Introduction

In 2021, state legislatures in 35 states will draw congressional or legislative maps. While the power of the pen is at stake, the last few months have only underscored how much else is on the line in state elections this year. State legislatures have an outsized impact on most of the policymaking that affects Americans’ lives. With gridlock in the federal government, Democratic majorities were able to swiftly pass much-needed coronavirus relief, police reform, voting rights legislation, and so many other critical policies.

In January, the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee (DLCC) unveiled its $50 million “Flip Everything” campaign to flip seats across the country and to specifically target more than a dozen chambers in 13 states. The DLCC is on complete offense this year—and in the six months since we launched this campaign, we’ve made incredible strides towards flipping chambers in an election that will decide power in the states for the next decade. The momentum is on our side after flipping over 450 seats and 10 chambers from red to blue since Trump’s election—but we aren’t taking anything for granted. We’ve been working to build a strong, early infrastructure in key states that will set us up for success in the fall.

This year, the DLCC has seen record-breaking fundraising and success in recruitment as GOP lawmakers retire in droves. We’ve already spent over $6.3 million investing in key states across the country—and that’s just the beginning. The world and political climate are different than when the DLCC launched this campaign in January, but thanks to strong Democratic candidates up and down the ballot, we’re poised to take back legislative majorities across the country this year.

Top Target Chambers

Arizona House & Senate

Arizona will be a key battleground state from the top of the ticket down to the battle for the state legislature. Democrats need just two seats in the House and three seats in the Senate to flip the state red to blue after gaining four House seats in 2018—and the political landscape in the state is favorable to Democrats this year. Between the state GOP’s dangerously negligent coronavirus response, their continued attacks on health care, and their sharp turn towards right-wing extremism, voters are looking for a change in leadership.

Our path runs through districts that voted for Senator Kyrsten Sinema in 2018, and this year, Democrats are poised for another strong showing in the state. One reason Democrats are able to compete in Arizona is thanks to its independent redistricting commission—which GOP lawmakers are already attempting to undermine. It’s critical Democrats have a lever of power in the state to ensure we keep that commission intact and protect fair maps.
**Iowa House**

Iowa is a top battleground state up and down the ballot this year. Democrats are just 4 seats away from flipping the state House after chipping away at the Republican stronghold by winning 5 seats in 2018. Last year, the longest-serving Republican legislator changed parties out of disgust over Trumpism, and earlier this year, a wave of GOP legislators announced their retirement—including House Majority Leader Chris Hagenow. The path to the majority runs through vulnerable open Republican seats and through the suburbs rapidly trending blue—most of which fall in congressional districts represented by a Democrat.

The DLCC invested early to help facilitate a strong recruitment period. Democrats are fielding an incredible slate, and we are running more candidates than Republicans. Iowa’s record-breaking primary turnout is also a positive sign for Democrats.

**Michigan House**

Democrats may have lost Michigan in the 2016 presidential election, but we’ve been making gains ever since, including last cycle when we broke the GOP supermajority in the legislature. This year, Democrats can win back the Michigan House by flipping just four seats red to blue. Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer won the four seats that Democrats need to take the majority this year. Thanks to her handling of the coronavirus, Governor Whitmer’s approval ratings are sky-high and voters will want to give her a lever of support in the legislature.

Michigan is a presidential battleground state, and a strong network of grassroot Democratic support plus the DLCC’s early investments this year will help lay the groundwork for a victory this fall. Thanks to a stellar recruiting period, Democrats have filed to run in every single district in Michigan—more than the GOP has.

**Minnesota Senate**

Minnesota hasn’t elected a Republican statewide since 2010, but it’s the country’s only divided state legislature. Winning back the Minnesota Senate is the clearest path to another Democratic trifecta, and we only need to flip two seats to do it. This is our first chance at taking back the Senate, which hasn’t yet been on the ballot since Trump’s election. There are currently ten GOP-held Senate seats in districts Democratic-Farmer-Labor (DFL) Governor Tim Walz won in 2018—laying out a clear path for Democrats to flip the chamber this year.

The DLCC invested early in the state this year, yielding a great recruitment period with Democrats running in all but two districts in the state.

