

## Candidates Spotlight May 2018 Update

[Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor](#)

[Lucy McBath, GA-06](#)

[Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, FL-06](#)

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**Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham**  
**Governor New Mexico**

**Democratic Primary – Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**General Election – Tuesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Update: Won with 66.4% of the primary vote**

**Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham** is a 12th generation New Mexican, who hails from a family of elected officials [dedicated to families, seniors, and expanding the New Mexican economy](#). Her career in public service began as a legal service lawyer. She is currently a three-term member of Congress (NM-1), business owner, and the former Bernalillo County Commissioner, New Mexico Secretary of Health and New Mexico Secretary of Aging. She is running for Governor to leverage her local, state, and federal experience to make major investment in public education, climate, water, and energy commercial/public infrastructure.

### ***On the Issues***

- Transform the state public education system by eliminating the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) test as well as creating early universal Pre-K for all children to adult education system.
- Grow New Mexico's long-term economy and climate resiliency by investing in modern and commercially oriented infrastructure including roads, bridges, railway, broadband internet, water, electric transmission, and clean power generation.
- Reverse draconian program and service cuts by state and federal GOP leaders by protecting and strengthening Medicaid, fixing our broken behavioral health system, and expanding access to high-quality affordable care.

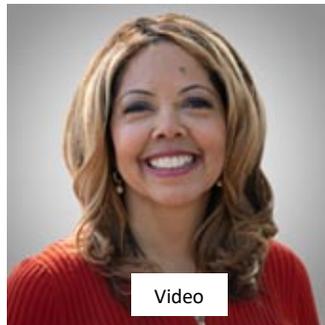
**Status of Race:** Cook Report ranks this race as leaning Democrat and is an open seat because current Governor Susana Martinez (R), who was elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2014, is prohibited from running again due to term limits. New Mexico is one of eight states conducting a gubernatorial election in 2018 that was carried by Hillary Clinton (D) in 2016 despite a Republican governor occupying the governor's mansion.

**Dynamics of Race:** Considered the front runner in a three way democratic primary that includes Jeff Apodaca, the son of a former Governor Jerry Apodaca and media executive, and Joe Cervantes, a current State Senator. Despite her front runner status and initial struggle by the state GOP to field a candidate, [recent internal polling](#) by the sole Republican candidate, Congressman Steve Pearce (NM-2), shows that this race is dead heat. Currently, 45% of voters say they would prefer Pearce, and 47% of voters **Michelle Lujan Grisham** the Democrat. At the end of the campaign finance period, Pearce had \$2.1 million cash on hand, compared to **Lujan Grisham's** \$1.8 million. His cash advantage is a result of a court case that essentially allowed Pearce to donate money from his previous congressional campaign to his latest effort to be elected.

**Lujan Grisham's Campaign:** The campaign has earned the [endorsements](#) of most mainstream Democratic organizations and the local Democratic establishment. Unfortunately, her tenure as New Mexico Secretary of Health continues generate media scrutiny and has chipped at her General election lead. The General is expected to be a bruising Trumpian showdown with the current President backing Congressman's Pearce candidacy. She is expected to win the Democratic Primary on June 5th but will need a strong field campaign if she is going to defeat Congressman Pearce. She can do this by investing more spending on field and digital versus media to increase turnout of her base. Also, donors can also support this race by supporting down ballot races and organizations focused on increasing the turnout of the rising American electorate in New Mexico.

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**Lucy McBath**  
GA-06

**Democratic Primary – September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018**  
**General Election – November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Update: Won with 36.3% of the primary vote;**  
**53.7% of the run-off vote**

**Lucy McBath** is a two-time breast cancer survivor, career flight attendant, who became a social justice and gun violence prevention advocate for Everytown for Gun Safety and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. Her national advocacy is inspired by the violent gun violence death of her son Jordan. Locally, she created an education foundation, in her home of Cobb County, tries to close the opportunity gap by providing charitable and educational assistance to graduating high school students attending traditional as well as technical and training colleges and universities. Now as a candidate to Congress, she is running to move the wheel on gun reform and prevention, transform our public education system, and real affordable health care for all.

