



Written by [Brian Koenig](#) on November 8, 2012

## Rep. Allen West Trails in Florida, Fighting for Recount

Republican Rep. Allen West, the outspoken Army veteran who won Florida's 18th congressional contest during the 2008 Tea Party blitz, lost by a slight margin Tuesday in his hotly-contested battle against Democratic challenger Patrick Murphy. But while Murphy has declared himself the winner, after securing an initial vote count in front by 2,456 — out of more than 300,000 total votes — West has yet to concede the race.



Protesting his challenger's alleged victory, West [filed](#) multiple motions Wednesday in St. Lucie County and Palm Beach County for injunctions in order to administer a recount of paper ballots and an investigation of electronic voting machines used in the hard-fought race. "This race is far from decided, and there is no rush to declare an outcome," he affirmed in a statement. "Ensuring a fair and accurate counting of all ballots is of the utmost importance."

Murphy won 50.4 percent of the vote, granting him a margin of about three-quarters of a percentage point, just above the breakpoint for a recount mandated under state law. But West alleges that a preliminary recount of early ballots in St. Lucie District had altered his 2,000-vote lead to a deficit of 2,400. Furthermore, there was other suspicious activity transpiring at the polls in the district, said West's campaign manager Tim Edson in a [statement](#):

In addition, there were numerous other disturbing irregularities reported at polls across St. Lucie County including the doors to polling places being locked when the polls closed, in direct violation of Florida law, thereby preventing the public from witnessing the procedures used to tabulate results. The St. Lucie County Supervisor of Elections office clearly ignored proper rules and procedures, and the scene at the Supervisor's office last night could only be described as complete chaos. Given the hostility and demonstrated incompetence of the St. Lucie County Supervisor of Elections, we believe it is critical that a full hand recount of the ballots take place in St. Lucie County. We will continue to fight to ensure every vote is counted properly and fairly, and accordingly will pursue all legal means necessary.

Murphy's campaign asserted Thursday that it's time for West to concede victory, indicating that his opponent's injunction is only delaying the inevitable outcome that Florida's 18th congressional district voted for. "Patrick Murphy is grateful to the voters for electing him," Murphy's communications director Erin Moffet [stated](#). "People are ready for the campaign season to be over and for the people they elected to get to work."

The congressional race between West and Murphy had been costly — with the two sides raising over [\\$20 million](#) as of October 17, according to the Center for Responsive Politics — and vicious at times, with heated campaign ads intended to brand their opponents as incompetent for congressional office.

Mr. West underscored Murphy's 2003 arrest for disorderly intoxication at a Miami bar when he was 19 years old. The Democratic challenger returned fire with ads highlighting the military proceedings West confronted after firing a pistol over an Iraqi prisoner's head during an interrogation. At one point in the



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race, the West campaign broadcast an ad featuring his wife, Angela West, accusing Murphy of taking the attacks on her husband too far.

Murphy insists that his campaign won the election because voters are “tired of extremism and the divisiveness,” and that Floridians are ready for a lawmaker who will put the country first. “I am humbled by the outpouring of support from the voters of the Treasure Coast and Palm Beaches,” Murphy said Thursday in a news release. “I pledge to be a representative who will work across the aisle, listen to all points of views and work to end the divisiveness in Congress. Our country faces many challenges, and by working together we will continue to move our country forward.”

The sharp-tongued conservative West [told](#) Fox News on Thursday he’s not worried about the ultimate outcome of the race. “I’ve been in combat, so this is not a stressful situation for me,” he said. “I’m not entitled to anything,” he added, saying he’s fighting to safeguard Americans’ right to vote. “We want to make sure we have a fair electoral process.”

*Photo: This Oct. 4, 2011 file photo shows Rep. Allen West (R-Fla.) during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington: AP Images*



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