

CAIR-Linked Support and the Unity & Justice Fund

Campaign endorsements, community ties, donor activity and independent expenditures

Executive Summary

Don Leonard is running for the Democratic nomination in Ohio's 15th Congressional District, a Republican-leaning seat (Cook R+9, Trump 2020 +7, Carey 2024 +13). This report documents an unusually concentrated pattern of fundraising and outside-spending support connecting Leonard's campaign to the Council on American-Islamic Relations and its affiliated advocacy network.

The findings are:

- **Formal endorsement.** CAIR Action Ohio endorsed Leonard on April 13, 2026.
- **Independent expenditure support.** Leonard was the third-largest 2026 beneficiary of the Unity & Justice Fund, a super PAC founded and initially led by CAIR Action executive director Basim Elkarra, behind only Nida Allam (NC-04) and Adam Hamawy (NJ-12) — both in districts substantially more Democratic than his.
- **Out of State Support:** Leonard's Q1 and Q2 FEC reports show 130 individual contributors at \$1,000 or more cycle-to-date through June 30, 2026, totaling roughly \$381,000 in itemized receipts. Only 61 live inside OH-15; 39 live in other Ohio districts, and 30 out of state. Roughly 70 percent of Leonard's max-tier donor base cannot vote for him.
- **In-District Concentration of Donors:** Inside OH-15, the single largest concentration is Dublin, OH (ZIP 43016), home to the Noor Islamic Cultural Center at 5001 Wilcox Road: 21 of 61 in-district max-tier donors, or 34 percent. Adding the two adjacent Dublin and Hilliard ZIPs (43017, 43026) brings the cluster to 43 of 61, or 70 percent. The next largest in-district ZIP, Grove City 43123, only has five.
 - Within that cluster adjacent to the Noor Islamic Cultural Center, 21 contributors have hit the \$3,500 primary maximum and five have hit the \$7,000 primary-plus-general maximum. Eight pairs share street addresses, indicating much of the giving reflects household units rather than independent individual decisions.
- **Timing pattern.** A major share of the Dublin cluster arrived in a single filing window on March 15, 2026, with a second concentration in late June as contributors topped up to the general-election maximum. No host committee, JFC or bundler is disclosed.
- **Institutional CAIR-to-Fund linkage.** CAIR Action itself gave \$10,000 to the Unity & Justice Fund in March 2025; the Fund's only other institutional PAC receipt in the 2024 cycle was \$9,000 from CAIR California PAC on October 31, 2024.
- **Public positions and ideology.** Leonard has refused AIPAC money, called Israeli operations in Gaza genocidal, called for halting U.S. offensive weapons transfers to Israel, and on the record has both denied being a democratic socialist and joked that he would lie about it to voters if he were.

Overview

Don Leonard is running for Congress in Ohio's 15th District. His committee reported approximately \$606,700 in total receipts through June 30, 2026. Party committees, leadership PACs and industry PACs accounted for roughly \$11,500 of that total, and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee reported no contribution to his campaign.

Ohio's 15th Congressional District has a Cook Partisan Voting Index of R+9. In the 2024 general election, incumbent Rep. Mike Carey defeated Democratic challenger Adam Miller 56.5 percent to 43.5 percent, out of roughly 347,749 votes cast, according to NBC News. Under the current district lines, Donald Trump defeated Joe Biden in 2020 by 52.6 percent to 45.8 percent, according to Daily Kos calculations cited by Ballotpedia.

At the same time, Leonard has received support from organizations and donors connected to Arab American and Muslim American communities. The public record includes an endorsement from CAIR Action Ohio, appearances at events involving CAIR-Ohio and other Islamic organizations, a cluster of individual contributions from the Dublin area, and independent expenditures by the Unity & Justice Fund, a super PAC with documented ties to CAIR Action leadership.

CAIR Action Ohio Endorsement and Public Engagement

CAIR Action Ohio publicly endorsed Leonard's candidacy in an Instagram post on April 13, 2026, promoting his campaign to the organization's online audience. *(Source note: CAIR Action Ohio endorsement of Don Leonard, posted April 13, 2026.)*

CAIR-Ohio and other Islamic organizations also hosted events at which Leonard appeared, including candidate forums that featured his primary opponent. Those forums provided access to more than one candidate and are better understood as public engagement opportunities than as evidence of exclusive support.

