

Congress – District 9

Question

Leticia Gutiérrez

Alex Mealer

	Democrat	Republican
	Leticia Gutiérrez is a longtime community advocate who has worked for more than 15 years on environmental and public health issues.	Alex Mealer is a U.S. Army veteran, West Point graduate, and former energy-finance professional who previously served on the Houston METRO board.
1. Denver Harbor recently went without a neighborhood early-voting location. Would you support using the Denver Harbor Multi-Service Center as an early-voting site?	Yes. I strongly support using the Denver Harbor Multi-Service Center as an early-voting location. Every eligible voter should have convenient and accessible opportunities to participate in our elections, especially in neighborhoods where residents have historically had to travel farther to cast their ballots. Denver Harbor deserves an early-voting site in the neighborhood that residents know, trust, and can reach without unnecessary barriers. If elected to Congress, I will support efforts to expand access to early voting and work with local election officials and community leaders to make sure voting locations are available where people live, work, and raise their families. No neighborhood should be overlooked when it comes to access to the ballot. Democracy works best when every eligible voter has a fair, practical, and convenient opportunity to participate and make their voice heard.	Campaign did not respond

2. Do you support tactics where armed and masked federal agents are involved in conducting street stops, vehicle stops, and neighborhood sweeps?	No. I do not support armed, masked federal agents conducting indiscriminate street stops, vehicle stops, or neighborhood sweeps in our communities. We have due process in this country, and everyone is entitled to it. We should not accept federal operations carried out without meaningful transparency, accountability, or safeguards against racial profiling. Local law enforcement officers are identifiable and accountable to the communities they serve, and tactics that leave residents unsure of who is stopping them or why undermine the trust that effective public safety depends on. When residents are afraid to call the police, go to work, take their children to school, visit local businesses, or simply go about their daily lives, our entire community becomes less safe. These operations also hurt small businesses by creating fear among workers, customers, and families. We can enforce our laws without abandoning our values. Public safety requires trust, accountability, transparency, and due process — not fear and intimidation.	
3. Regarding local cooperation with federal immigration enforcement: a. Should local police, constables, or other county and city resources assist ICE in arresting people who have no violent criminal record?	No. Local police, constables, and city or county resources should not be used to assist ICE in arresting people who have no violent criminal record. Our local law enforcement officers should be focused on protecting our neighborhoods, preventing and responding to crime, and building trust with the communities they serve—not acting as an extension of federal immigration enforcement. When people fear that any interaction with local police could lead to detention or deportation, they are less likely to report crimes, come forward as witnesses, or cooperate with officers. That makes everyone less safe. Local public-safety resources should be used to keep our communities safe, not to create fear among families who live and work here.	
b. Should local cooperation with ICE require a judicial warrant?	Yes. Any local cooperation with ICE that could result in someone being detained should require a judicial warrant and appropriate judicial oversight. We have due process in this country, and everyone deserves meaningful legal protections. Local governments should not bypass those protections or use public resources to detain people at the request of federal immigration authorities without proper judicial authorization. Accountability and due process should never be optional simply because immigration enforcement is involved.	
4. Should undocumented immigrants without serious criminal records be entitled to a prompt bond hearing before an immigration judge? Why or why not?	Yes. Due process requires that an independent immigration judge be able to promptly review whether continued detention is necessary and whether a person can safely be released while their immigration case proceeds. No one should be held indefinitely without a meaningful opportunity to have their circumstances reviewed by a judge. Our immigration system should protect public safety while also respecting basic principles of fairness, due process, and individual liberty.	

5. Would you support requiring immigration agents to display visible identification, wear body cameras, avoid masks except in documented dangerous situations, and provide written justification for stops and arrests?	Yes. I support requiring immigration agents to display visible identification, wear body cameras, avoid masks except in documented dangerous situations, and provide written justification for stops and arrests. Federal agents exercising the power to stop, detain, or arrest someone should be clearly identifiable and accountable for their actions. I also support withholding additional public funding for ICE operations until meaningful accountability, transparency, and identification requirements are in place. No federal agency should receive a blank check while operating without basic safeguards that protect both the public and responsible law enforcement officers.	
6. Do you support or oppose the following: a. Racial Profiling in Immigration Enforcement	Oppose	
b. Separating parents from children during enforcement actions	Oppose	
c. Large-scale detention of immigrants without criminal records	Oppose	
7. Do you support continuing DACA protections? Should DACA recipients have a path to permanent legal status?	Yes. I support continuing DACA protections and creating a path to permanent legal status for DACA recipients. People who were brought to the United States as children and have built their lives, families, careers, and communities here should not live under the constant threat of deportation. This country made a commitment to DACA recipients, and Congress should honor that commitment by providing a permanent legislative solution rather than leaving hundreds of thousands of people in a temporary status that can change from one administration to the next. DACA recipients are our neighbors, coworkers, students, teachers, business owners, and members of our communities. They deserve the opportunity to continue contributing to the only country many of them have ever truly called home.	

