



HEALTH POLICY PROFILES

12 Freshman Members to
Watch in the 118th Congress

The **12** Freshman Members to Watch

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CURA Strategies' bipartisan government relations team is excited to share our biennial Health Policy Profiles spotlighting the 12 freshman members to watch in the 118th Congress. Every member of Congress has the power to influence health policy—no matter how junior they are or the committees on which they serve.

With dozens of new members-elect, it was certainly difficult to choose just 12 freshman members to highlight. Our goal was to profile the new members who will bring critical diversity of thought, life experiences and policy proposals that will help shape the health policy debates of the 118th Congress. Whether applying their clinical expertise as health providers, building upon their previous legislative work back home or leveraging their personal health

experiences, these members-elect will stand out as new health care voices in Congress. We cited specific sources when necessary. Most of the information in Health Policy Profiles was gathered from news articles, Wikipedia pages of the members-elect, campaign websites and LinkedIn profiles as of November 20, 2022.

Health Policy Profiles is a part of CURA's ongoing [Art of Advocacy](#) resource hub, designed to empower bold and effective health care advocacy. The tools and frameworks found on the hub can guide your strategic planning process and aid you in approaching the right partners to get your message out.

ABOUT CURA STRATEGIES

Founded in 2016, CURA Strategies is a bipartisan strategic communications and public affairs agency focused on one thing: transforming health care. Our name, CURA—Latin for care, concern and attention to others—exemplifies our mission to take exceptional care of our clients so they can transform the health care system and improve lives. Using our client-centric, customized communications and advocacy approach, we have helped over 60 clients mobilize their missions, guided the launch of 10 national coalitions and received 20 industry awards.

CURA's government relations team is comprised of former staffers who worked at all levels of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate for both Democratic and Republican members. Our registered lobbyists work seamlessly with our communications team to shape legislation and health policy. Visit our website to [read case studies](#) and meet our bipartisan [team](#).

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REPRESENTATIVE

AARON BEAN

Pioneer of Florida Health Choices Marketplace



REPUBLICAN



FL-04

AGE:

55 (January 25, 1967)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, three children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.S. Finance

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

John Rutherford (R),
redistricting

TWITTER HANDLE:

@aaronpbean

About

Aaron Bean rose from State Senate staffer to a member of the House of Representatives. He has decades of state-level public policy experience and a resumé that includes establishing state-based health insurance marketplaces.

Political/Professional Background

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

In a sense, Aaron Bean is returning to Washington. He served as a legislative fellow in the office of former U.S. Senator Connie Mack (R) of Florida from 1989-1990. Now that he's elected to Congress, he's saying goodbye to the Florida State House and is stepping up to represent the state's new fourth district. With a life dedicated to public service, Bean has spent more than 25 years in and around Florida's legislature, beginning as a Fernandina Beach City Commissioner, then Mayor, State Representative, State Senator, and now a member of the 118th Congress. In that time, Bean has been described as having a particularly [unique across-the-aisle work style](#)—a trait that has aided his success as a state legislator.

While he intended to study pre-med in college, he reportedly couldn't stomach the sight of blood and opted for a career in health

FAMILY NOTES

The Bean family is perhaps one to watch in Florida politics. As Aaron steps into his new representative role, his son Bradley has been elected as the Mayor of Fernandina Beach, where Aaron began his career in public service.

policy and advocacy instead. In the Florida legislature, he helped introduce Health Choices, an alternative health care marketplace. Nearly 15 years later, Health Choices remains a prominent marketplace for individuals and businesses in Florida. Bean also proposed Health Choices Plus, which served as an alternative plan to Medicaid expansion. Proposed in 2013, the program sought to provide coverage to Medicaid-eligible Floridians, but it did not pass.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Bean worked as a Relationship Development Officer at University of Florida Health in Jacksonville for the last 13 years. He also has a self-proclaimed side hustle as an auctioneer, a talent he often contributes to community fundraisers.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION

Bean supports expanding access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and spearheaded efforts to secure funding for naltrexone for individuals with alcohol and/or opioid use disorders.



MARIJUANA

Bean supports the legalization of marijuana for medical purposes. In 2014, he filed "Charlotte's Bill" alongside other legislators, which would legalize tetrahydrocannabinol, a substance found in marijuana that is thought to help children with epilepsy.





REPRESENTATIVE

YADIRA CARAVEO

Physician Advocate for Children and
First-Generation Americans


DEMOCRAT

CO-08
AGE:

41 (December 23, 1980)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Hispanic/Latina

GENDER:

Female

FAMILY:

Single, no children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.S. Biology, M.D.

