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SPOTLIGHT

The Tao According to Ruben Gallego

Lessons from the junior Arizona senator.



Audience members listen to Sen. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., speak during a town hall meeting, Saturday, Aug. 9, 2025, in Davenport, Iowa. (AP Photo/Charlie Neibergall)

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Despite former Vice President Kamala Harris' sweeping loss in Arizona in 2024, Sen. Ruben Gallego (D) outperformed the national party among Latinos and men, helping him secure victory in a highly contested seat.

Now, Gallego is hitting the road and giving national Democrats a crash course on how to reimagine the party's identity ahead of the upcoming midterms.

"We need to go back to the basics of who we are: A pro-worker, pro-family party that is aspirational and pushing the American dream," Gallego said in an interview with [CBS News](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ruben-gallego-interview/)

(https://go2.nationaljournal.com/NTU2LVlFRSo5NjkAAAGcTVx_Bf4I1-kWiXNCkKB-hxU1Xm7Uo8p_qgwLTShUhpzIy7uKsH8eYPW_yQo_Tr4Sw6j2Tn8=).

So far, Gallego has made stops in Iowa and Pennsylvania as he attempts to reinvigorate the party. His advice is rooted in winning over the Latino

community, which was a key coalition for President Trump and a base that Gallego performed well with.

“For the first time starting around 2023, I heard this exhaustion, really from these [Latino] men ... psychologically that really clicked on in me cause I grew up in that community, I understand that mentality,” Gallego said in an interview with the [Wall Street Journal](https://go2.nationaljournal.com/NTU2LVlFRSo5Nj kAAAGcTVx BM7jXgQqzSRtOj-ig8rmkLK8sb-Z4u6yvrsL8W8c6kF4CZC2PF8cRgbfvG2TPtuNDZg=)

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The 45-year-old veteran cemented his legacy as a progressive Democrat during his tenure in the House. In 2024, Gallego was 1 of 4 Democratic senators who won in battleground states that Trump flipped.

Gallego edged out his competitor, 2022 GOP nominee Kari Lake (R), by 2 points. His strategy was seemingly focused on reworking his progressive ideology to appeal to a much wider voter base that isn’t comfortably

Democratic—like pushing for stronger borders as a necessary means to enhance national security and touting his military background.

“Arizona is not Nancy Pelosi or Chuck Schumer country,” said Paul Bentz, senior vice president of research and strategy at Highground Inc., in an interview with *Hotline*. “From [former Sen. Kyrsten] Sinema to [Sen. Mark] Kelly to Gallego, Democrats who have been successful in this state have posed themselves more as Arizonans and independent thinkers—not identifying or putting their sole identity into their Democratic background.”

— *Amelia Monroe*

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