



32nd Congressional District fundraising going strong

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The three top Democratic candidates in the race to represent the 32nd Congressional district have together raised nearly \$1.5 million.

Judy Chu, a member of the state Board of Equalization, led the pack, raising \$770,000; state Sen. Gil Cedillo followed with \$568,000; and political newcomer Emanuel Pleitez, a 26-year-old financial analyst, has raised \$153,000 in his bid to take the seat.

The contribution totals are from the first quarter of 2009, ending March 31. The deadline to file contribution reports was Wednesday.

While campaign contributions are often used to suggest the amount of support a particular candidate has, money won't buy this election, according to analysts.

Because it is an off-year special election, turnout for the May 19 primary is expected to be low, so grassroots get-out-the-vote campaigns will be paramount.

"It does not take a lot of money in these low turn out races, but that doesn't mean a lot of money isn't going to be spent," analyst Allan Hoffenblum said.

Chu still has nearly \$578,000 cash on hand to spend; Cedillo has \$441,000 cash on hand; and Pleitez has spent about one-third of his contributions, leaving more than \$106,000 for the remaining five weeks of campaigning.

Eight other candidates, including three Republicans and one Libertarian, are vying for the seat, and many are counting on grassroots efforts to get them votes. Their fundraising information was not immediately available.