



To: Interested Parties

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RE: Democrats are Going on Offense

Heading into the 2020 Presidential cycle, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is gearing up for an aggressive effort to fortify and expand our new Democratic Majority.

As the saying goes, the best defense is a good offense, and we couldn't agree more - especially with the battlefield that lies before us this election cycle.

That's why the DCCC is announcing the first 33 districts we are targeting to flip from red districts to blue ones. While each of these districts is as unique as the candidates who will rise to win them, 2018 revealed several commonalities among districts where Democrats will be most competitive in the 2020 cycle. Many of the districts on our list have big suburban populations; many have also experienced rapid population growth in recent years - particularly in diverse communities. This leaves Democrats with a large number of ripe pick-up opportunities.

Below are key reasons why the 2020 election cycle is shaping up to be strong for Democrats.

REPUBLICANS IN TROUBLE

History is on our side

If 2018 was the new 2006, then we're already on course for 2020 to shape up as the new 2008, where Democrats expanded the House majority they had just won. Similar to the 2008 cycle, Democrats go into 2020 with a House Majority and a battlefield with a clear path taking shape to win more seats. Meanwhile, the Republicans arrive in the minority with an extremely unpopular President dragging them down.

[January 15-18, 2007, Gallup poll](#) with President George W. Bush's Approval Rating: **36 approve / 61 disapprove**

[January 10, 2019, Gallup poll](#) with President Donald Trump's Approval Rating: **37 approve / 59 disapprove**

And with a fired up Democratic base and Independents rejecting President Trump and his Republican enablers in Congress, Presidential battleground states like Michigan, North Carolina and Pennsylvania are shaping up to be treacherous terrain for House Republicans.

President Trump is sinking fast... and dragging his enablers in Congress down with him

During the early days of the 116th Congress, Washington Republicans had an opportunity to rebrand themselves as fighting for something other than the special interest who fuel their campaigns – but instead, they have demonstrated they didn't learn a single thing from their historic defeat in 2018. They chose to vote repeatedly to continue President Trump's Shutdown, which punished our economy, forced 800,000 hardworking Americans to miss multiple paychecks, and undermined our national security. These votes have done further damage to what little was left of Republicans' standing with the American public as the already [deeply unpopular President](#) at the top of their ticket [continues to get more unpopular](#).

Scandals continue to engulf House Republicans

Ending the corruption in Washington was a central theme to the House Democrats' efforts in 2018, and we have already made it the focus of our very first bill in the 116th Congress.

On the other side of the aisle? Not so much...

Despite both being indicted for felonies, Republicans continue to proudly welcome [Congressmen Chris Collins \(NY-27\) and Duncan Hunter \(CA-50\)](#) to their cocktail parties. And if things progress as expected, freshman [Rep. Ross Spano \(FL-15\)](#) could soon be joining the [Indictment Caucus after he admitted to breaking campaign finance law by taking \\$180,000 in illegal loans](#).

These are just a few of the obvious ethical problems in the House Republicans' ranks and doesn't even begin to mention liabilities such as [Mark Harris in North Carolina's 9th Congressional District where his campaign is under criminal investigation for election fraud](#).

After two years of controlling the federal government, Republicans have nothing to show for it

Ok, maybe not nothing...

They do have their wildly unpopular Tax Scam law that ushered in [a new era of \\$1 trillion in deficits](#) to pay for tax cuts for special interests and the ultra-wealthy.

They also have their toxic and terrifying lawsuit to take away insurance protections for people with pre-existing conditions ([which all but three Republicans voted this month to continue](#)). By the way, [that's the same lawsuit they unsuccessfully tried to run away from](#) ahead of the election.

