

CIA Democrat Andy Kim wins New Jersey primary for US Senate

Erik Schreiber
6 June 2024

Representative Andy Kim won the June 4 Democratic primary in New Jersey and will run in November for the Senate seat currently held by Democrat Robert Menendez. Kim's victory reflects the ongoing integration of the intelligence agencies and the US State Department into the Democratic Party.

Kim has served in the US House of Representatives since 2019. His district encompasses the suburbs of Philadelphia across the Delaware River in New Jersey. Kim has long experience in defending the foreign policy interests of US imperialism. While in college, he was an intern at the US Agency for International Development. This agency has worked closely with the Central Intelligence Agency and presidents of both parties to manipulate governments and political developments in countries such as Brazil, Bolivia and Yemen.

Kim later worked at the US State Department, where he first served as a civilian adviser to General David Petraeus and General John R. Allen in Afghanistan. After leaving this post, Kim advised President Barack Obama on national security and became an official of the US National Security Council. Kim is thus implicated in the illegal and bloody wars that Obama waged, including in Syria and Libya.

The WSWS identified Kim in 2018 as one of the dozens for former intelligence, military and State Department officials who were carrying out campaigns for Democratic congressional nominations in a year where the Democrats were expected—and did—win control of the House of Representatives due to mass popular revulsion at the policies of the Trump administration. These former national security officials were the largest single group of candidates seeking Democratic Party nominations, more than lawyers, state legislators, or other traditional categories (see The

CIA Democrats).

Kim was one of four such “CIA Democrats” who won Democratic nominations in 2018 in New Jersey, out of five Republican-held seats in the state. These included former Navy helicopter pilot Mikie Sherrill in the 11th District, former State Department official Tom Malinowski in the 7th District, and retired Marine Corps officer Josh Welle in the 4th District. While Welle lost in his heavily Republican district, the other three won, with Kim and Malinowski defeating Republican incumbents.

After all three were reelected in 2020, Malinowski lost his reelection bid in 2022 to Republican Tom Kean Jr. In 2024, Kim has decided to seek promotion to the Senate, and is now heavily favored to win the seat. Sherrill is running for reelection in her congressional district and is also heavily favored.

Kim recently voted for the \$95 billion funding package for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan. During a debate between the Democratic candidates for US Senate, he explained his vote by saying, “We have to also be able to make sure that we’re addressing the global security, which does affect us here at home.” By “us here at home,” Kim means hedge fund managers and corporate chiefs like billionaire Donald Newhouse, the owner of Advance Publications and a New Jersey resident.

Kim became the favorite to win the Democratic nomination after Tammy Murphy, the wife of Governor Phil Murphy, dropped out of the race. Murphy's thin resume, long history as a Republican and inability to overcome charges of nepotism likely were factors in her decision. With the support of the Democratic Party and a steep fundraising advantage, Kim easily defeated challengers Patricia Campos-Medina, the executive director of the Worker Institute at Cornell University's

Industrial and Labor Relations School, and Lawrence Hamm, chair of the activist group People's Organization for Progress. Kim, alongside Representative Elissa Slotkin of Michigan, is one of two CIA Democrats running for Senate this year.

In November, Kim will face Republican Curtis Bashaw. A wealthy hotelier who had never before run for office, Bashaw defeated Christine Serrano Glassner to clinch his party's nomination. Serrano Glassner, it is worth noting, had the endorsement of Donald Trump. Bashaw's other opponents were US Navy veteran Albert Harshaw and Justin Murphy, a former deputy mayor of Tabernacle.

Bashaw is running on a platform of support for the police and for the fascistic governments of Israel and Ukraine. He calls for "securing our border" and describes himself as "pro-parent," a designation that has been invoked to justify book bans and restrictions on sex education.

Kim and Bashaw will also face Menendez, who is running a quixotic campaign for re-election as an independent. The former chair of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Menendez is on trial in federal court on charges of corruption and obstruction of justice. The longtime hawk allegedly accepted gold bars and a Mercedes-Benz, among other bribes, to interfere in criminal prosecutions and send weapons and aid to Egypt.

Trump won New Jersey's Republican presidential primary unopposed. President Joe Biden won the state's Democratic presidential primary with 88.4 percent of the vote. But of the state's approximately 2.4 million registered Democrats, only 425,512 voted for him, indicating the general lack of enthusiasm among Democratic voters. At the same time, some 42,479 Democrats (8.8 percent of the total turnout) voted "uncommitted" in New Jersey's presidential primary, mainly to express opposition to Biden's support for Israeli genocide in Gaza. This result is consistent with those of other states.

The "uncommitted" campaign, which is being promoted by some congressional Democrats and pseudo-left groups, is ostensibly directed toward pressuring Biden or the Democratic Party to reconsider its staunch support for Israel and adopt more progressive policies. This tactic is utterly futile. When a reporter asked Biden last month whether the student

protests had prompted him to reconsider his position on Israel, he replied, flatly, "No."

More recently, White House National Security spokesman John Kirby declared, "The president does not make decisions or execute policy based on public opinion polling." These statements reflect not only the administration's support for the genocide, but also its open rejection of democracy. The "uncommitted" campaign thus serves to keep opponents of the ongoing massacre from breaking with the Democratic Party.

Of the New Jersey primaries for the US House of Representatives, a few deserve comment. In the 8th district, Representative Rob Menendez, the son of the corrupt senator, won the renomination with 52.5 percent of the vote, a relatively poor showing for an incumbent Democrat. In November, he will face Anthony Valdes, who won the Republican primary unopposed. Menendez has touted his support for Israel, while Valdes is emphasizing border security and increased oil production.

In the 9th district, Representative Bill Pascrell won the Democratic nomination handily with 76.6 percent of the vote. The victory is notable because of the popular opposition to Pascrell's support for Israel's genocide, particularly in his hometown of Paterson, which has a large Arab American population. Billy Prempeh, who unsuccessfully challenged Pascrell in 2020 and 2022, won the Republican nomination.

The New Jersey primary results highlight the rightward trajectory of the Democrats, who are in a de facto coalition government with the Republicans. Both parties are united on a program of genocide in Gaza and war against Russia, which they are escalating to the brink of nuclear cataclysm. These wars are to be funded through increasing attacks on workers' standard of living, and both parties favor the use of police violence to crush all popular opposition. No progressive solution to any of the current crises can be found through capitalist politics.



To contact the WSWWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)