

Battleground state support priority recommendations – 9/1/2024

How we set the priority order of states in the updated Get Out The Vote (GOTV) matrix.

During the 2023 WIN Gathering we asked participants which 2024 election outcomes were their highest priority. Not surprisingly, given Indivisible's founding principle to resist the Trump administration, participants said:

- Retain the White House
- Retain the US Senate
- Regain the US House of Representatives

The previous GOTV matrix identified which states to support to achieve each of these goals separately. The updated GOTV matrix identifies the states to support, in order, to achieve **all three** of these goals.

A guiding notion – do no more than needed to achieve the goal. For example, there are 22 “Win Paths” for Harris / Walz to receive 270 or more electoral college votes and win the White House. There are only two “Win Paths” that involve only three states. Of these two possibilities, winning Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin are easier than winning Georgia, Michigan, and Wisconsin, based on the 2020 Presidential election results and current polling data. Accordingly, the GOTV matrix chooses the easier path of Pennsylvania (PA), Michigan (MI) and Wisconsin (WI).

Note: We assume here that Harris/Walz will win all the Biden/Harris 2020 states with exception of the battleground states of PA, MI, WI, Arizona (AZ), Nevada (NV) and Georgia (GA). See Michael Podhorzer's analysis of this approach [HERE](#).

Focusing on PA, MI, WI for the White House win, we can order them based on 2020 election results or polling data. We decided to use polling data, despite poor performance of the polls in the last decade. We also decided to order them in hardest to easiest to win. The resulting order is PA, MI and WI.

Note: Since Harris / Walz need to win all three states it seems a fine point to put them in order. In other words, it probably does not make a big difference.

Now, having won the White House, let's discuss the US Senate. The very challenging 2024 US Senate map means we must elect all seven Senate Democrats in PA, MI, WI, AZ, NV, Ohio (OH) and Montana (MT) to tie Republicans in the US Senate. Wow. We face this challenge since Joe Manchin, an admitted thorn in the side of progress, decided to step down in West Virginia. That seat is now rated Solid Republican.

Note: It sounds attractive to flip a Republican Senate seat. Unfortunately, the most likely to flip are Cruz in Texas and Scott in Florida, both rated Likely Republican. The Senate Democrat seats we need to win are all rated either Toss-Up or Lean Dem. Flipping a Republican Senate seat is more difficult than winning these seats for Democrats. As a result, we recommend sticking to our knitting to elect Democrats in PA, MI, WI, AZ, NV, OH, and MT.

Given this situation, the first priority is to support the Senate races in PA, MI and WI, our “White House” states. But in what order should we place the other “battleground” states – AZ, MT, NV, and OH? We might stick with the idea of supporting the hardest to win races first, but that ignores the fact that Harris / Walz winning in AZ or NV would provide some added electoral college votes as a hedge against

Republican election hijinks. Since AZ has more electoral college votes than NV, and polling indicates it is easier to win than NV, we choose AZ as our fourth priority state.

This leaves MT, NV and OH to place in order. At this point we could stick with the “build more electoral college vote margin,” but that would be pushing for electoral college votes that we do not need. An alternative is to go with the “most competitive races first” approach, which would result in these states being ordered: OH or MT (tied) followed by NV.

Instead of either of these approaches, we chose to order these states based on how many competitive US House seats they contain. This helps us focus on building margin in the US House. The resulting order: OH (two competitive US House seats), MT (one competitive US House seat), NV (no competitive US House seats).

Before concluding, we should talk about the US House of Representatives. After the 2022 election we needed to flip five US House seats to regain the Democratic majority. Good news – one seat already flipped when Tom Souzzi won George Santos NY-3 seat. Souzzi is now rated Likely Dem, needing no additional support to win again in November.

There is more good news. Both [Louisiana](#) and [Alabama](#) were ordered by the court to re-draw their Congressional District maps to include another “majority minority” district – meaning the population of non-white voters would predominate – which substantially increases the likelihood of electing a Democrat. If this comes to pass, we may only need to flip another two seats.

Note: The Center for Politics / Sabato’s Crystal Ball is showing LA-6 as a “safe Democratic flip”.

The good news continues in New York, whose 2024 Congressional District maps were also redrawn in a way that “slightly favors” Democrats. Given the number of US House seats flipped from Democrat to Republican in 2022 in New York, and the new maps, I’m betting that we will see a seat or two flip in New York without offering any additional help.