8. Do you believe Denver Harbor currently receives adequate police and constable coverage? What specific steps would you take to increase coverage of the neighborhood?	Denver Harbor deserves consistent, responsive, and adequately resourced police and constable coverage. Residents should be able to trust that when they call for help, officers can respond promptly and that public-safety resources are distributed fairly based on the needs of the community. As a member of Congress, I would work with city officials, the county commissioner, local law enforcement, and Denver Harbor residents to identify gaps in patrol coverage and community safety needs. I would advocate for federal funding and resources that can support local public-safety efforts, including additional personnel, equipment, training, and community-based policing. I would also prioritize better coordination between local law enforcement and the residents they serve so that resources are directed where they are most needed. Denver Harbor should not receive less attention or fewer public-safety resources simply because it has historically been overlooked.	
9. Investment companies are buying homes in Denver Harbor, pushing out current residents. What policies would you support to help long-term residents stay in the neighborhood and improve their homes?	As a member of Congress, I would fight to protect and strengthen restrictions on private equity firms and large institutional investors buying up single-family homes in neighborhoods like Denver Harbor. Homes should be for families to live in and build a future in—not assets for Wall Street firms to accumulate while pricing local families out. I would also support giving families, tenants, first-time homebuyers, local nonprofits, and community land trusts a meaningful first opportunity to purchase homes before they are sold in bulk to large investors. When corporate owners sell properties, the people who actually live in our communities should have a fair shot at owning them. But stopping displacement also means helping the people who are already here stay here. I would fight to fully fund federal Whole-Home Repair programs that can provide grants to qualifying homeowners for critical repairs, accessibility improvements, weatherization, and health and safety needs. I would also work to expand Community Development Block Grants, affordable home-improvement financing, and partnerships with community lenders so that longtime homeowners can repair their homes without taking on crushing debt. I would support expanding down-payment and closing-cost assistance for working families and first-time homebuyers, while working with state and local leaders on property-tax relief and other protections for longtime residents facing rapidly rising costs. Denver Harbor families helped build this neighborhood. They should be able to afford to stay here, improve the homes they worked for, pass those homes on to their children, and build generational wealth. Our neighborhoods should belong to the people who live in them—not become investment portfolios for corporations with no stake in the community.	

10. Denver Harbor residents pay county, state, and federal taxes. What would you do to bring more public money to improve the neighborhood?	Denver Harbor residents pay county, state, and federal taxes, and they deserve to see those dollars invested back into their community. As a member of Congress, I would work directly with city, county, and community leaders to identify Denver Harbor’s highest-priority projects and aggressively pursue federal funding to get them done. That includes using the congressional appropriations and Community Project Funding process, along with federal grants, to bring resources directly back to the neighborhood. I would prioritize investments in flood mitigation and drainage infrastructure, safer streets and sidewalks, better public transportation, neighborhood facilities, and improved access to preventive healthcare. I would also fight for federal community-development funding that can help repair homes, strengthen infrastructure, and improve the quality of life for families who already live here. And I would make sure Denver Harbor has a seat at the table when those priorities are being set. Too often, communities that have paid into the system for generations are asked to settle for whatever is left over. Denver Harbor deserves its fair share of public investment. Our goal should be simple: bring residents’ tax dollars home and invest them in the infrastructure and services that allow families to live safely, stay healthy, get to work, raise their children, and build a strong future in their community.	
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11. Many Denver Harbor students have attended schools outside the neighborhood for decades. We recently lost McReynolds Middle School and face the possibility of additional school closures. What would you do to protect and improve the schools serving Denver Harbor, and how would you ensure that residents have a meaningful voice in future school decisions?	I strongly oppose diverting public education dollars away from neighborhood public schools to subsidize private education through voucher or school-choice programs. Our public dollars should be used to strengthen the public schools that serve every child. The closure of a neighborhood school is not a minor administrative decision. Schools are anchors of their communities, and decisions to close or consolidate them should never be made without meaningful input from the families, educators, students, and residents who will live with the consequences. Denver Harbor families deserve a genuine voice in determining the future of the schools that serve their neighborhood, particularly after the closure of McReynolds Middle School. I also believe locally elected school board members should have a meaningful role in decisions affecting their communities rather than having state intervention continually override local representation and accountability. As a member of Congress, I would fight to protect and increase federal investments in neighborhood public schools, including Title I funding for schools serving lower-income families, special education funding, mental-health and student-support services, after-school programs, and resources to improve aging school facilities. I would also work directly with Denver Harbor families, educators, community leaders, and local officials to identify the needs of schools serving the neighborhood and advocate for the federal resources available to meet them. Denver Harbor should not have to keep losing institutions that generations of families have depended on. The goal should be to invest in neighborhood schools so families want to send their children there—not close them because we failed to give them the resources they needed to succeed.	
12. Denver Harbor has one clinic, which is not equipped for emergencies, and lost its nearest hospital after Hurricane Harvey. Residents are now served by small emergency hospitals along I-10. a. Do you consider this level of emergency care adequate for a neighborhood of this size?	No. Denver Harbor does not have adequate access to emergency and hospital care for a community of this size. The loss of a nearby full-service hospital, combined with limited neighborhood healthcare options, leaves residents with a serious gap in care. No family should have to worry about how far they will have to travel when a child, parent, or grandparent is experiencing a medical emergency. Denver Harbor also needs greater investment in preventive and primary healthcare so residents can receive care before a health problem becomes an emergency. I am deeply concerned about the Medicaid cuts and new eligibility restrictions enacted in 2025. At a time when communities like Denver Harbor already face shortages in healthcare access, Congress should be strengthening Medicaid and our healthcare safety net—not making it harder for people to get covered and receive care.	

