

Yadira Caraveo: U.S. House of Representatives, Colorado

Recommendation Level: High Priority



The 2020 Census has given Colorado a brand new eighth congressional district, and the resulting race is going to be one of the most closely watched in the country. It includes some Denver suburbs and stretches north into more rural Weld and Larimer counties, and has a [largely working-class electorate](#). Thirty-nine percent of the electorate is Hispanic, the largest proportion of such voters in any Colorado district. Democrats are particularly worried about their performances lately with working-class and Hispanic voters, so this race will be a test of the party's ability to appeal to these key demographics—and of course, it's also important for Democrats to win as many House seats as possible.

State Representative Yadira Caraveo won more than 70 percent of the vote at a district assembly, meaning she's the only Democrat on the primary ballot. She was seen as the more party establishment choice; her more progressive rival Chaz Tedesco, who got a lot of union support, didn't get enough assembly support to go on to the primary. Caraveo, the daughter of Mexican immigrants, is a pediatrician who will likely make her medical experience a big part of her campaign (as she did in her [2018 race](#) for the State House as a first-time candidate).

Caraveo faces a tough challenge: There are going to be a lot of voters who are up for grabs, as the district voted for Donald Trump in 2016 but went over to Joe Biden in 2020; in both years voters supported Democratic candidates for senator, but by narrow margins. As a relative newcomer in a hotly contested election, Caraveo needs all the help she can get.

Blue Tent views giving to support Caraveo's campaign as a **high priority**. Below, we explore three key questions that small and medium donors should answer before supporting candidates. ([See how we evaluate candidates.](#))

Is This Race Important?

Even if Democrats lose the House, a victory in Colorado's 8th would accomplish two things. First, it would prove that the party can still win Hispanic and working-class voters, which it will need to

do to emerge victorious in 2024. Second, it would secure a brand new House seat, making it easier to retake the House in future cycles. If Caraveo can win this time, she'll have incumbency and name recognition advantages over her future Republican challengers.

Can Caraveo Win?

This race is being viewed as a toss-up by most analysts, and even before the candidates were known it was assumed by everyone to be one of the cycle's key battlegrounds. Caraveo as a fresh face who can lean on her credentials as a doctor might have a better chance than a more left-leaning Democrat. It also remains to be seen who emerges from the Republican side.

Does She Need Money?

Cash will definitely be flowing into the 8th—House Majority PAC has [already reserved](#) \$4.4 million in TV ad spending in this district and the neighboring 7th. But as a relatively unknown candidate who wasn't the presumed candidate until recently, Caraveo doesn't have a huge war chest. At the end of 2021, she had \$179,000 in cash on hand, a relatively small amount for a congressional candidate, and her campaign told the Colorado Sun it had raised \$300,000 from January to March. By comparison, most Democratic incumbents in competitive House races have banked more than \$1 million by the end of 2021, with some having millions in the bank. Caraveo is clearly a better giving target than any of those incumbents, as she'll have a harder time fundraising than a sitting member of Congress.

Caraveo isn't a household name yet, but she'll probably be well known by the time Election Day rolls around. But now is the time when her campaign will need to build infrastructure and ramp up — whoever comes out of the Republican primary will be extremely well funded and prepared for a particularly tough battle.

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