



**TO:** Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Dee Duncan  
President, RSLC  
**DATE:** March 10, 2022  
**RE:** Holding Our Ground and Fighting for More

The Republican State Leadership Committee's (RSLC) top political priority at the beginning of the 2021-2022 election cycle was simple — hold the numerous razor-thin state legislative majorities we just barely managed to defend in 2020. As [Governing](#) reported last October, even though we experienced some momentum in special elections around the country in 2021, the cycle was still largely shaping up to be defensive in nature for state Republicans. A mere **18 seats** were standing in the way of Democrats taking back **eight legislative chambers** across **six states**, averaging a cushion of less than **three seats per chamber**. Democrats [were targeting](#) all of them, arguing the half of a billion dollars they spent on state races last cycle was not enough.

The RSLC's historic success in last November's elections, however, forced us to take another look at what is achievable in 2022. Our innovative and targeted spending, coupled with state Democrats mirroring the failed agenda of President Biden, allowed us to net-gain 7 seats in the [New Jersey](#) state legislature and flip seven [Virginia](#) House of Delegates seats to regain control of the chamber. The environment that helped propel our victories in 2021 has only gotten better, as a recent [battleground survey](#) the RSLC conducted in January confirms that Joe Biden is dragging down Democrats in key states across the country and Republicans lead by 6 points on the generic ballot for state legislature.

In Joe Biden's America, inflation is rising, crime is raging, and unions still have more say in education than parents. As state Democrats continue to stand by the leader of their party and the disastrous policies that are driving these crises, voters across the country are looking for state Republicans to step up and serve as a counterweight to the socialist agenda. This means more places for the RSLC to win in 2022.

Our main goal this cycle will still be to defend our majorities. Doing so — due to our victory in Virginia in 2021 — would make this the first two-year election cycle since 2013-2014 that Republicans net at least one state legislative chamber. The current political environment also puts certain chambers in play that were out of reach at the beginning of the cycle and presents us with numerous opportunities to make meaningful gains in liberal strongholds across the country.

## **2022 TARGETS**

### **Defending Republican Majorities**

Republicans currently hold **55 of the 88** state legislative chambers on the ballot this year, **and 62 of the 99 overall across the country**. Keeping these states in Republican hands this year is our top objective and will not be an easy task. In their three top target states that national Democrats released in March of 2021 (Arizona, Michigan, and Pennsylvania), Republicans have just a **24 seat** margin across all **six chambers**, averaging a cushion of **four seats per chamber**. With competitive gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races in each of the three states, their legislative races will be more expensive than ever before.

The remaining six defensive states on our target list all have chambers that national liberals spent a combined nearly **\$50 million** failing to flip in 2020 and we don't expect them to just pack it in after one unsuccessful effort.

- Arizona
- Florida
- Georgia
- Michigan
- New Hampshire
- North Carolina
- Pennsylvania
- Texas
- Wisconsin

### **Opportunities to Flip Chambers**

Unlike our Democrat counterparts, we believe it is irresponsible to tell our investors that “[flipping everything](#)” is a realistic possibility when it is not. However, our early data suggests that Democrat-controlled chambers in two states are increasingly vulnerable. Two separate state surveys commissioned by the RSLC in January found that Republicans in [Colorado](#) lead by one point on the legislative generic ballot and by four points in [Minnesota](#). What's more, President Biden is underwater in these states by more than he was in our Virginia internals and voters want their state legislature to push back on the president's agenda by double-digit margins — something Democrats in both states have refused to do time and time again during the last year. While Republicans already hold a slim one seat advantage in the Minnesota Senate, we believe that both chambers in Minnesota and Colorado could end up in Republican hands come November if everything breaks our way.

- Colorado
- Minnesota

### **Possibilities for Meaningful Gains in Liberal Strongholds**

The results of November's election in New Jersey made clear that voters, even in the most liberal bastions, are not necessarily supportive of the big government agenda President Biden and his allies in the states are pursuing. This phenomenon mirrors the seismic shifts we have seen on the congressional generic ballot in public polling and provides an opportunity to make meaningful gains in numerous liberal strongholds. In some states like New York, meaningful gains can be defined as breaking the Democrats' supermajority. In states like Nevada and Maine, our goal will be to make gains that could potentially put those chambers in play later in the decade.

- Illinois
- Maine
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- New York
- Oregon
- Washington

## WHAT WE LEARNED IN 2021

We learned a few things from our wins in November 2021 and it is important to reiterate them in the context of this discussion.

1. Those who believe their devastating losses in 2021 are going to stop the Democrats from coming back, more organized and better funded than ever, should think again. Less than a week after last November's election, the pro-Defund the Police States Project pledged to invest an additional [\\$31 million](#) in state legislative races by backing more progressive candidates.
2. Even with a great gubernatorial candidate at the top of the ticket and a strong political environment at our backs, we took back the House of Delegates in Virginia by only a few hundred votes, as Democrats outspent us by 2:1. Democrats can still very-well buy their way out of political peril if we fail to keep pace.
3. Flipping chambers is incredibly difficult and doing so requires defining Democrats early and often. We can make our resources go much further if we get them in the door sooner rather than later.

## CONCLUSION

Democrats know that state legislatures are the final puzzle pieces needed to spread Biden's failed agenda to every corner of our nation. It is our job to stop them. With liberal elites again lining up to bankroll Democrats, the battles ahead of us will be far from easy. This year's election presents a unique crossroads for state Republicans. We can go backwards and hand our state capitols over to Joe Biden and the radical left, or we can hold our ground, fight for more, and have our most successful election cycle since 2013-2014. We are grateful for your partnership and support in the fight to stop socialism in the states.