

Background on the DLCC's Top Races to Watch This November

TOPLINES FROM THE DLCC

- ▶ There are no off years for state elections, and the DLCC is leading the national strategy to build Democratic power in the states at this critical moment in the nation's history.
- ▶ **In 2025, the DLCC has been flipping Trump districts in special elections, building powerhouse campaigns in key states, and laying the groundwork all year round for wins on Election Day this November.**
- ▶ The November 2025 elections are a critical opportunity to strengthen the firewall against the failing Trump administration, as Democrats in state legislatures continue to lead in the fight against the GOP's extremism and reckless economic decisions that are hurting working families.
- ▶ At a time when Democrats are searching for a way forward, it is clear the leaders people are looking for are in the states and the strategy needed to rebuild power at all levels of government is also rooted in the states.
- ▶ With mid-cycle redistricting and voting rights under attack in the states, the path for sustained majorities in Congress runs through our state legislatures, and the DLCC's disciplined strategy and investments continue to fuel Democratic wins across the country.



- ▶ Virginia Democrats have mounted impressive campaigns this year through the strongest caucus program in history—from running candidates across all 100 districts to setting records for fundraising and early primary turnout.
- ▶ Alongside the competitive gubernatorial race, Democrats must defend a one-seat majority in the House of Delegates and have an opportunity to expand the majority.
- ▶ Over the past decade, the DLCC has helped build a strong caucus program that has transformed the House caucus from a near Democratic superminority to a growing majority.
- ▶ In 2023, the majority was secured by a Democrat who won by just 975 votes.
- ▶ Key battleground districts to watch include suburban districts around Richmond in Henrico County, northern Virginia suburban districts in Loudoun and Prince William counties, and the Hampton Roads region, including Virginia Beach and Chesapeake.
- ▶ If Democrats defend the House and win the governor's seat, it will be only the second time in over 30 years that Democrats have won a trifecta in Virginia. If Democrats expand the House majority, it will be for the first time since 1975.
- ▶ Also on the ballot is the lieutenant governor's race, which has implications for the state legislature since the LG serves as the tie-breaking vote in the Virginia Senate, where Democrats have just a one-seat majority.

- ▶ The future of three constitutional amendments also hangs in the balance to enshrine abortion rights, secure marriage equality, and restore voting rights for former felons. These amendments must pass through the legislature again next year before being placed on the ballot for voters in 2026.
- ▶ **More from Virginia:**
 - ▶ Virginia Mercury: [DLCC invests another \\$1.5 million into Virginia state elections](#)
 - ▶ Virginia Scope: [Virginia House Democrats surge in fundraising ahead of bellwether 2025 elections](#)
 - ▶ Virginia Mercury: [Democrats reach historic goal: A full slate in Virginia House races](#)
 - ▶ [DLCC Spotlight races](#) in Virginia



NEW JERSEY

- ▶ New Jersey Assembly Democrats won a 52-28 majority in 2023. The full Assembly is on the ballot this year, plus one special election in the Senate.
- ▶ While the Democratic majorities are the strongest protections for New Jersey's working families, the governor's race will also be crucial for ensuring a continued Democratic trifecta.
- ▶ The DLCC has made a six-figure investment in New Jersey this cycle and identified [12 Spotlight races](#) across the state that are competitive, including key districts in South Jersey and along the shore.
- ▶ Key bellwether districts like LD-11 will be highly competitive and are nested within battleground territory Mikie Sherrill needs on her path to victory.
- ▶ **More from New Jersey:** The Hill: [Democratic group makes six-figure investment in New Jersey Assembly races ahead of November](#)



PENNSYLVANIA

- ▶ The DLCC has made a [six-figure investment](#) in retaining all three Pennsylvania Supreme Court seats this cycle.
- ▶ There are three retention races for the state supreme court this November, where voters will cast a simple "yes/no" vote to allow three Democratic justices to serve a new term.
- ▶ The court currently has a 5-2 Democratic majority, and retaining all three would help protect the Democratic majority through the end of the decade for redistricting.
- ▶ Retention races are historically low-attention races, but this year the GOP poured a six-figure investment and flooded the airwaves in Pennsylvania.
- ▶ If voters fail to retain the Democratic justices, the governor appoints temporary replacements subject to confirmation from the Republican-controlled state Senate, which is likely to reject the appointments. That means the Democratic majority protecting fair maps would be eliminated, and the court could deadlock 2-2 until special elections in 2027 to elect new justices for full 10-year terms.