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

None, newly created district

TWITTER HANDLE:

@yadiracaraveo

About

Dr. Yadira Caraveo is a practicing pediatrician and former legislator in the Colorado House of Representatives. Dr. Caraveo is a first-generation American committed to addressing health disparities and expanding access to care for all Americans.

Political/Professional Background

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Caraveo was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives in 2018. She has served as the Vice Chair of the Health and Insurance Committee and on the Public and Behavioral Health and Human Services Committee. On her role as both a practicing physician and legislator, she has said, "I think it gives me a unique perspective, both in terms of knowing the real health care issues that docs and patients see in-clinic every single day... I think it's very easy to talk about the needs of kids and to focus on children as part of campaigning. But then, not everybody keeps them in mind as they're legislating or even thinks about — as good as their intentions might be — with a piece of legislation, it could affect kids in a different manner than it does adults."

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Caraveo has been a practicing pediatrician since 2009 and proudly provides culturally competent care to the heavily Latino community she now represents in Congress. While in medical school, she helped lead the charge to organize her fellow medical residents for better working conditions and representation by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). For this, she was recognized by President Barack Obama as a Champion of Change. She is also

a member of the Anythink Library System Board of Trustees, as well as a board member on the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County and the Colorado Behavioral Health Transformation Council.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



HEALTH COVERAGE

In the State House, Caraveo sponsored legislation to develop alternative payment models for primary care services that would incentivize providers to accept vulnerable and high-risk patients, those with complex health conditions, and patients who are affected by social determinants of health, such as lack of access to housing and nutritious food. She is a proponent of increasing funds to expand access to primary care to bring down overall health care costs.



HEALTH CARE REFORM

Caraveo supports health care reform with the intention to lower drug and insurance costs. She is an advocate for the Affordable Care Act and she plans to “focus on making sure that health care is affordable and accessible and not focused on health insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies.”



MARIJUANA

Approaching medical marijuana from the lens of a pediatrician, Caraveo has a different perspective than some in her caucus. She has worked to reduce underage use and ensure that any studies of medical marijuana involving children include child health providers, like pediatricians.



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Caraveo was the sponsor of a successful bill that created the Colorado Prescription Drug Affordability Review Board, a new decision-making body to review drug costs and set ceilings on prices.



WOMEN'S HEALTH

Caraveo is pro-choice and supported the Reproductive Health Equity Act, which codified legal abortion in state law. She also sponsored legislation to increase access to contraceptives and reproductive care to undocumented immigrants, citing medical studies that access to these services leads to declines in maternal and infant mortality.



MENTAL HEALTH

Caraveo has served on the Colorado Behavioral Health Transformation Council. As a state representative, she supported many mental health bills that passed through the assembly. From her perspective as a pediatrician, children are often underserved in regard to mental health.



REPRESENTATIVE

DON DAVIS

Air Force Veteran Fighting for Rural Health



DEMOCRAT



NC-01

AGE:

51 (August 29, 1971)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

African American/Black

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, three children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.S. Social Science, M.S. Administration, M.A. Sociology, Ed.D. Educational Leadership

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

G.K. Butterfield (D), retired

TWITTER HANDLE:

@DonDavisNC

About

From becoming mayor in his twenties to being elected to the State Senate and now Congress, Don Davis has worked to address rural health access issues, mental health and veterans health care issues.

Political/Professional Background

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Davis is an eastern North Carolina native, born in Snow Hill. His government experience began in 2002 when he was elected as Mayor of Snow Hill at age 29, making him the youngest mayor in town history. In 2008, Davis was elected as a State Senator and served six terms. During his time in the State Senate, he has served on the Health Care Committee.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

After completing his Air Force service, Davis came home and continued to instruct cadets as an assistant professor at East Carolina University. He is also a Presbyterian minister.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Davis attended the United States Air Force Academy. After being commissioned into the Air Force, he served for eight years. As a 1st Lieutenant, Davis coordinated Air Force One operations at the Andrews Air Force Base and provided support to military families as a mortuary officer.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



RURAL HEALTH

Rural infrastructure is a key priority for Davis, particularly as it relates to access to quality health care. As a State Senator, he helped secure more than \$215 million to aid the East Carolina University Brody School of Medicine in expanding access to care in rural areas. Davis has also championed legislation expanding telemedicine in rural areas, including telepsychiatry to help address the mental health crisis.



VETERANS HEALTH

Davis sponsored legislation that would make certain veterans in rural and underserved communities eligible for Medicaid. He also helped secure \$150,000 for veterans suffering traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).



WOMEN'S HEALTH

Davis cites his region as having some of "highest rates of maternal mortality and morbidity in the state," recognizing the impact of social determinants of health in rural areas. Davis says he will fight to lower these rates of mortality and morbidity while also working to codify Roe v. Wade.

