

Who's Running for Florida's U.S. Senate Seat in the 2026 General Election

By Sandy Parker | Sparker's Soapbox | Published 2026-09-13

Republican Ashley Moody and Democrat Angie Nixon are the major-party candidates competing for Florida's U.S. Senate seat in the Nov. 3, 2026, general election, with no-party-affiliation candidate Neil J. Gillespie also on the ballot. Florida voters statewide will decide the race. Moody was appointed to the seat by Gov. Ron DeSantis in January 2025 after Sen. Marco Rubio resigned to become U.S. Secretary of State. Because this is a special election, the winner will serve out the remainder of Rubio's term, through January 2029, rather than a full six-year term.

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

- [Ashley Moody](#) (Republican)
- [Angie Nixon](#) (Democrat)
- [Minor Candidate](#)
- [Polling and Campaign Finance Data](#)

Ashley Moody

Republican incumbent Ashley Moody is a fifth-generation Floridian raised in Plant City, Florida. She earned bachelor's, master's, and law degrees at the University of Florida and a Master of Laws from Stetson University. Moody began her career at the law firm Holland & Knight, where she specialized in commercial litigation. She later served as a federal prosecutor in Jacksonville and Tampa, where she handled cases involving drug trafficking, firearms, and fraud offenses (2004–2006). In 2006, she was elected to serve on the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court in Hillsborough County (2007–2017). Moody was elected to serve as Florida's Attorney General in 2018 and re-elected in 2022. As Attorney General, she championed policies to enhance public safety, strengthen law enforcement, and crack down on violent crime. She also supported lawsuits to invalidate the Affordable Care Act and opposed the legalization of recreational cannabis. In January 2025, Moody was sworn into the U.S. Senate after being appointed by Governor Ron DeSantis. ([Campaign website](#); [Official U.S. Senate biography](#))

Platform

Moody's campaign website states, "Florida's America First Fighter." Its priorities are unchanged from the [primary post](#): law and order, economic prosperity, and American sovereignty. No structured issues list exists on her site.

Endorsements

From her [campaign website](#), current as of Sept. 11, 2026, expanded from the [primary-post](#) list:

- **Federal and state officials:** President Donald Trump, Gov. Ron DeSantis, Sen. Rick Scott, Sen. Ted Cruz, Sen. Tommy Tuberville, CFO Blaise Ingoglia, and Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson, among 15 U.S. House members and other statewide officials
- **Law enforcement:** Florida Fraternal Order of Police, Florida Police Benevolent Association, Florida Police Chiefs Association, and 64 Florida sheriffs
- **Business and advocacy organizations:** Florida Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Florida, Florida Farm Bureau Federation FedPAC, Florida Home Builders Association, and the NRA, among others
- **Party organizations:** Republican Party of Florida, Senate Conservatives Fund, and Winning for Women

Legal Matters

On Aug. 26, 2026, a leaked grand jury report found that the DeSantis administration misappropriated \$10 million from a state Medicaid settlement with Centene. Specifically, it found that \$10 million was diverted through the Hope Florida Foundation, a nonprofit tied to First Lady Casey DeSantis, and ultimately to political action committees and the Republican Party of Florida that funded the 2024 campaign against Amendment 3, the recreational marijuana measure that Moody and the DeSantis administration opposed. The grand jury said it found insufficient evidence to charge anyone criminally, but concluded the funds were misappropriated and that no one had taken responsibility for the decision. The report's narrative, though not its formal findings, describes then-Attorney General Moody authorizing her then-chief deputy, John Guard, to sign the settlement agreement. According to the report, Guard was concerned the legislature would view the \$10 million commitment as encroaching on its spending authority; the report says the concerns were addressed by restructuring the agreement so the Agency for Health Care Administration, not Moody's office, would appear responsible. ([CBS News Miami](#); [Grand Jury Report](#))

Moody disputed the characterization, saying AHCA negotiated the settlement, that her office signed it only as one of several agencies as standard practice, and that it "had no knowledge of how funds would be spent or played any role in how Hope Florida, AHCA, or the legislature would spend the settlement money." She called efforts to characterize it otherwise "disingenuous." ([Fox49](#))

Nixon called for Moody's resignation over the findings, saying "Everyone involved in this, Ashley Moody included, should resign; enough is enough," and calling it "the ultimate betrayal of working families." ([CBS News Miami](#))

In the News

- Grand jury finds DeSantis administration "misappropriated" \$10 million in taxpayer money to Hope Florida. ([CBS News Miami](#), 8/26/26)
- Sen. Ashley Moody disputes reports on Hope Florida amid grand jury scrutiny. ([Fox49](#), 8/27/26)
- Democratic candidates call for resignations of Uthmeier and Moody over Hope Florida grand jury findings. ([CBS News Miami](#), 8/27/26)
- Immigration, crime and economy shape Ashley Moody's Senate campaign. ([WGCU](#), 9/7/26)
- Ashley Moody takes a hard pass on first debate with Angie Nixon. ([Florida Politics](#), 9/9/26)

Further Research

- Campaign website: ashleymoody.com
 - Official U.S. Senate page: moody.senate.gov
 - Active social media: [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#)
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Angie Nixon

