



EVERYDISTRICT

PURPLE STATES REPORT:
A PLAN TO WIN THE STATES IN 2019-2020

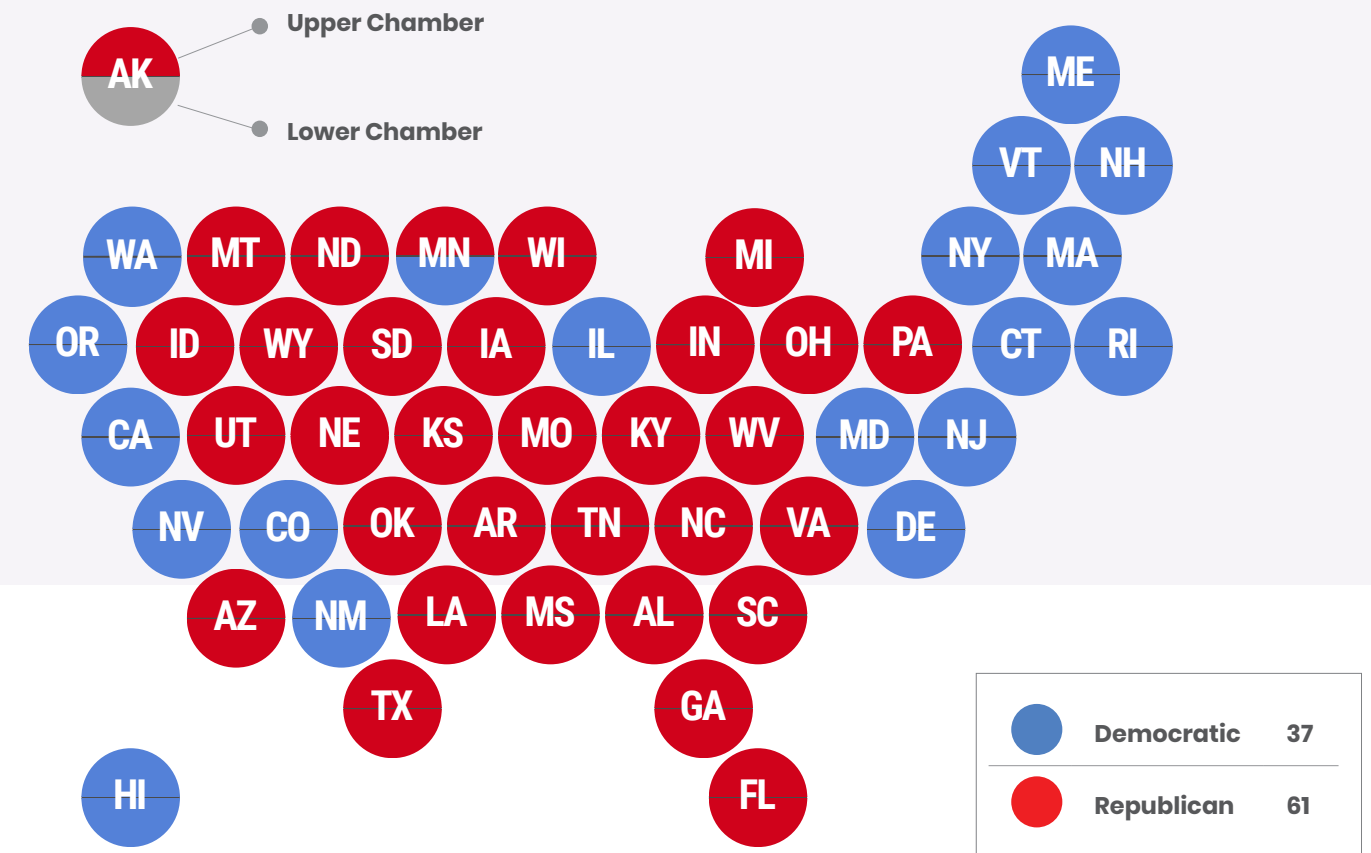
I. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The future of the Democratic Party's policymaking power depends on winning the states. We live in a fundamentally state-based country. The states determine the winner of the Electoral College, the composition of the Senate, and the district lines of the House of Representatives. They are also where much of the policy in this country is made, particularly as Congress remains dysfunctional.

And the shocking reality for Democrats is that we are far behind in the states, holding only 37 state legislative chambers to Republicans' 61 across the country (see Figure 1).¹ If we want to shape the future of the states, and therefore the nation, we have work to do.

¹ Why 98? Nebraska has a unicameral legislature and Alaska's House is subject to a power-sharing agreement between Democrats and Republicans.

FIGURE 1. PARTISAN CONTROL OF STATE LEGISLATURES



In 2017, EveryDistrict was founded to rebuild the states from the ground up. Since that time, we have endorsed 75 candidates running to flip GOP-held state legislative districts and raised over \$500,000 to support our endorsed candidates. Our support has helped to flip 37 battleground state legislative districts from red to blue.

Building on our work over the past two years, this report lays out what Democrats need to do to win back the states in 2019 and 2020. Democrats have a once-in-a-decade chance to advance Democratic power and policy over these next two years. If we fail, we cede tremendous power to Republicans throughout the 2020s to remake the country in their radical image. Voting rights, gerrymandering, gun safety, equality, economic opportunity, and access to healthcare—they are all on the ballot in the states in 2019 and 2020.

Despite the emergence of several organizations interested in electing Democrats to state legislatures, Democrats still need to lay out a cohesive national strategy to build electoral power at the state legislative level. There is no good list of target districts and strategic organizing opportunities for activists and donors interested in fundamentally

reshaping this country. There is no common understanding of the competitiveness and demographic profiles of the key districts. There is still insufficient commitment to resolving the severe structural deficit that Democratic candidates face in running for state legislatures. As NBC News reported recently, Democratic money has not yet made the necessary investments for the future.²

EveryDistrict is proud to use this, our Purple States Action Plan, to change the conversation and lay out the most competitive districts across the country that will need to be on Democrats' radar in 2019 and 2020. This report builds on our existing first-of-its-kind nationwide interactive map of competitive state legislative districts.³ It gives donors and activists a clear roadmap with which to act. We focus in on 28 chambers in purple states, the states at the center of the battle for control of this country.

If we work strategically and efficiently to win back the country, we can pick up **11 state legislative chambers** in 2019 and 2020, **defeat a GOP supermajority in 4**, and make substantial gains in **13 more**. This report identifies the approximately **250 critical state legislative seats⁴ in all 28 of these chambers** and groups them based on both competitiveness and demographics into distinct categories to help focus donor attention and resources. Among these districts, there are 112 priority seats in the 15 power-shifting chambers that will also be emphasized throughout the report. These priority districts represent the districts that are most winnable in the chambers where victory means a significant shift in political power in 2019 or 2020.

- **Lean Democratic** – These districts are held by Republicans but tend to vote for Democrats in statewide elections. These represent the most likely pickup opportunities in 2019 and 2020. EveryDistrict has identified **60 seats** (and 44 priority seats) in 2019 and 2020 that fall into this category.
- **Lean Republican** – These districts are held by Republicans and tend to slightly lean Republican in statewide elections. These represent the second tier of pickup opportunities in 2019 and 2020. In many states, these districts represent the key to making major gains. EveryDistrict has identified **74 seats** (and 44 priority seats) in 2019 and 2020 that fall into this category.

- **Favor Republican** – These districts are held by Republicans and tend to vote for Republicans more consistently and by larger margins than the “Lean” districts. They still are within the realm of possibility in wave election years like 2006, 2008, or 2018 and are must wins to overcome the worst Republican gerrymanders. EveryDistrict has identified **117 seats** (and 24 priority seats) in 2019 and 2020 that fall into this category.