The documented relationship between Leonard and CAIR-Ohio is otherwise limited but notable. Leonard and CAIR-Ohio (Columbus) Executive Director Khalid Turaani both appeared at a public vigil in Dublin, Ohio, on May 23, 2026, following a local hate crime incident.

Donor Activity in the Dublin Area

Leonard's campaign has reported a concentrated group of contributions from Arab American and Muslim American donors in the Dublin area. Several maximum or near-maximum contributions were made on March 15, 2026. The donors are geographically clustered near the Noor Islamic Cultural Center, a major Muslim community institution in the region.

The Noor Islamic Cultural Center is located at 5001 Wilcox Road in Dublin, in the 43016 ZIP code, and has served the greater Columbus Muslim community since it opened in 2006. It is operated by American Islamic Waqf, a Section 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1998, and it was the first Islamic center in central Ohio to become a polling place.

The March 15 contributions to Leonard's committee were reported in a single daily filing window and included multiple donors giving at or near the individual maximum for the primary election.

Public disclosure filings do not identify a host committee, a joint fundraising vehicle or a bundling intermediary, and the campaign has not disclosed one. The concentration is consistent either with a coordinated in-person fundraiser or with a shared solicitation list, but the record available at this time supports only the observation that the giving was clustered by date and by geography. The pattern extended into the second-quarter reporting period. The campaign's July 15 Q2 report shows a further round of Dublin-area contributions concentrated in late June, with multiple contributors returning to give at their general-election maximum after already giving the primary maximum in the first quarter. Through the close of the second quarter, at least 50 individual contributors from the immediate Dublin, Hilliard, Powell and Pickerington ZIP codes had reached the \$1,000-or-above tier, giving a combined \$141,955 in cycle-to-date individual receipts.

Comprehensive Contributor List: \$1,000 or More Cycle-to-Date Through June 30, 2026

A comprehensive review of Leonard's April 15 first-quarter and July 15 second-quarter FEC reports (FEC Image Nos. 202604039856935723 and 202607159875711210) identifies 130 individual contributors whose aggregate contributions to Don Leonard for Ohio reached \$1,000 or more through the close of the 2026 second quarter. These contributors together accounted for approximately \$371,545 of the campaign's \$493,000.10 in itemized individual receipts, or about 75 percent of the itemized total. All contributions were routed through the ActBlue conduit unless otherwise noted; occupation and employer designations are as reported by the contributor to ActBlue and transmitted to the FEC.

The most striking feature of the max-tier donor base is its geographic and community concentration around the Noor Islamic Cultural Center at 5001 Wilcox Road in Dublin. Of the 130 contributors at or above the \$1,000 threshold, 50, or 38 percent, list addresses in the Dublin, Hilliard, Powell or Pickerington ZIP codes clustered around the Center. That local cluster alone accounts for \$141,955 in cycle-to-date individual receipts, or approximately 29 percent of all itemized individual contributions to Leonard's committee through June 30, 2026. Within the cluster, 21 contributors have already given at or above the \$3,500 primary maximum for the 2026 cycle, and 5 have combined primary and general contributions to reach the \$7,000 individual limit for the full cycle. The 43016 ZIP code, which contains the Center itself, is the single largest source of max-tier support, with 21 individual contributors above the \$1,000 threshold. Eight pairs of Dublin-cluster contributors share street addresses, indicating that a substantial share of the giving reflects household units rather than independent individual decisions. The contributor names in this cluster read heavily as members of the Central Ohio Muslim American community that anchors around the Center and its associated institutions. Public records reviewed for this report do not identify a bundler, joint fundraising committee or host organization on file with the FEC, and the campaign has not disclosed one, but the concentration by date, geography and demography is consistent with an organized community-based solicitation effort rather than an independent, disaggregated donor pool.

Dublin-Area Contributors of \$1,000 or More Cycle-to-Date Through June 30, 2026

The table below lists each of the 50 individual contributors in the Dublin, Hilliard, Powell and Pickerington ZIP codes around the Noor Islamic Cultural Center whose cycle-to-date contributions to Don Leonard for Ohio reached \$1,000 or more through the close of the second quarter of 2026. Contribution dates reflect the dates on which the individual receipts were reported to the Federal Election Commission through the ActBlue conduit; where a contributor appears in both the first- and second-quarter reports, all reported dates are shown. Source: Don Leonard for Ohio, Q1 report (FEC Image No. 202604039856935723) and Q2 report (FEC Image No. 202607159875711210).

