.1 percent, in 2020 — an improvement over his 0.6 percent win in 2016 and a realignment away from former Illinois Sen. Barack Obama's 17-point victory, 58-41 percent, over Mitt Romney in 2012.

Democrats in Springfield, looking to salvage the party's prospects, significantly altered the seat in redistricting last year. While the skeleton of the district is the same — Rockford to Quad Cities to Peoria — much of the outlying, more rural and Republican areas, were excised. And Democratic-leaning metro areas in Bloomington and Macomb were tacked on.

Under the new lines, Biden would have carried the district by 8 points, 53-45 percent, an *improvement* over Clinton's 50-43 percent mark in 2016. Sen. Dick Durbin would have won it by 9 points, 53-44 percent, in 2020, and Gov. J.B. Pritzker would have carried it by 9 points, 50-41 percent, in 2018.

The district is geographically expansive and encompasses three media markets. It contains a mix of Democratic-moving urban and suburban areas, such as Bloomington-Normal, where Biden performed six points better than Clinton, and where green energy companies such as electric car manufacturer Rivian have set up shop; more old-school industrial towns such as Moline and Deerfield, where John Deere and, until recently, Caterpillar, were headquartered; and more rural farmland.

The Democrat

Eric Sorensen, 46, has worked as a TV weatherman for the past two decades.

Born in Rockford, Sorensen graduated from Northern Illinois University in 1999 and worked for three years as a meteorologist in East Texas.

In 2003, Sorensen returned to Rockford and spent 11 years as a meteorologist at WREX, the Rockford NBC affiliate. In 2014, he moved to the Quad Cities area and began work as a senior meteorologist for ABC affiliate WQAD.

Sorensen left WQAD in 2021 to work as a communications official for UnityPointHealth, a hospital network. But later that year he jumped in the race to succeed Bustos, who had announced her retirement in April.

Initially, party strategists had hoped to recruit Rockford Mayor Tom McNamara into the race, but he quickly took his name out of contention.

Ultimately, six Democratic candidates vied to succeed Bustos. In addition to Sorensen, state Rep. Litesa Wallace, Rockford Alderman Jonathan Logemann, Rock Island County board member Angie Normoyle, cannabis lobbyist Jackie McGowan, and driving school admissions officer Marsha Williams all ran.

Polling consistently showed Sorensen with the highest name recognition in the field, a result of his 19 years on local TV. Sorensen also outspent his rivals on advertising in the final two months of the race, and received significant air cover from 314 Action, an outside group that backs STEM-focused candidates. Logemann was the only other candidate to advertise on TV, and also had outside support from Democrats Serve, a public service-focused group, but both of those buys were significantly smaller than Sorensen's and 314 Action's, respectively.

Ultimately, Sorensen won 38 percent of the vote, followed by Wallace



(23 percent), Logemann (15 percent), and Normoyle (12 percent). If elected to Congress, he would be the first openly gay representative in Illinois history.

Sorensen's campaign team includes media consultant Kevin McKeon of Putnam Partners, pollster Fred Yang of Garin-Hart-Yang, and Michelle Gajewski of AMHC for direct mail.

The Republican

King, 37, is running for this seat for the second time in two election cycles.

Continued on page 9



She was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to Christian missionaries, and spent time living along the US-Mexico border — her family was at times homeless. She graduated from Oral Roberts Univ. in 2008, and spent that summer working for the United Nations in Afghanistan. She worked for several years in Texas at a consulting firm before moving onto law school at Northwestern, where she earned a JD and an LL.M. in taxation in 2013.

From 2013 to 2015, King worked in Chicago for law firm Kirkland & Ellis, before taking a job in the administration of GOP Gov. Bruce Rauner in the Department of Commerce. According to government documents, King was fired from that role in 2016.



Eric Sorensen

In 2018, King joined the U.S. Army Reserve JAG Corps, and was assigned to the Rock Island Arsenal. She also set up her own real estate law practice.

In 2019, King announced she would challenge Bustos. In the GOP primary, she faced 2018 nominee Bill Falwell, defeating him 65-35 percent.

In the general election against Bustos, then chairwoman of the DCCC, King began as a clear underdog but raised a solid amount of money — \$2 million — and picked up momentum late in the race. In a sign of the contest's late-breaking nature, main Democratic outside group House Majority PAC launched a \$1 million barrage of television ads against King in the closing days of the race.