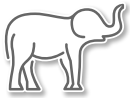


REPRESENTATIVE

JEN KIGGANS



From the Cockpit to Nurse Practitioner to Congress



REPUBLICAN



VA-02

AGE:

51 (June 18, 1971)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Female

FAMILY:

Married, four children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.S. Nursing, M.S. Nursing

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

Elaine Luria (D), defeated

TWITTER HANDLE:

@jenkiggans

About

Jen Kiggans—a retired Navy pilot, practicing Adult-Geriatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner and State Senator—will draw on decades of military, health care and government experience when she is sworn into the 118th Congress.

FAMILY NOTES

Jen Kiggans' husband is also a retired Navy pilot.

Political/Professional Background

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Kiggans was elected to the Virginia State Senate in 2019 and served on three committees, including the Rehabilitation and Social Services Committee.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Kiggans has worked as a board-certified Adult-Geriatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner since 2012. She worked at various nursing homes and long-term care facilities throughout Virginia and currently works at a small private practice.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Kiggans served in the U.S. Navy for over 10 years as an H-46 and H-3 helicopter pilot. She was deployed twice to the Persian Gulf. Upon honorable discharge, Kiggans used her GI benefits to pursue nursing studies.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



HEALTH COVERAGE

Kiggans supports protections for those with pre-existing conditions and champions access to primary care services as a way to reduce costs and save lives. She also supports price transparency and competition among insurance companies as a path to lower plan costs.



MENTAL HEALTH

Kiggans supports expanding access and making mental health care and screening more affordable. In the State Senate, she sponsored legislation to require depression screenings in emergency departments and to ensure the full continuum of care was accessible for patients leaving in-patient psychiatric stays.



ELDER CARE

As a geriatric nurse, Jen Kiggans supports expanding access to high-quality care for seniors. She sponsored numerous bills to protect patients in long-term care facilities during a pandemic and to ensure they are not isolated from family or spiritual advisors.



HEALTH WORKFORCE

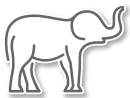
Kiggans advocates for measures to help address health workforce shortages, especially in nursing homes. She also supports requiring a school nurse in every school.



REPRESENTATIVE

**NICK
LALOTA**

An Officer Against (Executive) Orders

**REPUBLICAN****NY-01****AGE:**

44 (June 23, 1978)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, three children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:B.S. Political Science, MBA,
J.D.**INCUMBENT REPLACED:**Lee Zeldin (R), pursued New
York gubernatorial bid**TWITTER HANDLE:**

@nicklalota

About

During his naval service, LaLota came to recognize that “the United States has among the best doctors, the best medical technology and the best hospitals in the world... For many of us who do have health care, the costs are exceedingly expensive.”

Political/Professional Background**GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE**

LaLota has held various public service positions, including Chief of Staff to a New York (NY) State Senator, Long Island Director assisting in electing Republican candidates to the chamber, and a Trustee to the Village of Amityville from 2013-2019. Most recently, LaLota served in the Suffolk County, NY government as Elections Commissioner and Chief of Staff to the Presiding Officer of Suffolk County Legislature.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

After attending the Naval Academy and earning a Bachelor of Science in Political Science, LaLota [served for 11 years in the U.S. Navy](#) as a Surface Warfare Officer, where he was sent overseas on three separate occasions, deploying to 20 countries.

FAMILY NOTES

Public service runs in LaLota’s family—both of his grandfathers were NY police department officers, his father served as a Nassau County Police Officer, and his brother earned a Bronze Star with Valor for his actions as a Marine sniper in Fallujah, Iraq.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

LaLota plans to work with legislators from across the aisle to lower prescription drug prices, continue to require insurance companies to cover pre-existing conditions and protect Americans from surprise medical bills, building on the No Surprises Act. LaLota supports allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices and provider price transparency, so patients can make more informed health care decisions.



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In December 2021, LaLota stated that, "The cure shouldn't be worse than the illness," in reference to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. LaLota has criticized President Biden's Executive Order requiring all federal executive branch workers to be vaccinated against the disease and has stated that as a member of Congress, he will support legislation that automatically sunsets any executive order 45 days after it's issued unless it's approved by both the U.S. House and Senate.



WOMEN'S HEALTH

LaLota applauded the Dobbs decision which overturned Roe v. Wade but has stated that he supports exceptions in cases of rape, incest or if maternal health is at risk. He opposes late-term abortions.