b. What would you do to improve access to emergency and hospital care?	As a member of Congress, I would aggressively pursue federal resources to expand healthcare access in Denver Harbor. That includes fighting for increased funding through the federal Community Health Center program, healthcare workforce programs, congressional appropriations, and other federal grants that can expand primary, preventive, urgent, and emergency healthcare capacity in underserved communities. I would work with Denver Harbor residents, Harris County and city leaders, local healthcare systems, community health organizations, and responsible private-sector providers to identify exactly what additional emergency and hospital capacity the community needs and develop a concrete plan to bring those services closer to residents. Where eligible, I would use the Community Project Funding process to pursue direct federal investment in healthcare facilities and infrastructure serving the neighborhood. I would also fight to protect and strengthen Medicaid and other federal healthcare programs that help sustain hospitals, clinics, and safety-net providers, while investing in the doctors, nurses, paramedics, and other healthcare professionals needed to serve growing communities. And my long-term goal is bigger: I believe we should work toward guaranteeing healthcare to every American. No family should have to choose between getting the care they need and paying their rent, buying groceries, or keeping the lights on. We are the wealthiest and most powerful country in the world, and no other country should outdo the United States when it comes to taking care of our own people. Denver Harbor deserves more than a patchwork of healthcare options. Residents deserve reliable preventive care close to home and the confidence that, when an emergency happens, quality care is accessible when every minute matters.	
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13. What steps would you take to improve access to services and benefits for veterans?	Our veterans have earned our support, and we have a responsibility to keep the promises this country made to them. As the mother of a son who serves in the military, this issue hits home for me personally. I understand the sacrifices that service members make—and the sacrifices their families make alongside them. As a member of Congress, I would fight to protect veterans' healthcare and benefits and make those services easier to actually access. That means protecting VA funding and staffing, improving access to mental-health care, expanding services for veterans experiencing homelessness, strengthening support for disabled veterans and caregivers, and making sure veterans can receive timely appointments and benefits without getting lost in bureaucracy. My congressional office would also make veterans' constituent services a priority. Veterans who are struggling with a VA disability claim, healthcare enrollment, benefits, records, or another federal agency should have somewhere to turn for help navigating the system and getting answers. I am deeply concerned about reductions in the VA workforce and any policy that makes it harder for veterans to receive the care and benefits they earned. I am also deeply troubled by veterans and military families being caught up in immigration enforcement and facing detention or deportation. A country that asks people and their families to sacrifice in its defense has a responsibility to stand by them. I will not support cuts to veterans' healthcare or earned benefits. We should be doing more—not less—to ensure veterans and their families have access to quality healthcare, housing, mental-health services, educational and employment opportunities, and the benefits they were promised. Supporting our troops cannot end when they take off the uniform. We owe those who served more than gratitude—we owe them action.	
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