These districts require distinct strategies based on their partisan composition. However, partisanship is just one half of the equation for understanding the most critical elections in 2019 and 2020. We have also grouped these districts based on shared demographics. We believe that this is the first time that an organization has provided Democratic activists with a comprehensive view of what it will take to win in the states. Responding to these demographic characteristics will allow us to meet and surpass the gains made in 2018.

- **Engaging the Diverse Coalition:** These districts have the demographic mix that corresponds with districts that are winners for Democrats at the federal level. These represent the districts that offer the best opportunities to activate the Democratic majority for state-level wins. Typically, these districts are less than 70% white with large and active voting populations among communities of color. EveryDistrict has identified **44 districts⁵** (and 23 priority districts) in 2019 and 2020 that fall into this category.
- **Growing Further Among College-Educated Suburbanites:** These districts tend to be whiter, higher income, and with more voters with college educations (greater than 45% of likely voters). These districts correspond with those that particularly helped Democrats build a majority in the 2018 congressional elections, with suburbanite women playing a central role. Many of these districts, particularly in states like Georgia, Texas, and Virginia, are rapidly becoming more blue. EveryDistrict has identified **125 districts** (and 61 priority districts) in 2019 and 2020 that fall into this category.
- **Rebuilding Among Non-College Whites:** These districts are must-wins, but have large proportions of non-college whites (greater than 40% of likely voters). These populations have been trending away from Democrats at the federal level. At the same time, winning states like Ohio, Iowa, or even Michigan and Wisconsin depend on doing better among this group. EveryDistrict has identified **137 districts** (and 51 priority districts) in 2019 and 2020 that fall into this category.

² Alex Seitz-Wald, “Democrats’ focus on the White House may be crowding out the statehouse – and it might cost them big,” NBC News August 4, 2019.

³ You can visit our map at EveryDistrict.us/Map.

⁴ In this report, we examine both state legislative “seats” and “districts.” The source of the discrepancy is the Arizona House of Representatives, where each district has two seats. Three of the four competitive districts have two Republican-held seats.

⁵ Districts may be counted more than once if they meet criteria for more than one category.

STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This report first outlines the process EveryDistrict uses to identify the most competitive districts across the country, through our innovative Legislative District Index (LDI) score (Section II). The report then turns to what went right in 2018, but also what kept us from picking up more states and seats (Section III). It subsequently outlines what the most competitive districts are in the most crucial 2019 and 2020 states (Section IV) and, vitally, what their demographics tell us about how we can organize and win (Sections V and VI).

We then turn to the tremendous policy benefits of winning in these states (Section VII), and raise caution about the real possibility that Democrats are underprepared to make the necessary investments to win back these districts (Section VIII). Finally, we lay out the work that EveryDistrict will be doing—hopefully with your support—to make real change happen in the states (Section IX).

What is most exciting about what is contained in this report is this: despite GOP efforts to limit democracy in the states through gerrymandering and voter ID laws, Democrats have a huge opportunity to fight back in 2019 and 2020. The 16 states in this report include both states where Democrats are emerging and states where Democrats are rebuilding the blue wall. Our focus in this report is to concentrate resources on the winnable districts in these states.

BOTTOM LINE

What will it take to win? These three fundamental activities need to begin now:

- **Recruiting Candidates with Strong Connections to these Districts:** Quality candidates are the X-Factor that enable electoral success. In 2017 and 2018, successful state legislative candidates were those who could make a compelling claim to successfully represent a community with which they had real ties.
- **Raising Real Money Early:** It will take \$58 million to run viable campaigns in all 251 districts that are the subject of this report. Getting as much of these resources directly to candidates, not just to independent expenditure programs, has to be a priority. The earlier the candidates have the money they need to win, the more successful that they will be. With all of the distractions of 2020, we cannot let this opportunity slip away. In **Section VI**, we break down the dollars needed state-by-state and district-by-district.
- **Embracing Strategies to Respond to the Districts:** Winning in the states in 2019 and 2020 depends on implementing field and messaging strategies that respond to the districts' demographic profiles. We outline some strategies from the data and our work with candidates in **Section VI**.

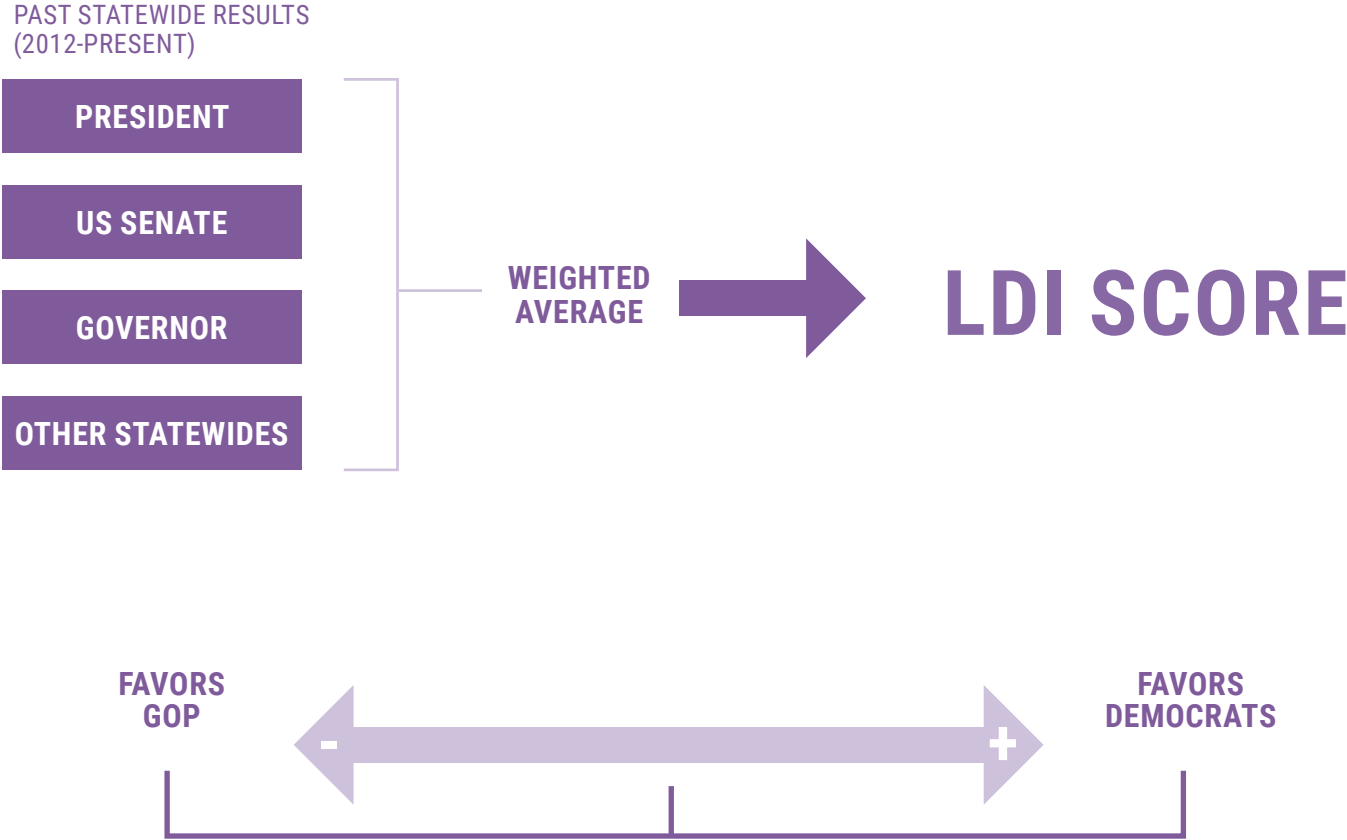
EveryDistrict will be working between now and November 2020 to raise the resources to remake the country in 2019 and 2020. E-mail our Executive Director, Nicole Hobbs (nicole@everydistrict.us) to join us. You can also sign up for our mailing list on our website, EveryDistrict.us, and make a donation to our 2020 fund at EveryDistrict.us/Donate.