#### **On the Issues**

1. While her Republican opponent has a A+ rating from the NRA, **Lucy** will advocate for background checks for all firearm purchases, raising the

minimum age to purchase a gun to 21 years of age, and work to defeat conceal carry reciprocity measures and work to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and other criminals.

2. Increasing funding to K-12 education, expanding early college and career technical pathways for young adults and adult learners as well as increasing federal funding for college scholarship programs
3. As the daughter of a registered nurse and a two-time breast cancer survivor, **Lucy** will fight to make healthcare affordable for all Georgians.

**Status of Race:** Cook Report ranks this race as leaning Republican and is Democratic challenge of current incumbent is Karen Handel (R). She was first elected in a special election on June 20, 2017. It was the most expensive U.S. House race in history. Handel and her Democratic rival Jon Ossoff, along with outside organizations, spent more than \$50 million on the election. She won by a margin of 4 percentage points. This seat consists of many of the northern suburbs of Atlanta and includes eastern Cobb County, northern Fulton County, the Dunwoody area of northern DeKalb County. Now, over a year into Trump's tenure at the White House, nearly 6 in 10 voters in Georgia hold an unfavorable view of the president. After almost a year of votes in Congress and her continued support of Trump, Handel now owns the DC dysfunction and Trump in a way she didn't previously. Despite the GOP advantage, the DCCC thinks it is one of their best chances to pick up a House seat in Georgia. Expect this general race to be a Trumpian showdown but a difficult race for any Democrat because the district's lines are drawn to ensure GOP control. More than 70 percent of the voters in the Sixth are white. Some 13 percent are black. The hope for Democratic defeat comes from Trump's narrow win by a margin of 1.5 percent over Hillary Clinton in the district in the 2016 presidential race and voter for Obama in 2008 and 2012.

**Dynamics of Race:** As a heavily recruited first time candidate for state senate, she surprised the local establishment when she announced her candidacy for Congress. Georgia is experiencing its woman blue wave, following national Federal Election Commission trends (339 Democratic women for Congress and an additional 34 women are running for Governor - twice as many in 2016, an all time record). The only woman in a five way Democratic Primary, **Lucy's** path to victory relies on recent Southern Democratic victory for recipe of turning out loyal urban party voters and suburban voters. Her fellow democratic challengers include two well-funded Democrats, former local news anchor Bobby Kaple and businessman Kevin Abel, as well as late entry candidate Steven Knight Griffin, an openly gay public health professional. Kaple and Abel are leading the fundraising race with \$415,219 and \$327,368 cash on hand respectively. The path to victory in the 6th is with a candidate that can excite Democrats while reaching out to independents and moderate swing voters. In Georgia, both of these groups are showing signs of supporting Democratic candidates.

**McBath's Campaign:** **Lucy** has been endorsed by Emily's List, has about \$52k in cash on hand and hired a Finance Director and General Consultant. Compared to to Kaple and Abel, her cash on hand has Lucy way behind but given the deep

democracy opportunities identified Maria's List recommends making an investment in this race and in organizations focused on increasing voter turnout of the Rising American electorate. With a competitive Democratic Gubernatorial election on top of the ticket on Primary, this race will be won by the campaign with the more robust ground game. The status and dynamics of this race also demonstrate how important this race is to the 2020 Census, 2020 Presidential elections, and the 2021 redistricting process.

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**Debbie Mucarsel-Powell**

**FL-06**

**Democratic Primary – Tuesday, August 28th, 2018**

**General Election – November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Update: Won with 63.5% of the primary vote**

**Debbie Mucarsel-Powell** is an Ecuadorian immigrant, first-generation American, mother, and a seasoned problem solver. For the last two decades, she has dedicated her professional and personal life to improving the quality of life and health care access for Miami's Dade low income residents. She successfully established and expanded a neighborhood health insurance program while working at the College of Health at Florida International University and at the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. **Debbie**, [a first time candidate for Congress](#), is running to restore the American social contract that benefited her family and has now disappeared for too many.