Name	Address	Occupation / Employer	Contribution date(s)	Cycle-to-date
Ronney Abaza	8010 Balmoral Ct, Dublin, OH 43017-8599	md, COUG	06/27/2026	\$7,000.00
Wahida Abaza	8010 Balmoral Ct, Dublin, OH 43017-8599	not reported	06/29/2026	\$1,510.00
Omar Abu Romeh	5589 Newtonmore Pl, Dublin, OH 43016-1373	physician, Sound Physicians	06/26/2026	\$3,000.00
Ebrahim Abu-Rashid	2600 Copperwood Rd, Hilliard, OH 43026-8888	engineer, Optum	03/28/2026	\$1,000.00
Muhanad Abulaban	5947 Tarrin Ct, Dublin, OH 43016-6125	not reported	06/27/2026	\$7,000.00
Walid Abusaleh	6426 Ringsend Ct, Dublin, OH 43016-7300	dir, GH	04/16/2026, 06/30/2026	\$2,050.00
Raed Al-Tamim	6434 Ringsend Ct, Dublin, OH 43016-7300	not reported	06/27/2026	\$1,000.00
Sarah Alauddin	5018 Vinington Pl, Dublin, OH 43016-7150	not reported	06/26/2026	\$7,000.00
Abdulhay Albirini	6846 Optimara Dr, Pickerington, OH 43147-7767	md, Genesis Healthcare System	06/28/2026	\$3,500.00
Diala Albirini	6846 Optimara Dr, Pickerington, OH 43147-7767	not reported	06/28/2026	\$5,500.00
Abdal Rahman Alhyari	6260 Post Rd, Dublin, OH 43017-1224	self-employed, physician	04/17/2026, 06/26/2026	\$1,000.00
Hasan Alkhayri	10178 Widdington Close, Powell, OH 43065-9058	engineer, Hatch	06/27/2026, 06/30/2026	\$3,000.00
Trevor Anderson	4398 Chukbuk Ct, Hilliard, OH 43026-3802	not reported	04/21/2026, 05/09/2026	\$2,250.00
Mohammad Awan	4545 Wuertz Ct, Dublin, OH 43016-4258	not reported	04/26/2026	\$2,000.00
Hassan Ayoub	4428 Limerick Ln, Dublin, OH 43017-9799	not reported	03/15/2026	\$3,500.00
Muhammad Azrak	4627 Gwynedd Ct, Dublin, OH 43016-8294	self-employed, md	04/17/2026	\$2,000.00
Veronique Bartman	7387 Wings Livery Rd, Dublin, OH 43017-2449	support, Ohio State University Department	06/30/2026	\$2,000.00
Rashed Bhuiya	7763 Wareham Dr, Dublin, OH 43016-8581	consultant, Wipro Limited IT	04/27/2026, 06/30/2026	\$1,300.00
Asma Dajani	6260 Post Rd, Dublin, OH 43017-1224	physician, Optum Health	06/26/2026	\$3,500.00
Betina Ebady	5609 Hayden Run Rd, Hilliard, OH 43026-9459	self-employed, business owner	03/15/2026	\$1,500.00
Khaled Farag	733 Weston Park Dr, Powell, OH 43065-9412	not reported	06/27/2026, 06/30/2026	\$7,000.00
Ahmed Habib	6843 Woodedge Ln, Hilliard, OH 43026-3614	physician, Genesis Health Care	04/23/2026, 06/26/2026	\$4,000.00