II. UNDERSTANDING THE DISTRICTS: HOW EVERYDISTRICT ANALYZES THE OPPORTUNITY IN 2019-2020

EveryDistrict has done extensive data analysis to identify the most competitive districts across the country. For every state legislative district across the country, we have developed a Legislative District Index (LDI) score.

This LDI calculates the expected vote margin based on a weighted average of statewide election results as they played out in the district. A district with an LDI score of 5, for example, votes for statewide Democratic candidates by five points on average. A district with an LDI score of -5, conversely, votes for statewide Republican candidates by five points on average. In developing the index, we look at presidential, senate, gubernatorial, and other statewide constitutional officer results. After the 2018 election, we revised the LDI scores for all 6,764 districts based on the latest information.⁶ As part of this review and revision, we found that in our 16 2020 target states, our LDI was highly correlated with the 2018 results. And now it's even better. You can see the competitiveness of every state legislative district using the interactive maps on our website at EveryDistrict.us/Map. Figure 2 provides a simple explanation of the LDI.

FIGURE 2. HOW THE LDI WORKS



The LDI provides us with the initial assessment to identify the most competitive districts across the country. This Purple States report supplements the LDI with the most detailed public analysis of the demographics of state legislative districts so that activists and donors can better understand where different strategies will be most effective.

With this demographic analysis in hand, we can begin to build a roadmap for building successful campaigns across the country. But real success will depend on effective monitoring of how candidates are performing in the field. Next summer, we'll release our Candidate Viability Index, a public model for evaluating how competitive state legislative candidates are faring, so that donors and activists can direct energy to the candidates most in need of, and ready to deploy, fundraising resources, as campaigns progress.

⁶ You can read more about our work to build the best public index for state legislative competitiveness on our website at: EveryDistrict.us/About-Our-Map.

III. LIMITS OF THE 2018 BLUE WAVE: WHY DIDN'T WE WIN MORE AT THE STATE LEVEL?

In 2018, Democrats netted 436 seats and won seven chambers across Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and New York.

At the same time, though, Democrats lost 103 seats and missed major opportunities for chamber pickups in Arizona, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. Why was the blue wave more of a ripple at the state level?

Some groups, in their autopsy, blamed gerrymandering and voter suppression. We also found a significant impact of gerrymandering on the 2018 results. After the 2018 election, we surveyed the candidates we endorsed. Nearly 90% of unsuccessful candidates highlighted their district boundaries as a factor in their loss.⁷

Others claimed that the issue was just how big Democrats' hole was. After losing 1,000 seats during the Obama years, how could Democrats be expected to make it all up in one year?⁸

These explanations do get at very real trends that have to be addressed,⁹ but they don't offer a compelling vision for how we could actually win back seats in 2020. Is there more to the story?

We think so. Our map in 2018 and 2020 was not made easier by the antidemocratic proclivities of the Republican Party. But we also did not do enough to remake the nation on our own terms. Here is where we fell short:

DEMOCRATS SIMPLY DID NOT RAISE ENOUGH MONEY TO COMPETE IN MANY COMPETITIVE DISTRICTS.

Campaigns need resources to run successful races—and this is even more essential in the tight purple-to-pink districts where EveryDistrict operates. In 2018, on average, a Democratic or Republican campaign who won their election in an EveryDistrict-targeted race raised \$454,530. Successful Democrats raised an average of \$23,330 less than their Republican opponent. The average EveryDistrict-endorsed candidate who won their election raised \$463,320, just 5% less than their Republican rival. Democratic candidates who were endorsed by EveryDistrict but lost their election raised an average of just \$207,580, and on average raised \$240,180 less than their Republican opponent.

At the state legislative level, this money deficit has big implications for candidate viability. Many Democratic campaigns simply do not have the resources to do the fundamental “blocking and tackling” of campaigns. The impact of financial resources was perhaps starkest in the area of field. EveryDistrict's successful candidates in 2018 identified field as the most important factor in their victory when surveyed. Financial

⁷ See our blog post on the candidate survey for more information: EveryDistrict. “From Progress to Power: How Democrats Regain the States in 2020, Part 2,” June 19, 2019. Available at: [EveryDistrict.us/blog/from-progress-to-power-how-democrats-regain-the-states-in-2020-part-2](https://everydistrict.us/blog/from-progress-to-power-how-democrats-regain-the-states-in-2020-part-2).

⁸ Emily Badger, Quoc Trung Bui, and Adam Pearce, “Republicans Dominate State Politics. But Democrats Made a Dent This Year,” *New York Times* November 10, 2018.

⁹ Our friends at EveryDistrict Action Fund are actively working on improving voting rights in the states. See more at: [EveryDistrict.us/Voting-Rights](https://everydistrict.us/Voting-Rights).

resources provided essential support to help successful campaigns invest in field operations, helping put boots on the ground to meet with, influence, and turn out voters. Candidates, staff, and volunteers at the average successful campaign knocked 32,000 doors, while unsuccessful campaigns knocked on only 24,000 doors (or 33% less). This disparity helps to illustrate the impact that limited campaign resources can have on voter outreach and results on Election Day.

DEMOCRATS PERFORMED BETTER IN A CORE SET OF STATES INSTEAD OF THE PURPLE STATES THAT DEMOCRATS MUST CONTROL IN ORDER TO HAVE CONTROL OVER POLICYMAKING IN THIS COUNTRY.

In 2018, Democrats won full control of seven chambers: Colorado Senate, Connecticut Senate, Maine Senate, Minnesota House, New Hampshire Senate and House, and New York Senate. The achievements associated with these wins should not be understated. They took substantial resources and strategy from Democrats across the country. Most impressive was the 18-seat pickup in the Minnesota House. But this level of success did not carry forward to purple states at the heart of questions like voter ID, gerrymandering, and broader policy reform. In the pickup states, Democrats held all vulnerable seats and won 47% of competitive GOP-held seats.¹⁰ In the purple states where EveryDistrict worked in 2018,¹¹ Democrats only held 64% of their vulnerable seats and batted just 29% in competitive GOP-held seats.

DEMOCRATS PERFORMED BETTER IN DISTRICTS THAT LEANED BLUE, COMPARED TO THOSE THAT LEANED RED.

The average LDI score of the districts of our successful 2018 candidates was +1.2, a slight Democratic lean. The average LDI score of the districts of our unsuccessful candidates was -2.6, a moderate GOP lean. In Democratic pickup states, while Democrats won 58% of Dem-leaning GOP-held seats, they only snagged 45% of the GOP-leaning seats. In the states in which we worked, Democrats only picked up 33% of the GOP-leaning seats.

It is not surprising that Democrats would do better in bluer seats, but it has serious implications for why the blue wave was cut short in 2018 and what could go wrong in 2020. Due to Republican gerrymandering and the relative success of 2018, the seats we'll need to win in 2020 fall squarely in the "purple-to-pink" category. If we perform in such districts as we did in 2018, we will not see a dramatic shift in control of the states. See Section IV for more competitiveness information as we look to 2019 and 2020.

THE MANNER BY WHICH MONEY MOVES TO SUPPORT STATE LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES MATTERS.

