

The 49th Report: A Hotly-Contested Congressional Primary in the Post-Issa Era

Voters in the June 5th California Primary Election chose Diane Harkey (R) and Mike Levin (D) to face off in the November General Election in the 49th Congressional District. The results for the top eight candidates are reflected below. (Some mail and provisional ballots are still being counted, but the Associated Press, San Diego Union Tribune, and others have called the race.)

The major parties dodged a big bullet: California's open, top-two primary system could have resulted in two candidates from the same party advancing to the General Election, shutting out one of the major parties altogether, given the multiplicity of candidates in this race (8 Republicans, 4 Democrats, plus 4 others).

50.72% voted for one of the four Democratic candidates, while 48.03% voted for one of the eight Republican candidates, in a district where voter registration is 36% Republican, 31% Democratic, and 26% No Party Preference. Of the District's 380,000+ voters, nearly 95,000 are in Orange County.

The 49th race was an expensive one by any standard, with total spending by candidates exceeding \$16 million, not including party-related and independent expenditures. Opensecrets.org rates it as the fourth most expensive Congressional race in the country this year, in terms of both candidate fundraising and candidate expenditures; and the third most expensive race in terms of candidate plus outside group expenditures.

Candidate (Party)	Votes	%	Funds Raised *
Diane Harkey (R)	34,150	25.63%	\$474,000 (\$100K self-funded)
Mike Levin (D)	23,246	17.44%	\$1.7 million
Sara Jacobs (D)	20,636	15.49%	\$2.2 million (\$1.58 self-funded)
Doug Applegate (D)	17,521	13.15%	\$914,000
Kristin Gaspar (R)	11,504	8.63%	\$356,000
Rocky Chavez (R)	10,278	7.71%	\$233,000
Paul Kerr (D)	6,189	4.64%	\$4.4 million (\$4.1 self-funded)
Brian Maryott (R)	3,856	2.89%	\$745,000 (\$700K self-funded)

**as reported by Voice of OC on June 1*