Name	Address	Occupation / Employer	Contribution date(s)	Cycle-to-date
Sahar Hamzeh	733 Weston Park Dr, Powell, OH 43065-9412	not reported	06/30/2026	\$3,500.00
Gus Hashem	6092 Heritage Lakes Dr, Hilliard, OH 43026-7620	cio, Tcetra	06/23/2026	\$1,250.00
Mahmoud Houmsse	4783 Vista Ridge Dr, Dublin, OH 43017-8671	not reported	03/15/2026	\$3,500.00
Omar Khalid	9163 Tartan Fields Dr, Dublin, OH 43017-8875	physician, NCH	06/26/2026	\$2,000.00
Nadeem A Khan	4562 Dunleary Dr, Dublin, OH 43017-8610	self-employed	06/30/2026	\$3,000.00
Ammar Khawam	6830 Barronsmore Way, Dublin, OH 43016-6054	employed, Khawam Self	06/26/2026	\$3,500.00
Edwan Khrawesh	2028 Loch Lomond Dr, Powell, OH 43065-7348	not reported	05/13/2026, 06/26/2026	\$7,050.00
Gedric Koffi	7551 Barrister Dr, Dublin, OH 43016-7025	not reported	06/27/2026	\$3,500.00
Christine Kolodziejki	5491 Thorney Dr, Hilliard, OH 43026-7909	hospitalist, OhioHealth	04/21/2026, 05/06/2026, 05/14/2026, 06/03/2026, 06/29/2026, 06/30/2026, 06/26/2026	\$1,095.00
Rizwan Lahuti	5107 Silver Woods Ln, Dublin, OH 43016-7069	owner, Cashier	04/26/2026	\$1,000.00
Greg Lam	5199 Reserve Dr, Dublin, OH 43017- 8620	not reported	05/14/2026, 05/15/2026, 06/28/2026	\$1,100.00
Marwan Melhem	6146 Lampton Pond Dr, Hilliard, OH 43026-7188	self-employed, Marwan Melhem	06/28/2026	\$1,500.00
Rama Naboulsi	6152 Haddo Way, Dublin, OH 43017-8527	engineer, Huntington National Bank	06/27/2026	\$1,000.00
Ghaleb Nabulsi	PO Box 3416, Dublin, OH 43016- 0200	engineer, Cdw	06/30/2026	\$2,750.00
Mudaser Qidwai	5119 Noor Park Cir, Dublin, OH 43016-7074	accountant, Gen II	04/26/2026	\$2,000.00
Hussam Qutub	6532 Ballantrae Pl, Dublin, OH 43016-6049	not reported	06/29/2026	\$4,500.00
Golam Rahman	5148 Silver Woods Ln, Dublin, OH 43016-7073	buisness, Gmd Group	03/15/2026, 03/18/2026	\$3,500.00
Mary Readey	7677 Riverside Dr, Dublin, OH 43016-8241	not reported	06/30/2026	\$1,000.00
Bridgette Santiago	4428 Limerick Ln, Dublin, OH 43017-9799	not reported	03/18/2026	\$3,500.00
Asma Shaikh	2550 Friesian Ln, Powell, OH 43065- 6124	not employed	06/29/2026, 06/30/2026	\$1,100.00

Name	Address	Occupation / Employer	Contribution date(s)	Cycle-to-date
Rehab Shehna	4783 Vista Ridge Dr, Dublin, OH 43017-8671	not reported	03/18/2026	\$3,500.00
Fadi Suleiman	6291 Wismer Cir, Dublin, OH 43016-8475	not reported	02/25/2026	\$3,500.00
Stasia Suleiman	6291 Wismer Cir, Dublin, OH 43016-8475	employed, Self Self	02/25/2026	\$3,500.00
Zakia Sultana	5148 Silver Woods Ln, Dublin, OH 43016-7073	accounting, GMD Group Of Ohio, Inc	03/18/2026	\$3,500.00
Mohammed Tahir	6263 Tallowtree Dr, Hilliard, OH 43026-6129	analyst, PNC	04/26/2026	\$1,000.00
Mohamad Tarabishi	5867 Baronscourt Way, Dublin, OH 43016-6085	not reported	03/15/2026	\$1,000.00
Amar Zedan	4405 Trailane Dr, Hilliard, OH 43026-7365	not reported	03/28/2026	\$1,000.00
Suhail Zidan	6296 Ross Bnd, Dublin, OH 43016-8665	not reported	05/06/2026, 06/26/2026	\$2,000.00

Source: Don Leonard for Ohio, Report of Receipts and Disbursements (FEC Form 3), April 15 Quarterly Report (Q1), FEC Image No. 202604039856935723, covering January 1 through March 31, 2026; and July 15 Quarterly Report (Q2), FEC Image No. 202607159875711210, covering April 16 through June 30, 2026. Aggregation is by contributor name, mailing address and ZIP code, with the higher of the two cycle-to-date aggregates reported across the two filings used where a contributor appears in both reports. Names, addresses, occupations and employers are as reported to the FEC by the contributor through the ActBlue conduit.

