

# The Facts on CA48

Updated on April 25, 2026

Claim	Backup
<p>Additional reporting on Campa-Najjar’s con man record.</p>	<p><b>Michael Smolens: “Ammar Campa-Najjar has a lot of explaining to do.”</b> “It’s hardly rare that candidates in the past shifted positions and made controversial statements. Ammar Campa-Najjar may have done that more than most. During his previous run for Congress in 2020, Campa-Najjar said he:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opposed “legal or illegal abortion.”</li><li>• Did not support banning assault weapons.</li><li>• Would consider voting for Donald Trump over Joe Biden for president.</li><li>• Would not have voted to impeach President Trump.</li><li>• Considered supporting investigations of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama regarding Russia’s involvement in Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign.</li></ul> <p>These days, one of his top campaign priorities is to get “money out of politics,” yet his campaigns have benefited from generous financial support from the family of his partner, Rep. Sara Jacobs, D-San Diego, whose grandfather, Qualcomm co-founder Irwin Jacobs, has been a major national donor to the Democratic Party for years. Campa-Najjar, like other candidates, also is backed by independent expenditure committees.” [The San Diego Union-Tribune, <a href="#">4/24/26</a>]</p>
<p>Navy investigations found that Campa-Najjar broke Pentagon regulations – Campa-Najjar lied about the investigation to reporters. Veterans have condemned his misuse of his military status and his use of gravesite photos with a veteran who he had no relationship with.</p>	<p><b>Headlines:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>“San Diego Congressional Candidate Broke Pentagon Rules In His Campaign.”</b> [KPBS, <a href="#">4/24/26</a>]</li><li>• <b>“Navy Says Campa-Najjar’s Use Of Uniform In Campaign Warranted ‘Corrective Action.’”</b> [KPBS, <a href="#">4/23/26</a>]</li></ul> <p><b>Navy Reserve Inspector General Confirmed Complaint Over Campa-Najjar’s Use Of His Naval Reserve Status Resulted In “Corrective Action,” While Social Media Posts Warranted</b></p>

**“Further Scrutiny” Under Ongoing Review By His Chain Of Command.** “A San Diego congressional candidate ran afoul of Pentagon rules by using his status as a Navy Reserve officer in his campaign, the Navy Reserve inspector general said in an email... News reports and veterans raised questions about whether Campa-Najjar's use of that status ran afoul of Pentagon regulations last month. Freelance journalist Douglas Aguillard filed a complaint with the Navy Reserve inspector general in early March. On Wednesday, in an email response to the complaint obtained by KPBS, the inspector general wrote the candidate's chain of command was notified of the complaint and enacted ‘corrective action.’ The email also says more potential violations of Pentagon rules remain on Campa-Najjar's campaign Facebook page, however, and that those concerns were sent to his chain of command Wednesday... ‘...there is content on the subject’s campaign Facebook page that warrants further scrutiny by his Navy Reserve chain of command,’ the email says. ‘Therefore, these remaining social media concerns were referred to Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command ... on 22 April 2026 for action deemed appropriate.’” [KPBS, [4/23/26](#)]

**Campa-Najjar Had Said Pentagon Told Him His Campaign Materials Were “Spot On” And Claimed “There Is No Investigation.”** In an interview with NBC San Diego, Campa-Najjar said, “I reached out to my command. I reached out to the Pentagon and the JAGs, and I asked them about this, and they gave me standard issue guidance that they give every reservist, and they said that I am good to go. They said I was spot on and that I wanted to clarify something because this has come up and this has never been said. The Navy has never told anybody, me or the press that there's a quote unquote, investigation that was entirely created by the New York Post. And it's reckless and it's irresponsible. There is no investigation.” [NBC San Diego, [4/23/26](#)]

- **Campa-Najjar Claimed Navy Told Him He Was “Good To Go.”** In another interview with Times of San Diego,