There are essentially three ways that organizations raising money for state legislative candidates can do so. They can give money directly to candidates, they can support the coordinated campaign through the state parties and caucuses, or they can fund independent expenditure programs that push messages outside of the candidates' activities. All play an important role in driving resources to support Democratic victories. Much of the well-publicized dollars in 2017 and 2018 that went to support state legislative candidates happened through independent expenditure and party support. At the same time, as we noted above, too many candidates were left without the necessary resources to compete. In 2020, we will need to change that.

¹⁰ These figures do not include the New Hampshire House of Representatives due to the large number of districts.

¹¹ Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

IV. THE STATE AGENDA FOR 2019 AND 2020

Though 2018 was a key year for state elections, 2019 and 2020 will offer substantial opportunities for Democrats to make gains at the state legislative level. The biggest opportunity in 2019 is the possibility to flip the Virginia State Senate and State House and build large Democratic majorities in both chambers. EveryDistrict is also working in Mississippi to bring more state legislative districts into the Democratic column, thereby erasing a GOP supermajority, and to elect a Democratic Governor.¹²

In 2019 and 2020, we will have opportunities in 16 states to win **11 chambers**, beat **4 GOP supermajorities**, and make major gains in 13 more chambers, if we work strategically. We can make this change by flipping only 251 of the 7,383 state legislative seats across the country. We can flip chambers and kill supermajorities if we focus in on the 112 most strategic of these districts. These targets are substantially fewer than the number of seats that we won in 2018.

EveryDistrict used our comprehensive data analysis to identify the winnable purple-to-pink seats that are essential for gaining legislative majorities in the states. Based on our LDI, we have identified where competitive districts are and whether Democrats or Republicans are favored. We sort these districts initially into Lean D, Lean R, or Favor R. Lean D districts are those held by Republicans with a positive LDI score. Lean R districts are those held by Republicans with an LDI score between 0 and -5. Favor R districts are those held by Republicans with an LDI score less than -5 where we have identified an opportunity for Democrats to win.

TABLE 1. 2019-2020 DISTRICT COMPOSITION

	GOP HELD, LEAN D	GOP HELD, LEAN R	GOP HELD, FAVOR R	TOTAL
Total Seats	60	74	117	251
Percentage Of Total	24%	29%	47%	
Priority Seats	44	44	24	112 ¹³
Percentage Of Priority	39%	39%	22%	

¹² EveryDistrict, "Why Mississippi," June 10, 2019. Available at: [EveryDistrict.us/blog/why-mississippi](https://everydistrict.us/blog/why-mississippi).

¹³ These are the most winnable districts in chambers where Democrats have the best shot to flip the chamber or beat a supermajority in 2019 and 2020.

TABLE 2. PARTISAN COMPETITIVENESS OF 2019 AND 2020 PURPLE STATES

LIKELY DEMOCRATIC			GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	NEED TO FLIP	LEAN D	LEAN R	FAVOR R	TOTAL
Minnesota	Senate	2	4	3	5	12
Virginia	Senate	2	3	3	0	6
Virginia	House	2	8	3	1	12
LEAN DEMOCRATIC			GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	NEED TO FLIP	LEAN D	LEAN R	FAVOR R	TOTAL
Iowa	House	4	5	5	10	20
Michigan	House	4	1	3	8	12
Pennsylvania	House	9	7	8	18	33
LEAN REPUBLICAN			GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	NEED TO FLIP	LEAN D	LEAN R	FAVOR R	TOTAL
Arizona	Senate	3	1	0	4	5
Arizona ¹⁴	House	2	0	0	7	7
Iowa	Senate	8	2	7	3	12
Pennsylvania	Senate	4	2	1	2	5
Texas	House	9	0	1	11	12
BEATABLE SUPERMAJORITY			GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	NEED TO FLIP	LEAN D	LEAN R	FAVOR R	TOTAL
Kansas ¹⁵	Senate	3	2	4	0	6
Kansas	House	1	2	4	4	10
Mississippi ¹⁶	Senate	2	2	2	0	4
Mississippi	House	4	4	1	3	8
LIKELY REPUBLICAN			GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	NEED TO FLIP	LEAN D	LEAN R	FAVOR R	TOTAL
Florida	Senate	4	1	1	0	2
Florida	House	14	2	5	10	17
Georgia	Senate	8	0	1	1	2
Georgia	House	16	3	3	6	12
Montana	Senate	6	2	1	1	4
Montana	House	9	0	6	3	9
North Carolina	Senate	5	0	2	1	3
North Carolina	House	6	0	1	2	3
Ohio	Senate	8	2	0	1	3
Ohio	House	12	2	4	3	9
West Virginia	Senate	4	1	1	1	3
Wisconsin	Senate	3	0	1	1	2
Wisconsin	House	14	4	3	11	18

What is most striking is how challenging the districts are in 2019–2020. Of the 251 seats that Democrats can tackle in these elections, the vast majority lean or favor Republicans at the outset. A substantial proportion of the districts in the most winnable states also trend red.

This landscape means that candidates will require greater resources and new strategies to win. The figures above lay out the opportunities across the states.

These states will form the centerpiece of a strategy to turn purple places blue. **Appendix A lists the specific districts that we will need to win to rebuild power in the states.**

To truly take advantage of this list and overcome the challenges associated with these districts, we need to better understand the demographics of these districts so that we can develop targeted strategies for success. That is what we do in **Section V**.

¹⁴ Arizona has two-member house districts.

¹⁵ In Kansas, the opportunity in 2020 is to break the GOP supermajority in both the Senate and the House. With a Democratic governor, that will give Democrats an opportunity to reject the most extreme GOP policies.

¹⁶ In Mississippi, the opportunity in 2019 is to break the GOP supermajority in both the Senate and the House. Finance and budget bills in Mississippi require a supermajority, meaning that breaking the GOP supermajority can put progressive policy on the agenda.

V. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE MOST CRUCIAL DISTRICTS?

For this report, EveryDistrict developed a demographic profile of all of the most critical 2020 districts, in addition to our LDI competitiveness.¹⁷

This profile evaluates the districts based on party registration, gender, race and ethnicity, and class.

From these profiles, we have been able to group districts effectively, creating a roadmap for donors and activists to target the districts that we not only need to win in 2020, but that help to build power for the future.

BACKGROUND

In this demographic analysis, we primarily look at Likely Voters, those who tend to vote in general elections in even-numbered years more than half the time. These are the voters who can be expected to show up to the polls in November 2019 and 2020 and to make their way to vote down the ballot for state legislative candidates. The demographic estimates provided in this report come from voter file data in each state. The demographics identified below help give a nuanced view of the major constituencies in these districts.

We examine two groups of districts in our analysis. The first group of districts contains all 251 seats in the 28 chambers we focus on in this report. These represent a broad opportunity to win back seats in purple states across the country. The second group of districts contains 112 seats in chambers where we are most likely to shift power in 2019 and 2020, if we employ the right strategy. These are the “priority districts.”

In almost all of these districts, “expanding the map” will have benefit for Democratic vote share. Doing so will require amply funding the Democratic campaigns in those districts. In Section VI below, we speak to the states where this expansion may have its largest impact.

From a demographic perspective, Democrats’ see their greatest success in coalitions with large numbers of college educated voters, particularly women, and minorities. While they tend to struggle in districts with large numbers of non-college white males, there is substantial opportunity to gain in those districts where voters can be motivated by an engaging Democratic message. Here’s what we know about all 251 seats.

¹⁷ As noted above, Appendix A lists all 251 target seats.

