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Recount ends in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties: It’s Low, Liccardo

Results break tie between 2nd-place congressional candidates by 5 votes

By Holly Rusch , Daily Journal staff
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Evan Low will face off against front-runner Sam Liccardo in the District 16 congressional election, finalized recount results confirm — marking an end to the controversial recount saga that emerged after [Low and candidate Joe Simitian tied for second place](#).

The recount results, which found 12 previously uncounted votes for Low and seven for Simitian, break a historic second-place tie for the Silicon Valley seat.

Santa Clara County’s recount found 11 additional votes for Low and seven for Simitian, according to an April 30 press release from the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters.

San Mateo County’s recount results found one additional vote for Low, its elections office announced May 1.

“We are very excited that my advancement into the general election was reaffirmed and I now look forward to the real work of tackling the big issues facing our country, like reproductive freedom and affordability,” Low said in a social media statement.

Low had previously spoken out against the recount — which was requested, technically on his behalf, by former Liccardo staffer Jonathan Padilla — calling into question its legality as well as its funding sources.

[Turbulence and local political intrigue followed the recount](#) in following weeks after confirmation the process was paid for by Super PAC Count the Vote, spurring criticism from elected officials like Low and U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto — who currently holds the District 16 seat — demanding funding transparency.

A filed Federal Election Commission complaint soon followed, accusing Liccardo of conspiring with Padilla and other individuals previously close to his campaign to illegally pay for the recount — an accusation the Liccardo camp roundly denied.

A Low campaign spokesperson did not immediately respond to request for comment on previous challenges to the legality of the recount, but Liccardo’s team referenced it in a statement, maintaining that while Low tried to “undermine and stop” the recount process, Liccardo “steadfastly stood by the principle every vote should be counted.”

“Despite the efforts of some to stop this recount, we should also celebrate that democracy prevailed. Previously uncounted votes were counted. We can now re-focus on our work ahead, toward solutions to our region’s and nation’s great challenges,” the Liccardo statement read.

Simitian announced his concession in a May 1 statement when he said he was disappointed, but not sad, at the results of the recount and had no doubt that Low and Liccardo will run a “lively campaign.”

“I’m disappointed because I won’t have the opportunity to bring a fresh take to our nation’s Capitol — where we urgently need a renewed sense of purpose, and a commitment to maintaining and sustaining our democracy,” he said. “That said, I am not sad. I have a wonderful life, a wonderful wife, and satisfying work to engage me at the county.”

Simitian is a former state senator and assemblymember currently serving as a member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. Liccardo is the former mayor of San Jose and Low is an assemblymember representing District 26, with a district office in Cupertino.

The highly-anticipated recount results found in Santa Clara County, 19 ballots were erroneously excluded due to human error and seven of 45 challenged ballots were found valid to include in finalized results. Additionally, three ballots were mistakenly counted twice and subtracted from the total count.

In San Mateo County, a machine recount found no errors to the original results, although seven of 28 challenged ballots were found valid and included in finalized results.

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