### ***On the Issues***

1. Making healthcare affordable and accessible is **Debbie's** top priority. She will fight for a bipartisan solution to fixing the Affordable Care Act and protecting Medicare while continuing her lifetime commitment to improving health access
2. Making college affordable and accessible by fully funding k-12 public education, expanding financial aid programs, lowering interest rates for all federal student loans while working on a plan to provide free community college for families
3. [Debbie lost her father to a tragic gun violence](#) and understand intimately the impact this has on families and communities. She sees gun violence as an epidemic and will fight for universal background checks, prevent those with a history of domestic violence or terrorism from purchasing a gun, and prevent firearms from falling in the hands of the mentally ill.

**Status of Race:** Cook Report recently upgraded the rank of this race from leaning Republican to a toss up race and is considered one of the bluest districts in the country represented by a Republican. It also a top priority of the DSCC's red to blue program and considered by some as the bellwether for Democrats taking back the majority in House. This seat is located in the heart of South Florida, and consists of Monroe and parts of south-west Miami-Dade county, including Key

West, Everglades national park, Miami, Redland and Homestead. Heading into the election the incumbent is Carlos Curbelo (R), who was first elected in 2014 and won his re-election in 2016 by 12 points. Curbelo is considered [one of the most vulnerable members](#) of the [GOP](#) this cycle because of [his vote to dismantle the Affordable Care Act](#), putting at risk over 100,000 of his constituents. The likelihood of Democratic victory comes from recent presidential elections Barack Obama (D) won in 2012 by a margin of 8 points and Hillary Clinton (D) in 2016 by 16 points.

**Dynamics of Race:** Expected to easily defeat her Democratic primary opponent, this race will be a General Election battle between the challenger and the incumbent. **Debbie's** biggest challenge and opportunity is the local perception that Curbelo is a moderate despite his [80% voting record](#) with Trump. Compared to Curbelo who is leading the fundraising race at \$2,812,724 with \$2,101,202 cash on hand, she has only raised over \$926,001 with \$702,008 cash on hand. This race presents a strategic democratic opportunity because the campaign is choosing a robust field, mail, and digital program instead of spending money on television. Her campaign is relying on a robust field and mail/digital program that targets low propensity Democrats (Latino and Black) with strong support scores and a much smaller swing voter (women) universe. **Debbie's** path to victory in the General relies on her ability to excite the American electorate and raise the money to fund her path victory. In Florida, if investments are made early to support **Debbie** as well as integrated voter engagement efforts on the ground like the [New Florida New Majority](#), **Debbie** will be poised to win on Election Day.

**Mucarsel-Powell's Campaign:** The campaign has built an aggressive grassroots campaign that has the potential to turn this red seat blue and resulting in both local and national attention with [key mainstream endorsements](#) from progressive mainstream organizations like [Emily's List](#) as well local/national elected officials like [former Vice President Joe Biden](#). **Debbie** will also benefit from deep democracy opportunities in Florida such as the [Voter's Right Restoration ballot question](#), the 2018 gubernatorial, state senate races, and integrated voter engagement efforts, which will drive turnout among Democratic base voters. Her team has built one is [one of the best Democratic campaigns to win this November](#) and take out the GOP incumbent. Similar to the GA-6 race, the status and dynamics of this race also demonstrate how important this race is to the 2020 Census, 2020 Presidential elections, and the the 2021 redistricting process.

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**Xochitl Torres-Small**

**NM-2**

**Closed Democratic Primary – Tuesday, June 5th, 2018**

**General Election – November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Update: Won with 72.6% of the primary vote**

**Xochitl Torres-Small** is the daughter of former social worker and public school teacher, second

generation American, and a proven coalition builder. Unlike many of her peers, **Xochitl** returned to Las Cruces upon graduating early from Georgetown University, to help invest in the community that invested in her. She began her career as a field representative for US Senator Tom Udall, then became a federal clerk, and now is a water attorney. **Xochitl**, [a first time candidate for Congress](#), is running to bring together New Mexicans of all backgrounds around shared values to adopt [sensible solutions](#) to their common challenges and aspirations. To the surprise of the local and national establishment, she is also [raising money faster](#) than any of her Democratic and GOP opponents, resulting in her current front runner status.

