



## DCCC MEMORANDUM

To: Interested Parties  
From: Cheri Bustos, DCCC Chairwoman  
Lucinda Guinn, DCCC Executive Director  
Date: Thursday, January 16, 2020 (**updated April, 2, 2020**)  
Subject: **Democrats Set to Protect & Expand House Majority, As 2020 Kicks Off**

With just over 200 days to Election Day, Democrats are in a commanding position to protect and expand our House majority. We did this by:

- Focusing on delivering results in line with the priorities of the American people, a sharp contrast to Washington Republicans and Mitch McConnell who are hurting everyday Americans by standing with their special interest backers;
- Making bold and effective early investments that put us in position to capture organic voter enthusiasm in offensive districts, including easing access to the ballot box and building trust with communities of color; and
- Ensuring the DCCC, our candidates and Frontline members built the financial strength in the off-year to aggressively communicate clear, localized messages this year

After spending 2019 putting Frontline districts on path to re-election and building the infrastructure to support a large battlefield, Democrats are adding the following districts to the DCCC's offensive battlefield.

### AK-AL

In 2018, Congressman Don Young of Alaska, currently the longest serving member of the House, was held to his closest race in over a decade, carrying the district with just over 5% of the two-way vote. Data already shows Young is in for another close race: new DCCC polling shows that by a 13-point margin, voters are ready to consider someone else, or replace Don Young. Republicans know Young is vulnerable, which is why Congressional Leadership Fund devoted significant resources to the state for a last minute GOTV effort to push Young over the line in the last days. Republicans are again facing a significant challenge heading into November of 2020, where they will have to defend the longest serving incumbent in the Washington.

- In 2018, the Democratic House candidate earned 46.7% of the two-way vote, the strongest performance for a Democrat in recent elections, and a 5-point improvement on 2016.
- Independent Bill Walker won the gubernatorial election in 2014 with 51.2% of the two-way vote

### AR-02

In 2018, Congressman French Hill won this district by only 6.3 points - a 15.2 point improvement for Democrats over 2016. In the same year, Democrat Frank Scott was elected as Little Rock mayor, showing that with the right candidate, this district can be competitive. Joyce Elliott is that candidate. A State Senator, former State Representative, and decades long public educator, Elliott has the name recognition, profile, and fundraising ability to increase turnout in her favor as she runs against Hill, who's voting record serves the interest of his largest donors: banks and financial services.

- This district has had strong performances from Democrats in recent years, most notably when Frank Scott won the Little Rock mayoral race in 2018. The demographics also play to Sen. Elliott's strengths with the electorate made up of over 29% college educated voters and over 21% African American voters.

- State Senator Joyce Elliott is a decades-long teacher with high name recognition and reputation as a strong and focused leader. A former State Representative, she went on to become a State Senator and to serve as the Arkansas State Senate Majority Leader. She has already proven herself a formidable fundraiser to put this district on the map. CA-25

California's 25th Congressional District is a dense, overwhelmingly suburban seat situated in northern Los Angeles County and eastern Ventura County. Democrats currently hold [a 6-point registration advantage](#), and the district is trending rapidly toward Democrats as it becomes increasingly diverse. Re-tread candidate Steve Knight brings two factors to 2020 that dogged him in 2018: perennially weak fundraising and a record in Washington attuned to the needs of special interests, not the working people of California's 25<sup>th</sup> district.

- This district is overwhelmingly suburban (80.7% suburban) and has strong minority compositions, with Hispanic/Latinos (30.0%), African Americans (8.3%), and AAPI (7.9%) making up over 46% of the district's eligible voters.
- Clinton won this district in 2016 with 53.6% of the two-way vote and Democrat Katie Hill won the district in 2018 with 54.4% of the two-way vote, defeating Steve Knight by nearly 9 points.

## KS-02

After making historic gains in Kansas in 2018, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District presents an opportunity for Democrats to grow their majority in 2020. Last cycle, Governor Kelly won this district and the 2018 Democratic House candidate came within just 0.8 points of winning – a 14-point improvement on 2016 and the strongest performance for a Democrat at the House level in recent elections. Meanwhile, incumbent Rep. Steve Watkins has spent his first 12 months in office building a record of [embarrassing scandals](#) and repeated votes against lowering the cost of health care and prescription drugs.

- In 2018, the Democratic House candidate earned 49.6% of the two-way vote, the strongest performance for a Democrat in recent elections, and a 14-point improvement on 2016, while Governor Kelly also carried the district (55.1% two-way) in 2018.
- As a result of Steve Watkins' scandals, he is facing a significant primary challenge.

