

# OH-09 District Primer

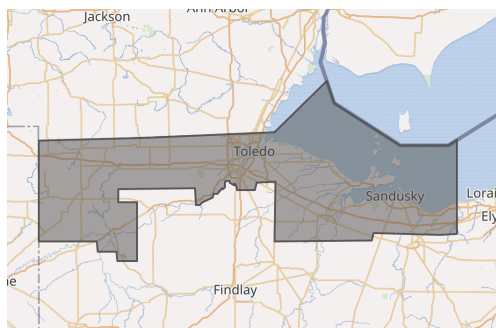
In 2024 Democrat Marcy Kaptur won by just 2,382 votes. **That's close!** With a winning margin of less than one vote per precinct, we can't afford to lose a single vote. With your help, we're going to **HOLD** this key seat and secure a Democratic House majority in 2026.

Key dates
<b>Filing Deadline:</b> February 4
<b>Primary:</b> May 5
<b>Midterms:</b> November 3

## Recent Election Results

2024 Presidential Election	2024 House Election	2022 House Election
<b>Harris:</b> 174,641 (46%) <b>Trump:</b> 200,020 (53%)	<b>Marcy Kaptur (D):</b> 181,098 (48.3%) Derek Merrin (R): 178,716 (47.6%) Tom Pruss (L): 15,381 (4.1%)	<b>Marcy Kaptur (D): 150,655 (56.6%)</b> J.R. Majewski ( R): 115,362 (43.4%)

## District Facts & Stats



### Largest Cities

- Toledo, pop. 265,651
- Sandusky, 24,606

### Geography

OH-09, in northwestern Ohio, borders Michigan, Indiana, and Ontario, Canada. After redistricting in 2025, the new 9th still includes part of Lucas County, which contains Toledo, considered reliably blue. Putnam, Paulding, and Henry counties are traditional Republican strongholds with high voter turnout in recent elections.

### Citizensry

Of 776,236 residents in 2024, 75% were white, 12% were Black, 8% Hispanic, and 2% Asian. The counties added in redistricting are close to 90% White. In 2024, prior to redistricting, 6% of the 18+ population were veterans, the poverty rate was 14.8%, almost 99% of residents were US citizens, and 95% of households spoke English at home. The median household income is approximately \$66K. In 2024, 19% of district residents relied on Medicaid, and 15% on Medicare.

### The Local Vibe

OH-09 has been redistricted repeatedly, the last two successfully creating a larger Republican voting bloc.

In addition to the House race, the November election will feature a competitive gubernatorial race between Amy Acton (D) and Vivek Ramaswamy (R) and a high-profile Senate race between Sherrod Brown (D) and appointed incumbent Jon Husted (R). In previous elections, mail ballots had a four-day grace period but a new law says ballots must be received on Election Day at the latest.

Though gerrymandering has made OH-09 increasingly conservative, the Iran war and tariffs have unsettled agriculture and auto industries. In 2025 and 2026, thousands participated in No Kings rallies in Toledo and Sandusky.

## Key Issues

- **Jobs and industry:** “One Big Beautiful Bill” eliminates clean energy tax credits, putting 4,000 manufacturing jobs in OH-09 at risk and jeopardizes \$899 million in investments in the district.
  - **Healthcare:** OBBB will hike health care costs for the nearly 40,000 OH-09 residents on marketplace plans, and jeopardize coverage protections for the roughly 300,000 OH-09 residents with pre-existing conditions.
  - **Affordability:** OBBB will raise Ohioans’ energy bills by roughly \$410 a year. Gas price spikes since the start of Trump’s disastrous war with Iran, coupled with supply chain disruptions have voters worried about inflation and affordability.
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## About the Candidates

### Marcy Kaptur | Democratic Incumbent

A moderate Democrat, **Marcy Kaptur** has represented OH-09 since 1983. She is the longest-serving woman in Congressional history. Her top priority is strengthening the economy by bringing middle-class jobs back to Ohio. She supports tariffs that protect Ohio-based companies and opposes tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas. She fights to protect Social Security and Medicare and to lower the costs of healthcare, prescription drugs, and groceries.

As chair of the Energy and Water subcommittee on Appropriations, Kaptur believes we need an “all of the above” energy policy that includes solar, wind, geo-thermal, and biofuels to foster American energy independence and to reduce emissions and combat climate change. Additionally, Kaptur supports secure borders and legal immigration, affordable housing, and reproductive rights. Kaptur currently serves on the House Budget Committee and the House Appropriations Committee. She is co-chair and co-founder of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus.

Having represented OH-09 for more than 40 years, Kaptur has extremely high name recognition. Until the mid-decade gerrymandering she routinely won reelection by more than 20 points. As of April 2026, Kaptur had a very significant fundraising advantage.

### Derek Merrin | Republican Challenger

A Trump-endorsed, self-styled “America First” candidate, **Derek Merrin**, 40, has been in politics for much of his life. He was elected to the City Council of Waterville at the age of 19, and was elected mayor at 21. Merrin holds a BA from the University of Toledo and a master’s in public administration from Bowling Green State University. He served in the Ohio House of Representatives from 2016-2024. His tenure was marred by a vendetta he led against the OH House Speaker after Merrin did not get the position; ultimately Merrin sued. He was term-limited out of the legislature in December 2024 and has worked as an auditor, realtor, and real estate investor. Merrin is anti-tax, anti-regulation, pro-school choice, and pro-gun. He lost to Kaptur by less than 1% in 2024; this year, the margin could be much wider as voters continue to sour on Trump’s erratic economic policies and military adventurism. Merrin supports Trump’s tariffs which are hammering the auto industry on which northwest Ohio depends.

**The contrast:** While Rep. Kaptur is known for bipartisan work, her opponent’s litigiousness and willingness to alienate even members of his own party is a vulnerability in a region where getting along with others is an important homespun value.

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Updated June 2026 • Researched and edited by Swing Left’s all-volunteer research team

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