Bustos eked out a 4-point victory, 52-48 percent. And when the congresswoman announced several months later that she wouldn't seek another term in Congress, King launched her campaign within an hour of the news.

In the 2022 GOP primary, King defeated insurance salesman Charlie Helmick, 69-31 percent.

King's campaign team includes media consultant Liesl Hickey of Ascent Media.

The Money

King enters the general election with an advantage rare for nonincumbent Republican candidates: she's loaded.

King reported \$1.8 million in the bank on June 30, giving her a 16-to-1 edge over Sorensen, who reported just \$114,000 at the same time. And she's raised more than \$3 million overall since entering the race early last year.

That's already \$1 million more than she raised over the course of the 2020 election, an improvement GOP sources say points to her growth as a candidate and increased enthusiasm among national donors for her bid.

"Fundraising is Sorensen's biggest challenge in this race by far," acknowledged one Democratic strategist following the race, who also noted optimistically that Sorensen raised nearly \$100,000 in the two days after his primary win and before the end of the fundraising quarter.

Publicly, the DCCC says Sorensen "must raise at least \$5 million to ensure IL-17 stays Blue." But other Democratic sources say a more

feasible target for Sorensen is closer to \$2 million, which will allow him to run two broadcast TV ads across all three of the district's media markets.

With King already having that much at her disposal and likely to continue her rapid pace, that means that outside groups will have to pick up the slack for Sorensen. House Majority PAC, 314 Action, and the DCCC make up "the Eric Sorensen ecosystem" that one Sorensen ally hopes will boost him to victory (plus an assist from big-spending Gov. Pritzker at the top of the ticket). But it's not clear how forthcoming that outside support will be. HMP has booked just \$660,000 in fall TV ad time so far, compared to \$2.2 million for the GOP's Congressional Leadership Fund, and neither 314 nor the DCCC have reserved fall time yet.

While few, if any, Democrats expect Sorensen to reach financial parity with King, if he isn't able to scale his fundraising dramatically this race could become a less attractive target for outside groups. One party strategist said Sorensen's third quarter fundraising report will be "a huge reckoning." Those reports aren't due until October 15.

The Issues

Money isn't the only factor in elections but it helps candidates and parties define the terms of the debate — especially in Illinois, where voters are already going to be inundated with ads paid for by the billionaire Pritzker.

Democrats may pick up their line of attack from the 2020 election, when they attempted to portray King as an out-of-town Chicagoan trying to carpetbag in northwest Illinois; a recurring theme from last cycle's TV ads was exposing "the real Esther Joy King."

Some party strategists say that, while the carpetbagger messaging



was effective enough to stop King's momentum late in the 2020 race, it's likely not as salient a second time around, with King now a more known quantity for voters, and with new district lines.

King's business record and her brief

Esther Joy King

tenure in the Rauner administration will also be front-and-center in Democratic attacks, including questions about the legitimacy of the companies she founded and the circumstances of her termination. One Democratic strategist involved in the race said that they're "excited to get to run against a Republican as a corrupt Chicago politician."

Republicans look likely to run a playbook here similar to dozens of other competitive races across the country: focusing on inflation, high gas prices and government spending, and tying Sorensen to an unpopular president. "It's not a particularly sexy race," said one national GOP operative.

More specifically, Sorensen's focus on climate change and his support for the 2021 Illinois Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (which puts Illinois on track to run on 100% carbon-free energy by 2050) could be a ripe target for King and her allies as they try to win votes from the district's manufacturing and agribusiness sectors (agriculture is the first item on King's website's priorities list).

In the primary, Sorensen's main issue was climate change and extreme weather, leaning heavily on his experience as a meteorologist to run as an *Continued on page 10*



effective science communicator. But some party strategists are concerned that might not be as compelling a message for a general electorate as it was for Democratic primary voters, and that if Sorensen wants to continue placing climate concerns at the center of his campaign, he'll need to do so in a way that also incorporates the economic struggles of the district.

Democratic strategists expect Sorensen to lean into his own middle class background. But it could be a taller order, say strategists from both parties, for Sorensen to replicate the blue collar appeal Bustos honed through her "Cheri on Shift" events shadowing workers throughout the district.

