

ITE RESEARCH REPORT

INVEST *to* ELECT

ILLINOIS

SUBJECT: Sean Casten
REPORT CURRENT AS OF: 2/14/22
AUTHOR: Karen Zelden

- INCUMBENT
- CHALLENGER
- OPEN SEAT

PRIMARY DATE: June 28, 2022
STATE OR DISTRICT: Illinois Congressional 6th District

CANDIDATE(S) BACKGROUND:

First elected in 2018 after defeating long-time GOP incumbent, Peter Roskam. Sean is trained as a scientist. He is a clean energy entrepreneur and author. His career has been focused on energy and energy efficiency initiatives. Sean is supported by Planned Parenthood, NARAL, J-Street, HRC and others. He has introduced and co-sponsored legislation in support of clean energy, women's rights, protections for seniors and universal health care.

CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN FINANCES:

As of 2/12/22, Casten had \$1.6 million cash on hand.

OPPONENT(S) BACKGROUND:

Democrats:

In reality, Illinois is a "new" district. With the new maps drawn this year, Casten is being challenged in the primary for IL-6 by Marie Newman (current Congress rep for IL-3). In the new maps, Newman would have to run against Garcia in IL-3. Instead, she has chosen to run against Casten for IL-6. Although Newman does not live in the 6th, she is able to run against Casten for the seat. The new IL-6 includes a portion of IL-3. We will have to watch this primary race. According to Lynn Sweet for the Chicago Sun Times, Casten has \$1mm more than Newman in available funds. Newman has had to use her campaign cash for payments to a law firm representing her in an ongoing ethics probe.

Republicans:

The new IL -6 is one of the most conservative Democratic districts in the state. Only Cheri Bustos's former district is more conservative. Biden won this district by +11 and Bustos' district by +8. There are a large number of Republican candidates who are supposedly running. However, none of them have much funding at this point. That slate will most likely change as the primary between Casten and Newman plays out. The district will be vulnerable to a quality, GOP candidate in this midterm.

OPPONENT CAMPAIGN FINANCES:

Currently, the key opponent is Marie Newman. As noted above, Casten has approximately \$1.6 mm in cash and Newman has about \$573K. Also noted, she is fighting a serious ethics charge that is costing her. Regarding Republicans, of the 4 running, no candidate has over \$112,000 on hand and collectively, the Republicans do not even have \$200,000 on hand. However, depending on how the primary plays out, this could become a battleground due to the conservative nature of the district.

STATE POLITICAL CLIMATE:

IL -6 is a district and relatively conservative. With money flowing into Republican coffers in IL, this could be a tough one to retain. Clearly, Illinois is a very Blue state with a Democratic trifecta in state government and two Democratic Senators. These maps have been gerrymandered to favor Democrats in the Congressional races, but this district is not a solidly Democratic district and contains many new precincts that were not previously in the 6th.

BIDEN +/- 2020

+11

POLITICAL REPORTS AND POLLS (e.g., Cook Political Report, FiveThirtyEight, Sabato's Crystal Ball)

N/A at this time.

We are not recommending support until after the primary based on ITE policy to not participate in primary elections.

SUPPORT:

- YES
- NO
- TBD

NEWSLINKS: