



**RACES TO WATCH FOR SUPPORTERS OF IMMIGRATION REFORM**

***HOUSE EDITION***

Post-Election Scorecard Update: November 2012

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*In fifteen House races America's Voice identified as Races to Watch for Supporters of Immigration Reform in the election, supporters and champions of immigrant rights won ten and lost five. Six of those races (in California's 7<sup>th</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup>, and 52<sup>nd</sup> District's; Florida's 18<sup>th</sup> District; Illinois' 8<sup>th</sup> District; and Texas' 23<sup>rd</sup> District) represented Democratic pickups of previously Republican-held seats—meaning that as of November 16<sup>th</sup>, six of the eight House seats Democrats have picked up in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress were driven by Latino voters and supporters of immigrants.*

*Latino voters ensured that the number of immigration supporters will grow in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. And they gave notice to opponents of immigration reform in changing districts: get right on immigration reform or lose your seat in Congress.*

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Arizona's 9th Congressional District (open seat)

**Candidates:** Krysten SINEMA (D) v. Vernon Parker (R)

**Rating:** Lean Democratic (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 22.4%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 4.3%

**Final vote:** [Sinema 48.3%/Parker 45.2%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** [Democrat 82%/Republican 18%](#)

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Though voter registration in Arizona's brand-new Ninth Congressional District is evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, the District is heavily Latino (26.9% of all residents are Latino, and 22.4% of all voting-age residents). It's also in the heart of Sheriff Joe Arpaio's stomping ground in Maricopa County. So it's fitting that the candidates—Democrat Krysten Sinema and Republican Vernon Parker—represent such different poles of the immigration debate. Sinema has been a champion of immigrants in the state legislature: she fought Arpaio's abuses for years and led the effort to block Arizona from passing more extreme legislation in 2011. Parker, on the other hand, is the founder of a defunct PAC called "Defend Sheriff Joe."

The race was tagged before the election as "the state's most competitive", and between the close margin and Arizona's failure to count hundreds of thousands of ballots on election night, it took [six days after the election](#) for Sinema to be certified as the winner. But it was worth the wait for immigrants and their allies, who now have one more supporter in Congress.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** California's 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Ami BERA (D) v. Rep. Dan Lungren (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Toss Up (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 13.7%

**Latino Eligible Voter Population:** 10.3%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 13.7%  
**Asian Eligible Voter Population:** 10.0%

**Final vote:** [Bera 50.8%/Lungren 49.2%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** [Democrat 80%/Republican 20%](#)

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Rep. Dan Lungren has been in Congress so long, he actually used to support immigration reform. He was a House sponsor of the Immigration Reform Act of 1986, which President Ronald Reagan signed into law. This bill legalized nearly 2.7 million undocumented immigrants, including as many as 1.3 million who are now voters in California. Unfortunately, that was back during his first stint in Congress, from 1979 to 1989, before he left to seek a variety of statewide offices in California. In 2004, Lungren returned to Congress with a changed tune, saying during a House hearing that a path to citizenship for undocumented workers "is what doomed all immigration legislation in the last two administrations." Lungren also supports the construction of a border fence, and amending the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to end birthright citizenship for babies born to undocumented parents. His positions have earned him an "A" ranking from the extremist Americans for Legal Immigration PAC.

This year, Lungren was redistricted into California's 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, a swing district that is equally split between Republicans and Democrats and where Latinos are 16% of the population. His "tossup" race against Dr. Ami Bera was incredibly close—it was not officially called until November 15<sup>th</sup>—but Lungren lost, sending a clear message to House Republicans in changing districts: adjust your views or lose your next election.

**LOSS FOR IMMIGRANTS:** California's 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Jose Hernandez (D), v. Rep. Jeff DENHAM (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Toss-Up ([Cook Political Report](#), 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 34.9%

**Latino Eligible Voter Population:** 24.8%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 6.5%

**Asian Eligible Voter Population:** 5.5%

**Final vote:** [Denham 53.5%/Hernandez 46.5%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** [Democrat 80%/Republican 20%](#)

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

National Journal has [this](#) to say about California's 10<sup>th</sup> District: "This district seems bound to turn Democratic eventually; the question is when. A quick walk around Modesto is all you need

to understand the pace of demographic change in this area and why Republicans need to figure out how to recover ground with Hispanics sooner rather than later.” At a [Latino Community Roundtable](#) with all the candidates in April, immigration was a popular topic. Rep. Denham made it clear that his top priority on immigration is enforcement. He said he opposes the DREAM Act, but claimed to support comprehensive immigration reform and a guest-worker program.