FIGURE 3. THE AVERAGE DISTRICT IN 2019-2020

AVERAGE DISTRICT - ALL												
Female	White	Black	Hispanic	College Whites	Non-College Whites	College White Males	College White Females	Non-College White Males	Non-College White Females	Middle Class (\$50K - \$100K)	Upper Class (>\$100K)	Working Class/ Low-Income (<\$50K)
53.6%	83.1%	6.9%	6.4%	41.4%	41.7%	19.9%	21.5%	19.5%	22.2%	47.0%	30.3%	22.7%
AVERAGE PRIORITY DISTRICT												
Female	White	Black	Hispanic	College Whites	Non-College Whites	College White Males	College White Females	Non-College White Males	Non-College White Females	Middle Class (\$50K-\$100K)	Upper Class (>\$100K)	Working Class/ Low-Income (<\$50K)
53.8%	82.6%	7.5%	5.9%	42.9%	39.7%	20.6%	22.3%	18.6%	21.1%	45.8%	33.3%	20.9%
AVERAGE LEAN D DISTRICT												
Female	White	Black	Hispanic	College Whites	Non-College Whites	College White Males	College White Females	Non-College White Males	Non-College White Females	Middle Class (\$50K-\$100K)	Upper Class (>\$100K)	Working Class/ Low-Income (<\$50K)
54.1%	81.1%	10.3%	5.1%	41.6%	39.5%	19.9%	21.7%	18.4%	21.3%	45.8%	31.6%	22.7%
AVERAGE LEAN R DISTRICT												
Female	White	Black	Hispanic	College Whites	Non-College Whites	College White Males	College White Females	Non-College White Males	Non-College White Females	Middle Class (\$50K-\$100K)	Upper Class (>\$100K)	Working Class/ Low-Income (<\$50K)
53.6%	84.4%	6.3%	6.2%	41.9%	42.5%	20.1%	21.9%	19.7%	22.7%	47.2%	30.4%	22.5%
AVERAGE FAVOR R DISTRICT												
Female	White	Black	Hispanic	College Whites	Non-College Whites	College White Males	College White Females	Non-College White Males	Non-College White Females	Middle Class (\$50K-\$100K)	Upper Class (>\$100K)	Working Class/ Low-Income (<\$50K)
53.3%	83.3%	5.5%	7.2%	40.9%	42.4%	19.7%	21.1%	20.1%	22.4%	47.6%	29.7%	22.8%

This average district information presents the demographic challenges before Democrats. The most critical state legislative districts are substantially whiter than the nation at-large when we look at likely voters. They have notable levels of non-college whites, a demographic that has been trending away from Democrats over the last election cycles. Winning in these districts will take both ample persuasion of likely voters and efforts to bring in Democratic-leaning low propensity voters. It will take recognizing that white voters will need to be a large portion of the Democratic state-level coalition, along with communities of color.

At the same time, averages don't tell us everything. In looking at individual districts, we see concentrations of different demographics that point to unique approaches. The below tables give us a sense of what districts have the largest proportion of certain key demographics.

TABLE 3. KEY DEMOGRAPHICS IN 2019-2020 TARGET DISTRICTS

TOP 10 MOST "COLLEGE WHITE" DISTRICTS					TOP 10 MOST "NON-COLLEGE WHITE" DISTRICTS				
STATE	CHAMBER	DISTRICT	LDI	% COLLEGE	STATE	CHAMBER	DISTRICT	LDI	% NON COLLEGE
Kansas	House	20	-1	72.51%	Iowa	House	58	-4	64.61%
Texas	House	108	-9	67.52%	Wisconsin	House	50	-4	64.60%
Kansas	House	14	-10	67.29%	Iowa	House	51	-6	64.38%
Kansas	House	17	2	66.09%	Iowa	House	96	-9	64.25%
Kansas	Senate	8	2	65.95%	Iowa	House	56	-10	63.93%
Ohio	Senate	24	1	63.83%	Montana	House	22	-1	63.84%
Texas	House	134	-3	63.67%	Iowa	Senate	26	-4	63.81%
Georgia	House	52	4	63.41%	Wisconsin	House	92	1	63.72%
Iowa	Senate	22	-1	62.81%	West Virginia	Senate	10	-9	63.51%
North Carolina	Senate	39	-3	62.61%	Wisconsin	House	42	-6	63.25%

TOP 10 MOST HISPANIC DISTRICTS					TOP 10 MOST AFRICAN-AMERICAN DISTRICTS				
STATE	CHAMBER	DISTRICT	LDI	% HISPANIC	STATE	CHAMBER	DISTRICT	LDI	% BLACK
Florida	House	119	-6	89.18%	Georgia	House	151	5	49.23%
Florida	House	115	-3	66.80%	Virginia	House	76	15	41.27%
Florida	House	105	-3	63.88%	Mississippi	Senate	22	10	41.14%
Florida	Senate	39	10	63.27%	Mississippi	Senate	10	4	39.60%
Texas	House	43	-7	52.47%	Georgia	House	109	-10	39.57%
Florida	House	42	-9	28.64%	Georgia	House	138	-9	38.99%
Texas	House	121	-16	25.72%	North Carolina	House	12	-5	37.72%
Texas	House	138	-12	24.25%	Georgia	House	145	-7	37.33%
Arizona	Senate	8	-6	22.50%	Georgia	House	106	3	36.85%
Arizona	House	8	-6	22.50%	North Carolina	House	1	-6	36.42%

These tables of districts reinforce the diversity of the districts at play. From 89% Hispanic to 98% white and 73% college to 65% non-college, there are winnable districts with vastly different demographic compositions.

Based on data about these voters, we can group these districts into three categories based on the demographics, rather than competitiveness, of the districts. **In certain cases, districts fall into multiple categories because they meet the criteria of more than one.** Here is how we see the 2019-2020 state legislative landscape.

- Engaging the Diverse Coalition:** These districts have the demographic mix that corresponds with districts that are winners for Democrats at the federal level. These represent the districts that offer the best opportunities to activate the Democratic majority for state-level wins. Typically, these districts are less than 70% white with large and active voting populations among communities of color. Based on our analysis, of the 251 seats, 44 fall into this category. These are referred to as "Engaging" districts in this report.
- Growing Further Among College-Educated Suburbanites:** These districts tend to be whiter, higher income, and with more voters with college educations (greater than 45% of likely voters). These districts correspond with those that particularly helped Democrats build a majority in the 2018 congressional elections, with suburbanite women playing a central role. Many of these districts, particularly in states like Georgia, Texas, and Virginia, are rapidly becoming more blue. Based on our analysis, of the 251 seats, 125 fall into this category. These are referred to as "Growing" districts in this report.
- Rebuilding Among Non-College Whites:** These districts are must-wins, but have large proportions of non-college whites (greater than 40% of likely voters). These populations have been trending away from Democrats at the federal level. At the same time, winning states like Ohio, Iowa, or even Michigan and Wisconsin depend on doing better among these groups. Some of these districts represent higher income areas that have been shifting Democrats' direction. Based on our analysis, of the 251 seats, 137 fall into this category. These are referred to as "Rebuilding" districts in this report.
- Edge Cases:** For these three groups, there are districts just outside the criteria we set. We have tried to group those districts in their nearest category or categories.