	<p>Campa-Najjar said, "I talked to my command and the Navy... and they said you were spot on. You're good to go." [YouTube, <a href="#">4/19/26</a>]</p> <p><b>Veterans Condemned Campa-Najjar For Using Campaign Photos From Military Cemetery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Michael Malach, an Army combat veteran, said: 'All these allegations are damning and show a complete disregard for what military service and wearing the uniform should mean. 'Shame on Campa-Najjar and anyone who supported these cynical political stunts, especially using posed portraits at a deceased veteran's grave to try and boost his campaign.'" [California Post, <a href="#">3/26/26</a>]</li><li>• "“Our national cemeteries are sacred ground — not political backdrops. Using a service member's gravesite at a VA cemetery for political campaign photos is among the most disrespectful, distasteful and cynical political ploys I've ever seen,' added Brian Van Riper, a Marine Corps combat veteran and former organizer for President Barack Obama." [California Post, <a href="#">3/26/26</a>]</li></ul>
<p>Campa-Najjar is bankrolled by billionaires and a dark money Delaware corporation</p>	<p><b>Headline: "A Bezos-Backed PAC And Irwin Jacobs Are Spending Big For Ammar Campa-Najjar."</b> "Ammar Campa-Najjar's bid for the newly redistricted 48th Congressional District got a big boost last week from the Bezos family. The donation from a group that has received a majority of its funding from Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, and his parents. It landed in Serving CA, a committee solely supporting Campa-Najjar, and came in alongside a major donation from Irwin Jacobs, the Qualcomm founder and grandfather of Campa-Najjar's girlfriend, Rep. Sara Jacobs. Irwin Jacobs dropped \$500,000 to support Campa-Najjar, one of the leading Democratic candidates in a toss-up district that could determine control of Congress. The Bezos-backed group added another \$250,000 on his behalf. The Bezos support came by way of the latest iteration of the With Honor Fund, which in the organization's nearly 10 years of existence has received \$27.3</p>

	<p>million from the Bezos family, good for 55% of its total funding.” [Times of San Diego, <a href="#">4/24/26</a>]</p> <p><b>Bezos-Linked Funds Were Contributed Though “Servant-Leader Fund.”</b> “But the Bezos money took a serpentine path before it ended up with Serving CA, the committee created in February to support Campa-Najjar that currently has \$819,980 in the bank... The donation to Serving CA came through the Servant-Leader Fund, a super PAC that describes itself as a fund for Democratic veteran candidates. But 95% of the Servant Leader Fund’s money comes from two other political action committees — With Honor Fund II and With Honor Fund III.” [Times of San Diego, <a href="#">4/24/26</a>]</p> <p><b>Servant-Leader Fund, Inc. Is Super PAC, Delaware-Based Corporation.</b> [<a href="#">fec.gov</a>; <a href="#">Delaware Dept of State Division of Corporations</a>, Filed No. 10077521]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Delaware “The Biggest Single Source Of Anonymous Corporations In The World.”</b> “The New York Times quotes the chief executive of a registration agent — a company that registers companies — as saying Delaware has ‘the most secret companies in the world and the easiest to form.’ A senior researcher at the Tax Justice Network quoted in its piece concurs, calling Delaware ‘the biggest single source of anonymous corporations in the world.’” [Sunlight Foundation, <a href="#">4/6/16</a>]</li></ul>
<p>Marni is leading the charge against ICE’s terror tactics. Marni pushed to take ICE to court for its abusive practices and blew the whistle against ICE weapons training in our community.</p>	<p><b>Von Wilpert Introduced Resolution Authorizing City Attorney To Take Legal Action Supporting Minnesota And Illinois’ Lawsuits Against Trump Administration, Asserting “ICE’s Enforcement Actions Must Comply With Constitutional Protections.”</b> “The San Diego City Council voted Monday to authorize the City Attorney’s Office to take legal action supporting constitutional lawsuits filed by the states of Minnesota and Illinois against the Trump Administration. The move comes after the council approved a resolution introduced by Councilmember Marni von Wilpert, chair of the city’s Public Safety Committee, opposing what she described as ‘aggressive and unlawful enforcement tactics’ by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)... The resolution asserts that ICE’s enforcement actions must comply with constitutional protections, including</p>

due process and equal protection under the law. Von Wilpert emphasized that federal agencies have a responsibility to uphold civil liberties while carrying out their duties.” [Fox 5/KUSI, [2/4/26](#)]

**San Diego City Council passes resolution opposing ‘excessive’ ICE tactics.** “The resolution also allows City Attorney Heather Ferbert to take legal action on behalf of San Diego to support Minnesota and Illinois lawsuits against DHS, ICE and CBP.” [NBC 7/KNSD, [2/2/26](#)]

“Councilwoman Marni von Wilpert, chair of the Public Safety Committee, was joined by Councilmembers Sean Elo-Rivera and Vivian Moreno in bringing forward the resolution, which would allow City Attorney Heather Ferbert to take legal action on behalf of San Diego to support Minnesota and Illinois lawsuits against the Trump Administration via DHS, United States Immigration Customs and Enforcement, and United States Customs and Border Protection.” [Times of San Diego, [1/29/26](#)]