His 2012 challenger, Democrat Jose Hernandez, is an unabashed champion of immigrants. Hernandez, the California-born son of migrant farmworkers who were once undocumented, has been an outspoken champion of comprehensive immigration reform since before he entered politics. As a high-profile NASA astronaut who flew in one of the last space-shuttle missions, Hernandez gained national attention when he [expressed his belief](#) that “Having 12 million undocumented people here means there’s something wrong with the system, and the system needs to be fixed.” Hernandez continued to speak out in favor of humane immigration policies during his congressional campaign.

[Denham beat Hernandez](#), but his days appear numbered. The 10<sup>th</sup> District may not have reached the point in its demographic transformation to be ready to elect a Democrat in 2012, but as National Journal said, “the question is when” it will be. Denham can try to play chicken with demographic change—and risk getting ousted the minute his district becomes diverse enough to lean Democratic—or he can make himself over to match the needs of his new constituents.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** California’s 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District (open seat)

**Candidates:** Julia BROWNLEY (D) v. Tony Strickland (R)

**Rating:** Toss-Up ([Cook Political Report](#), 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** [38.5%](#)

**Latino Eligible Voter Population:** [26.2%](#)

**Asian Voting Age Population:** [6.8%](#)

**Asian Eligible Voter Population:** [6.3%](#)

**Final vote:** [Brownley 52.0%/Strickland 48.0%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** [Democrat 80%/Republican 20%](#)

*(“Statewide Latino vote” is taken from Latino Decisions’ election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Technically, California’s 26<sup>th</sup> Congressional District is a “new” district. But in reality, it’s just the result of a few tweaks made to the district of Republican Congressman Elton Gallegly. Gallegly has been at the forefront of the House Republicans’ anti-immigration agenda since the 1990s, and is currently the Chairman of the House Immigration Subcommittee. Gallegly supported rewriting the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to end “birthright citizenship” before it was a popular Republican position. He tried to take California’s Proposition 187 nationwide with an [amendment](#) to the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act in 1996, and

just last year, he led a failed effort with Judiciary Chairman Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX) to make E-Verify mandatory for all employers in the United States.

When California's Congressional districts were redrawn this last cycle, the writing was on the wall for Gallegly, and he decided to take the dignified way out: he's retiring. In the toss-up race to fill his seat, Democratic candidate Julia Brownley had been an immigrant champion: a steadfast supporter of common-sense reforms like the DREAM Act, she co-authored the California DREAM Act granting in-state tuition to undocumented Californian college students, and has been endorsed by Immigrants' List. Her Republican opponent, Tony Strickland, had an anti-immigrant voting record as a state legislator: he voted against the California DREAM Act and the TRUST Act, which would have kept the police from turning immigrants over to ICE on minor charges. But if Strickland's voting record resembled Gallegly's, he certainly didn't campaign as a Gallegly clone. He said that creating a path to citizenship for undocumented residents was "something to definitely have a look at," and told the Western Growers Association that "I think we should encourage people who want to come here and work in our agriculture and hotel industries. We need them."

But that wasn't enough for voters in the 26<sup>th</sup> District, who picked [Brownley over Strickland](#). Not only did the anti-immigrant movement lose one of its key voices with Gallegly's retirement, but the pro-immigrant movement gained a sure vote in his old seat.

