



In the final days before midterms, in a sleepy farm district in ruby red Trump country, the re-election campaign of Iowa Rep. **Steve King** has become a surprise electoral bellwether for Democrats' chances of retaking the House.

King, one of the most hard-line Republicans in Congress, was last elected for his eighth term in 2016 with 61 percent of the vote; in 2016, [Donald Trump](#) won his county by 27 points. Yet as of Monday, his lead against Democratic challenger

**J.D. Scholten**

has narrowed to just one point.

A combination of factors have complicated King's once-dominant electoral position. For one, Trump's extreme rhetoric on immigration has turned up the temperature in midterm races across the country, forcing Republicans to take increasingly controversial positions on issues like child detention, militarizing the U.S. border, and birthright citizenship.

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