Democratic challenger Angie Nixon, whose full legal name is Angela Nixon, was born and lives in Jacksonville, FL. After earning a B.A. in political science from the University of Florida in 2007, Nixon worked on a series of political campaigns and held several community organizer positions. Nixon was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in 2020 and has been re-elected twice since. ([Campaign website](#); [Florida House biography](#))

She was sanctioned earlier this year by the House Rules and Ethics Committee for using a megaphone to protest while her colleagues voted to approve a congressional redistricting map. ([CBS News Miami](#))

Nixon also serves as Executive Director of Florida for All, a statewide voter registration and fundraising coalition, and runs a bookstore and community hub focused on bringing healthy food and educational opportunities to local families. ([Campaign website](#); [Florida House biography](#))

Platform

Nixon's campaign [website](#) now runs a "Working Families Guarantee" platform, a significant expansion from the primary post's one-sentence description:

- Medicare for All
- Universal Child Care and Pre-K
- Quality Public Education Cradle to Career
- Housing You Can Actually Afford
- Standing With Workers and Unions
- Reining in Big Tech and AI
- A Foreign Policy Rooted in Diplomacy, Human Rights, and Restraint
- Support Human Dignity, Ending Mass Incarceration and Mass Deportation
- Protecting Your Privacy and Ending Mass Surveillance
- Climate Action That Matches the Scale of the Crisis
- Protecting and Expanding Democracy, Getting Money Out of Politics
- Making Billionaires and Corporations Pay Their Fair Share
- Combatting Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, Anti-Blackness, Nativism, Transphobia, and All Forms of Hate

Endorsements

From her [campaign website](#), current as of Sept. 11, 2026, expanded from the primary-post list:

- **National leaders:** U.S. Reps. Maxwell Frost, Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib, Ayanna Pressley, and Yvette Clarke, Sens. Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders, and Chris Murphy, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and former Rep. Cori Bush, among others
- **Local leaders:** state senators, state representatives, city commissioners, and State Attorneys Harold Pryor and Monique Worrell, among others
- **Organizations:** Common Defense

In the News

- Florida's Angie Nixon isn't the socialist you've heard about. ([Axios](#), 8/21/26)
- Bernie Sanders endorses Florida's Angie Nixon for Senate. ([Axios](#), 8/20/26)
- 1-on-1 with Angie Nixon after her Florida primary win, what's next in race for Senate. ([CBS Miami](#), 8/23/26)
- Democratic candidates call for resignations of Uthmeier and Moody over Hope Florida grand jury findings. ([CBS News Miami](#), 8/27/26)
- How U.S. Senate candidate Angie Nixon plans to reach Florida voters. ([WGCU](#), 9/7/26)
- Will Angie Nixon drag down the entire Florida Democratic ticket? ([Florida Politics](#), 9/8/26)

- Ashley Moody takes a hard pass on first debate with Angie Nixon. ([Florida Politics](#), 9/9/26)

Further Research

- Campaign website: [angienixon.com](#)
 - Florida House biography: [myfloridahouse.gov](#)
 - Active social media: [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#)
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Minor Candidates

No-party-affiliation candidate Neil J. Gillespie also qualified directly for the Nov. 3, 2026, general election ballot for U.S. Senate.

- Neil J. Gillespie (NPA): [Campaign website](#)
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Polling and Campaign Finance Data

According to [RealClearPolling's average](#) of recent polls (accessed Sept. 13, 2026), Moody leads Nixon 49.0% to 40.3%, an 8.7-point margin; RealClearPolling rates the race “Likely R.”

Ashley Moody's Contributions

Ashley Moody had 14 percent of receipts from small-dollar contributions of less than \$200, the FEC threshold for itemized donor disclosure. Sixteen percent of her itemized individual contributions came from Florida donors; 84 percent came from out of state.

Separately, Florida Leads, a leadership PAC she sponsors, has raised \$1.1 million since its formation, of which \$769,406 remains available.

Angie Nixon's Contributions

Angie Nixon had 59 percent of receipts from small-dollar contributions. Eighty-six percent of her itemized individual contributions came from Florida donors; 14 percent came from out of state.

In addition, independent expenditures for Moody as of July 29, 2026, included \$250,000 by SLF PAC, \$177,210 by Senate Conservatives Fund, \$55,000 by Law Enforcement for a Safer America PAC, \$53,948 by Senate Conservatives Action, and \$150 by Moshangusa Free Speech. Spending against Moody of \$36,025 was reported by Out of the Swamp PAC. No Super PAC independent expenditure

activity was identified for Nixon as of July 29, 2026. Independent expenditures are not coordinated with candidates and are not included in the campaign finance totals above.

For complete campaign finance data, see the [U.S. Senate race page on OpenSecrets](#). For more on how to read these figures and what this information does and does not tell us, see Sparker's Civics primer, [Understanding Campaign Finance Data](#).

Campaign finance data is from Federal Election Commission filings, cross-checked against source records. Data through July 29, 2026. Florida Leads data was compiled separately from its own FEC committee filing (ID C00896092), through June 30, 2026. See the FEC's [committee filings search](#) for complete records.

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.