REPRESENTATIVE

MORGAN LUTTRELL

GOP Fighting Against PTSD and TBI



REPUBLICAN



TX-08

AGE:

47 (November 7, 1975)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, two children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.A.Sc. Psychology,
M.S. Applied Cognition
Neuroscience, Ph.D. Cognitive
Neuroscience (candidate)

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

Kevin Brady (R), retired

TWITTER HANDLE:

@mluttrelltx

About

A combat veteran, Luttrell suffered a spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury (TBI) in a military training accident. Throughout his educational, professional and government career he has championed veterans health issues, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Political/Professional Background

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Luttrell served in the Trump Administration’s Department of Energy (DoE) as a Special Advisor, under longtime Texas ally Secretary Rick Perry. Luttrell’s responsibilities included the use of supercomputing, machine learning, artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies to solve various health care problems.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

After receiving his medical discharge from the U.S. Navy, Luttrell worked for Boot Campaign, a nonprofit with a mission to unite Americans to honor and restore the lives of veterans and military families through individualized, life-improving programs. He served in a variety of positions, including as CEO.

FAMILY NOTES

Luttrell’s mother, Holly, is a breast cancer survivor and he and his brother Marcus host a podcast, “Team Never Quit,” where they meet with guests from a variety of health care backgrounds, including disease advocacy, mental health awareness, PTSD and TBI treatment.

Aligning with his experiences, the work at Boot Campaign includes delivering personalized treatment plans to veterans and their families and providing care for diverse health challenges connected to PTSD and/or TBI, as well as addressing trauma-based insomnia, chronic pain, substance abuse, nutrition and fitness.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Luttrell served as a U.S. Navy SEAL from 2000 to 2014, ultimately being medically discharged as a result of major damage to his spinal cord that he received from a helicopter crash during a training exercise in 2009. Luttrell served with distinction, receiving two Bronze Stars for Valor among numerous other recognitions. Luttrell's twin brother, Marcus, also served as a Navy SEAL. Marcus' experiences serving in Afghanistan were portrayed in the movie Lone Survivor, as well as in the non-fiction book written by him and published under the same title.

During the 2009 training accident, Luttrell also experienced a traumatic brain injury, the effects of which he has dealt with for years. This experience motivated Luttrell to pursue a Master of Science in Applied Cognition Neuroscience from The University of Texas at Dallas, which he completed in 2016. In addition, he is pursuing a Ph.D., which he began in 2016 with PTSD expert Dr. John Hart serving as his advisor.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



MENTAL HEALTH

Luttrell has expressed openness toward the research of certain psychedelic drugs to treat mental illnesses. He appeared at the Texas State Capitol alongside former Texas Governor Rick Perry in April 2021 in support of H.B. 1802, which created a study evaluating the safety and efficacy of psilocybin in the treatment of PTSD in veterans.



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Luttrell has opposed federal vaccine mandates as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



REPRESENTATIVE

**RICH
McCORMICK**

Veteran and ER Doc on the Frontlines

**REPUBLICAN****GA-06****AGE:**

54 (October 7, 1968)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, seven children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.S., MBA, M.D.

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

Lucy McBath (D), ran for GA-07 after redistricting

TWITTER HANDLE:

@richforga

About

Dr. Rich McCormick is a decorated Navy and Marine veteran and an emergency room doctor who looks to bring his military and health care problem-solving experience to Washington.

FAMILY NOTES

Dr. McCormick's wife is an oncologist.

Political/Professional Background**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

McCormick is an emergency room physician.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

McCormick served in the U.S. Navy and the Marines for over 20 years and saw multiple deployments to combat zones. In addition to serving as the department head for the Emergency Medicine Department in Kandahar, Afghanistan, he was also a helicopter pilot. At home, he was a Marine Officer Instructor at both Georgia Tech and Morehouse College.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

McCormick was motivated to enter the political arena after bringing a proposed solution to surprise medical billing to the Georgia legislature, where he felt the committee members did little to elevate his proposal. Having seen firsthand how detrimental surprise billing can be in an emergency and having witnessed other failures of our health care system—such as how “patients are unable to afford basic medications such as insulin”—McCormick believed it was time to do more to fight for better health care. McCormick supports market competition to reduce drug costs.



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As an emergency physician, McCormick faced the COVID-19 pandemic firsthand and supports disease mitigation measures like vaccines, masks and social distancing when clear scientific evidence supports them. He opposes vaccine and mask mandates and the politicization of COVID-19.



