FL-26 Campaign Overview

April 8, 2016

**District Summary**

**THE CANDIDATES**

***Annette Taddeo (D)***

Annette Taddeo is a small business owner and a working mom who has lived in South Florida for more than 30 years. Annette knows what it’s like to fight against tough odds, work minimum-wage jobs, juggle child care, worry about making payroll, and build a business from the ground up.

Annette’s story is America’s story. As a child in Colombia, Annette developed a strong sense of community – first as a volunteer organizing toy drives for needy children and helping at local orphanages, then later as a 13-year-old entrepreneur, selling oranges to her neighbors from her family’s ranch. Annette’s father, Anthony, was a World War II and Korean War fighter pilot. They fled an unstable Colombia when Annette was 18, and moved to Miami to build a better life for their family. Annette learned English, and persevered to improve her language skills, earned herself admission to college, and graduated from the University of North Alabama in 1992 with a degree in commercial Spanish and a minor in business administration.

Annette started her own business, providing translation services. Today, Language Speak provides translations in more than 240 languages and has been named one of the top 100 small businesses in Florida and one of the top 500 small businesses in the United States.

Annette Taddeo is the former chair of Miami- Dade Democratic Party, former Lt. Governor Candidate alongside Gov. Charlie Crist and past Chairman of the Women’s Chamber of Commerce of Miami Dade County

***Joe Garcia (D)***

José Antonio Garcia, Jr. known as Joe Garcia is the former U.S Representative for Florida's 26th congressional district; he was defeated in his 2014 bid for re-election and left office on January 3, 2015. The district includes most of western Miami-Dade County, as well as the Florida Keys. He is a member of the Democratic Party. He is the former executive director of the Cuban American National Foundation and was nominated by President Barack Obama to be director of the Office of Minority Economic Impact and Diversity of the United States Department of Energy, a position for which he was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate.

***Carlos Curbelo (R)***

Republican Carlos Curbelo is the first term incumbent. Rep. Curbelo was formerly a Miami-Dade county School Board member and comes from a family of Cuban refugees Carlos was born in Miami on March 1, 1980, to Carlos and Teresita Curbelo, Cuban exiles who fled Fidel Castro’s tyranny in the 1960s.

In 2002, just months out of college, Carlos founded a public and media relations firm that did work for South Florida and international companies. In 2009, he was named State Director for US Senator George LeMieux. In 2010, he was appointed by Florida’s Governor to the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a federally mandated board tasked with prioritizing local transportation and infrastructure projects. Carlos is also the co-founder of Centre Court Charities, a non-profit organization that runs basketball leagues for high school students during the summer months.

In November of 2010, Carlos was elected to serve on the Miami Dade County School Board. Miami Dade County Public Schools is the fourth largest school district in the country.

**THE DISTRICT**

FL-26 contains southern Miami and the Florida Keys. The district contains the entirety of Monroe County, which makes up 14% of its voters, and part of Miami-Dade County, which makes up the other 86%. The city of Miami makes up 65.7% of the district, followed by Homestead (17.5%), Key West (5.8%), and Key Largo (2.4%). It also should also be noted that that unpopulated Everglades make up a large portion of the land area in this district.

The district is contained completely within the Miami-Ft. Lauderdale media market, which has a cost per point of $720 for campaigns and a cost per point of $864 for issue campaigns. Approximately 60.2% of the district speaks Spanish, so Spanish language media will be crucial here.

FL-26 is demographically notable for its large Hispanic/Latino population, which makes up 59.8% of the voting age population. The Hispanic/Latino population is dense throughout the district, but is a little less dense in the Florida Keys. The Hispanic/Latino population in the district is overwhelmingly Cuban (53.4% of total Hispanic/Latino population). The district also has a significant African American population that makes up 13.4% of the voting age population. The African American population is largely concentrated in the Homestead Florida area. FL-26 is primarily urban (25.5%) and suburban (67.6%). The district is young with 23.6% of the voting age population under 35 years old. Florida International University contributes 54,099 students to the youth population.

