



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on July 5, 2018
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California: How Far Left Can It Go?

From the print edition of The New American:

A new generation of ultra-left ideologues backed by billionaire tech moguls is challenging the “old guard” Democrats in order to push an even more-extreme Marxist agenda.



California’s Democratic Party is undergoing a generational change that could push it even further to the left than it already is. How is that possible, you ask, without stepping off the Left Coast pier into the ocean? Well, a key sign that they are in the process of doing just that, metaphorically speaking, came this past February when the California Democratic Party’s annual convention refused to endorse veteran Senator Dianne Feinstein for reelection to a fifth term this November. The 85-year-old Feinstein, who has held her Senate seat since 1992, was challenged in the state’s June 5 primary by 51-year-old State Senator Kevin de León, a popular Democratic Party firebrand and Latino activist. (He was the author of the “sanctuary state” measure signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown.) The vote at the convention, 54 percent for de León over 37 percent for Feinstein, was a sharp rebuke of the state’s senior Democrat, even though de León fell short of the 60-percent threshold needed to receive the party’s endorsement. However, her name recognition and \$10 million campaign chest proved too much for de León in the June 5 primary, and Feinstein won easily, taking 44.4 percent of the vote, to de León’s 11.8 percent.

But de León will be back for a matchup in November, thanks to California’s open “jungle” primary, which sends the top two vote-getters on to the general election, even if they are from the same party.



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The Feinstein-de León rematch will be California's second U.S. Senate race between two "progressive" Democrats. In 2016, then-State Attorney General Kamala Harris defeated U.S. Representative Loretta Sanchez to become the state's junior senator. De León has the backing of Tom Steyer, the hedge fund billionaire-turned-environmental activist, as well as a rising Latino population that has become increasingly active politically. So even though Feinstein is likely to win in November, she has already moved further to the left to placate the de León-Steyer wing of the party.

In the governor's race to replace term-limited Jerry Brown, Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom came out on top in a crowded primary jungle of 27 candidates. Newsom, who gained national name recognition as the ultra-liberal mayor of San Francisco, will be facing Republican John Cox, a San Diego businessman, in November. Cox, virtually unknown a few months ago, was boosted into second place thanks to anger over the state's new fuel tax hike, an endorsement from Donald Trump, and a crowded Democratic field. Newsom took 33.9 percent of the primary votes, to Cox's 25.7 percent. With most of the rest of the vote split among Democrat candidates, it will take a miracle for Cox to win in November.

In addition to holding the governorship, the Democrats control all statewide elective offices (lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer, controller, and insurance commissioner), as well as both houses of the legislature. They lost a two-thirds supermajority in each house in late 2017 due to recall efforts and resignations over sexual scandals, but they still enjoy an advantage of 26 seats to 13 over Republicans in the State Senate and 53 seats to 25 in the State Assembly. As in the past couple recent elections, the Republican Party is not even fielding candidates for many of the state and congressional offices, essentially conceding them to be permanent Democrat property.

At the federal level, both U.S. Senate seats are held by Democrats: Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris. California's delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, the largest of all 50 states, has 53 members, with 39 Democrats (including minority leader Nancy Pelosi) and 14 Republicans (including majority leader Kevin McCarthy). But in their "Blue Wave" effort to retake the House of Representatives, the Democratic National Committee and the state party are targeting eight of those 14 GOP-held seats. Among the targeted congressional districts are four in Orange County, once a solid Republican stronghold. The 48th district is held now by Representative Dana Rohrabacher, who has earned a 78-percent rating on The New American's Freedom Index. Another targeted district is the 45th, held by Representative Mimi Walters (Freedom Index rating 55 percent). The other two, the 39th and the 49th, are held, respectively, by Representatives Edward Royce (Freedom Index 71 percent) and Darrell Issa (Freedom Index 54 percent), both of whom are retiring.

The other California congressional seats the Democrats hope to flip are the 4th District, occupied by Tom McClintock (Freedom Index 85 percent); the 25th District, held by Steve Knight (Freedom Index 63 percent); the 10th District, held by Jeff Denham (Freedom Index 55 percent); and the 21st District, held by David Valadao (Freedom Index 46 percent).

The Trump presidency has energized a sustained "Blue resistance," with hardcore demonstrators who relentlessly hound Republican congressmen every single day — at their homes, offices, public appearances, and on social media. A plethora of Democratic candidates, many of them newcomers, have jumped into the congressional races. This enthusiasm, which the Democrats are counting on to bring their voters to the polls, also has a downside for them. In these crowded races with multiple candidates, the Democrats risk knocking each other out. This may turn out to have been the case regarding former Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who many expected to take second place behind Newsom in



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the governor's race, but who was beaten by Republican upstart John Cox.

Photos at top show U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Sate Sen. Kevin de Leon: AP Images

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