TABLE 4. DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMPETITIVENESS – NATIONWIDE

ALL SEATS (251)	LEAN D	LEAN R	FAVOR R	TOTAL SEATS ¹⁸
Engaging the Diverse Coalition	14	9	21	44
Growing with College Whites	30	38	57	125
Rebuilding with Non-College Whites	29	42	66	137
PRIORITY SEATS (112)	LEAN D	LEAN R	FAVOR R	TOTAL SEATS
Engaging the Diverse Coalition	10	3	10	23
Growing with College Whites	25	26	10	61
Rebuilding with Non-College Whites	21	24	6	51

TABLE 5. BREAKING DOWN THE DISTRICTS BY DEMOGRAPHICS IN EACH STATE

LIKELY DEMOCRATIC		GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	ENGAGING	GROWING	REBUILDING	TOTAL SEATS ¹⁹
Minnesota	Senate	0	11	8	12
Virginia	Senate	0	5	2	6
Virginia	House	9	3	3	12
LEAN DEMOCRATIC		GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	ENGAGING	GROWING	REBUILDING	TOTAL SEATS
Iowa	House	0	11	17	20
Michigan	House	0	6	7	12
Pennsylvania	House	0	22	22	33
LEAN REPUBLICAN		GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	ENGAGING	GROWING	REBUILDING	TOTAL SEATS
Arizona	Senate	1	3	2	5
Arizona	House	2	3	4	7
Iowa	Senate	0	2	10	12
Pennsylvania	Senate	0	3	3	5
Texas	House	7	6	1	12

TABLE 5. BREAKING DOWN THE DISTRICTS BY DEMOGRAPHICS IN EACH STATE

BEATABLE SUPERMAJORITY		GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	ENGAGING	GROWING	REBUILDING	TOTAL SEATS
Kansas ²⁰	Senate	0	5	3	6
Kansas	House	0	10	2	10
Mississippi ²¹	Senate	3	1	0	4
Mississippi	House	3	3	5	8
LIKELY REPUBLICAN		GOP-HELD SEATS			
STATE	CHAMBER	ENGAGING	GROWING	REBUILDING	TOTAL SEATS
Florida	Senate	2	0	0	2
Florida	House	7	4	6	17
Georgia	Senate	1	1	0	2
Georgia	House	7	5	0	12
Montana	Senate	0	3	4	4
Montana	House	0	5	8	9
North Carolina	Senate	1	2	0	3
North Carolina	House	2	0	1	3
Ohio	Senate	0	2	1	3
Ohio	House	0	6	7	9
West Virginia	Senate	0	0	3	3
Wisconsin	Senate	0	1	2	2
Wisconsin	House	0	4	17	18

When we then combine the demographics and competitiveness of districts, we see how the landscape poses opportunities and challenges. **Table 4** gives a nationwide view of the seats up in 2019 and 2020. **Tables 5 and 6** break down the demographics and competitiveness of districts on a state-by-state basis.

¹⁸ Because districts may be in more than one category, these totals may exceed the total number of districts.

¹⁹ Because seats may be in more than one category, the total in the three columns to the left may exceed the total presented in this column.

²⁰ In Kansas, the opportunity in 2020 is to break the GOP supermajority in both the Senate and the House. With a Democratic governor, that will give Democrats an opportunity to reject the most extreme GOP policies.

²¹ In Mississippi, the opportunity in 2019 is to break the GOP supermajority in both the Senate and the House. Finance and budget bills in Mississippi require a supermajority, meaning that breaking the GOP supermajority can put progressive policy on the agenda.

TABLE 6. DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMPETITIVENESS – ALL STATES

ARIZONA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	ARIZONA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	1	Engaging	0	0	2
Growing	1	0	2	Growing	0	0	3
Rebuilding	0	0	2	Rebuilding	0	0	4
FLORIDA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	FLORIDA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	1	1	0	Engaging	1	3	3
Growing	0	0	0	Growing	0	1	3
Rebuilding	0	0	0	Rebuilding	1	1	4
GEORGIA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	GEORGIA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	1	Engaging	2	1	4
Growing	0	1	0	Growing	1	2	2
Rebuilding	0	0	0	Rebuilding	0	0	0
IOWA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	IOWA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	0	Engaging	0	0	0
Growing	0	2	0	Growing	4	2	5
Rebuilding	2	5	3	Rebuilding	4	5	8
KANSAS SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	KANSAS HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	0	Engaging	0	0	0
Growing	2	3	0	Growing	2	4	4
Rebuilding	1	2	0	Rebuilding	1	0	1
				MICHIGAN HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
				Engaging	0	0	0
				Growing	1	1	4
				Rebuilding	0	2	5
MINNESOTA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R				
Engaging	0	0	0				
Growing	4	2	5				
Rebuilding	2	2	4				
MISSISSIPPI SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	MISSISSIPPI HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	2	1	0	Engaging	1	1	1
Growing	0	1	0	Growing	2	0	1
Rebuilding	0	0	0	Rebuilding	2	1	2

MONTANA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	MONTANA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	0	Engaging	0	0	0
Growing	1	1	1	Growing	0	3	2
Rebuilding	2	1	1	Rebuilding	0	6	2
NORTH CAROLINA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	NORTH CAROLINA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	1	Engaging	0	1	1
Growing	0	2	0	Growing	0	0	0
Rebuilding	0	0	0	Rebuilding	0	0	1
OHIO SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	OHIO HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	0	Engaging	0	0	0
Growing	2	0	0	Growing	2	3	1
Rebuilding	0	0	1	Rebuilding	1	4	2
PENNSYLVANIA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	0	Engaging	0	0	0
Growing	2	0	1	Growing	3	6	13
Rebuilding	1	1	1	Rebuilding	5	5	12
				TEXAS HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
				Engaging	0	0	7
				Growing	0	1	5
				Rebuilding	0	0	1
VIRGINIA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	VIRGINIA HOUSE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	0	Engaging	7	1	1
Growing	2	3	0	Growing	2	1	0
Rebuilding	1	1	0	Rebuilding	1	1	1
WEST VIRGINIA SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R				
Engaging	0	0	0				
Growing	0	0	0				
Rebuilding	1	1	1				
WISCONSIN SENATE	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R	WISCONSIN ASSEMBLY	Lean D	Lean R	Favor R
Engaging	0	0	0	Engaging	0	0	0
Growing	0	0	1	Growing	0	0	4
Rebuilding	0	1	1	Rebuilding	4	3	10

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

The results of the unique competitiveness and demographic analysis in this report point to new ways to think about state legislative districts. While the bulk of competitive districts in these states are in the Growing and Rebuilding categories, certain states (like Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, and Virginia) stand out for a concentration of Engaging districts. It underscores that state-by-state and district-by-district strategies must be different. Political analysts often want Democrats to just focus on their favorite voting bloc, whether that's the "Rising American Electorate" or the "White Working Class." The truth is, to win the states, Democrats need to motivate and engage potential supporters across all groups. We have to improve with everyone.

The second key point is that partisan lean and demographic profile are not always neatly correlated in a district. Across all of the studied districts, there are more "Lean D" seats in the Growing and Rebuilding categories than the Engaging category. At the same time, there are districts that are apparently most winnable based on their demographics that lean right.

The ongoing shifts in how certain groups vote may also allow Democrats to surprise Republicans in 2019 and 2020. College-educated whites are shifting quickly toward Democrats. Most of the "Favor R" districts in Texas voted for Beto O'Rourke in 2018. Previously very challenging districts in Johnson County, Kansas backed Governor Laura Kelly in large numbers. We think that we can create another blue wave over the next two years by doubling down on these positive shifts.

The final point is that what we need to do to win in 2019 and 2020 will be hard. As mentioned above, if we just win the sort of places we did in 2018, we won't fundamentally reshape this country. It will take an all hands on deck approach to every type of district listed in this report, following the approaches outlined in Section VI below.

USING THIS INFORMATION

This demographic information gives us a roadmap to making change in the states. It also helps donors and activists prioritize investments. Those passionate about Democrats' growth among these different groups can partner with us on new strategies to win in more places. Many organizations care about advancing the political power of rising minority populations. Others care about re-engaging with non-college white voters, particularly in the Midwest. This report provides a framework for everyone to act. And if everyone does act and takes the states seriously, we can make a tremendous difference.