King's messaging centers on service, both to her community and country. Her promotional materials highlight her military experience: her slogan is "Battle Ready Leadership," she calls her volunteers "Esther's Army," and she features camo merchandise on her campaign store. She talks about her upbringing, including living out of a school bus on the US-Mexico border, and her time in Afghanistan. And she draws upon her experience working in the state Department of Commerce and as an economic development lawyer to demonstrate her economic chops.

The Geography

The most crucial targets geographically for King may be the second tier communities that populate the district in between the urban centers; places like Sterling and Rock Falls in Knox County, and Canton in Fulton County where Democratic performance has dropped precipitously over the past decade.

The addition of Bloomington to the district presents a unique opportunity — and challenge — for Sorensen.

Of the three media markets in the district, Peoria-Bloomington is the only one where Sorensen did not appear on TV as a weatherman, which Democratic sources say makes his name recognition lower there. And in the primary, while Sorensen dominated in the Quad Cities, he struggled in Bloomington (trailing Wallace 38-21 percent) and Peoria (34-24 percent).

But Bloomington is also home to Rivian, the buzzy eclectic car manufacturer. One longtime Illinois Democratic strategist says Rivian could be a compelling backdrop for Sorensen to marry his focus on climate change with an economic message that can appeal to the working class voters in the district by highlighting the job-creating aspects of climate change legislation.

The X-Factor

In races across the country, Democrats are cautiously optimistic that the Supreme Court's overturning of Roe v. Wade has helped erode the GOP's enthusiasm advantage heading into the fall. One Democratic strategist working on several high-profile races compared the post-Dobbs landscape to "a hurricane that's been downgraded from Cat 5 to Cat 4."

Most recently, an win for abortion rights in Kansas, where voters overwhelmingly defeated a ballot measure that would strip the right to an abortion from the state constitution, has Democrats bullish on the

CALENDAR

	Tennessee Primary
Aug. 9	Connecticut, Minnesota, Vermont, Wisconsin Primaries
Aug. 13	Hawaii Primary
Aug. 16	Alaska, Wyoming Primaries
Aug. 23	Florida, New York (House) Primaries

power of abortion politics this fall.

That optimism extends to Illinois' 17th, where one Democrat mused that hitting King on her opposition to abortion could be as or more salient than any of the more unique attacks Democrats could deploy against her — and because of financial constraints, might end up being main negative message in this race.

Republicans, however, are skeptical that abortion issues will override voter concerns about cost of living and other economic considerations. And some GOP strategists believe that a young woman running as a Republican is slightly more insulated from abortion attacks than a man might be.

The Bottom Line

If Election Day goes as well as Republicans hope, and Democrats fear, King should win this race. Private data indicates the contest begins as a jump ball, and between her previous run, her financial resources, and the national environment, King has the pieces to put herself in a position to win.

If Sorensen can mitigate some of those disadvantages — by raising more money to spend himself and show viability to outside groups and benefit from a potential shift in the national environment brought about by Dobbs, the race could move back in his favor. But at the moment, the Democrat has his work cut out for him. Move from Tilt Democratic to Toss-up. IΕ

2022 Senate Ratings

Toss-up Warnock (D-Ga.) Cortez Masto (D-Nev.) Kelly (D-Ariz.) **Tilt Democratic** Tilt Republican Hassan (D-N.H.) PA Open (Toomey, R) Johnson (R-Wisc.) Lean Democratic Lean Republican NC Open (Burr, R) Likely Democratic Likely Republican Bennet (D-Colo.) Rubio (R-FI.) Murray (D-Wash.) Solid Democratic Solid Republican AL Open (Shelby, R) VT Open (Leahy, D) Blumenthal (D-Conn.) MO Open (Blunt, R) Duckworth (D-III.) OH Open (Portman, R) Padilla (D-Calif.) OK Open (Inhofe, R) Schatz (D-Hawaii) Boozman (R-Ark.) Schumer (D-N.Y.) Crapo (R-Idaho) Van Hollen (D-Md.) Grassley (R-lowa) Wyden (D-Ore.) Hoeven (R-N.D.) Kennedy (R-La.) Lankford (R-Okla.) Lee (R-Utah) Moran (R-Kan.) Murkowski (R-Alaska) Paul (R-Ky.) Scott (R-S.C.) Thune (R-S.D.) Young (R-Ind.) Takeovers in Italics

moved benefiting Democrats, * moved benefiting Republicans