**LOSS FOR IMMIGRANTS:** California's 30<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Rep. Howard Berman (D), incumbent v. Rep. Brad SHERMAN (D), incumbent

**Rating:** Solid Democratic (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 24%

**Latino Eligible Voter Population:** 16.4%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 12.3%

**Asian Eligible Voter Population:** 10%

**Final vote:** [Sherman 60.4%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** N/A

In California's redrawn Congressional District 30, 14-term Democratic congressman Howard Berman faced off against 8-term Democratic congressman Brad Sherman. Despite support from a vast array of Democratic leaders, unions, and legends like Dolores Huerta, Berman lost to Sherman twice—in the June primary, and the rematch in November. Although Rep. Sherman has voted the right way on immigration over the years, Rep. Berman has been an essential—yet understated—player in every legislative battle since the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, and had a crucial role passing legislation that expanded labor and immigration rights and directly helped their families.

In a District that is 27% Latino and 12% Asian (with Latinos comprising 24% of voting-age residents), Sherman's home-field advantage ruled the day. Although it seems that immigrants will retain the support of the representative from California's 30<sup>th</sup> District after this election, they failed to retain the author of the original DREAM Act, and one of their biggest champions.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** California's 36<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Raul RUIZ (D) vs. Mary Bono Mack (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Toss Up (Cook Political Report, 10/31/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 39.4%

**Latino Eligible Voter Population:** 27.5%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 3.2%

**Asian Eligible Voter Population:** 2.4%

**Final vote:** Ruiz 51.9%/Mack 48.1%

**Statewide Latino vote:** Democrat 80%/Republican 20%

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Seven-term Congresswoman Mary Bono Mack (R) almost got it right in October when she noted that Republicans needed to do a better job reaching out to the Latino vote. "We're missing a big opportunity," she said. Still, the Representative was too busy to help with this outreach herself, saying that she would "try my hardest to speak to Latino voters" *after* the November election. Luckily, she'll have time after her loss on election day. Her postponement of Latino outreach in a district where the electorate is almost one-third Hispanic helped to tighten up the race in the last few weeks of the campaign – when commentators moved the race from the "lean Republican" column into "tossup" territory – and ultimately cost her the election. Bono Mack is also known for having voted against the DREAM Act in 2010 (along with her husband, Rep. Connie Mack IV (R-FL)) and for once having called a heavily Latino part of her district a "third world toilet."

Meanwhile, Bono Mack's successor, Raul Ruiz, was recently lauded in a Las Vegas Sun article entitled "Latino House candidates set to make history." Ruiz, a son of farmworkers who became a physician, supports the DREAM Act and has spoken up against anti-immigrant laws like Arizona's SB 1070.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** California's 52<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Scott PETERS (D) v. Rep. Brian Bilbray (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Toss Up (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 11.5%

**Latino Eligible Voter Population:** 9.4%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 17.8%

**Asian Eligible Voter Population: 12.8%**

**Final vote: Peters 50.5%/Bilbray 49.5%**

**Statewide Latino vote: Democrat 80%/Republican 20%**

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Brian Bilbray, California's Congressman-turned-hate-group-lobbyist-turned-Congressman, was first elected to the House in 1994, and has faced close races before. In 2000, he actually lost his seat in the 49<sup>th</sup> District to Democrat Susan Davis, after which he promptly turned around and became a lobbyist for the Federation for Immigration Reform (FAIR), which the Southern Poverty Law Center designates as a hate group. In 2006 Bilbray returned to Congress from California's 50<sup>th</sup> District, after being elected to replace Randy "Duke" Cunningham (who resigned on bribery charges). Immigration is Bilbray's pet issue: he chairs the extremist House Immigration Reform Caucus, blames immigrants for environmental degradation, says that you can identify an undocumented immigrant by the clothes he wears ("right down to the shoes"), supports mandatory E-Verify as a way to purge the country of undocumented workers, and blames the DREAM Act for murders committed by cartels.

Today, he is still listed as a member of the National Board of Advisors for FAIR. His race against Democrat Scott Peters in California's redistricted 52<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District (which is 13% Latino) was listed as a tossup before the election, and was not called until November 16<sup>th</sup>, when Bilbray finally conceded to Peters. Bilbray may have been able to win his seat back once, but something tells us this time he's out for good.