Life in the minority is no fun - Stand by for more GOP retirements

Now that Republicans are living in the minority, the survivors of 2018 are learning the hard way that they no longer hold the levers of power in Congress. Right now, 20 of the 33 seats the DCCC is targeting are held by an incumbent Republican who has never served in the minority before. Political observers should pay close attention to vulnerable Republicans who decide it's not worth the work to run for a seat they may lose just for the chance to continue living in the minority. This point is underscored by [GOP Rep. Tom Marino, who had never served in the minority, and went from taking the oath of office to resigning just 14 days into the 116th Congress.](#)

In 2018, GOP retirements played a major role in opening up the battlefield, and we expect it will continue into the 2020 cycle with Representatives like Fred Upton (MI-06) and Peter King (NY-02) at the top of the retirement watch list.

DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO BUILD MOMENTUM IN 2019

An agenda that works for working families

While Washington Republicans continue turning on a dime to accommodate President Trump's whims from tweet to tweet, Democrats have put forward a real agenda to strengthen hardworking families.

In 2018, Democrats' argument for control of the House was anchored by a focused message about how Washington Republicans were responsible for the skyrocketing cost of healthcare and prescription drugs, making it harder for Americans to make ends meet. After their politically indefensible campaign to undermine protections for people living with pre-existing conditions, Republicans, regardless of the "brands" they claimed to possess, were stuck on defense throughout the cycle.

Heading into 2020, healthcare is not going away as a key issue, and Republicans will continue to be forced to explain their votes to undermine protections for people living with pre-existing conditions and raise the cost of prescription drugs.

In stark contrast, Democrats in the House will be the single check on the Trump Administration's lawsuit to gut the Affordable Care Act, while working to pass common sense legislation to bring down the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs.

And while Republicans continue standing by scandal-plagued Reps. Chris Collins, Duncan Hunter and Ross Spano, Democrats have put forward H.R. 1, the *For the People Act*. The Democrats' bill strengthens voting rights, cracks down on the influence of big money in elections and improves ethical standards for elected officials.

Healthcare and corruption in Washington were key motivating factors for voters in 2018, and with the Trump Administration and House Republicans on defense, Democrats have the upper hand.

2018 revealed new GOP weaknesses where no one expected it

During the 2018 election, there were 26 seats where Republicans won by 5 points or fewer (including election night results in the heavily-disputed North Carolina 9th District).

One key geographic area where Democrats will go on offense is Texas, home to six of these seats (TX-10, TX-21, TX-22, TX-23, TX-24 AND TX-31). All six have suburban areas experiencing population booms and an increasingly diverse electorate. These factors gave Republicans a taste of what is headed their way. In 2018, the DCCC demonstrated that the once formidable Republican fortress in Orange County could fall, and in 2020 a rapidly emerging Democratic coalition will make Texas a focal point of the House Democrats' offensive strategy.

But these kind of trends aren't exclusive to Texas - Republicans will need to look out for districts like AZ-06, GA-07, IN-05, MO-02 and NC-09 for the same reasons.

DCCC 2020 Initial Offensive Battlefield

AZ-06 – Dave Schweikert	NE-02 – Don Bacon
CA-22 - Devin Nunes	NY-01 – Lee Zeldin
CA-50 – Duncan Hunter	NY-02 – Peter King
CO-03 – Scott Tipton	NY-24 – John Katko
FL-15 – Ross Spano	NY-27 – Chris Collins
FL-18 – Brian Mast	OH-01 – Steve Chabot
GA-07 – Rob Woodall	PA-01 – Brian Fitzpatrick
IA-04 – Steve King	PA-10 – Scott Perry
IL-13 – Rodney Davis	PA-16 - Mike Kelly
IN-05 - Susan Brooks	TX-10 – Mike McCaul
KY-06 – Andy Barr	TX-21 – Chip Roy
MI-06 – Fred Upton	TX-22 – Pete Olson
MN-01 – Jim Hagedorn	TX-23 – Will Hurd
MO-02 – Ann Wagner	TX-24 – Kenny Marchant
NC-02 – George Holding	TX-31 – John Carter
NC-09 – OPEN	WA-03 – Jaime Herrera Beutler
NC-13 - Ted Budd	

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