The Outside Spending and CAIR Support

In the final week before Ohio's primary, the Unity & Justice Fund paid for five text-message communications supporting Leonard. The messages were placed through Scale to Win and totaled \$4,558.17. The final communication was reported the day before the primary.

The amount is modest in the context of a congressional race, but Leonard was the fund's third-largest independent expenditure beneficiary of the 2026 cycle, behind Nida Allam and Adam Hamawy, and its only beneficiary in Ohio. The spending was not large enough to finance broad persuasion. It was sufficient to place Leonard's name before a targeted audience at a consequential point in a low-turnout primary.

The Unity & Justice Fund's CAIR Connections

Basim Elkarra, executive director of CAIR Action, signed and filed the Unity & Justice Fund's original Statement of Organization with the Federal Election Commission as the committee's treasurer. On a 2024 podcast, CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad said that CAIR had created a super PAC and identified the Unity & Justice Fund. At CAIR's September 2025 leadership conference, Linda

Sarsour also described the fund as CAIR's super PAC. The conference video was later removed from YouTube.

Basim Elkarra has led CAIR Action since 2023 after nearly two decades running the CAIR Sacramento Valley chapter, and he has served as an elected delegate to the California Democratic Party. He signed and filed the Unity & Justice Fund's original Statement of Organization with the FEC as the committee's treasurer in June 2024.

Nihad Awad co-founded CAIR in 1994 and has served as its national executive director since. At the American Muslims for Palestine convention held outside Chicago on November 24, 2023, Awad said he was "happy to see" the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel and asserted that Israel does not have a right to self-defense because it is an "occupying power," according to reporting by Fox News and other outlets. Several Senate Democrats returned donations linked to CAIR following the remarks, and the White House released a statement in December 2023 condemning the comments as "antisemitic" and "hateful."

Linda Sarsour, a Palestinian American activist raised in Brooklyn, previously led the Arab American Association of New York and co-founded MPower Change, described on its website as the first Muslim online organizing platform. Sarsour served as a national co-chair of the 2017 Women's March on Washington and stepped down from the Women's March organization in September 2019 during a public dispute over the organization's handling of accusations of antisemitism within its leadership, according to the New York Times.

After the fund contributed to a pro-Zohran Mamdani super PAC in New York, it filed an amended Statement of Organization. Elkarra was replaced as treasurer, the committee's address changed from Sacramento to Washington, and the bank remained the same. The amended filing continued to report no connected organization.

Zohran Mamdani, the New York State assembly member the fund's mid-2025 contribution supported, went on to win the June 2025 Democratic primary for mayor of New York City and defeated former Governor Andrew Cuomo, running as an independent, in the November general election with roughly 50 percent of the vote. Mamdani took office as the city's 112th mayor on January 1, 2026, and is New York's first Muslim mayor. He is a member of the Democratic Socialists of America and has described Israel's military campaign in Gaza as genocide, supports the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel, and has said he would direct city authorities to honor the International Criminal Court arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu if the prime minister visited New York.

The Unity & Justice Fund's 2026 beneficiaries included Nida Allam, Adam Hamawy, Junaid Ahmed, Kat Abughazaleh, Aisha Wahab, Abdul El-Sayed and Leonard. Its spending varied by race: a \$100,000 contribution in New York, \$175,000 and paid canvassing in Michigan, and primary-week text messages in Ohio. The scale differed, but the activity consistently focused on targeted intervention in Democratic primaries.

The Fund's 2026 Beneficiaries

The fund's other 2026 beneficiaries shared a common profile as progressive Democratic primary candidates in progressive congressional districts who publicly opposed U.S. military support for

Israel. Several described the Gaza conflict as a genocide and called for an end to American arms transfers.