The good news doesn’t come without some bad news however. The Center for Politics / Sabato’s Crystal Ball indicates three “safe Republican flips” in North Carolina, where Republican favorable maps are still allowed.

Given all this news, where do we stand? It looks like we still must flip five seats. Our priority states include twelve close US House races. More than twice as many as we need to flip the US House. By focusing on convincing progressive voters in these Congressional Districts to vote, we triple our GOTV value since that single progressive voter will likely vote for the Democrat running for the US House, the Democrat running for the US Senate and the Democrats running for the White House! This is known as a “nested races” strategy, which is very effective given our currently divided political landscape.

We recommend focusing on the close US House races in our recommended states to drive “up ballot” votes for US Senate and White House Democrats. The GOTV matrix now shows the US House District numbers, listed in order of which seat needs the most help.

The bottom line for the US House – there are multiple paths to flip the House back to Democratic control.

One last point, however – let’s not make the problem more difficult. This is where re-electing Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (currently rated a toss-up) and Dr Kim Schrier (currently rated Likely Dem) come into play. Of these two, Marie’s campaign is clearly the harder to win and most needing your support.

The resulting priority order of states is PA, MI, WI, AZ, OH, MT, NV, as shown in the Get Out The Vote matrix below. To visualize these states another way, see the “heat map” following the color-coding description table below.

		Highest <div></div> Lowest												
NEW - Priority order of states to win the White House, retain the US Senate and flip the US House of Representatives!		Washington	Pennsylvania	Michigan	Wisconsin	Arizona	Ohio	Montana	Nevada	California	New York	North Carolina	Colorado	Oregon
GOALS	Hold the White House													
	Hold the US Senate													
	Flip the US House (Priority Districts, in priority order)	WA-3 WA-8	PA-7 PA-8 PA-10 PA-17	MI-7 MI-8 MI-10		AZ-1 AZ-6	OH-13 OH-9	MT-1		CA-13 CA-27 CA-22 CA-41 CA-47 CA-45	NY-17 NY-19 NY-4 NY-22 NY-18	NC-1	CO-8 CO-3	OR-2
	Maintain progressive State Leadership	Gov	AG									Gov		

Goals section color coding:	
	Highest priority need
	High priority need
	Medium priority need
	Low priority need

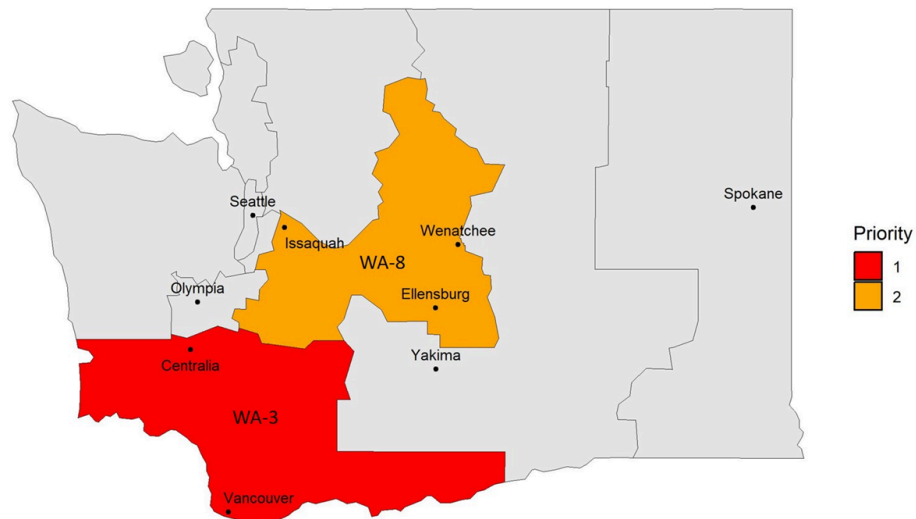
WIN Elections Group priority states to win the White House, retain the US Senate and regain control of the US House of Representatives