**Von Wilpert Called on the City of Escondido to Cancel Their Contract with ICE.** “San Diego Councilmember Marni Von Wilpert is pushing for the agreement to be terminated. She represents District 5, which is just south of Escondido, and is running for Congress in the newly redrawn 48th district that will include the City. “We can show the city of Escondido we have to stand up to Trump and Kristi Noem’s unlawful tactics and pull ICE back and out of our communities,” she said. Von Wilpert has launched a petition arguing that taxpayer-funded facilities should not be used by ICE. “What ICE is doing is un-American, it is not immigration enforcement, and we here in local government need to use all the resources we can to protect our communities against these unlawful tactics by ICE,” Von Wilpert said.” [CBS8/KFMB-TV, [1/25/26](#)]

“A San Diego City Council member running for Congress is calling on Escondido to cancel its contract with the federal government that allows Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to train at the Escondido Police Department’s outdoor

	<p>shooting range. “City resources should be used to keep all communities safe — not to train Trump’s deportation forces,” said San Diego Councilmember Marni von Wilpert, who is one of nearly a dozen candidates for the 48th Congressional District seat held by Rep. Darrell Issa.” [The San Diego Union-Tribune, <a href="#">1/26/26</a>]</p> <p>“This contract was not approved with the public vote, and the city council never had an opportunity to vote on this contract in Escondido,” San Diego City Councilmember Marni von Wilpert said. von Wilpert is calling for her counterparts in Escondido to end the contract. “It’s just what we’re seeing is so chaotic and un-American. We need to end this contract and not allow ICE to do further damage to our communities,” von Wilpert said. [ABC 10/KGTV, <a href="#">1/28/26</a>]</p>
<p>Marni is a former prosecutor where she sued chemical polluter Monsanto for poisoning California’s waterways.</p>	<p><b>Von Wilpert Is A Former Civil Prosecutor, Sued Monsanto Over San Diego Bay Pollution.</b> “When [von Wilpert] returned home to Scripps Ranch, she started working for City Attorney Mara Elliott as a civil prosecutor. ‘I go after corporations for polluting our environment, violating privacy rights or not treating their workers fairly,’ she said. Her cases have included suits against Experian for selling data, Monsanto for polluting San Diego Bay and Instacart for violating workers’ rights.” [San Diego Union-Tribune, <a href="#">12/9/20</a>]</p> <p><b>June 2020: City Attorney Announced \$550 Million Total Settlement With Monsanto.</b> “Today, the Office of San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott and twelve other governmental entities announced a proposed settlement of \$550 million in the nationwide class action lawsuit against Monsanto Company and related subsidiaries to clean up cancer-causing polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs) from contaminated waterways throughout the country... The City of San Diego is represented by City Attorney Mara W. Elliott’s Affirmative Civil Enforcement (ACE) Unit: Chief Deputy City Attorney Mark Ankcorn, Deputy City Attorney Kevin B. King, and Deputy City Attorney Marni von Wilpert.” [San Diego City Attorney Release, <a href="#">6/24/20</a>]</p>

<p>Marni von Wilpert has a proven record of beating the Republicans.</p>	<p><b>November 2020: Von Wilpert Defeated Republican In City Council District 5 Election By 6.5%.</b> Von Wilpert won her November 2020 city council election with 53.25% of the vote against Republican Joe Leventhal's 46.75%. [<a href="#">San Diego County Voter Registrar</a>]</p> <p><b>District 5 Was San Diego's "Traditionally Most Conservative District."</b> "There's no more closely followed race for the San Diego City Council than the traditionally most conservative district in the city, District 5. It covers Rancho Peñasquitos, Rancho Bernardo and Scripps Ranch." [Voice of San Diego, <a href="#">8/22/20</a>]</p>
<p>Marni passed a law in San Diego to protect abortion rights after Roe v Wade was overturned.</p>	<p><b>Von Wilpert Co-Authored Pioneering Resolution Declaring San Diego Safe For Reproductive Freedom.</b> "The San Diego City Council passed a resolution Tuesday declaring San Diego a 'safe city for reproductive freedom and access to abortion,' a move supporters believe makes it the first city in the nation to do so. Councilman Stephen Whitburn authored the resolution — which passed 8-0 — with Council President Pro Tem Monica Montgomery Steppe and Councilwomen Jennifer Campbell and Marni von Wilpert." [City News Service, <a href="#">5/24/22</a>]</p> <p><b>2024: Von Wilpert Made The Motion To Approve San Diego's Updated Buffer Zone Law In 2024.</b> "The city of San Diego is strengthening its ordinances to give people who deal with protestors more rights to not be obstructed or harassed. The city passed an ordinance May 21 that creates a 100-foot buffer zone around a health care facility, place of worship or K-12 school grounds that restricts protestors from going within eight feet of people unless they give consent... The staff memo stated that the state legislature has passed several laws to make California a safe haven for those wanting to have abortions... Since 2021, the San Diego Police Department has responded to complaints at a Planned Parenthood location in the downtown at least 32 separate times. The police have also received 23 requests to respond to disturbances and trespassing, according to the memo. The memo stated that Planned Parenthood employees said that protestors had aggressively</p>

