

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: CHRIS BAKER

DATE: 2/27/26

RE: RACE UPDATE IN CALIFORNIA'S 5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

As many of you know, there has been a tremendous amount of speculation about the possibility of Kevin Kiley running in Tom McClintock's district. Over the last couple of months, Kiley has engaged in a "will he or won't he" melodrama on social media with long posts about his political future. If Kiley is to be believed, he will, at long last, announce his decision this coming Monday.

The McClintock for Congress campaign expects Kiley to announce that he has decided to challenge McClintock in McClintock's district even though Kiley currently only represents less than 5 percent of the population in the new CA-05. To put this in perspective, Congressman McClintock currently represents 80 percent of the new CA-05.

In anticipation of Kiley's decision to turn his back on Republicans and embark on a longshot challenge to McClintock, Republicans have united around McClintock. President Trump has given McClintock his full endorsement. The California Republican Party has also endorsed McClintock. Every county in CA-05 that endorsed has endorsed McClintock. Even Kiley's home county of Placer endorsed McClintock.

Two weeks ago, after Kiley started running TV ads in McClintock's district, the McClintock for Congress campaign conducted a poll to see where the race stood. Not surprisingly, McClintock has a solid lead over two Democrats with Kiley in 4th place. That shouldn't be surprising to anyone familiar with McClintock or the district. Coming out of the 2021 redistricting, McClintock quickly solidified broad support with the voters of CA-05. In the last two elections (2022 and 2024) no candidate got within 20 points of McClintock.

While most Republicans in California and DC think it's foolish for Kiley to primary a popular and well-liked incumbent with a broad base of support, all indications are that Kiley will announce he's challenging McClintock on Monday. It's worth noting that while other members of the CA Republican congressional delegation have chosen to stay and fight to keep the House in Republican hands, Kiley appears likely to cut and run to challenge a fellow Republican incumbent in a district that Kiley has little to no connection to.

There has been some [speculation](#) that given Kiley's less than conservative voting record (Club for Growth, Heritage Action, and National Taxpayers Union all give Kiley a failing

grade) that Kiley is hoping to use his less than conservative voting record to appeal to Democrats both in the primary and general. We see this as an unlikely scenario for two reasons. First, as mentioned above, Kiley is currently behind both Democrats in the polling and there is little indication that Democrat voters will vote for a Republican in the primary. The second reason is that one of the Democrats (Mike Masuda) recently was endorsed by the California Democratic Party and should be able to use that endorsement to unite Democrats in the district behind his candidacy.

Over the last month, McClintock has solidified political, grassroots, and financial support across the district, statewide, and nationally. With endorsements from President Trump, the California Republican Party, the Club for Growth, Reform California, Republican heavyweights such as former Speaker Kevin McCarthy, and every active county Republican Party in the district, McClintock is in a very strong position to defeat Kiley in the primary. Democrat Mike Masuda is likely to finish second and advance to the general. Should Kiley somehow defeat Masuda and the other Democrat in the primary, we're confident that Republican voters will unite behind McClintock and Democrat voters will reject Kiley leaving Kiley no path to victory in the general election.