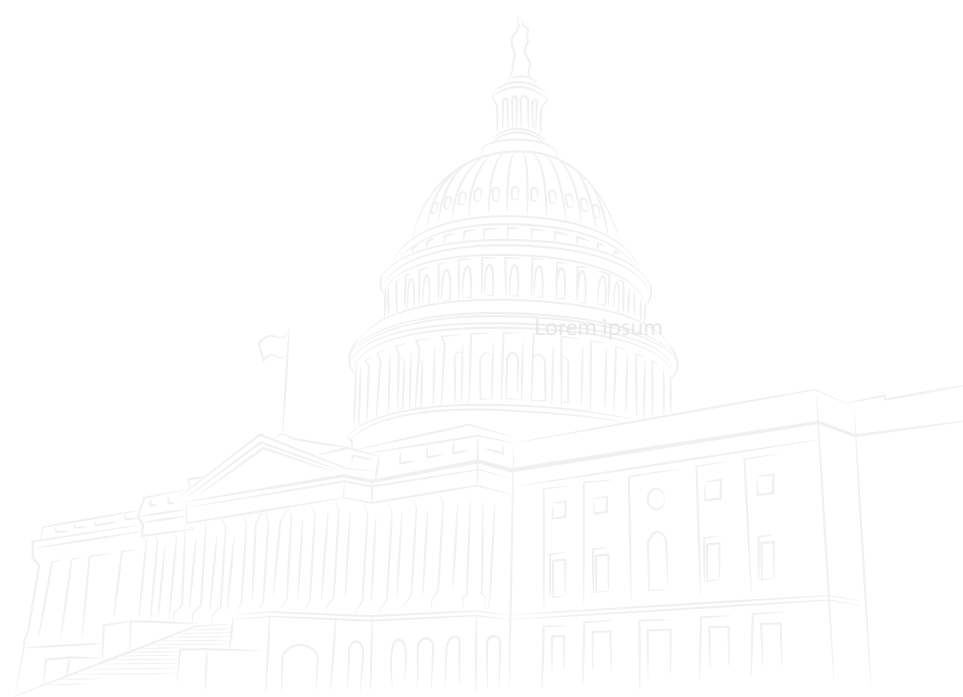
MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION

Given that he lost his father to alcoholism, substance use disorder (SUD) and mental health issues are deeply personal for McCormick. While in the Navy, he partnered with prescribers to fight the opioid epidemic afflicting servicemen and women. McCormick supports increased education on SUD, including educating children about the dangers of SUD and implementing a public health campaign on addiction, such as campaigns to counter smoking and nicotine use.



HEALTH COVERAGE

McCormick supports increased price transparency and fair-market competition as ways to reduce costs for patients. He opposes federal mandates and unnecessary bureaucratic burdens on providers that rob doctors of their time with patients.





REPRESENTATIVE

MORGAN MCGARVEY

Champion for Children



DEMOCRAT



KY-03

AGE:

42 (December 23, 1979)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, three children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.A. Journalism, J.D.

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

John Yarmuth (D), retired

TWITTER HANDLE:

@morganmgarvey

About

In 2011, Morgan McGarvey and his wife, Chris, became parents to twins born at 26 weeks. Unfortunately, the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) where their children were hospitalized did not have 100% human milk, inspiring McGarvey to champion landmark legislation to require plan coverage of human milk for preemies.

Political/Professional Background

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Before his time in the State Senate, McGarvey served as Press Secretary for Jack Conway's 2002 campaign to represent Kentucky's 3rd Congressional District, as well as a campaign and legislative staffer for Rep. Ben Chandler (D-KY-06). From 2008 to 2010, McGarvey was Special Assistant Attorney General of Kentucky.

McGarvey was first elected to the Kentucky State Senate in 2013, representing the 19th district. In 2019, McGarvey was chosen by his fellow Senate Democrats as Minority Leader in the chamber. He served on multiple committees, including the Medicaid Oversight and Advisory Committee.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

A Louisville native, McGarvey initially planned on becoming a war correspondent, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism at the University of Missouri, then switching to law, earning his Juris Doctor (J.D.) at the University of Kentucky, which prepared him for his time in the Kentucky State Senate. In the private sector, McGarvey has worked at law firms Frost Brown Todd and, more recently, Morgan Pottinger McGarvey.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



HEALTH COVERAGE

McGarvey supports the creation of a Medicare for All health care system, as well as expansion of health insurance coverage to include vision, dental and hearing. On Kentucky's decision to extend Medicaid coverage to over 400,000 residents, McGarvey stated, "It was a game changer for thousands of families in our commonwealth and was one of the greatest economic development policies ever passed in our state." One of McGarvey's first pieces of legislation passed into law requires health insurance plans to provide coverage for a 100% human milk diet for premature infants in the NICU if prescribed by a physician to prevent necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) and associated comorbidities. NEC is one of the leading causes of death in premature infants.



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

McGarvey supports allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies.



MENTAL HEALTH

McGarvey sponsored numerous mental health bills, including legislation that would prevent individuals with serious mental health illnesses from being executed for capital offenses. In 2021, in response to an alleged rape and assault of a Louisville 8-year-old, McGarvey led an effort in the Kentucky Senate to close a loophole that allowed mentally ill offenders to walk free despite being accused of violent crimes.

