



**TO:** Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Interim DLCC President Heather Williams  
**DATE:** November 13, 2023  
**RE:** **How We Won: The DLCC's Path to the Majority in Virginia**

This year's huge victories in Virginia are the result of the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee's year-round strategy of investments and partnerships with the House and Senate caucuses in the state along with the valued support of other national groups. Tuesday's victories put the DLCC on a path to success for 2024, as trendlines and momentum continue to build for Democrats in the states. Simply put, in every important election of 2023, Democrats have either overperformed or outright won. Virginia was the most important election of 2023 and the DLCC emerged victorious for the reasons outlined below.

### **The DLCC's early investments in Virginia were multipliers this year, building a strong foundation and critical infrastructure**

The DLCC's early investments in Virginia were multipliers this year, building a strong foundation and critical infrastructure so that Democrats on the ground could build a self-sustaining program in the state and be ready to take full advantage of later spending and support. By mid-October, the DLCC set a new committee record for direct investment in Virginia this cycle at over **\$2.2 million**. In addition to direct contributions, DLCC staff advised and directly supported the development of finance and campaign plans by the caucuses, helping them achieve their own record fundraising totals. We provided data, targeting, digital communications, research, fundraising support, and other strategic expertise to help Democrats in the state succeed.

Next, throughout the year, **the DLCC sounded the alarm on the national stage about the stakes of the election** and what a Republican trifecta would mean for Virginia. Republican control of the General Assembly and an unchecked GOP trifecta would have led to an abortion ban and cut off the last point of access for the entire South. It also would have led to restricted voting rights, new attacks on the LGBTQ+ community, and the rolling back of hard-fought measures to protect against climate change. The DLCC led the charge in highlighting the outsized importance of Virginia in the political landscape this year and marshaled attention and resources to our Democratic candidates and races.

Finally, while national pundits focused on Governor Youngkin and his presidential ambitions, we made one thing abundantly clear: **this election was about state power and the future, not just for Virginia, but for the direction of the whole country.** Results now show that Virginians agreed, showing up to vote in record numbers and rejecting the GOP's radical agenda. The long path to get here wasn't easy but with the right resources, the DLCC proved we have the winning strategy to win these elections and shift the balance of power in the states.

### **What this means heading into 2024:**

There are no off-years in state legislative politics. While national pundits and observers focus on the presidential race and dysfunction in Washington, D.C., movement on key issues is happening in the states where the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee is on a historic winning streak. In 2022, for the first time since at least 1934, the party holding the White House did not lose a single state legislative chamber in a midterm year. Throughout 2023, we have overperformed in special elections by 7 points and now we have won the most important election of the year, gaining full Democratic control in Virginia's legislature despite massive spending from Republicans.

**This proves one thing: regardless of what happens at the top of the ticket, 2024 will be the year of the states.** The DLCC remains laser-focused on securing and protecting Democratic majorities that will safeguard Americans' fundamental freedoms and grow the middle class. [The state legislative map in 2024](#) is full of opportunity. Democrats are recognizing that alongside important federal races, we must also compete and win power in the states. Republicans built an advantage in the last decade but now Democrats are fighting back and shifting the balance of power. The DLCC will continue to lead this fight to bring an era of security, opportunity, and progress to all parts of the country. **CONTINUED ▶**

SUMMER 2022

JAN 2023

GOP BAN

MAR 2023

Caucus leadership, including newly-elected House Leader Don Scott, begin strategizing with **DLCC's Political Department**

**DLCC** invests \$25k to flip a senate seat blue in a critical special election

**Republicans** introduce a 15-week abortion ban in Virginia which is blocked by our Democratic majority in the Senate

**DLCC's** affiliated C4, State Democracy Action Fund, launches a \$150k digital ad campaign to hold Virginia Republicans accountable for the abortion ban

**DLCC** begins to compile research for caucus partners in Virginia, which goes on to inform paid and earned communications throughout the year

JUN 2023

MAY 2023

APR 2023

Following the June primary, **DLCC releases** a memo to national audiences highlighting the stakes of the election, abortion as a key issue and warning about Governor Youngkin's plan to spend big

**DLCC Invests** an additional \$50k to support the caucus programs

**DLCC Invests** \$50k to support building the caucus programs

**DLCC** and caucus staff hold retreats to develop digital, communications, and fundraising plans for the year, urging both caucuses to maximize fundraising staff and putting strategies and trainings in place to optimize member investment in the caucuses' finance plans

JUL 2023

GOP SPEND

AUG 2023

**DLCC** announces 17 Virginia Spotlight candidates—outstanding Democratic candidates in some of the most critical races

**DLCC Invests** \$100k to support building the caucus programs

The House Democratic Caucus **announces** record Q2 fundraising of \$2.3 million

**Governor Youngkin** and the **RSLC announce** a \$1 million+ commitment to boost GOP turnout in the fall. **House Republicans** launch six-figure digital ad campaign, attacking Democrats in 12 districts.

**DLCC Invests** \$250k and DLCC staff continue directly supporting candidate fundraising

SEP 2023

GOP SPEND

**President Biden** and the **DNC** **commit** \$1.2 million to Virginia—an investment the DLCC helped secure

**DLCC Invests** \$1.55 million and DLCC staff continue to advise on finance plans and cash flow

**Governor Youngkin's** Spirit of Virginia PAC transfers over \$1.2 million to GOP candidates and committees. The **RSLC, Senate Republican Caucus, and Youngkin's PAC** **launch** a seven-figure ad campaign attacking Senate Democrats

Partnership between **DLCC** and caucus staff grows the House Democratic Caucus's digital program, leading to \$50k raised throughout the year and a record-breaking August email raise of nearly \$18k

PARTNER SPEND

GOP SPEND

Partner organizations help boost spending in target districts by several million dollars—funding ads, voter outreach, and staffing plans to finish the year strong

**DLCC** runs an all-out national press blitz to make the stakes of Virginia's elections clear to national observers

**DLCC** builds and launches early vote modeling tool with caucuses to monitor the landscape as voting begins

**Governor Youngkin's** Spirit of Virginia PAC contributes over \$3.2 million to support GOP candidates and committees

**DLCC** invests \$200k in **an effort** to tie GOP dysfunction in Washington to Virginia GOP

Democrats win big on Election Day, delivering full Democratic control of the Virginia General Assembly

NOV 2023

SPEND

OCT 2023

**DLCC** deploys staff to help oversee voter protection efforts and election night operations

House and Senate campaigns reach out to voters over 1 million times to get out the vote in the lead-up to election day

Additional **Partner spending** helps close final gaps

House Democratic caucus **announces** their candidates have outraised their GOP counterparts in Q3