



TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Heather Williams, DLCC President
DATE: February 11, 2025
RE: Memo: DLCC Launches Target Map for 2025/2026 Cycle

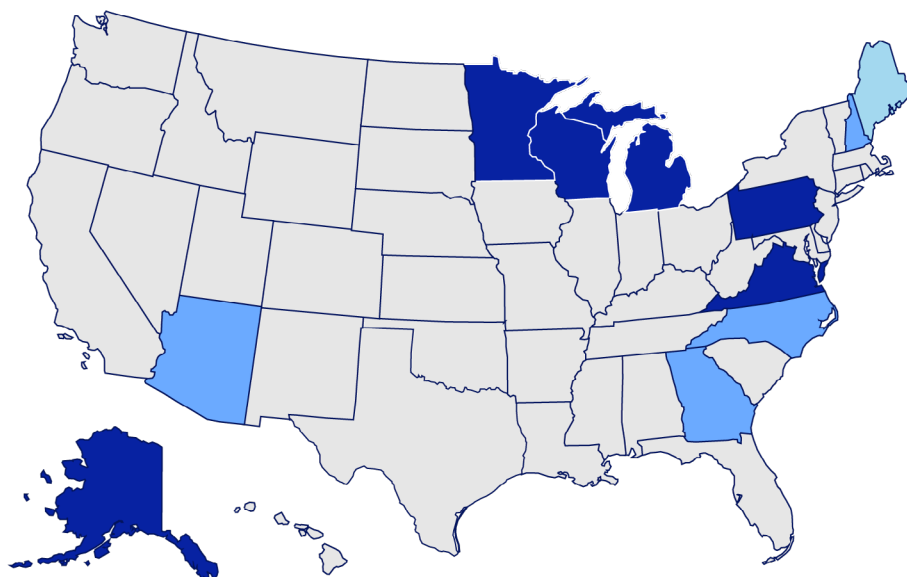
Our country and the Democratic Party face a critical juncture amid this dangerous new era of unchecked Republican power in Washington. We are currently witnessing an extreme and sweeping attack on the federal government that threatens the stability of our nation's future, and we must leverage every tool at our disposal to push back on the unfolding chaos. In this environment, states have become an important bulwark to combat the full-scale implementation of Project 2025 and the MAGA agenda. Not only that, but state legislatures are the only level of government where Democrats hold majorities and can proactively move policy forward that improves lives. State capitols are where Democrats are addressing real concerns—from lowering costs to protecting freedoms—while Washington dissolves into dysfunction.

To meet this moment, the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee (DLCC) is strategizing the most ambitious plan to strengthen Democratic power in the states. Our strategy builds on important lessons and data from the last cycle. While the top of the ticket suffered serious losses last cycle, the **DLCC held its ground and even secured key victories** in battleground states like Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Carolina. 2024 built on the DLCC's work over the last decade to secure a dozen new legislative majorities. Now, Democrats' 39 state legislative majorities provide critical protections for nearly half of the country—state legislatures are where Democrats are leading, securing progress, and moving our communities and country forward.

Democratic power in the states matters more than ever amid this moment of unbridled extremism in Washington. As the official arm of the Democratic Party charged with building Democratic power in the states, the DLCC's imperative couldn't be more clear. **Armed with historical data and our internal analysis of the 2024 elections, the DLCC is now unveiling our target map for the 2025/2026 cycle:**



- BATTLEGROUND
- POWER BUILDING
- WATCH LIST





Battleground chambers are in states we must win and defend before the end of this decade to ensure that Democrats are in a strong position going into 2030 redistricting. This is an extremely competitive map on

which five state legislative chambers are decided by a single seat—the Minnesota House, Minnesota Senate, Michigan Senate, Pennsylvania House, and Virginia House. These chambers alone decide the fates of over 40 million Americans.

