

Who's Running for Florida House District 81 in the November Elections

By Sandy Parker | Sparker's Soapbox | Published 2026-09-06

Republican incumbent Yvette Benarroch and Democrat Kim Finer are competing for the Florida House of Representatives seat in District 81, which covers coastal Collier County from Naples Park south through Isles of Capri, Marco Island and Goodland, in the Nov. 3, 2026, general election. Registered voters in the district will decide the race. The winner will serve a two-year term in the Florida House of Representatives.

Find your district using the Florida Legislature's [District Finder](#). For background, see [The Legislative Branch: A Soapbox Primer](#).

In this post, I summarize the backgrounds and stated priorities of the two candidates seeking this seat, along with their endorsements, recent news coverage, and campaign finance data, to help voters prepare to cast their ballots. I also include links where you can research each candidate further.

- [Yvette Benarroch](#) (Republican)
- [Kim Finer](#) (Democrat)
- [Campaign Finances](#)

Yvette Benarroch

Republican incumbent Yvette Benarroch was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She moved to Florida in 2003 and lives in Marco Island with her husband and two teenage sons. She served in the U.S. Air Force from 1990 to 1992 during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from Interamerican University of Puerto Rico and a master's degree in marketing from Southern New Hampshire University. ([campaign website](#); [Florida House of Representatives](#); [Ballotpedia](#); [Marco Eagle](#))

Benarroch is co-owner of a Naples- and Marco Island-based landscaping company and a licensed Realtor. Before her 2024 election to the Florida House, she held Republican Party leadership roles in Collier County and statewide, including Vice Chairwoman of the Collier County Republican Party, and worked as a campaign volunteer coordinator for Republican candidates in Southwest Florida, including President Trump and Gov. Ron DeSantis. She is active in several local business and civic organizations, including the Marco Island & Naples Chamber of Commerce and the Naples Area Board

of Realtors, and is now seeking her second term. ([campaign website](#); [Florida House of Representatives](#); [Marco Eagle](#))

Platform

According to her campaign [website](#), Benarroch's priorities are:

- Stopping Illegal Immigration
- Defending The Second Amendment
- Getting Wokeism Out Of Our Schools
- Economic Opportunity
- Supporting Florida Family Values
- Insurance
- Safe And Secure Elections
- Term Limits

Endorsements

Benarroch's campaign website does not have a dedicated endorsements page; I found the following 2026-cycle endorsements:

- Florida Chamber of Commerce ([Florida Chamber](#), 6/11/26)
- Associated Industries of Florida (AIF) ([AIF](#), 7/13/26)
- Southwest Florida Young Republicans ([Florida's Voice](#), 7/13/26)
- U.S. Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott ([Facebook](#), 8/9/26)

In the News

- Rep. Yvette Benarroch treated for 'acoustic shock' after Rep. Angie Nixon used bullhorn on House floor. ([Florida's Voice](#), 5/1/26)
- District 81: Marco's Yvette Benarroch faces challenger in general election. ([Marco Eagle](#), 6/23/26)

Further Research

- [Campaign website](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [X](#)

Kim Finer

Democratic challenger Kim Finer was born and raised in Canton, Ohio, and also lived in Texas and North Carolina before settling in Naples in 2012. She holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology from Miami University in Ohio and a Ph.D. in veterinary microbiology from Texas A&M University, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in food microbiology at North Carolina State University. She spent the bulk of her 35-year career as a professor of biological sciences at Kent State University before retiring. ([Kim Finer for Florida](#); [Marco Eagle](#))

Finer is a first-time candidate for public office. She is a longtime member of the American Society for Microbiology, where she held a variety of leadership roles, and is active in several civic and conservation groups, including the League of Women Voters, the ACLU and AARP. She serves as president of the Friends of Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park and supports the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, the Naples Botanical Garden, and the Naples chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. ([Kim Finer for Florida](#); [Naples Daily News](#))

Platform

According to her campaign [website](#), Finer's priorities are:

- Homeowner's Insurance
- School Vouchers
- Local Government Control
- Coastal Development
- Public Health

Endorsements

According to her [website](#), Finer's endorsements include:

- Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida
- 3.14 Action

In the News

- District 81: Marco's Yvette Benarroch faces challenger in general election. ([Naples Daily News](#), 6/23/26)

Further Research

- [Campaign website](#)
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [Instagram](#)
 - [YouTube](#)
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Campaign Finances

Political committees may raise and spend money without limit to support or oppose candidates, but Florida law caps direct transfers from a committee to a candidate's own campaign account at \$3,000 per election, with the primary and general treated as separate elections. For more on how to read these figures and what this information does and does not tell us, see the Sparker's Civics primer, [Understanding Campaign Finance Data](#).

Yvette Benarroch's Contributions

Yvette Benarroch's campaign took in \$146,505 in total: \$123,375 in monetary contributions, \$3,130 in in-kind support, and \$20,000 carried over from her previous campaign account. The \$123,375 in contributions came from 179 donors, 94 percent of whom were from Florida and 6 percent from out of state. Political committees gave \$47,000 of that total directly to her campaign account. Most of her in-kind support, \$2,000 of the \$3,130 total, came from Benarroch herself.

Separately, Friends of Yvette Benarroch, a political committee supporting conservative principles, issues and candidates, has raised \$146,901 since its formation, of which \$69,725 remains available.

Kim Finer's Contributions

Kim Finer's campaign took in \$20,431 in total: \$19,324 in monetary contributions and \$1,107 in in-kind support. The \$19,324 in contributions came from 112 donors, 83 percent of whom were from Florida and 17 percent from out of state. She received no contributions from political committees and has no affiliated committee. Of her in-kind support, \$107 came from Finer herself.

Campaign finance data is from Florida Division of Elections filings, cross-checked against source records. See the Division of Elections' [Candidate Listing search](#) for complete filings. Affiliated political committee data for Friends of Yvette Benarroch is from the Division of Elections' [Committee Database Search](#).

This post was researched and drafted with the assistance of Claude (Anthropic AI). The content was reviewed, edited, and fact-checked by the author. Both humans and AI can make mistakes. Please let us know if you spot one.