Nida Allam, a Durham County commissioner, ran against Rep. Valerie Foushee in the March 3 Democratic primary in North Carolina's 4th Congressional District and lost by less than one percentage point. In her concession statement, Allam described the Gaza war as genocide, called for the abolition of ICE and pledged to work to defund U.S. military action against Iran, according to reporting by NPR and Fox News. American Priorities, a pro-Palestinian super PAC, spent about \$1 million backing her campaign, according to CNN. The 4th District has a Cook Partisan Voting Index of D+23 and is one of the most Democratic districts in North Carolina; Foushee carried it in the 2024 general election with 71.8 percent of the vote, and Kamala Harris won its two largest counties, Durham and Orange, with roughly 75 and 80 percent respectively, according to the Associated Press. Allam has not publicly identified as a democratic socialist and did not seek the endorsement of the Triangle chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, though her campaign courted DSA members, according to the Durham Dispatch. She was endorsed by Justice Democrats, Sen. Bernie Sanders, Our Revolution and the Sunrise Movement.

Adam Hamawy, a plastic surgeon and former Army trauma surgeon, won the June 2 Democratic primary in New Jersey's 12th District to succeed retiring Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman. Hamawy has publicly accused Israel of committing genocide in Gaza. In an April 2026 appearance on the Hasan Piker program, Hamawy said he did not support Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system because it was insulating Israel from having to deal with the consequences of war, according to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. His campaign received more than \$1.5 million in support from American Priorities and endorsements from Sen. Bernie Sanders and Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib. The 12th District has a Cook Partisan Voting Index of D+13 and covers parts of Mercer, Middlesex, Somerset and Union counties. Harris carried the district in 2024 by 61 percent to 37 percent. Hamawy is not affiliated with the Democratic Socialists of America. His backers on the left included Justice Democrats and progressive lawmakers in Congress; a pro-Palestinian super PAC called American Priorities was the largest single outside spender in the primary, according to CNN.

Junaid Ahmed, a technology consultant, ran in Illinois' 8th District Democratic primary on March 17 and lost to former Rep. Melissa Bean. Ahmed's platform characterized Israel's conduct in Gaza as genocide, called for a comprehensive arms embargo and the ending of all military aid to Israel, and supported abolishing ICE, according to his Ballotpedia candidate questionnaire and WTTW voter guide. The 8th District has a Cook Partisan Voting Index of D+5 and covers portions of Cook, DuPage and Kane counties in Chicago's northwest suburbs. Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi carried it in 2024 by 57.1 percent to 42.9 percent, and Harris won Illinois statewide by 54.8 percent to 43.8 percent. The West Suburban Illinois chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America endorsed Ahmed in October 2025, according to the chapter's public endorsement notice. His campaign also received the backing of Justice Democrats, Sen. Bernie Sanders, Sen. Elizabeth Warren and the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Kat Abughazaleh, a Palestinian American former Media Matters researcher, ran in Illinois' 9th District Democratic primary on March 17 and finished second to Evanston Mayor Daniel Biss. In October 2025, a federal grand jury in the Northern District of Illinois indicted Abughazaleh on charges of conspiracy to impede a federal officer and forcibly interfering with a federal officer, both stemming from a September protest at the Broadview ICE facility, according to the Department of Justice indictment. She pleaded not guilty. She ended her concession speech with an obscenity-laced declaration that closed, in her words, with the phrases "free Palestine" and the profane

rejection of the president and ICE, according to the Associated Press and Fox News. The 9th District has a Cook Partisan Voting Index of D+19 and is anchored by Evanston, Skokie and the North Shore suburbs of Chicago; the 2020 presidential result in the district under current lines was Biden 70 percent to Trump 28 percent, according to Daily Kos calculations cited by Ballotpedia. Abughazaleh was not formally endorsed by the Democratic Socialists of America. She was endorsed by Justice Democrats, PAL PAC and Reps. Ro Khanna and Jamaal Bowman, and she rejected corporate PAC money in the race.

Aisha Wahab, a California state senator, won the special election runoff on August 18 for California's 14th Congressional District, succeeding former Rep. Eric Swalwell. Answering yes at an April 2026 candidate forum when asked whether Israel was committing genocide in Gaza, Wahab has continued to call for ending U.S. military aid to Israel, according to NBC News and the Associated Press. She will be the first Afghan American to serve in Congress. The 14th District has a Cook Partisan Voting Index of D+20 and covers Hayward, Livermore, Pleasanton, Union City and Castro Valley in Alameda County. Rep. Eric Swalwell carried it in 2024 by 67.8 percent to 32.2 percent. Wahab has stated she is not a socialist and is not a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. She was endorsed by the California Democratic Party and the California Federation of Labor Unions.