## NC-08

North Carolina's [redrawn](#) congressional map puts the state's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District [squarely in play](#), forcing incumbent Republican Rep. Richard Hudson into the first competitive general election of his career. Hudson will have to answer for his votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, oppose lowering prescription drug costs, and give tax handouts to Washington special interests. The newly redrawn district, Hudson's out of touch record, and a strong Democratic field have led [local commentators](#) and [analysts](#) alike to view this race as one to watch.

- This district improved after the Republican gerrymander was ruled illegal and maps were redrawn in November, moving from a district Trump carried by 14.8-points to a district Trump carried by 9.3-points overnight.
- In a similar, neighboring district, Dan McCready overperformed Trump by 10-points during the NC-09 Special Election just months ago.
- This newly drawn district is majority suburban (56.7%) and has strong minority communities, with African Americans making up 28.1% of the district's eligible voters and AAPI voters making up 6.5%.

## NJ-02

Republicans face a significant challenge holding onto New Jersey's Second Congressional District and Congressman Jefferson Van Drew's party switch does not improve their chances in November. Beyond the vulnerabilities highlighted in his own internal polling, Van Drew's party switch further weakened him as a candidate. Van Drew's ability to win a primary as a questionable Republican, but an unquestionable "[traitor](#)," remains uncertain..

- NJ-02 is majority suburban (56.9%), with minority populations comprising over 25% of the district's eligible voters. President Obama won this district twice, and in 2017, Governor Murphy won with 51.7% of the two-way vote.
- In Jeff Van Drew's own [internal](#) polling, voters wanted a new representative by a 17% margin. Now, considering Van Drew's shapeshifting, it is unclear if he would win a Republican primary.

## OH-10

President Trump barely eked out a victory in his 2016 election and after Sherrod Brown won this district in 2018, voters are clearly growing tired of the corporate special interest first agenda of Republicans like Congressman Michael Turner. The Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) is 16.4% African American, the fourth highest of any district in Ohio, and presents significant opportunities for a strong Democratic candidate to boost turnout. Running against Turner's record of taking away protections for people with pre-existing conditions and his votes against lowering prescription drug costs, the ultimate Democratic candidate will have a strong case that makes this seat competitive. The Cook Partisan Voting Index (PVI) rates OH-10 an R+4, one of the most competitive swing districts in the state. Senator Sherrod Brown won the district twice, in 2018 with 52.7% of the vote and in 2012 with over 50.4%, and President Trump only won the district with 51% of the vote in 2016. This is a diverse district with significant opportunities for a strong Democratic candidate to boost turnout.

- The Cook Partisan Voting Index (PVI) rates OH-10 an R+4, one of the most competitive swing districts in the state. Senator Sherrod Brown won the district twice, in 2018 with 52.7% of the vote and in 2012 with over 50.4%, and President Trump only won the district with 51% of the vote in 2016.
- Rep. Mike Turner has proven to be a very poor fundraiser throughout his time in Congress. In 2017/2018 he raised only \$1.2 Million for his re-election bid, and as of his most recent FEC filing he had only \$557,956 cash on hand.

## TX-02

When Texas House Speaker Dennis Bonnen [admitted President Trump was killing the Republican Party in "urban-suburban districts" across the Lone Star State](#), he was talking about places like Texas' 2nd Congressional District. Freshman Congressman Dan Crenshaw vastly underperformed in his 2018 campaign, scraping by with an historically low vote share for a Republican in this quickly-changing district. One year into his new job, Congressman Crenshaw has already gone Washington – caving to drug manufacturing lobbyists and [flat-out breaking a key 2018 campaign promise to lower prescription drug costs](#).

- The district is highly educated (41.3% with a college degree). It's an urban suburban mix (68.3% urban, 31.4% suburban) and has strong minority compositions, with African Americans (11.6%), Hispanics/Latinos (21.0%), and AAPIs (6.7%), making up a combined 39% of the district's eligible voters.
- The district is trending Democratic and growing, with a 21.0% increase in citizen voting age population from 2010 to 2018. O'Rourke narrowly lost this district in 2018, earning 49.4%.



## THE DCCC CAN CONTINUE TO EXPAND THE OFFENSIVE BATTLEFIELD FOR FOUR IMPORTANT REASONS:

### DEMOCRATS' MESSAGE IN LINE WITH AMERICANS' PRIORITIES

Democrats have put themselves on path to re-election by following through on their promises to the American: passing landmark anti-corruption legislation and passing bi-partisan legislation to bring down the cost of prescription drugs. Not only are these the priorities Democrats ran and won on in 2018, they are among [voters' top priorities](#).

In contrast, Washington Republicans and Mitch McConnell have worked against the American people at every turn. In fact, Mitch McConnell has gone so far as to label himself “the grim reaper.” While Democrats have put themselves on the right side of the American people’s priorities, Republicans who represent increasingly competitive districts have chosen a dangerous ally for themselves.