**LOSS FOR IMMIGRANTS: Colorado's 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District**

**Candidates: Joe Miklosi (D), v. Rep. Mike COFFMAN (R), incumbent**

**Rating: Toss Up (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)**

**Latino Voting Age Population: 16.7%**

**Asian Voting Age Population: 5.3%**

**Final vote: Coffman 48.7%/Miklosi 45.1%**

**Statewide Latino vote: Democrat 88%/Republican 12%**

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Colorado's 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District was Tancredo Country for ten years, but the times they are a-changing. After winning by healthy margins in 2008 and 2010, Rep. Mike Coffman (R) faced a tough re-election campaign in 2012 due to a changing district and his own inability (or unwillingness) to adapt. National Journal identified the 6<sup>th</sup> District contest as one of five "bellwether races" this cycle, pointing out that "One of the first bills [Coffman] introduced in Congress ended requirements for ballots to be printed in languages other than English, a



reasonable proposal for a conservative legislator, but one out of sync with a district that's 16 percent Hispanic—more than double the percentage of his old district.” Coffman has taken other extreme positions that match those of his predecessor Tancredo. He wants to end birthright citizenship to children born in the U.S. if their parents are undocumented. And after voting against the DREAM Act in 2010, Coffman issued a statement calling the legislation “a nightmare for the American people.”

Coffman's challenger, state representative Joe Miklosi, is a strong advocate of Colorado ASSET, a bill that would provide reduced-rate tuition to undocumented youth living in the state (the same students the DREAM Act would provide with legal status). In one of his first interviews after declaring his candidacy for the 6<sup>th</sup> District seat, Miklosi cited immigration reform as a major issue that distinguishes him from Coffman. While Coffman managed to hang on for one more term (by the smallest margin of any Congressional race in the state), Republicans in Colorado shouldn't take comfort from the close victory — one election doesn't stop lasting demographic change.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Florida's 18<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Patrick MURPHY (D) v. Rep. Allen West (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Toss Up (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 11.6%

**Final vote:** Murphy 50.3%/West 49.7%

**Statewide Latino vote:** Democrat 58%/Republican 42%

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Rep. Allen West was one of the best-known members of the GOP's freshman class in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, mostly because of the inflammatory remarks he made about many different groups, including immigrants, over the past several years. Last year, while talking about undocumented immigrants, West said "you have to repel invasions." In June, West attacked the President's DREAMer relief policy, asking "Is this one of those backdoor opportunities to allow people in the next five months to get the opportunity to vote?"

When Florida's Congressional districts were redrawn in 2011 to reflect the growing Latino population, West moved districts, thinking that the less-diverse 18<sup>th</sup> District might be easier for a Republican to win than the new 22<sup>nd</sup>. But while he could run from the Latino vote, he couldn't hide, and he was defeated by Democrat Patrick Murphy, a businessman whose views on immigration are the polar opposite of West's. On his campaign website, Murphy stated, "I believe undocumented workers that have otherwise observed our laws should be given a reasonable path to legality." He also "strongly" supports the DREAM Act.



After a protracted recount and threats of legal action, West finally conceded to Murphy on November 20<sup>th</sup>. Finally, residents of the 18<sup>th</sup> District can be proud of their representative in Congress.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Florida's 22<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District (open seat)

**Candidates:** Lois FRANKEL (D) v. Adam Hasner (R)

**Rating:** Likely Democratic (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 17.2%

**Final vote:** [Frankel 54.6%/Hasner 45.4%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** [Democrat 58%/Republican 42%](#)

*("Statewide Latino vote" is taken from Latino Decisions' election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

After this district was redrawn, Rep. Allen West (R) left to run in the 18<sup>th</sup> to improve his chances for re-election. Former State Rep. Adam Hasner initially ran in the Republican primary to face Bill Nelson in the U.S. Senate race, with the support of some far-right leaders. In that unsuccessful campaign, Hasner positioned himself as the toughest anti-immigrant voice in the state legislature. He eventually dropped out of the Senate race to run for Congress in the new District 22. Hasner's House campaign website talked about the need to "[s]ecure America's borders from illegal infiltration," and he is firmly in the conspiracy wing of the anti-immigrant movement.