Victories in these chambers and states won't be measured in a single cycle—they must be won and defended through the end of the decade. They include:

- **Virginia House** (2025) (1-seat Democratic majority)
- **Minnesota Senate** (1-seat Democratic majority)
- **Minnesota House** (tied chamber)
- **Michigan Senate** (1-seat Democratic majority)
- **Michigan House** (3-seat Republican majority)
- **Pennsylvania House** (1-seat Democratic majority)
- **Wisconsin Assembly** (5-seat Republican majority)
- **Wisconsin Senate** (2-seat Republican majority)
- **Alaska House** (21-seat multipartisan coalition (14D - 5I - 2R))
- **Alaska Senate** (14-seat multipartisan coalition (9D - 5R))



Power building chambers represent opportunities to (1) gain seats on the path to new majorities by 2030, or (2) protect other benchmarks for power, including defending the veto pens of Democratic governors. The DLCC's work in our power building

states focuses on seizing opportunities to create a more competitive environment for cycles to come.

To put future majorities in play:

- **Arizona House** (3-seat Republican majority)
- **Arizona Senate** (2-seat Republican majority)
- **Georgia House** (10-seat Republican majority)
- **New Hampshire House** (22-seat Republican majority)

To protect the veto pen of Democratic governors:

- **North Carolina House** (1 seat currently protects the Governor's veto)
- **North Carolina Senate** (1 seat away from breaking GOP supermajority)



Watch list chambers are hard-won majorities the DLCC won't take for granted—we will support these chambers to maximize Democratic state legislative power through the end of the decade. We are paying close attention to the data and monitoring

Republican investments in these states to ensure Democrats continue to control these chambers.

Though more chambers may be added to this list, right now this includes:

- **Maine House** (2-seat Democratic majority)
- **Maine Senate** (3-seat Democratic majority)

The Path Ahead

The DLCC's target map represents our role in crafting the long-term strategy for building Democratic power in the states. The DLCC's priorities are clear regarding where resources can secure the most power during an era of total GOP power in Washington. The DLCC will continue to be the permanent, year-round presence and strategic hub to ensure Democrats can build on the progress we've made and lead amid unchecked GOP power in Washington.

That said, this ballot level is historically underfunded, and the continual and growing disparity between funding for state-level and federal races is a serious cause for concern for our country. For example, the DLCC's support helped caucus programs raise \$182 million in 2024—doubling their fundraising since 2020. Though that was historic for our caucuses, it still lags dramatically behind our federal counterparts. In the 2024 cycle, the fundraising was over \$2 billion for congressional races and \$2.3 billion for the presidential race, which does not even include independent expenditures. Just a fraction of these billions of dollars could dramatically reshape the balance of power in the states.

Amid the threats posed by unchecked Republican power in Washington, we can't afford the dangerous gamble of ignoring state legislatures. The urgency and opportunity at this ballot level are immediate.

While general elections loom large, the DLCC will also be engaging in special elections throughout the year. In January alone, state Democrats won three must-win elections to defend single-seat majorities in the Virginia House and Senate and the Minnesota Senate. Democrats also scored the first flip of the cycle in an Iowa state Senate district that voted for Trump by 21 points last November.

It's no exaggeration to say the future of our country and our rights are in jeopardy if we don't prioritize state legislatures. If Republicans dominate statehouses, Project 2025 will be on a glide path to implementation across the country. Republican victories this cycle would also position them to dominate redistricting, ensuring GOP victories up-ticket through gerrymandered maps and widespread voter suppression over the next decade. As the Democratic Party looks to build the bench of the next generation of leaders, investing in state legislatures is also key—[nearly half of the members](#) of the 119th Congress got their start in state legislatures. The stakes couldn't be higher, which is why the reliance on electing federal Democrats to push our agenda forward must necessarily evolve into a strategy that prioritizes state Democrats too.

State chamber control in many states this cycle will likely come down to just a few seats and possibly just a few hundred votes, so our efforts to bring attention and resources to this fight will make all the difference. Amid this existential moment in our country, the DLCC is leading the fight to win back power and determine the future of millions of Americans for years to come.