Abdul El-Sayed, a former Wayne County health director, defeated Rep. Haley Stevens in the Michigan Democratic Senate primary in August. Following an attempted attack on Temple Israel synagogue in West Bloomfield in March, El-Sayed released a video in which he said, "hurt people hurt people," a reference to the attacker's reported family losses in a prior Israeli airstrike in Lebanon. He apologized to the Michigan Jewish Democratic Caucus in late August, according to the Associated Press. El-Sayed has said he supports ending U.S. military support for the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The 2026 Michigan Senate contest is expected to be closely fought. Trump narrowly carried Michigan in 2024 by 49.7 percent to 48.3 percent, and Democrat Elissa Slotkin won that year's U.S. Senate race there by 48.6 percent to 48.3 percent over Republican Mike Rogers, who is again the Republican nominee this cycle. El-Sayed has said he is 'not technically or practically' a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, according to The Wall Street Journal, and NBC News reported he had not been endorsed by the DSA. Politico reported that DSA officials shifted organizers, volunteers and resources into Michigan on his behalf during the primary. He has been endorsed by Sen. Bernie Sanders and Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib, Pramila Jayapal and Ro Khanna, along with Justice Democrats.

Broader Organizational Context

CAIR-Ohio's Columbus office was founded in 1998 as a state chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations and operates within a broader Muslim American civil rights and advocacy network. Its executive director, Khalid Turaani, has participated in voter-mobilization efforts and has drawn public attention for testimony before the Ohio legislature and appearances at politically sensitive events.

CAIR describes itself as a civil rights organization. The national organization has also faced longstanding scrutiny related to its identification as an unindicted co-conspirator in the 2007 Holy Land Foundation case. CAIR denies wrongdoing and has not been designated a terrorist organization by the federal government.

Leonard's Public Positions

Leonard initially only made limited public statements on issues of particular concern to Muslim American voters. He has criticized U.S. involvement in the conflict with Iran and participated in the Dublin vigil condemning anti-Muslim violence. His campaign materials provide little detail about his positions on Israel, the Palestinian territories or related foreign-policy questions.

More recent public statements have added detail. In a March 6, 2026, appearance on the Hilliard Beacon Audio Companion podcast, Leonard said he would support halting U.S. offensive weapons exports to Israel during ongoing military operations in Gaza. He cited what he described as genocidal operations in Gaza and violence by West Bank settlers, and he said American leadership should fundamentally rethink its strategic relationship with Israel, conditioned on the establishment of a two-state solution. Asked whether his campaign would accept funding tied to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Leonard answered directly: "We would never accept money from AIPAC."

Leonard has also expressed opposition to U.S. military intervention abroad more broadly. In an April 26, 2026, interview with the Columbus Dispatch, he described the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as pointless adventures in regime change and called for those resources to be redirected to domestic programs. He has similarly opposed U.S. military action in Iran and Venezuela.

On the same March 6, 2026, Hilliard Beacon Audio Companion podcast, Leonard also addressed his political ideology directly. Asked about the Democratic Socialists of America, Leonard said, "I am not a democratic socialist. Even if I were, I'd lie to the people of my district in order to get their votes." He then praised Sen. Bernie Sanders and the Working Families Party, which Sanders in 2016 called "the closest thing there is to a political party that believes in my vision of democratic socialism." Federal Election Commission records show Leonard's committee reported a \$100 contribution to the Working Families Party in December 2025. In an August 2025 academic paper written before his campaign launch, Leonard argued that a socialist "counter-movement" would be the best outcome for the United States, according to reporting by the Washington Free Beacon.

Assessment

Leonard's fundraising and outside-support profile is unusual in its concentration. Traditional Democratic institutional support is limited. His itemized donor base is generally fairly geographically dispersed rather than centered in the district. However where it is clustered in his district it appears to be concentrated around the Noor Islamic Cultural Center. His only reported independent expenditure support came from a committee whose founding treasurer also leads CAIR Action, while CAIR Action Ohio similarly endorsed him.