McGarvey was a sponsor of what became known as "Tim's Law," which allows a judge to order outpatient treatment for up to a year for some individuals who are unable to recognize the severity of their mental illness and have a history of involuntary psychiatric hospitalization. The law also allows judges to order temporary psychiatric hospitalization for severely mentally ill individuals.



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

McGarvey supports various pandemic preparedness policies, including additional investment into pathogen research and vaccine development; improved oversight into labs that work with pathogens; and the incorporation of air filtration, ventilation and sterilization mechanisms into building codes.



MARIJUANA

McGarvey supports the legalization of medical marijuana and as a State Senator cosponsored legislation to legalize medicinal and recreational marijuana. He also sponsored a bill to ease requirements on researchers at state hospitals to use marijuana in FDA-approved studies or compassionate use programs, which ultimately became law.

REPRESENTATIVE

BRITTANY PETTERSEN

Delivering on Lived Experiences



DEMOCRAT



CO-07

AGE:

41 (December 1981)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Female

FAMILY:

Married, one child

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.A. Political Science

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

Ed Perlmutter (D), retired

TWITTER HANDLE:

@petterson4co

About

When Pettersen was six, her mother experienced a back injury and after being prescribed opioids to manage the pain, her mother developed substance use disorder (SUD) with prescription pills, alcohol and heroin. This experience of SUD in her family informs Pettersen’s policymaking.

FAMILY NOTES

Pettersen is only the second Colorado legislator to give birth during a legislative session.

Political/Professional Background

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

Pettersen was first elected to public office in 2012 as a member of the Colorado House of Representatives, representing the 28th district. Pettersen served in the Colorado State House until elected to the State Senate in 2018, representing the 22nd District.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Pettersen received a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the Metropolitan State University of Denver. Before running for office, Pettersen [worked for New Era Colorado](#), a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to engaging youth in government and politics.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION

As both a state representative and senator, Pettersen has sponsored many opioid epidemic-related bills, including Colorado's [Behavioral Health Recovery Act](#) to expand provider training and patient access to evidence-based therapies. Bills she's gotten passed into law have expanded funding for substance use disorder (SUD) treatment research and updated prescribing guidelines for physicians. In 2017-18, Pettersen chaired a bipartisan committee that developed a package of opioid bills to be introduced to the state legislature. Pettersen has faced criticism for her legislation. In 2019, the Colorado Secretary of State approved the circulation of a recall petition against Pettersen—among the reasons for Pettersen's recall (which ultimately failed) was her support for taxpayer-funded heroin injection sites.



MATERNAL HEALTH

Prior to giving birth to her son in 2020, Pettersen stated, "I was pretty surprised to find out that we [Colorado State House and Senate] have no maternity policy." In reference to maternity leave policies in an interview with Good Morning America, Pettersen stated, "I have flexibility because I have leadership that's working with me, and we're going to update and modernize our statutes, but that shouldn't be determined by who's in the majority...it should be a blanket policy and shouldn't be politicized, and we need to make sure that happens." While CO voters approved a state-run paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance program that will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2023, it does not apply to lawmakers. Pettersen sponsored a bill to establish a similar system for legislators in 2022, which passed in the state House and Senate and was signed into law by Gov. Jared Polis.



WOMEN'S AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Pettersen has led legislation that requires health plans to reimburse dispensers for providing multiple months' supply of contraceptives and expands some preventive health care services to include counseling, prevention and screening for sexually transmitted infections.



ELDER CARE

Pettersen has championed elder care as well, sponsoring legislation to add geriatric advanced practice providers to the Colorado Health Service Corps program.



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

In Congress, Pettersen intends to support recent efforts to allow Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices and to place a cap on insulin costs, which she voted in support of as a State Senator.



MARIJUANA

Pettersen supports the use of recreational and medical marijuana and supported numerous bills in the State House to expand access to medical marijuana.

REPRESENTATIVE

**DALE
STRONG**

Madison County Commissioner to the Rescue

**REPUBLICAN****AL-05****AGE:**

52 (May 8, 1970)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Caucasian/White

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, two children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:B.S. Business
Administration, Emergency
Medical Technician license**INCUMBENT REPLACED:**Mo Brooks (R), pursued U.S.
Senate bid**About**

An emergency medical technician (EMT), former volunteer firefighter and 911 dispatcher, Dale Strong will leverage his decades of first responder and local government experience in Washington.

Political/Professional Background**GOVERNMENT
EXPERIENCE**

Strong has served on the Madison County Commission since 1996 and has served as chairman since 2012.

**PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE**

A Monrovia, Alabama native with family roots in the area stretching back generations, Strong is a licensed EMT, former volunteer firefighter and former 911 dispatcher. Strong received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Athens State University and earned his EMT license from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Before running for office, Strong worked at Solvay Pharmaceutical as a sales representative. Strong has continued to serve as a volunteer firefighter and EMT with the Monrovia Volunteer Fire Department while in office. Strong was active in responding in the aftermath of the Airport Road tornado in Huntsville in November 1989. In recognition of his actions, Strong was awarded the Medal of Valor. More recently, in February 2019, Strong was driving home from a funeral when he stopped to rescue a car wreck victim, including performing CPR until EMS arrived. Thankfully, the motorist survived.

FAMILY NOTES

Strong's wife, Laura, is a nurse. They met while Laura was working in the ER at Huntsville Hospital.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



WOMEN'S HEALTH

Strong has stated that he will "100%" advocate for Right-to-Life legislation while in Congress and has described himself as a "big proponent of adoption."



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

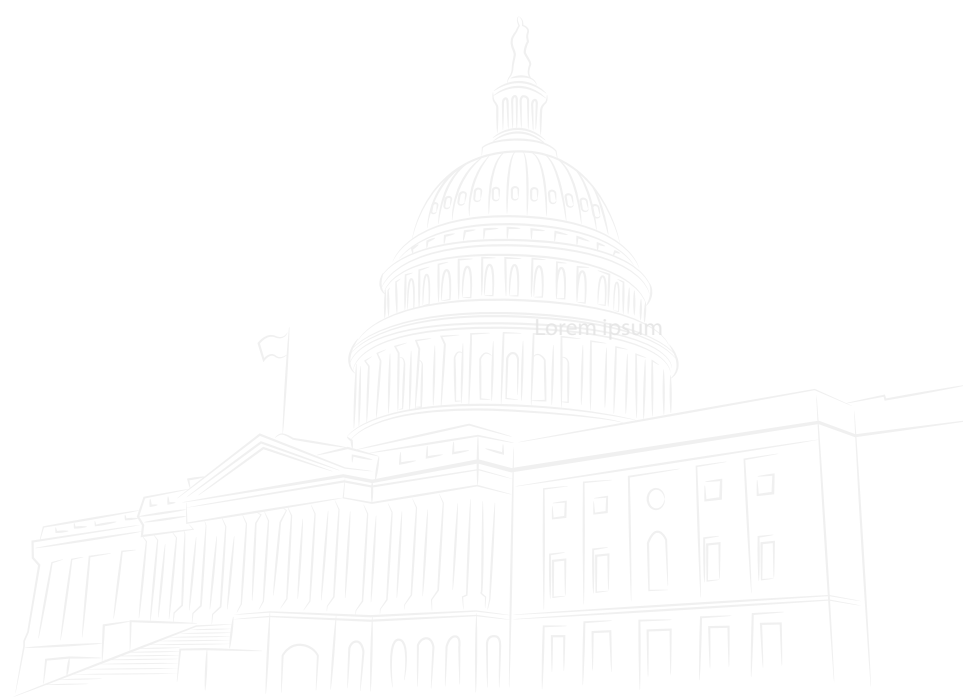
As a local leader during the COVID-19 pandemic, Strong was active in organizing his community's response to the virus and he has named "Preventing the Next Pandemic" as one of his biggest priorities while serving in the House of Representatives.

In 2020, Strong was a supporter of mask mandates as a tool to slow the spread of COVID-19, saying, "You look at the mistakes of other states, we don't want to make the same mistakes they've made...the mask has proven to be beneficial to the people of Madison County." Strong, along with other state and local leaders, was "banned" from a Huntsville restaurant in 2020 for supporting a mask mandate to combat the spread of COVID-19.



MARIJUANA

Strong is critical of efforts to legalize marijuana for medical purposes. In a September 2022 hearing about licensing medical cannabis dispensaries in Madison County, AL, Strong expressed concern, stating, "We're not talking about people who suffer from MS, ALS or Parkinson's who would benefit from this...we're concerned about abuse and those who would manipulate the process."





REPRESENTATIVE

EMILIA SYKES

A Master of Public Health



DEMOCRAT



OH-13

AGE:

36 (January 4, 1986)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

African American/Black

GENDER:

Female

FAMILY:

Single, no children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

B.A. Psychology, J.D., M.P.H

INCUMBENT REPLACED:

Tim Ryan (D), pursued U.S. Senate bid

TWITTER HANDLE:

@EmiliaSykesOH

About

Emilia Sykes has a decade of experience as a state legislator, serving in various leadership roles with a keen interest in health policy. She was motivated to pursue a Master of Public Health because she “wanted to serve in influencing public health policy and ensuring our communities were healthy and well; and people can live their best, healthy, optimal lives.”