New national DCCC polling shows Mitch McConnell maintains a 24% favorable, 56% unfavorable rating (-33 net approval rating). House Republicans will be forced to defend yet another well-known Washington politician who is deeply unpopular with American voters. The DCCC has already seized on [McConnell's legislative graveyard](#) to drape this albatross around House Republicans’ necks, and as we push further into Republican-held territory the importance of McConnell as a foil beyond President Trump will be even more central.

To put it simply: the Democrats have kept their promise to be the party that fights for the top priorities of the American people; Mitch McConnell and the Republicans have done nothing but do the bidding of their special interest backers and work against the needs of everyday Americans.

### EARLY INVESTMENTS WITH LONG-TERM DIVIDENDS

After flipping an historic number of seats in 2018 and getting right to work in 2019 to fight for the priorities of the American public, the DCCC knew that protecting and expanding this House majority in a Presidential year hinged on building the infrastructure to support a large offensive and Frontline battlefield. As such, the DCCC made large scale strategic investments early in 2019 and laid the groundwork to maximize opportunities to engage voters early and lay the groundwork to turn record enthusiasm into record turnout.

The DCCC launched the Cycle of Engagement in June of 2019 - building on 2018’s successful Year of Engagement – to engage young people and people of color and earn their support. Through the Cycle of Engagement, the DCCC has already been able to make major investments in research that will be applied through voter registration programs and aid communication across the battlefield, including among [rural African American voters in North Carolina](#) and [eligible, but non-voting Latinos in Texas](#). This early work lays the groundwork to maximize voter engagement in a Presidential year and will continue in additional communities of color throughout the cycle.

The DCCC followed that investment by uplifting March Forward, a multi-year program that has put nearly 60 Field Managers on the ground in swing districts across the country. These organizers have registered more than 12,000 voters, met one on one with more than 4,900 activists, and trained more than 1,750 volunteers. Just this week, the DCCC announced it is expanding that program, adding 11 constituency field organizers to actively engaging with key communities of color in battleground districts.

After flipping two Texas districts in 2018, the DCCC announced a new [Texas Headquarters](#) led by native Texans to capitalize on the proven grassroots energy in the state. Since launching that on the ground offensive, three of the DCCC’s



six targets have retired, as signifier of how momentous these retirements will be, and added “[TEXODUS](#)” to the political vernacular.

Further, the DCCC, [in partnership with the DSCC](#), has invested 8-figures in strategic voting rights litigation taking on Republicans’ decades long crusade to build barriers to the ballot for core Democratic voters. This multi-state legal strategy has [already changed voting laws](#) in Florida, Michigan, and North Carolina.

## BANKING STRENGTH IN THE OFF-YEAR

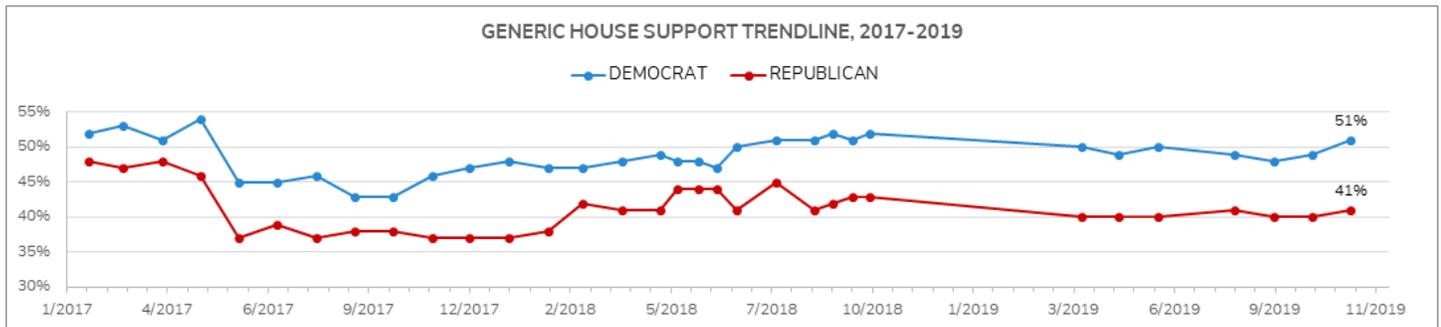
The DCCC, Frontline Members, and challenger candidates raised the financial resources to build a large battlefield and stretch Republicans thin, forcing them to play defense in places they cannot afford, if they in fact intend to challenge for the House majority. The DCCC raised nearly \$125 million in 2019, roughly \$20 more than we raised in 2017. The DCCC’s fundraising in 2019 was anchored by \$59.6 million in grassroots contributions, with an average online gift of \$17. This fundraising advantage is crucial because it allows the DCCC to effectively communicate our widely popular priorities to voters, and make large-scale strategic investments to support a large battlefield.