**THE CAMPAIGN TEAM POL**

* Media: GMMB
* Mail: Dylan Summer, Sumner Mack
* Polling: Molly Murphy, ALG
* Online/Digital:
* Self-research:

**RETREAT SCHEDULE POL**

* **4/19**

**LOCAL CONTACTS POL**

* Juan Cuba, Former ED of County Party/Activist/Friend of Annette Taddeo

e-mail: jcuba85@gmail.com

phone: 305-761-6650

**MEDIA PLANS POL**

The initial media proposal is in the media section of the FL-26 district by district folder. It is unlikely that the campaign will have the resources necessary to fund the amount of early tv that it will take to win the primary or the general election. This is due to the very expensive market and the fact that nearly 20-25% of the primary electorate will cast their vote by mail, potentially as early as a month before Election Day.

**POLLING TIMELINE POL**

* **4/6 benchmark poll**
* **8/12 tracking poll**
* **9/2 general election benchmark poll**
* **October 10 and October 24 tracking poll**

**MAIL PLANS POL**

The full mail plan is in the mail section of the FL-26 district by district folder.

**MESSAGE AND vulnerabilities**

**MESSAGE SUMMARY**

Topline:

**Annette Taddeo** is mom and small business owner whoknows the importance of having to make payroll and provide for a family. Taddeo built Language Speak into one of the top 100 small businesses in Florida. With her years as an activist for the Hispanic community and women’s issues, Taddeo is the best candidate to represent South Florida’s families.

**Joe Garcia** is the scandal plagued former Congressman, who South Florida voters rejected in 2014 amid a campaign scandal that continues to haunt this record and image. His candidacy is a flashback to a corrupt line of politicians in South Florida who put their personal ambitions above South Floridians’ priorities.

**Carlos Curbelo** is a former lobbyist who is now a leader of the the reckless Republican leadership working to defund PPFA, defund ACA, undermine gay marriage, and block efforts to provide relive to immigrant Americans and address climate change.

Overview

**Taddeo h**as garnered the endorsement of most Democratic figures locally and nationally because they know she is the best choice to break gridlock. Emily’s Lists, SEIU, former mayor of Hialeah Raul Martinez, and countless others. In a tough year for Dems 2014, Taddeo won FL-26 as the Lt. Gov. Candidate with former Florida Governor Charlie Crist. The DCCC stands 100% behind Annette. She represents Democrats best chance to oust the current incumbent, Republican Congressman Curbelo and make sure the seat stays Democratic through the next cycle and beyond.

**Joe Garcia** publicly stated last year that he wasn’t running for office, but recently announced run conjuring up old news of the scandals that ultimately sank his 2014 campaign. Joe Garcia is too far behind the ball to mount a credible campaign against an incumbent.  Joe Garcia lost this district in 2014 (the same year Annette won the district as a Lt. Gov.) amid a scandal involving fraudulent absentee ballot requests and funding a shill candidate during his 2010 run. Joe Garcia’s former Chief of Staff ultimately took the fall and was sentenced to jail for engaging in illegal campaign activity in 2015.

With redistricting making FL-26 two to three points more Democratic, **Carlos Curbelo** is desperately attempting to strike an independent streak and distance himself from the Republican Caucus. The latest iteration of this involves consistently lambasting leading Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, intensely flacking for Sen. Marco Rubio, and moving priorities to combat climate change.

* Curbelo attempts to moderate himself, especially on Spanish language outlets but consistently votes against South Florida’s priorities.
* As a member of Republican leadership, Curbelo is expected to vote with a reckless republican caucus that jeopardizes women health, stalls immigration reform, and
* Curbelo has voted to defund the health of lower of middle income women by defunding Planned Parenthood
* Curbelo has voted to cut Pell Grants for college students in South Florida.
* Curbelo claims to be a clean energy advocate yet supports offshore drilling on Florida’ coasts.
* Curbelo has called pivotal programs like Social Security & Medicare a Ponzi scheme.
* Curbelo has done little to advance comprehensive immigration reform and has provided no leadership to see its passage
* Curbelo has criticized POTUS’s executive actions to provide relief for American immigrants (DACA/DAPA).
* Curbelo enthusiastically endorsed Paul Ryan immediately following a closed door meeting w/ Republicans, where Speaker Ryan made his infamous promise to not bring up comprehensive immigration