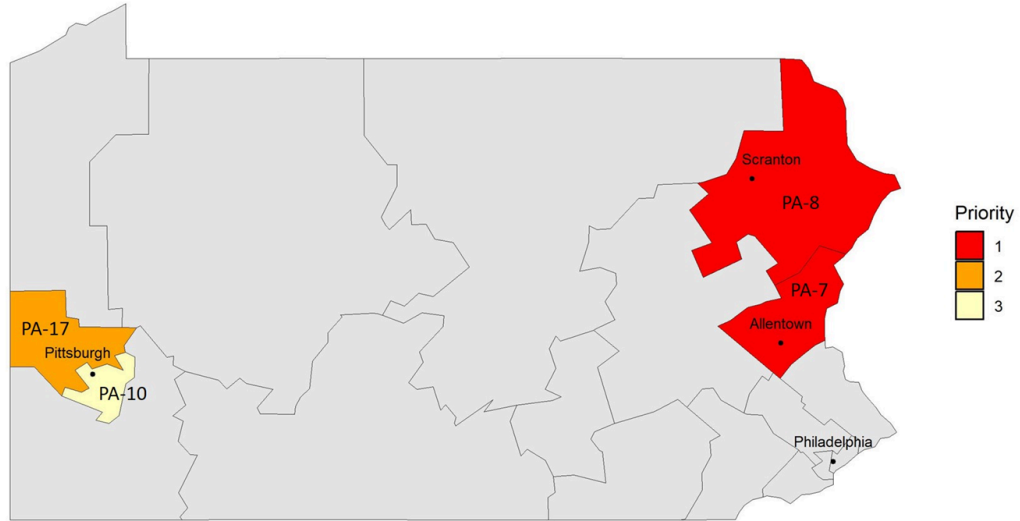
Battleground State “Hot Spots”

Planning to visit one of the battleground states to do a little canvassing? Know someone who is? Check out the maps below to see the locations of the most competitive US House races and focus on those areas. Every voter you mobilize in these states will have a competitive US Senate candidate on their ballots in addition to the White House. Triple your activism value by driving “up ballot” votes to help us retain the US Senate and the White House!

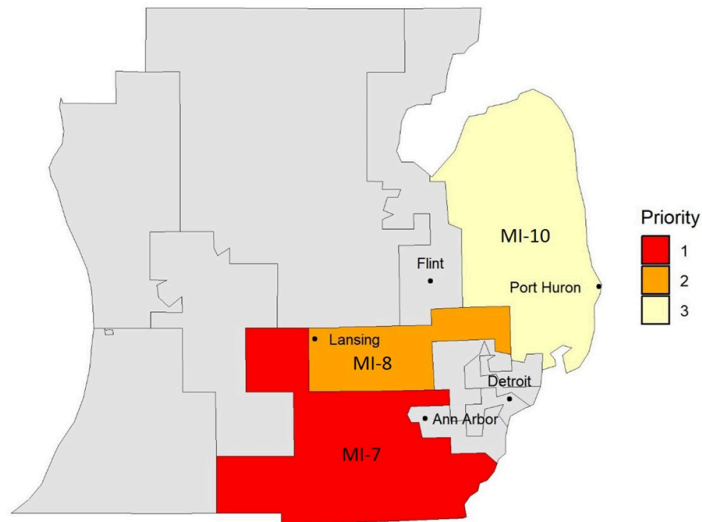
WIN Elections Group Washington Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



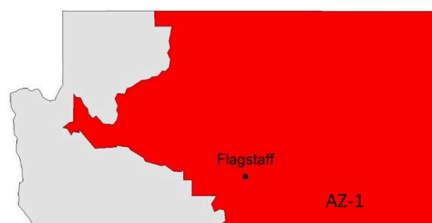
WIN Elections Group Pennsylvania Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



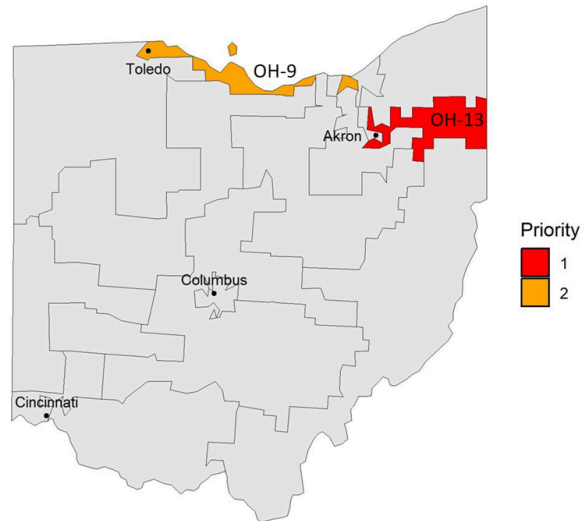
WIN Elections Group Michigan Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