Hasner's opponent was Lois Frankel, the Democratic former Mayor of West Palm Beach. At a candidate forum in September, she expressed support for the DREAM Act and a "fair and humane" way for undocumented immigrants to come forward to get legal status and, in some cases citizenship. Hasner disagreed, stating that we need to deal with this issue "sequentially"; i.e. secure the border and reform the legal system first. Only after we take these steps, he argued, should we consider other measures. Reassuringly for supporters of real and humane immigration reform, [Frankel won the seat](#).

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Illinois' 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Tammy DUCKWORTH (D) v. Rep. Joe Walsh (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Likely Democratic (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 22.14%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 12.26%

**Final vote:** [Duckworth 54.7%/Walsh 45.3%](#)

Republican Rep. Joe Walsh (IL-8) is perhaps best known for spending much of his short tenure in Congress promoting fear and hate against American Muslims by stirring up the specter of “radical Islam” in American suburbs. The Hill called him a “brash, conservative freshman” soon to be a “one-hit-House-member-wonder”—and their prediction was borne out when he was handily defeated by Democratic challenger Tammy Duckworth. On immigration, Walsh was similarly extreme. After President Obama announced his deferred action policy for DREAMers, Walsh called him a “tyrant” and then said, “I don’t want to give him that credit because I don’t think he’s smart enough.” Walsh also backed Herman Cain’s offhand proposal to “build a moat with alligators in order to secure our borders,” and supported Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX)’s recent plan to get rid of diversity visas.

New Congresswoman and Iraq War veteran Tammy Duckworth, on the other hand, supports comprehensive immigration reform and the DREAM Act. In a candidate debate in September 2012, she attacked Walsh for being “extreme” and reiterated her support for common-sense immigration measures.

**LOSS FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Iowa’s 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Christie Vilsack (D) v. Rep. Steve KING (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Lean Republican (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 4.3%

**Asian Voting Age Population:** 1.6%

**Final vote:** King 53.2%/Vilsack 44.6%

In Iowa’s new 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, five-term Congressman and Vice Chair of the House Immigration Subcommittee Steve King (R) faced off against former Iowa First Lady Christie Vilsack (D) in the Congressman’s first competitive race since his election to the House of Representatives in 2002. King’s old 5<sup>th</sup> District was eliminated after the last census, and while minority strength was limited in this election (92% of 4<sup>th</sup> District voters are white), the new district contains a few more independents and far more Democratic voters than King is used to. Activists closely monitored the race as a rare opportunity to take down one of the nation’s most offensive and inflammatory politicians—and while they did not succeed, the closeness of the race was enough to make national observers notice.

King is one of the most strident anti-immigrant voices in Congress: he has compared immigrants to dogs and then said it was a “compliment,” threatened to sue President Obama to stop his DREAMer deferred action program, and called immigration a “slow motion Holocaust.” Vilsack’s campaign called King out for his extreme and inhumane rhetoric on immigration and other issues, and her appeal to Iowan values struck a chord with the district’s voters—especially after King stood up for Missouri Rep. Todd Akin (R) and his offensive comments about rape victims. As the race tightened up in the final weeks, one anonymous Republican spectator

noted that King was on his list of top five Republican incumbents “most likely to not return to Congress next year.”

While King was ultimately able to hold off Vilsack, his margin of re-election was [the smallest since he arrived in Congress](#). Maybe his (rumored) plan to run for Senate in 2014 is just an attempt to escape a district that’s wised up to his tricks.

**LOSS FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Nevada’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** John Oceguera (D) v. Rep. Joe HECK (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Toss Up ([Cook Political Report](#), 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** [13.49%](#)

**Asian Voting Age Population:** [14.27%](#)

**Final vote:** [Heck 50.4%/Oceguera 42.8%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** [Democrat 79%/Republican 21%](#)

*(“Statewide Latino vote” is taken from Latino Decisions’ election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Nevada’s 3<sup>rd</sup> District race was closely watched, as Rep. Heck won election in 2010 by only 1,078 votes. However, redistricting in 2011 gave Heck a much [safer Republican district](#) for the 2012 election, which allowed him to [defeat](#) Democrat John Oceguera, the Nevada State Assembly Speaker of [Hispanic descent](#), with more votes than he defeated Titus.