**North Carolina House & Senate**

North Carolina has been one of the top swing states in the nation for the last several cycles, and 2020 is no exception. After flipping 16 seats and breaking the GOP’s supermajorities in 2018, Democrats are closer than ever to turning both chambers in North Carolina blue. Court-ordered redistricting in 2019 gives voters in the state a fairer map this year after extreme gerrymandering allowed Republicans to artificially prop up their majorities.

Democrats need to flip just six House seats and five Senate seats to win control of the legislature, which will be key to stopping further GOP gerrymandering and voter suppression since the governor has no veto power over district maps. There are a number of Republican-held districts that Hillary Clinton or Governor Roy Cooper won in 2016, giving Democrats a clear path to victory as Trump’s toxic unpopularity repels suburban voters in the fast-growing state. The DLCC invested early in North Carolina to build in-state infrastructure.

**Pennsylvania House & Senate**

Despite Republican gerrymandering, Democrats flipped 16 seats in the General Assembly in 2018, flipped a Senate seat in a special election, and are in striking distance of taking back control for the first time in over a decade. The top Republicans in both chambers of the legislature announced
their retirements earlier this year, and the GOP has spent the better part of the spring in a temper tantrum over Governor Tom Wolf’s coronavirus policies, which are popular with a wide majority of Pennsylvanians.

The continued leftward swing of the suburbs has given Democrats a long target list this year. Democrats need to flip just nine seats in the House and four in the Senate to win control of the chambers. Many Republican incumbents remain in districts that Hillary Clinton or Governor Wolf won, and the Keystone State will be competitive at all levels of the ballot this year. Democrats outvoted Republicans in this month’s primary election, and Joe Biden earned nearly 200,000 more votes than President Trump.

**Texas House**

Democrats only need to flip nine seats in order to flip the Texas House from red to blue. Momentum is on our side after winning 12 House seats in 2018 and the remaining targets are in the suburban districts that Beto O’Rourke won. There’s a state-level GOP Texodus with Republican lawmakers retiring in droves — including the speaker of the Texas House after audio leaked of his plans to sabotage members of his own party.

For the first time in recent history, Texas Democrats are competing in more districts in both the House and Senate than Republicans. Demographic shifts show Texas is rapidly becoming younger and more diverse. The number of registered voters in Texas has topped 16 million and is growing faster than the population. Nearly two million Texans have registered to vote since 2016, and nearly one million of those have registered since 2018. The desire for change is apparent, with voter turnout surging during the 2020 primary — for the first time since 2008, the number of Democratic primary voters surpassed that of Republicans, a clear sign of energy and momentum.

**Notable Expansion Targets**

**Kansas House & Senate**

Division between moderates and extremists in the Kansas Republican Party helped Governor Laura Kelly win the governorship in 2018, and now Democrats are on the brink of breaking the GOP supermajority in both chambers of the legislature. Voters in the state are increasingly repelled by Republicans’ extremist agenda; during this year’s session, they once again refused to pass Medicaid expansion and went out of their way to restrict reproductive freedom.

The GOP’s record of extremism led several incumbents to switch parties in 2018 and allowed Democrats to make gains in suburban districts. The GOP’s continued struggles with suburban voters means Democrats have the momentum they need this year to break the supermajority and give Governor Kelly veto power.

**Georgia House**

Republicans’ Trump-era meltdown has cost them dearly in this rapidly growing and diversifying state. In 2018, Democrats flipped over a dozen seats in the House and are poised to make further gains this year. Governor Brian Kemp also has some of the worst approval ratings in the nation on his coronavirus response, and Republicans’ refusal to expand Medicaid has made it harder to adequately tackle the public health crisis.

Given these developments, it’s no surprise that Republicans in the state and across the country are ringing alarm bells about Georgia. National Republican groups are openly panicking about their once-secure legislative majorities, announcing a multi-million dollar commitment as they desperately try to hold onto the state. Notably, Georgia Democrats shattered their last primary turnout record from 2008 and outvoted Republicans in the state, despite widespread problems with absentee ballots and at the polls on election day. With the Georgia GOP in a full-blown meltdown, the Peach State is one to watch heading into the general election campaign.