What will it take to win these districts? In the next section, we outline the common strategies across districts, as well as the unique approaches that will need to be taken. Winning in each of these districts requires messaging and outreach strategies that respond to these conditions on the ground.

VI. WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO WIN THESE DISTRICTS?

The demographic analysis above points to a need to turn out and persuade the right voters in the right places. Any campaign in these districts will need to employ effective outreach and messaging strategies described further below. But these effective outreach strategies can only be achieved if we do two things right first:

1. RECRUIT CANDIDATES WITH STRONG CONNECTIONS TO THE DISTRICT

In our experience, the biggest X-Factor by far is the quality of the candidate. In 2018, there were a few key misses where Democrats failed to recruit a candidate in a winnable district. In other cases, unsuccessful candidates often failed to have the strong connection to the district necessary to be successful.

To fail to recruit a quality candidate in any of these 251 competitive state legislative races would be an indefensible lost opportunity. Luckily, the resources around candidate recruitment at the state level are the strongest that they have been in some time. We'll work to make sure no district is missed.

There is substantial public discussion about "electability." Here's what we know about electability. In the last two years, 70% of EveryDistrict's successful candidates have been women. We have supported candidates of color in majority white districts. We have endorsed candidates who have run boldly on issues like gun safety in purple districts. Authentic candidates are electable.

2. RAISE SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO RUN A VIABLE CAMPAIGN BASED ON THE FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE OF EACH STATE

After recruiting good candidates, we need to make sure that they have the resources to actually compete. As mentioned in Section III above, the lack of resources substantially hobbled unsuccessful Democratic candidates in 2018, who raised an average of \$250,000 less than their Republican opponents. This funding deficit has come despite large dollars going to federal candidates and a substantial infrastructure of independent expenditure dollars. However, without sufficient direct resources for the campaigns, these wraparound resources are ineffective. Campaigns need the funds to push their own messaging, hire sufficient staff, and implement successful field programs. As we noted in the demographic analysis, a key to success is the ability for the state legislative campaign to build unique awareness and persuasion opportunities that respond to the district. That's where dollars come in.

Table 7 below outlines the resources needed to run a "minimally viable" campaign in all 251 crucial purple state races. This estimate is based on previous levels of funding for successful Democratic candidates and is state-specific. Within a state, candidates in expensive media markets and those facing particularly strong Republican opponents will require additional funds.

What the figure below makes clear is this: for relatively low levels of funding, Democrats can reshape the country at the state level. This is what Republicans realized in 2010 through REDMAP: for substantially less than the cost of a presidential campaign, we can fundamentally remake the country by changing the purple states. These resources need to flow to candidates, not just independent expenditures, caucuses, and outside groups.

TABLE 7. THE DOLLARS WE NEED TO WIN

2019-2020 TARGET STATES					
STATE	CHAMBER	STATE LEAN	TARGET DISTRICTS	PER DISTRICT REQUIRED RAISE	TOTAL TARGET DISTRICT REQUIRED RAISE
Arizona	Senate	Lean Republican	5	\$200,000	\$1,000,000
	House	Lean Republican	7	\$100,000	\$700,000
Florida	Senate	Likely Republican	2	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000
	House	Likely Republican	17	\$300,000	\$5,100,000
Georgia	Senate	Likely Republican	2	\$200,000	\$400,000
	House	Likely Republican	12	\$100,000	\$1,200,000
Iowa	Senate	Lean Republican	12	\$200,000	\$2,400,000
	House	Lean Democratic	20	\$200,000	\$4,000,000
Kansas	Senate	Beatable Supermajority	6	\$40,000	\$240,000
	House	Beatable Supermajority	10	\$20,000	\$200,000
Michigan	House	Lean Democratic	12	\$200,000	\$2,400,000
Minnesota	Senate	Likely Democratic	12	\$75,000	\$900,000
Mississippi	Senate	Beatable Supermajority	4	\$50,000	\$200,000
	House	Beatable Supermajority	8	\$50,000	\$400,000
Montana	Senate	Likely Republican	4	\$5,000	\$20,000
	House	Likely Republican	9	\$5,000	\$45,000
North Carolina	Senate	Likely Republican	3	\$500,000	\$1,500,000
	House	Likely Republican	3	\$500,000	\$1,500,000
Ohio	Senate	Likely Republican	3	\$300,000	\$900,000
	House	Likely Republican	9	\$200,000	\$1,800,000
Pennsylvania	Senate	Lean Republican	5	\$1,000,000	\$5,000,000
	House	Lean Democratic	33	\$200,000	\$6,600,000
Texas	House	Lean Republican	12	\$250,000	\$3,000,000
Virginia	Senate	Likely Democratic	6	\$1,000,000	\$6,000,000
	House	Likely Democratic	12	\$500,000	\$6,000,000
West Virginia	Senate	Likely Republican	3	\$100,000	\$300,000
Wisconsin	Senate	Likely Republican	2	\$400,000	\$800,000
	House	Likely Republican	18	\$200,000	\$3,600,000

In total, Democrats should raise at least \$58 million to fund the 251 candidates who will win back these states. A total of \$30 million is needed to get an advantage in the most winnable 112 races in Likely Democratic, Lean Democratic, Beatable Supermajority, and Lean Republican states.

3. RESPOND TO THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE DISTRICT STRATEGICALLY AND COMPREHENSIVELY

With good candidates and resources in hand, campaigns then need to respond to who lives in their districts. Based on our work with successful state legislative campaigns across the country and Democrats’ success in a diverse set of districts at the federal level, here are some approaches that we think can respond to the nuances of the demographic profiles that we have shared.

- In **diverse districts**, candidates should not take the votes of communities of color for granted, only contacting them during GOTV efforts. Earlier efforts are essential in the low turnout environment of state legislatures. Candidates and organizations should not assume unanimity of communities of color, either. Some of the most Hispanic districts on our list are South Florida districts with large Cuban-American populations that are traditionally more conservative.
- A **diverse district** may not necessarily be an integrated one. Many first-time candidates may not have strong connections across racial lines. Establishing those early in the cycle is key.

- In suburban districts with large proportions of **college-educated** voters, voters are shifting away from national and state Republicans in large part because of their focus on a radical agenda rather than addressing the principal concerns of voters. Candidates have done well by emphasizing how they are more laser-focused on the daily lives and dignity of their future constituents.
- In these **well-educated districts**, there is often an interest in keeping around more moderate members of the Republican coalition and an expectation that these members will be difficult to beat. It is a story that was told in Virginia leading up to 2017 and it can be defeated by candidates building strong narratives about how districts are shifting, how even “moderate” Republicans have aided and abetted a dangerous agenda, and how a good campaign can win.
- While many have written off districts with high proportions of white non-college voters, they play an important role in unlocking certain critical purple state legislatures. We think that a more targeted focus on lower-income, working-class, and middle class **non-college whites** can work in the state legislative context. Evidence shows that many such voters share Democratic priorities on most economic policy issues and are cross-pressured on issues like trade and immigration. With these national issues aside at the state level, candidates can emphasize their meaningful economic message.
- At the same time, candidates should not confuse “**non-college**” with working class. The substantial populations of upper income non-college voters have been the base of the Trump campaign and the Tea Party Movement before it. Unless required by the demographics, those voters are less likely to be a fruitful target.

There are also a few insights that transcend the individual demographics of districts but tie directly to shared attributes of state legislative districts not seen at campaigns at other levels of government.

