

IA-02 District Primer

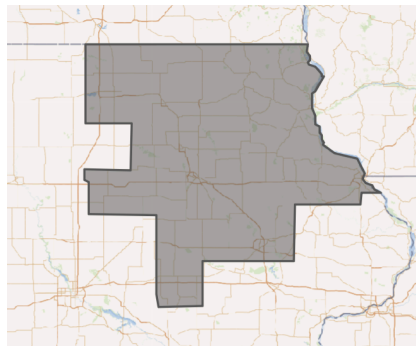
Republican Ashley Hinson is retiring, making this seat a prime Democratic pickup opportunity. In 2024, Hinson won this seat by 63,600 votes—that’s 42 votes per precinct. If we can persuade 43 voters per precinct, we can win this year. With your help, we’re going to **FLIP** this key seat and secure a Democratic House majority in 2026.

Key dates
Filing Deadline: March 13
Primary: June 2
Midterms: November 3

Recent Election Results

2024 Presidential Election	2024 House Election	2022 House Election
Harris: 190,502 (45%) Trump: 226,309 (54%)	Ashley Hinson (R): 233,340 (57%) Sarah Corkery (D): 169,740 (42%)	Ashley Hinson (R): 172,181 (54%) Liz Mathis (D): 145,940 (46%)

District Facts & Stats



Largest Cities

- Cedar Rapids, pop. 137,904
- Waterloo/Cedar Falls area, ~108,000
- Dubuque, 59,667

Geography

IA-02 encompasses the northeastern corner of Iowa from the Minnesota and Wisconsin borders in the northeast to Mason City in central Iowa and down to Poweshiek County. The district includes Cedar Rapids, the second largest city in Iowa.

Citizenry

IA-02 is socioeconomically mixed, similar to other Iowa districts, with the highest percentage of households having income and benefits in the \$100,000-149,999 range. Industries with the highest number of workers are manufacturing, health care and social assistance, retail, and accommodation and food services.

The Local Vibe

The economic impacts of tariffs on IA-02 include surging input costs, specifically the cost of steel storage bins and farm machinery plus exponentially higher fertilizer and pesticide costs. In addition, tariffs on Chinese goods caused the Chinese government to retaliate so that Iowa soybean exporters have lost their primary customer.

The March 2026 No Kings rally drew thousands in Cedar Rapids. Protests were also held in Iowa City, Dubuque, and Waterloo.

Iowans will elect a governor and senator this year, as Governor Kim Reynolds (R) and Senator Joni Ernst (R) are not running for reelection. The current IA-02 incumbent, Ashley Hinson, is vacating her seat to run for Ernst's.

Key Issues

- **Healthcare threats:** Cuts to Medicare and Medicaid threaten individuals' healthcare and rural hospitals. Due to restrictive abortion laws, Iowans must now travel to neighboring states for reproductive care.
 - **Agriculture woes:** Reductions and elimination of subsidies and other farm programs threaten the livelihoods of the 70% of Iowa farmers who receive federal payments.
 - **Manufacturing challenges:** Tariffs and rising prices are creating challenges and insecurity for district manufacturers and their workers.
 - **Environmental dangers:** Iowa public health officials are alarmed by an uptick in cancers linked to carcinogenic agriculture runoff. Lung cancer rates are also high, due to the region's high radon levels.
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About the Candidates

Lindsay James | Democratic Candidate

Lindsay James is an ordained Presbyterian minister who has served as a member of the Iowa House of Representatives since 2019. Born and raised in Oregon, she earned a degree in communications from Santa Clara University followed by an M.Div from the Fuller Theological Seminary in 2007. In 2015, she joined the faculty of the University of Dubuque. In 2017, she co-founded the Loras College Peace Institute, where she also served as Director. She lives in Dubuque with her husband and their two children.

An inspiring figure and a talented communicator, James believes that “each person matters, and their struggles deserve attention.” In the Iowa House, she co-founded Iowa's first bipartisan, bicameral caucus to reduce partisan barriers to problem-solving; expanded access to insulin; fought to protect mobile home residents from sudden rent and utility hikes as well as landlord retaliation for complaints; and advocated for affordable housing and better mental health care provisions for all Iowans. Her humane pragmatism will be a welcome addition in Congress, where she intends to bring good-paying jobs to Iowa, ensure affordable and accessible health care, improve education, and fight for clean water and a healthy environment—the last being a particular concern as cancer rates have ticked up.

James has earned endorsements from a slew of local, regional, and national leaders as well as labor and political organizations including: Emily's List, End Citizens United, Elect Democratic Women, the IBEW, Iowa AFL-CIO, Iowa Teamsters, Iron Workers Local 189, and Indivisible Dubuque, as well as former Rep. Dave Loebsack, who represented the district from 2007-2021.

Joe Mitchell | GOP Candidate

A real estate lobbyist elected to the Iowa House in 2018, **Joe Mitchell** is the youngest person ever to join that legislative body. After losing his seat in 2022, he was briefly a resident fellow at Harvard before joining Trump's presidential transition team. Following the inauguration, he held positions at the Federal Housing Finance Agency and the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Great Plains Region. A supporter of Turning Point USA who claims to have been close to Charlie Kirk, he is the founder of Run Gen Z, which encourages younger people to “take control of the future by supporting the vision of the founders of this country and supporting conservative political values.” He owns a real estate company in Clear Lake, and as of June 2026, his campaign had spent more than \$77k at Mar-a-Lago, second only to the RNC.

The contrast: As a minister and an elected representative, Lindsay James is committed to improving the lives of Iowans. Lobbyist and career politician Joe Mitchell seems primarily interested in burnishing his reputation by touting his commitment to extremist ideas and those who promote them and cozying up to Trump, spending thousands at his Florida resort.

Sign up for another event: mobilize.us/swingleft

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