**VULNERABILITIES (SELF) RESEARCH**

**Annette Taddeo**

* Sunshine State News wrote that Taddeo campaign made up several phony endorsements (*NOTE: Sunshine State News is a highly unfriendly and conservative outlet, and this story did not receive pickup from any major FL-26 outlets after much pushback from this building and the Taddeo campaign.)*
* Supported the Iran Deal and would have voted yes if she had been a member of Congress
* Called herself a member of the middle class despite being worth $5.7 million and living in a 6,500 square foot mansion
* Cancelled a radio interview seven hours after launching her campaign because she was too tired to call into the radio station.
* Taddeo has lost three elections fueling the narrative that she is an incompetent campaigner.
* Though Taddeo comes from humble beginnings, many view her as a wealthy elitist, who lacks commonality with everyday middle class families.

**Joe Garcia**

* Garica’s Chief of staff arrested for absentee ballot fraud committed during 2012 election – and though Garcia claimed he knew nothing about the crimes, court documents showed otherwise
* Said in video that “communism works”
* Received money from Dade Medical College, a for-profit college in Miami that went down in scandal. Hundreds of students face mounting debt and worthless degrees

**PRESS HITS (2016 CYCLE) RESEARCH**

* Curbelo is a Republican who [votes with his party 84 percent](https://www.opencongress.org/people/voting_history/412621_Carlos_Curbelo) of the time and has fundraised with extreme Republicans like [Allen West](http://sunshinestatenews.com/blog/allen-west-remains-active-guardian-fund-pac#sthash.4LzJRXxF.dpuf)
* Curbelo has been [fined](http://miamiherald.typepad.com/nakedpolitics/2015/03/miami-congressman-pays-election-fine-for-sloppy-financial-reports.html) [twice](http://miamiherald.typepad.com/nakedpolitics/2015/10/miami-congressman-agrees-to-pay-another-fine-over-misreported-campaign-contributions.html) for omitting donations from FEC reports
* Curbelo had potential pay to play issues on the school board, receiving campaign donations from individuals tied to corporations for which he approved contracts
* Said he was not coming to Congress to cast symbolic votes against the ACA, but then voted for full repeal and remained silent on King v. Burwell decision
* Touted oil drilling as part of an “all of the above” energy strategy despite the NRCC running an ad saying he would protect Florida from oil drilling

**UNLANDED HITS RESEARCH**

* Curbelo’s immigration leadership PAC meant to give to members who are good on immigration reform has repeatedly given money to anti-immigrant members of Congress

**OTHER TOP HITS RESEARCH**

* Called Social Security and Medicare a Ponzi scheme

**TRACKING FOOTAGE RESEARCH**

* Called Medicare and Social Security a Ponzi scheme

**STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES POL**

Strengths: Annette has a great story that performs well with the voters in this district. She has long standing ties in the Miami Dade community and has a national profile due to her campaign for Lieutenant Governor in 2014.

Weaknesses: Annette’s opponent in the primary has very high name id as a former member of congress. This gives him a big advantage before paid communications. Annette has also proven to be a somewhat poor fundraiser and she has gained a reputation as an inadequate campaigner among some of the talkers in the community.

**HISTORICAL CONCERNS POL**

Miami Dade County has one of the lowest rates of volunteerism in the country. It is susceptible to high levels of drop off voters and low turnout.

**FUNDRAISING Candidate fundraising**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DEMOCRAT** | **Q1 2015** | **Q2 2015** | **Q3 2015** | **Q4 2015** | **Q1 2016** |
| **Goal** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Actual Raised** |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Difference*** |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **REPUBLICAN** | **Q1 2015** | **Q2 2015** | **Q3 2015** | **Q4 2015** | **Q1 2016** |
| **Actual Raised** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **COH** |  |  |  |  |  |