

U.S. House, District 7

Open seat (Rep. Cory Mills lost the August 2026 Republican primary to Ryan Elijah).

Bale Dalton

DEMOCRAT · OPEN SEAT

Navy Reserve captain and former helicopter pilot (24 years in the Navy and Navy Reserve); former NASA chief of staff.

Ryan Elijah

REPUBLICAN · OPEN SEAT

Former Central Florida television news anchor.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

WAR & PEACE

POPE LEO XIV *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress “to work for peace and to reject war and violence.”* [Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 \(Vatican News via The Good Newsroom\)](#)

BALE DALTON

Calls for “avoiding more forever wars in the Middle East” with clear strategic goals, and criticizes the “rudderless war with Iran” for raising gas prices.

[1] Dalton campaign: Priorities

RYAN ELIJAH

In a questionnaire said “the U.S. must use discretion on foreign conflicts” and called Israel “a longtime valuable ally”; backs a strong, well-equipped military.

[1] iVoterGuide: Ryan Elijah questionnaire
[2] Elijah campaign: Key Objectives

AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

POPE LEO XIV *“No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data.”* [Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026](#)

BALE DALTON

Supports the PRO Act “so labor unions can advocate for workers in a changing economy” and a higher minimum wage; endorsed by the Florida AFL-CIO.

[1] Dalton campaign: Priorities
[2] Dalton campaign: AFL-CIO endorsement

RYAN ELIJAH

No public position found.

THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

POPE LEO XIV *The preferential choice for the poor is “a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society.”* [Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025](#)

BALE DALTON

Would restore Medicaid funding cut by the 2025 reconciliation law, reverse ACA premium increases, build on the ACA, negotiate drug prices and raise the federal minimum wage.

[1] Dalton campaign: Priorities

RYAN ELIJAH

Favors lowering health costs through expanded Health Savings Accounts and price transparency from hospitals and insurers; has not stated a position on Medicaid or SNAP changes.

[1] Elijah campaign: Key Objectives

LIFE OF THE UNBORN

POPE LEO XIV *Abortion “cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life.”* [Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026](#)

BALE DALTON

Supports codifying Roe v. Wade into federal law and opposes Florida’s six-week abortion ban, saying it “puts politicians between women and their doctors.”

[1] Dalton campaign: Priorities

RYAN ELIJAH

Describes himself as pro-life, saying “every life is a sacred gift from God.” In a questionnaire he said he supports IVF with “ethical safeguards for embryos.”

[1] Elijah campaign: Key Objectives
[2] iVoterGuide: Ryan Elijah questionnaire

THE DEATH PENALTY

POPE LEO XIV *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty “is not really pro-life.”* [AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025](#)

BALE DALTON

No public position found.

RYAN ELIJAH

No public position found.

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

POPE LEO XIV *“Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants.”* [Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026](#)

BALE DALTON

Says he supports “a robust national security and border security infrastructure”; his platform does not detail positions on deportations or legal status.

[\[1\] Dalton campaign: Priorities](#)

RYAN ELIJAH

Says “we must enforce the rule of law” and secure the border while opposing measures that weaken enforcement; supports the SAVE America Act and opposes sanctuary cities.

[\[1\] Elijah campaign: Key Objectives](#)

[\[2\] iVoterGuide: Ryan Elijah questionnaire](#)

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

POPE LEO XIV *Religious freedom is “the right of every person to worship according to conscience.”* [Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026](#)

BALE DALTON

No public position found.

RYAN ELIJAH

Champions parental rights and school choice; in a questionnaire said businesses should not be required to provide services that violate their religious beliefs.

[\[1\] Elijah campaign: Key Objectives](#)

[\[2\] iVoterGuide: Ryan Elijah questionnaire](#)

CARE FOR CREATION

POPE LEO XIV *“We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures.”* [AP, Oct. 1, 2025](#)

BALE DALTON

Opposes drilling off Florida’s coasts and backs an “all-of-the-above” energy policy that includes natural gas and solar while protecting clean air and water.

[\[1\] Dalton campaign: Priorities](#)

RYAN ELIJAH

Supports “American energy independence” and federal beach-nourishment projects; said natural gas, coal and nuclear power are the most reliable energy sources.

[\[1\] Elijah campaign: Key Objectives](#)

[\[2\] iVoterGuide: Ryan Elijah questionnaire](#)

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