Heck [opposes the DREAM Act](#), and has said that he wants to [end birthright citizenship](#). On the other hand, when President Obama announced his Administration’s new deferred action policy for DREAMers, John Oceguera issued a [statement](#) praising it and criticizing his opponent for being too extreme.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Nevada’s 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District (open seat)

**Candidates:** Steven HOSFORD (D) vs. Danny Tarkanian (R)

**Rating:** Toss Up ([Cook Political Report](#), 10/25/12)

**Latino Voter Age Population:** [22.93%](#)

**Asian Voting Age Population:** [6.71%](#)

**Final vote:** [Hosford 50.1%/Tarkanian 42.2%](#)

**Statewide Latino vote:** [Democrat 79%/Republican 21%](#)

*(“Statewide Latino vote” is taken from Latino Decisions’ election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Nevada’s 4<sup>th</sup> district was another highly anticipated race in a state with a growing number of Latino voters who are changing politics. When Danny Tarkanian ran unsuccessfully for the Republican Senate nomination in 2010, he earned the endorsement of the anti-immigrant

Minuteman Project with his hardline positions like opposition to the DREAM Act and support for Arizona’s “show me your papers” law. In July 2012, Tarkanian had a tense meeting with Hispanic activists in which he accused President Obama of using Hispanics as a “political football.” Regarding Obama’s relief for DREAMers, he said: “I certainly don’t agree with it because it wasn’t passed in Congress.”

The Democratic Congressman-elect, Steven Horsford, is the outgoing Majority Leader of the Nevada Senate. He supports comprehensive immigration reform, the DREAM Act, and the Obama Administration’s deferred action policy.

Tarkanian tried to soften his position slightly on immigration in 2012, saying that he now supported the provision in the DREAM Act that provides a path to citizenship for undocumented youth who serve in the military, but opposed the rest. Horsford contended that Tarkanian was still too extreme on the issue for the 4<sup>th</sup> District. The election results show that Hosford was correct, and Nevada’s first black congressman will go to Washington as a firm supporter of immigrants.

**WIN FOR IMMIGRANTS:** Texas’ 23<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District

**Candidates:** Pete GALLEGO (D) v. Rep. Francisco “Quico” Canseco (R), incumbent

**Rating:** Toss Up (Cook Political Report, 10/25/12)

**Latino Voting Age Population:** 65.8%

**Final vote:** Gallego 50.3%/Canseco 45.5%

**Statewide Latino vote:** Democrat 71%/Republican 29%

*(“Statewide Latino vote” is taken from Latino Decisions’ election-eve poll, asking Latinos who they planned to vote for in the U.S. House race in their district.)*

Texas’ 23<sup>rd</sup> District was home to one of the closest races this election cycle. The Latino vs. Latino battle between incumbent Rep. Francisco “Quico” Canseco (R) and state Rep. Pete Gallego (D) was a true test of Hispanic power both at the podium and in the voting booth—and the results showed that Texas Latinos are increasing their voter clout and their support for Democrats. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 66% of the district is populated by Latinos, with 48% speaking Spanish at home. In an effort to reach out to district voters, both candidates participated in what was one of the first Spanish-language debates for a congressional race in the state. While the debate primarily focused on Medicare and Social Security, Gallego was still able to remind the audience that his opponent was one of the original sponsors of English-only legislation. “He wants to be our voice, but he only has the most extremist ideas,” said Gallego.

Rep. Canseco has held a hardline stance on immigration policy. In 2007, he applauded Senator Cornyn and other Senators for voting against the DREAM Act, and earlier this year, he told Telemundo that the DREAM Act “had no support in the House.” When asked to comment on

President Obama's new deferred action policy for DREAMers, Canseco remained silent on the substance of the policy but critical of the way "the president handled the decision, by not consulting Congress, during an interview with a TV station in San Antonio," reported Victoria Pelham of the Dallas Morning News. Canseco's Democratic challenger, Pete Gallego, on the other hand, has been a strong supporter of the DREAM Act as well as the President's new deferred action policy. According to his campaign website, Gallego supports "a path to legalization" for immigrants currently living in the U.S.

With Gallego defeating Canseco in one of the bigger wins for House Democrats of the election, it is clear that the candidates' stark immigration differences weighed on the minds of Latino voters.