### ***On the Issues***

1. Making health care accessible and affordable means confronting pharmaceutical companies responsible for high prescription costs, expanding rural healthcare, protecting our veterans, and stopping all efforts to weaken Medicare.
2. Promoting targeted education solutions that understand the challenges faced by rural and urban school district. She will fight for broadband expansion, increasing Pre-K to 12 funding as well as funding for English Language Learners.
3. It's critical that all New Mexicans receive living wages for their work and that New Mexico develop public private partnerships to create good jobs, invest in a climate resilient infrastructure, as well as early college, career, and adult education pathways.

***Status of Race:*** Cook report ranks this race as leaning Republican and it is an open seat because Congressman Steve Pearce is running for Governor against Congresswoman Michelle Grisham Lujan. The DCCC recently upgraded this race to its priority red to blue program, making it one of the 24 seats Democrats need to win to take back control of the house. This seat is located in southwestern New Mexico and includes Catron, Chaves, Cibola, De Baca, Dona Ana, Eddy, Grant, Guadalupe, Hidalgo, Lea, Lincoln, Luna, Otero, Sierra, and Socorro counties as well parts of Bernalillo, McKinley, Roosevelt, and Valencia counties. Heading into the General, **Xochitl** stands to benefit from [recent democratic success](#) in this district in 2008, which was the last time this was an open seat. Democrats also outnumber Republicans in this district. In 2008, Obama won this district between 2 - 10 points and by 2 - 4 points in 2012. In the 2016 presidential election, Hillary Clinton (D) won New Mexico with 48.3 percent of the vote. Donald Trump (R) received 40 percent. Another key factor is the growing unpopularity with Donald Trump (R).

***Dynamics of Race:*** Even though her Democratic primary opponent, Madeline "Mad" Hildebrandt campaigned for a year before **Xochitl**, she is [expected to easily defeat](#) her Democratic primary opponent. Early voting has already started and a majority of Democratic primary delegates pledged their support to **Xochitl**. **Xochitl's** campaign has contacted voters in 18 of the district's 19 counties and recently released its [first commercial](#); creating great momentum for her campaign as it pivots to the General. This race will be a General Election battle between the

challenger and one of five candidates vying for the Republican nomination. Currently, she has raised \$313,332 with \$243,409 cash on hand. The GOP front runner, former Hobbes Mayor, former state GOP party chair, and businessman, Monty Newman has raised \$594,914 with \$368,769 cash on hand. He is followed by State Representative Yvette Herell, who has raised \$349,530 with \$256,129 cash on hand. By all local accounts, the GOP is a primary is a toss up between the two front runners, but if the recent GOP convention is any indication, State Representative Yvette Herell may have the edge. She defeated Monty Newman for the GOP nomination with 56 percent of the delegate vote. **Xochitl's** path to victory in the General election is tied to her ability to turnout her base (Hispanics, women, farmers, ranchers, and hunters) in Dona Ana County, which accounts for 35% of the electorate, and expand her base in Valencia County, which accounts for for 55% of the electorate. To accomplish this, she will focus on water rights and land protection. Internal polling demonstrate that farmers, ranchers, and hunters see this is a top policy issue in the district. The main challenge is the lack of local progressive infrastructure and building the organization quick enough to be competitive in the General.

**Torres-Small's Campaign:** Xochitl's campaign has taken everyone by storm in just five months, in fact, she raised \$100,000 in the first three and half weeks of the campaign. This early momentum catapulted her into the DSCC red to blue program, earned her an early [Emily's List](#) endorsement as well as her former boss, US Senator Tom Udall. Having built what she needs to win on Primary Election Day, the campaign is focused on organizational building phase. With a competitive Democratic Gubernatorial election on top of the ticket on Primary, exciting down ballot races, this race will be won by the campaign with the more robust ground game. The status and dynamics of this race also demonstrate how important this race is to the 2020 Census and the 2020 Presidential elections.