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# Rhoda Nazanin announces decision to drop from CA-25 race

OCTOBER 21, 2021 BY RYAN MANCINI (EDIT)

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Courtesy of Rhoda for Congress.

In a statement issued by her campaign, 25th Congressional District candidate Rhoda Nazanin announced on Wednesday she is no longer running in the 2022 election.

“Unfortunately, as we look at our third-quarter fundraising numbers, it made it clear that our campaign is not on a path to compete in this primary and to beat (Rep. Mike Garcia, R-Santa Clarita) in the general election,” she said in the statement. “It is with a heavy heart that I have made the difficult decision to end our campaign.”

By the end of September, Nazanin’s campaign raised \$83,708 with almost \$9,000 on hand according to the Federal Election Commission, well behind incumbent Garcia, previous CA-25 candidate Christy Smith and Quaye Quarthey. Simi Valley City Council member Ruth Luevanos’ financial numbers come behind Nazanin’s with more than \$7,000 on hand, and candidates Steve Hill and Dara Stransky have no fundraising numbers to report, according to the FEC.

Nazanin’s decision to run, as seen on her website and read from the beginning of her statement, was catalyzed by the events of the Jan. 6 insurrection during the electoral vote certification of then-President-elect Joe Biden. Nazanin decided after “watching the events of Jan.6 unfold and knowing Mike Garcia voted with the insurrectionist (sic) to overturn the presidential election led me to today...”

In stepping aside, she insisted on standing “with the other Democratic candidates to not distract from our common goal – flipping CA-25 blue. We must all unite behind whoever the Democratic nominee is because this election is about more than just one candidate. It’s about fighting for an inclusive, progressive vision for our community.” She also voiced her advocacy for policy proposals like Medicare for All, the Green New Deal, terminating student debt and protecting “the rights of all Americans.”

### “It’s not about the zip code”

When she announced her campaign, Nazanin served as the project manager for Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. The daughter of an Iranian immigrant who fled the country under the reign of the country’s supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei. She became the first queer pastor to be credentialed by the Assemblies of God, the largest Pentecostal denomination.

She previously told The Proclaimer that she saw a parallel with what happened in Iran and the events of Jan. 6.

“I’m still traumatized by everything that my family has experienced in Iran and it just took me back,” she said to The Proclaimer back in May. “I know what this sort of civil unrest is like and what it can do to a country. To have someone like Mike Garcia with a seat at the Capitol is unacceptable.”

However a major point of contention on social media, including among supporters of other congressional candidates, was Nazanin’s residency outside of the district. The term “carpetbagger” has been thrown at all of the candidates besides Smith (and despite Luevanos’ residency within the district). This previously impacted the campaigns of Bryan Caforio and Cenk Uyger, neither of which won their respective elections. Despite this history and the attacks, Nazanin called the district home.

“It’s not about the zip code, it’s about the representation,” she said. “I’m not trying to capitalize on any situation, but this is the best way I know to help save the democracy that has given so much to me and my family.”

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Ryan Mancini Ryan Mancini is a journalist, editor and a graduate of California State University, Northridge. Born in Los Angeles, he and his family moved to the Santa Clarita Valley in 2002. He previously covered local news for The Daily Sundial and The Santa Clarita Valley Signal, and he is also a host of the arts and entertainment podcast “Mars on Life.”

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