- ▶ In the legislature, Republicans are just one seat away from flipping the state House and currently hold the Senate majority—a conservative court would only empower Republicans' ambitions to roll back progress.
- ▶ **More from Pennsylvania:**
 - ▶ Philly Inquirer: [A national Democratic group is getting involved in the Pa. Supreme Court retention elections](#)
 - ▶ Spotlight PA: [Republicans have a chance to transform the Pa. Supreme Court this year](#)



CALIFORNIA

- ▶ Voters will face a ballot measure to introduce new congressional district maps in response to Republicans' egregious gerrymandering to steal seats for their U.S. House majority ahead of 2026.
- ▶ Prop 50 was placed on the ballot after Democrats in the California state legislature introduced and passed this package of legislation.
- ▶ If passed, this measure will effectively counteract the Republican gerrymander in Texas, but it won't be enough to balance all the other Republican states currently taking action to rig their maps.
- ▶ To achieve parity in the redistricting fight, Democrats must win more majorities in state legislatures, and the 2026 midterms will be a historic opportunity to shift the balance of power.
- ▶ The DLCC has been [raising resources](#) to fund the fight to win more state legislatures and put the party on offense, and remains laser-focused on winning more chambers to achieve redistricting parity by 2030.



MINNESOTA

- ▶ Two special elections triggered by mid-cycle vacancies will decide the state Senate majority. With those vacancies, the Senate currently stands 33D-32R.
- ▶ Rep. Amanda Hemmingsen-Jaeger is running in SD-47, a Democratic-leaning district. Her victory would be a Democratic hold and protect the one-seat DFL majority.
- ▶ Louis McNutt is running in SD-29, a Republican-leaning district. If he flips this seat, it would be a significant victory, given that Trump won this district by 32 points in 2024. A victory would secure and likely strengthen DFLers' razor-thin majority.
- ▶ Minnesota DFLers have already won three majority-deciding special elections this year, and both chambers are on the DLCC's target map for 2026 as we aim to take back the House and defend the Senate.



MISSISSIPPI

- ▶ Ten House and Senate special elections are being held in north Mississippi and the Pine Belt this year after a federal court ruling triggered new maps to rectify racial gerrymandering.
- ▶ If Democrats gain two seats, they will break the Republican supermajority in the state Senate, marking a critical milestone in gradually building Democratic power in the state.
- ▶ If Democrats break the supermajority, they can block constitutional amendments and veto overrides from the Republican governor.
- ▶ The most likely path to breaking the supermajority runs through majority-minority districts, including defending SD-11 and gaining seats in SD-45 and SD-02.
- ▶ **More from Mississippi:** Mississippi Today: [National Democrats promote five candidates in Mississippi special legislative races](#)

OTHER SPECIAL ELECTIONS



In **New Hampshire**, Corinne Cascadden is running to flip a GOP seat in the 400-person state House. This would be the first flip in New Hampshire this cycle as the DLCC prepares to target this chamber and the New Hampshire Republican trifecta in 2026.



In **Washington** state, Senators Victoria Hunt and Deb Krishnadasan were appointed earlier this year to fill vacancies and are now on the ballot to defend their seats and help ensure the Democratic majority remains strong.



In **New York**, Michael Cashman is running in a special election to fill a vacant Assembly seat. New York state Democrats drive one of the world's largest economies, and this special election is an opportunity for voters to affirm Democratic leadership in this powerful blue state.