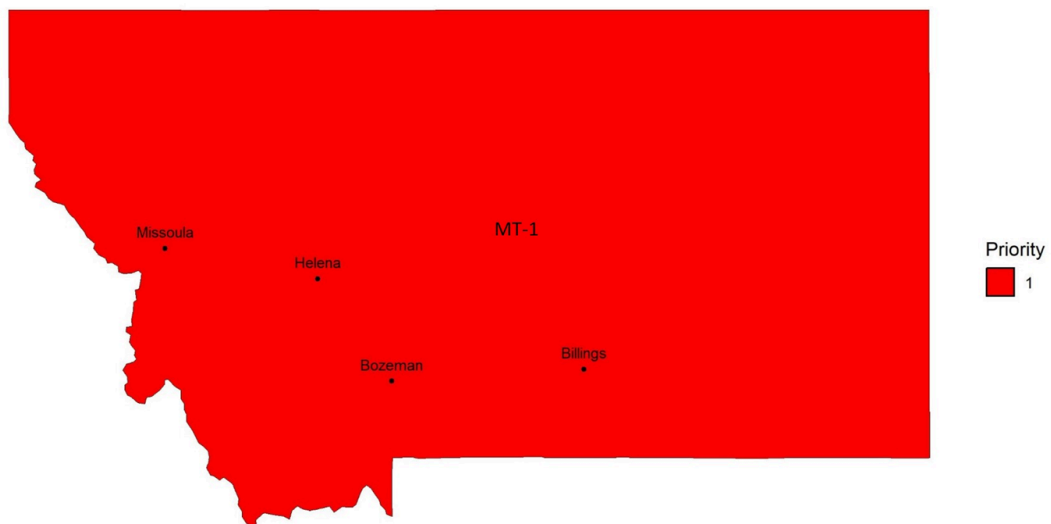
WIN Elections Group Arizona Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



WIN Elections Group Ohio Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



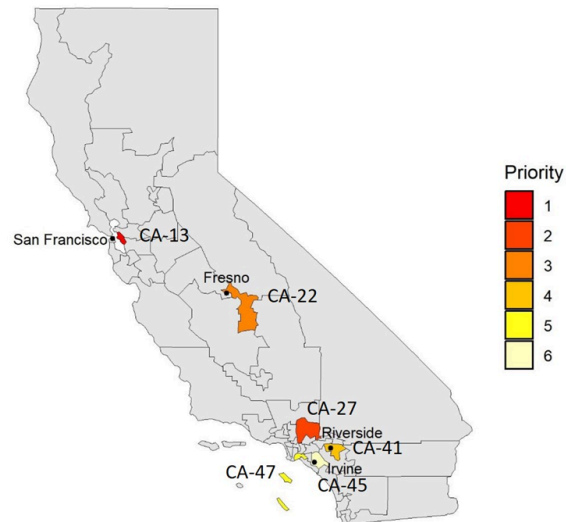
WIN Elections Group Montana Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



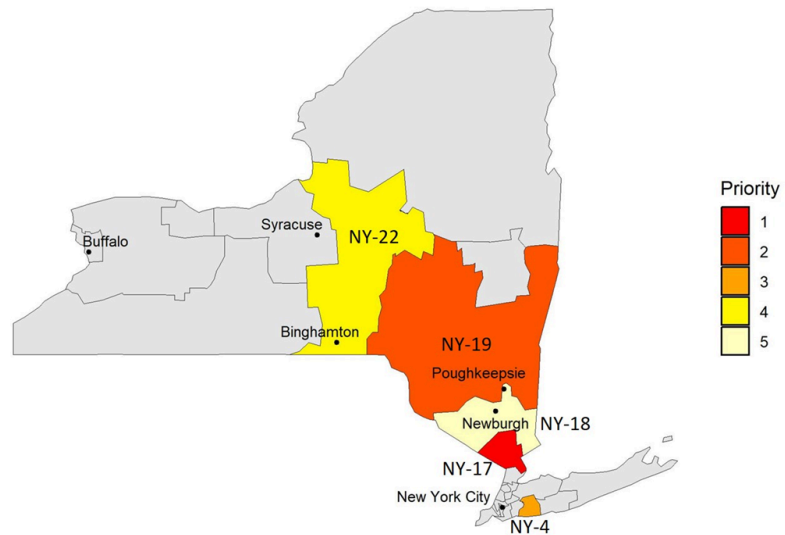
Other Priority State “Hot Spots”

While not “battleground states”, the states below contain competitive US House races. Happen to be in one of those states, or have family or friends in those states who want to do some door knocking? Let them know about these “hot spots” so their volunteer hours best contribute to our WIN Elections goals.