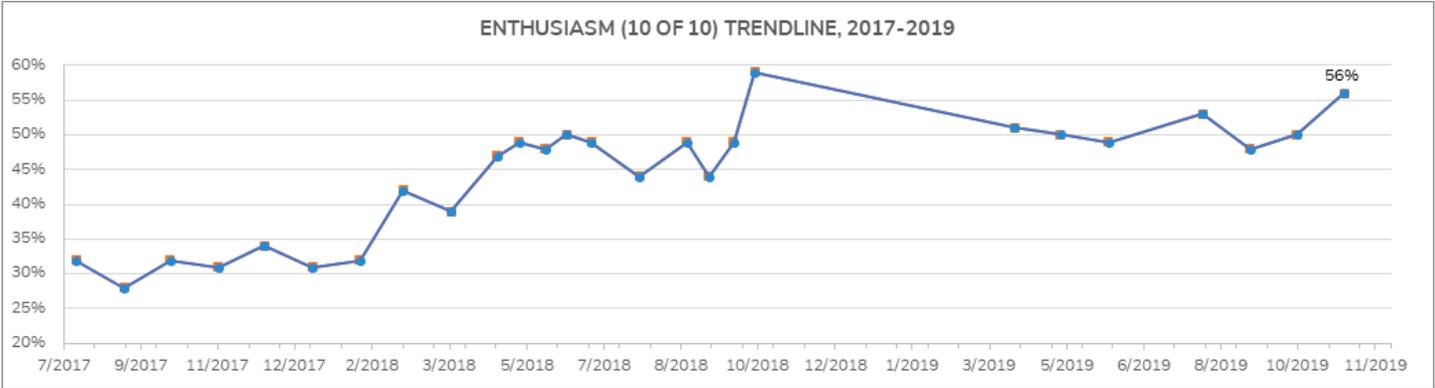
In addition to the DCCC’s fundraising dominance, Democratic Frontline Members set themselves on track for a successful re-election by raising more than \$91 million in 2019. Across the full Democratic Frontline class, roughly 75% ended with more than \$1 million cash on hand, and Frontline Members ended 2019 with over \$74 million on hand.

Democratic challenger candidates also raised huge sums of money in 2019: at least \$41 million in 2019, ending the year with well over \$25 million cash on hand. As a reminder, many of these candidates only got into the race in the second or third quarter of 2019.

## 2018’S FAVORABLE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT UNCHANGED

As Democrats expand the battlefield further into Republican held territory, Democrats are in a position to capture historically high levels of voter enthusiasm, and a political environment that mirrors November of 2018 when we flipped 40 seats and won the House. In short: there is a reason Republicans are retiring in droves and Democrats start the on-year in a strong position to protect and expand this House majority.





### 2020 DCCC OFFENSIVE BATTLEFIELD

- |                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AK-AL – Don Young       | NE-02 – Don Bacon             |
| AR-02 – French Hill     | NJ-02 – Jeff Van Drew         |
| AZ-06 – Dave Schweikert | NY-01 – Lee Zeldin            |
| CA-22 – Devin Nunes     | NY-02 – OPEN                  |
| CA-25 – OPEN            | NY-24 – John Katko            |
| CA-50 – OPEN            | NY-27 – OPEN                  |
| CO-03 – Scott Tipton    | OH-01 – Steve Chabot          |
| FL-15 – Ross Spano      | OH-10 – Mike Turner           |
| FL-16 – Vern Buchanan   | OH-12 – Troy Balderson        |
| FL-18 – Brian Mast      | PA-01 – Brian Fitzpatrick     |
| GA-07 – OPEN            | PA-10 – Scott Perry           |
| IA-02 – OPEN            | PA-16 – Mike Kelly            |
| IA-04 – Steve King      | TX-02 – Dan Crenshaw          |
| IL-13 – Rodney Davis    | TX-10 – Mike McCaul           |
| KS-02 – Steve Watkins   | TX-21 – Chip Roy              |
| IN-05 – OPEN            | TX-22 – OPEN                  |
| KY-06 – Andy Barr       | TX-23 – OPEN                  |
| MI-03 – Justin Amash    | TX-24 – OPEN                  |
| MI-06 – Fred Upton      | TX-31 – John Carter           |
| MN-01 – Jim Hagedorn    | VA-05 – Denver Riggleman      |
| MO-02 – Ann Wagner      | WA-03 – Jamie Herrera Buetler |
| MT-AL – OPEN            |                               |
| NC-08 – Richard Hudson  |                               |
| NC-09 – Dan Bishop      |                               |