FAMILY NOTES

Sykes comes from a family of lawmakers, as Ohio’s 34th House District had been represented by either Sykes’ father Vernon, or mother, Barbara, since 1983.

Political/Professional Background

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Prior to running for public office, Sykes worked as an Administrative Staff Advisor at the Summit County Fiscal Office in the Akron, OH area.

GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

In 2013, Sykes was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives in the 34th District, succeeding her father, State Representative Vernon Sykes. While in the Ohio House, Sykes filled various Democratic Party leadership roles, including Assistant Whip, Minority Whip and Minority Leader.

Having been the first Black woman under 30 to serve in the Ohio legislature, Sykes has sought to support other Black women running for office in Ohio, launching the We Belong Here PAC to financially assist their candidacies.

Sykes' work in health care policy has been widely recognized, including earning her the 2016 Public Health Practice Excellence Award by the Consortium of Eastern Ohio Master of Public Health Programs.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



MINORITY HEALTH

As an Ohio State Representative, Sykes was a Board Member on the Ohio Commission on Minority Health and collaborated with other Black women in Columbus to establish the Ohio Black Maternal Health Caucus, the state's first-ever group of state lawmakers dedicated to improving black maternal health across the state.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Sykes advocated for minority health, calling Governor DeWine's response "too little too late" in May 2020.



WOMEN'S HEALTH

As a student, Sykes began a lifelong education in women's health care, investigating major issues at crisis pregnancy centers in Ohio and volunteering at the Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Clinic to educate women and girls about domestic violence. Sykes was a leader in legislative efforts to repeal the "Pink Tax"—the sales tax on essential women's health items such as tampons and pads—in Ohio, which was repealed in 2019. Sykes is pro-choice, and as a Member of Congress, "will fight against any attempts to criminalize abortion and contraception or punish women."



COVID-19

Sykes has supported masking, testing and vaccination as ways to combat the spread of the virus and held vaccine townhalls in her community encouraging others to receive the shot.



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Sykes has emphasized her desire to lower drug costs throughout her campaign, including her intention of working to "push to cap the cost of life saving medication such as insulin," and "allow Medicare to negotiate to lower the cost of prescription drugs and use those savings to expand Medicare benefits to cover vision, hearing and dental services for seniors."



ELDER CARE

Understanding that health care must be provided in various ways across the lifespan, Sykes has discussed her support for expanding access to different long-term care options, like allowing seniors "to age with dignity in their own homes on their own terms."

REPRESENTATIVE

**SHRI
THANEDAR**

Mixing up the Capitol Chemistry

**DEMOCRAT****MI-13****AGE:**

67 (February 22, 1955)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

Indian American

GENDER:

Male

FAMILY:

Married, two children

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:B.S. Chemistry, M.S.
Chemistry, Ph.D. Chemistry,
MBA**INCUMBENT REPLACED:**Rashida Tlaib (D), ran for MI-
12 after redistricting**TWITTER HANDLE:**

@ShriThanedar

About

Thanedar sadly lost his first wife and the mother of his children to untreated mental illness. He has turned his grief into action in the Michigan State House as a steadfast advocate and champion for improving Michigan's mental health services.

Political/Professional Background**GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE**

Thanedar's political career began with a gubernatorial run in 2018. Although he lost the race, it propelled him as a progressive candidate in the forefront of Michiganders' minds. In 2020, Thanedar was elected to the Michigan State House of Representatives.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Thanedar is a chemist who studied in India and the United States. Before entering the political arena, Thanedar most recently founded and ran a chemical testing company called Avomeen Analytical Services (now Element Life Sciences). He has worked for numerous other chemical analysis companies.

STANCE ON KEY HEALTH ISSUES



MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION

One of the leading issues for Thanedar is the state of mental health in the U.S. Having lost his first wife to mental illness, Thanedar has long spoken out and advocated for improved mental health services. As a state house representative, Thanedar sponsored multiple bills supporting mental health, including legislation aiming to improve access to quality services for behavioral health, mental health first aid training for law enforcement and corrections officers, as well as increasing K-12 student access to mental health services. In Congress, Thanedar wants to work towards improving the nation's mental health system by sponsoring legislation to increase funding for mental health, substance treatment and treatment centers.

In past debates, Thanedar has said that opioid use disorder needs to be treated as a "health care issue...we need to provide people with counseling, education and compassion."



WOMEN'S HEALTH

Thanedar is pro-choice and as a State House representative, he supported legislation guaranteeing the right to an abortion.



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Thanedar supports allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices and placing a cap on out-of-pocket costs for medication. He introduced similar legislation in the state house, which limited out-of-pocket prescription co-pays to \$30 a month.