	<p>confronted them, followed staff to their vehicles and taken photos of their license plates and yelled and screamed at them.” “An ordinance is a law adopted by the City Council. Ordinances usually amend, repeal or supplement the Municipal Code; provide zoning specifications; or appropriate money for specific purposes.” [Center Square, <a href="#">5/22/24</a>; San Diego City Council Meeting Minutes, <a href="#">5/21/24</a>; City of San Diego, <a href="#">City Council Resolutions and Ordinances</a>]</p>
<p>Marni prosecuted the drug companies that fueled the opioid epidemic.</p>	<p><b>Von Wilpert Was One Of The Lead Litigators On San Diego’s Case Against Purdue Pharma.</b> [Case No. <a href="#">3:2019cv00420</a>, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California]</p>
<p>Obama administration labor attorney</p>	<p><b>Von Wilpert served as a labor lawyer for the Obama administration from 2014 to 2017.</b> After that, it was two years at the Mississippi legal clinic and a one-year clerkship for a judge before joining the Obama administration from 2014 to 2017. She worked for the president at the National Labor Relations Board and in Congress, focusing on workers’ rights. [The San Diego Union-Tribune, <a href="#">12/6/20</a>]</p>

<p>Claim</p>	<p>Backup</p>
<p>Ammar Campa-Najjar isn’t just a flip flopper on the issues that matter, he’s also a con man. He’s run and lost three campaigns from <a href="#">four different addresses</a></p>	<p><b>Campa-Najjar Has Used Addresses In Jamul, East Chula Vista, And Kensington During Various Campaigns, While Also Apparently Living In Downtown San Diego.</b> “A former candidate for Chula Vista Mayor continues to use an address in the City nearly three years after losing the election, despite being exposed for actually living in San Diego during and after his campaign... Before the 2022 election, [John] McCann exposed videos of Campa-Najjar living in San Diego at the Bankers Hill condo of his girlfriend, Congresswoman Sara Jacobs... La Prensa San Diego interviewed Campa-Najjar when he claimed he lived in an East Chula Vista condo occupied by relatives, including his aunt and uncle, and an adult cousin, but he refused to meet at the condo to show his living arrangements... in previous campaigns for an</p>

	<p>East County Congressional district in 2018 and 2020, he claimed he was a ‘Jamuligan’ who grew up in the East County community of Jamul, where his mom and her husband live... After losing the Mayor’s race, Campa-Najjar changed his voter registration address to a home owned by Jacobs in the Kensington area of San Diego and continues to use that address now.” [La Prensa, <a href="#">2/3/26</a>]</p>
<p>under <a href="#">two different names</a></p>	<p><b>Campa-Najjar Petitioned To Legally Change His Name Three Weeks Before 2018 Candidate Filing Deadline.</b> San Diego County court records show Ammar Campa-Najjar filed to change his legal name from Ammar Yasser Najjar on February 15, 2018, and the petition was granted several months later on June 12, 2018 (shortly after the primary election). The candidate filing deadline during the 2018 election was <a href="#">March 9, 2018</a>. [San Diego County Superior Court Case No. 37-2018-00007993-CU-PT-CTL, Filed 2/15/18; <a href="#">California Secretary of State</a>]</p> <p>FEC records show Campa-Najjar initially filed to run for congress in March 2017 as “Ammar Campa-Najjar,” in June 2017 he filed an amended statement of organization using the name “Ammar Campa.” [fec.gov, <a href="#">3/27/17</a>; <a href="#">6/1/17</a>]</p> <p><b>Campa-Najjar Petitioned To Legally Change His Name Three Weeks Before 2018 Candidate Filing Deadline.</b> San Diego County court records show Ammar Campa-Najjar filed to change his legal name from Ammar Yasser Najjar on February 15, 2018, and the petition was granted several months later on June 12, 2018 (shortly after the primary election). The candidate filing deadline during the 2018 election was <a href="#">March 9, 2018</a>. [San Diego County Superior Court Case No. 37-2018-00007993-CU-PT-CTL, Filed 2/15/18; <a href="#">California Secretary of State</a>]</p>
<p>He <a href="#">opposed Trump’s impeachment, supported Trump’s border wall</a>,</p>	<p><b>Campa-Najjar Expressed Support For Trump Border Wall And Opposition To Trump’s Impeachment.</b> “[Campa-Najjar] also reiterated stances he’s previously made in support of Trump’s border wall and against his impeachment.” [KPBS, <a href="#">10/11/20</a>]</p>