- **Downballot drop-off** means that large proportions of “likely voters” do not make their way down to the state legislative race. This drop-off can be substantial. Evidence suggests that strong endorsements from top-of-ticket Democrats can help raise the name ID of state legislative candidates. Even more important is to ensure that candidates in these districts have the necessary funding for their campaigns, so that they can effectively reach out to voters and make sure voters who show up to the polls on Election Day know to look for their name on the ballot.
- The **small size of the electorate** in state legislative campaigns creates opportunities for more targeted strategies. The universe of likely voters in some of these districts is in the thousands. They can be messaged comprehensively and efficiently, making state legislative campaigns a highly effective use of donor dollars. It also means that efforts like voter registration drives or heavy messaging to low propensity voters, potentially cost-prohibitive for a national or statewide campaign, might be the best use of resources to capture some extra voters in a small map. Expanding the map is particularly valuable in the districts with the largest proportions of low-propensity Democratic voters. Among the states we analyzed, Arizona and Texas stood out as particular opportunities for electorate expansion.

VII. THE IMPACT OF WINNING

The ability to win in these districts in 2019 and 2020 is vital for questions of power and policymaking. Controlling the states is fundamental to Democrats' ability to implement a legislative agenda in the 2020s and to gain control at other levels of government. Redistricting and voting rights are decided in state capitals. With the continuing dysfunction in Washington that is unlikely to abate even if Democrats pull out a narrow majority in the Senate in 2020, states will be the geography at which most policymaking occurs in the foreseeable future.

What does that mean specifically? It means stopping heartbeat and bathroom bills, restoring a commitment to every citizen's right to vote, ending partisan and racial gerrymandering, and pursuing economic policies that uplift families, not just the 1%.

In Michigan, Democrats could enact an agenda that will protect the environment, while Republicans have occupied their time removing references to climate change from school curriculum.²² In Florida, Medicaid expansion would give health care coverage to an additional 850,000 people.²³ In Pennsylvania, workers would get a raise; Pennsylvania's current minimum wage is the federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hour.²⁴ In Ohio, Democrats could implement a pro-voting agenda, while Republicans have done everything in their power to restrict the right to vote.²⁵

Most significantly, Democrats can overcome their "powerless majority" by winning in the states. Having won the popular vote for the presidency in five of the last six elections and having won the popular vote for the U.S. Senate in 2018 despite the lost seats, Democrats are staring down a daunting fate: being the popular choice of the country but being unable to take advantage of that fact. With the successful implementation of a state-focused strategy, they can regain substantial power in this country and put their popular policies into play.

VIII. THE REAL RISK OF FALLING SHORT

If states are left in the hands of Republicans, that means more restrictions on people's ability to vote, more bills cutting spending for education, further evisceration of Medicaid, and additional fiscal policies that favor the very wealthy over families and children. And if we don't win in the states in 2020, we will lose them for a decade as Republicans get a second consecutive chance to gerrymander the states as they see fit. We will have to accept minority rule through the 2020s. And this is not some remote possibility.

In 2018, Democrats won the easy districts – the districts that fundamentally lean Democratic but were held by Republican legislators. Though Democrats did a better job than in recent years, we still left winnable districts on the table. As shown in this report, we failed to fully invest in candidates in competitive districts. Thanks to gerrymandering, in 2020 Democrats have to compete in districts and states that fundamentally lean Republican. It is going to take substantial focus and resources for Democrats to take back control of the states. That focus is going to have to compete against a crowded landscape. With two dozen presidential candidates and plenty of U.S. House and Senate seats up for grabs, Democrats will need to overcome the distractions and attractions of 2020 to make sure that the states are not left behind.

²² Ron French and Lindsay VanHulle, "History gets a conservative twist in Michigan social studies standards," *Bridge Michigan* June 12, 2018.

²³ "Life in Florida without Medicaid Expansion," *Miami Herald*, ongoing series.

²⁴ Ron Southwick, "While Gov. Tom Wolf seeks to raise minimum wage, Pa.'s neighbors are doing it," *Penn Live* July 3, 2019

²⁵ Richard Wolf, "Supreme Court upholds Ohio voting restrictions," *USA Today* September 13, 2016.

IX. OUR PLAN

We have laid out the districts, their demographics, and the work that must be done. Armed with this information, we have a detailed plan for how we will work over the next 15 months, in coordination with partners and allies, to bring these districts into the Democratic fold:

- 1. Raise funds to directly support candidates in the 2020 districts.** Through our network of grassroots fundraising champions and in concert with online allies, we aim to raise enough funds to provide a down payment toward the \$58 million needed to elect Democrats to these critical seats. Our first stop on that that journey is our “110-by-2020” campaign. Launching soon after this report, we hope to raise \$1.1 million for the priority districts identified in this report.
- 2. Galvanize large donors to meet this need.** Large donors are interested in strong Returns on Investment (ROI) in political giving. Investing in these districts has some of the largest ROI around:
 - Campaigns are inexpensive, so the same dollar goes farther.
 - These campaigns are the most competitive districts, so no dollar is spent on candidates who would “win anyway.”
 - The states will remain the focus of policymaking for the time being.

EveryDistrict will work to tell the story of the winnable districts contained in this report so that more Democratic donors make the forward-looking investments that their Republican counterparts did in 2010.

- 3. Use new fundraising approaches to engage activists in more empowering ways.** EveryDistrict fundraises through peer-to-peer networks led by grassroots “fundraising champions.” This people-centered approach to fundraising helps transform fundraising from an extractive process to one that serves an organizing purpose by getting more people directly involved in supporting campaigns and organizing their fellow Democrats.
- 4. Leverage the data behind the data to help candidates and allies further.** Beneath the data shared in this report is a more detailed set of analyses that can point to the path forward for candidates and groups looking to support them. This data points to where outreach and organizing among young voters, communities of color, and white suburban voters can have their largest impact. We’ll make use of this data to help Democratic candidates get the upper hand on their Republican opponent. EveryDistrict allies will have early access to state-by-state profiles that provide deep data dives on each state legislative chamber and district discussed in this report.
- 5. Translate this demographic data into campaign strategy.** The three types of districts we describe in this report require different campaign tactics and approaches. Moreover, different organizations have different priorities in the types of districts in which they want to work. Some want to engage new emerging coalitions, while others want to build back in populations that are slipping away. Others want to focus in on certain geographies of voters, like rural voters. As a result of this report, we can provide a menu of districts for these groups to support with our help.
- 6. Ensure that candidate recruitment and support go to these districts.** As Democrats redouble efforts to provide support in recruiting candidates, we’ll be working to make sure strong candidates with compelling connections to the district are recruited. Based on the partner network we have built²⁶ we will connect these candidates with early stage resources, including low cost services like web design and media and identity-based fundraising opportunities.

That is what EveryDistrict will be doing between now and November 2020.

²⁶ Learn more about our Partners Network (and join it) at: EveryDistrict.us/About/Partners.

TAKING A DEEPER DIVE

Behind the data presented in this report is a comprehensive look at every district. If you are an organization that works on state legislatures and are interested in having access to even deeper insights on state legislative races over the next two years, please contact us. Email our Executive Director, Nicole Hobbs, at nicole@everydistrict.us if you're interested in demographic profiles for any or all of the districts in this report.

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

If you're interested in joining us in this important work, visit us at EveryDistrict.us and join our mailing list to be the first to receive updates on our analysis and ways to take action. You can donate to our 2020 fund by visiting EveryDistrict.us/Donate. Sign up to be a fundraising champion, raising money among your friends and family to support grassroots campaigns across the country, by visiting EveryDistrict.us/Fundraise.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Through the approaches outlined in this report, EveryDistrict is prepared to implement a comprehensive strategy for winning back the states in 2019 and 2020. We believe that we can remake this country by 2020 and implement a forward looking agenda that restores our democracy and provides opportunity for all. Now is the time to concentrate on the states, the center of policymaking and power in our country. Now that you know where we can make change, let's work together to make it happen.



EVERYDISTRICT