WIN Elections Group California Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



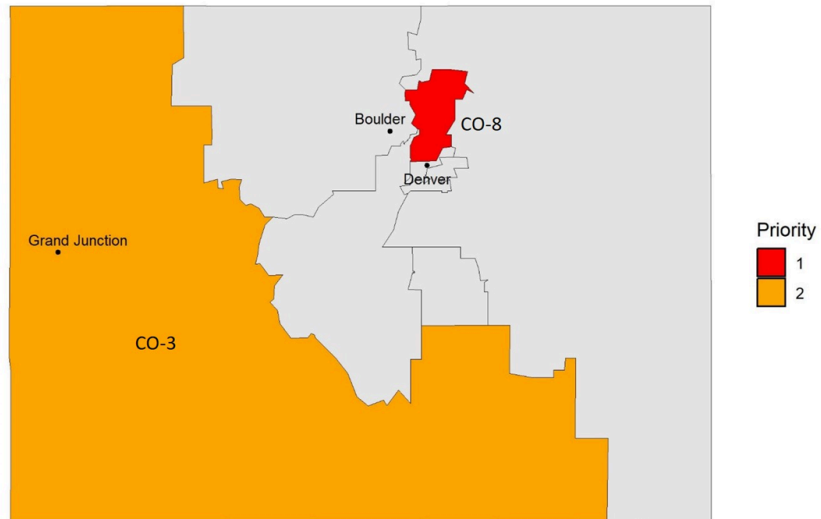
WIN Elections Group New York Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



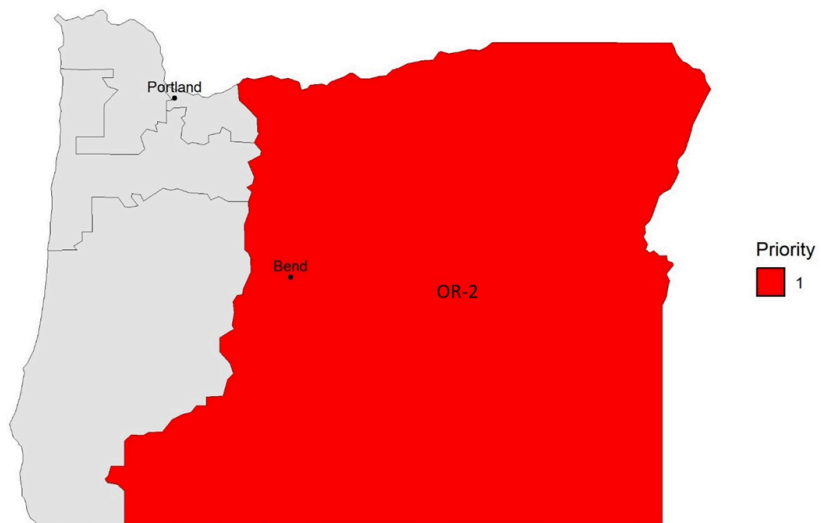
WIN Elections Group North Carolina Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



WIN Elections Group Colorado Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



WIN Elections Group Oregon Congressional District
Priorities to regain control of the US House of Representatives



PS – What happened to Georgia?

That is a really good question which we get asked frequently. We've all seen how important Georgia was in the 2020 election – seating two Democrat US Senators and creating the one vote Democrat margin

that we enjoy today. In fact Georgia was super important in 2022, when Senator Raphael Warnock ran to retain his seat, which he first won in a special election in 2020 to replace a retiring Georgia Senator.

However, US Senate election cycles change every two years. In 2024, both Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff are safe. Their seats are not up for re-election this cycle. Also, given the gerrymandered Georgia Congressional districts, there is not a single “close” (aka: competitive) US House of Representatives seat in Georgia.

And while Georgia was in the Biden / Harris win column in 2020, it was the state with the smallest Biden / Harris win margin of any state that year. At the time of this writing, it looks like it will be harder for Harris / Walz to win Georgia than was true for Biden / Harris.

Things can change. We'll be watching, and if Georgia ends up being a more viable path to 270 electoral college votes than Pennsylvania, our recommendations will change. Until then, put Georgia on your 2026 support list when Jon Ossoff will be up for re-election and we will need to defend that seat once more to retain control of the US Senate.