<p><a href="#">donated to an extreme gun rights group,</a></p>	<p><b>Campa-Najjar Contributed \$650 To San Diego County Gun Owners PAC.</b> According to San Diego County campaign finance records, Campa-Najjar contributed \$650 to the San Diego County Gun Owners PAC in September 2020. [<a href="#">San Diego County Campaign Finance Reports</a>]</p> <p><b>San Diego County Gun Owners Had Previously Opposed Assault Weapons Ban, Safe Storage Measures.</b> [Union-Tribune, <a href="#">8/16/19</a>; Union-Tribune, <a href="#">9/11/19</a>]</p>
<p>and said, quote, "<a href="#">I ran for Congress to work with Trump.</a>"</p>	<p><b>"I ran for Congress to work with Trump"</b> – Campa-Najjar interview with Defend East County leader Justin Haskins [KPBS, <a href="#">10/11/20</a> - <a href="#">YouTube link</a>]</p>
<p>He was <a href="#">against abortion</a>, then for abortion.</p>	<p><b>Campa-Najjar Wrote That He Did Not Support "Legal Or Illegal Abortion."</b> Multiple outlets reported that Campa-Najjar wrote in that he did not support "legal or illegal abortion" <a href="#">during an October 2020 exchange in the Defend East County Facebook group</a>, with screenshots:</p> <p>"Campa-Najjar, a registered Democrat, was criticized in October 2020 for a live-stream interview he held with Defend East County, a known far-right group whose followers regularly promote right-wing conspiracy theories, make racist statements, and publicly called for violence against Black Lives Matter protesters. Campa-Najjar and the group's leader, Justin Haskins, smoked cigars and drank during the interview... During that same period, as Campa-Najjar worked to garner voter from conservative East County voters, he expressed in a Facebook exchange that he did not 'support legal or illegal abortion', taking a position that seemed at odds with his endorsement by Planned Parenthood, NARAL Pro-Choice PAC, and other pro-choice groups, including the Democratic Party and several prominent elected officials." [La Prensa, <a href="#">5/7/22</a>]</p> <p>"In 2020, [Campa-Najjar] ran against congressman Darrell Issa to represent California's 50th Congressional District. Running as a Democrat, Campa-Najjar flaunted his proximity to</p>

Donald Trump through comments in the Defend East County Facebook group. Campa-Najjar commented that he intended to switch his party affiliation to Independent once elected, and that he did not support 'legal or illegal' abortion." [Left Coast Right Watch, [8/10/22](#)]

Facebook later [removed the Defend East County group](#), but Campa-Najjar discussed joining it and engaging with its members during his interview with Haskins:

Campa-Najjar: "**I joined Defend East County because I wanted to see it for myself...** this group has gotten a bad rap because people are focusing on only one thing and a few bad actors that every group has... I appreciate your leadership on that and what I've seen on the group so far, I don't know if you've done some cleaning of it, but the way it looks right now, aside from the comments about me, I think they're pretty damn good." [YouTube, 10/12/20, [6:00 Mark](#)]

Haskins: "When we got to talking, [Campa-Najjar] **wanted to be on the page**, my exact words to Ammar were that you know, I would not support him, I would not endorse him, but **I would allow him to be on the page just as I would any candidate or politician, so that they could answer questions** and promote themselves. I think that this is an incredible tool that we have, the ability to do, rather than sending in an email to a candidate or politician's public account and who knows if their PR person is gonna get it and respond [*Campa-Najjar laughs*] or when you're going to get it, we have the opportunity here to ask questions directly and get real-time answers." [YouTube, 10/12/20, [1:33 Mark](#)]

Haskins: "I'm glad you... want to be on the page." [YouTube, 10/12/20, [7:52 Mark](#)]