



THE NEW MEXICO HOUSE VICTORY PROJECT:

2018 Campaign Prospectus



What is the New Mexico House Victory Project?

In 2016, despite a challenging political landscape and an even more challenging fundraising environment, New Mexico's House Democrats were successful in taking back the state House from Republican control—one of only two states in the country where Democrats were able to flip a legislative chamber.

The NM House Victory Project is the centralized campaign operation that guided our 2016 successes, and is working to protect and grow our Democratic majority in the state House of Representatives in 2018 and beyond.

2016 Successes

Against the odds, we picked up 5 Republican seats, while holding onto a very difficult district—won solidly by Donald Trump—left open by the retirement of a long-time Democratic incumbent.



Those successes were built on factors we identified early in the cycle as “Keys to Victory”:

- 🔑 **strong support from, and collaboration with, allies and partners,**
- 🔑 **high-caliber candidates with record fundraising,**
- 🔑 **an aggressive field program,**
- 🔑 **meticulous and effective opposition research and accurate polling,**
- 🔑 **strategic messaging and communications, and**
- 🔑 **strong investment in digital media.**

The House Victory Project was also designed to provide ongoing capacity, ensuring that our incumbents have vital support starting the day after the 2016 election, and helping top-tier challengers even earlier in the cycle.

Why 558?

We're proud of the success of our 2016 campaign, but our wins were narrow. Although we now have a 38-32 majority in the House, we prevailed by a total of only 558 votes across the three tightest races.

That's right: only 558 votes were the difference between a Democratic state House championing fairness and opportunity for hard-working New Mexicans, and a Republican-controlled House cutting deals for their powerful, well-connected friends.

The Challenges in 2018

The narrow margins in 2016 are a good indication of the danger we face of losing our majority once again in 2018. The myriad challenges ahead include:

lower voter turnout – New Mexico has never experienced midterm turnout that reached the levels of even the lowest turnout presidential election. The decline in turnout from 2016 levels will likely range from 15% to nearly 50% in some priority districts, disproportionately hurting our Democratic candidates.

competition for resources and voters' attention – although we expect a strong Democratic ticket top to bottom, the number and diversity of campaigns—from US Senate and Governor to Commissioner of Public Lands and local county races—means intense competition for limited financial resources and for voter engagement, making it more difficult and expensive for our down-ballot candidates to capture the attention of voters.

redistricting and Republican focus – redistricting is just around the corner, and this is the last, best opportunity for Republicans to regain control of the House and maintain any leverage in the redistricting process. The last redistricting process significantly benefited the GOP, allowing them to capture the House in 2014.

unstable and unpredictable political landscape – it is fair to say that the current political landscape is fluid. It is more difficult to predict how the electoral climate will impact voters' engagement and actions, necessitating more resources for crucial qualitative and quantitative research to guide campaign planning.

unprecedented obstacles for our allies – many stalwart Democratic allies are facing enormous challenges, most notably the coordinated attacks on labor, women's, and immigrant organizations. With conservative control of the US Supreme Court, and a crucial impending case that could cripple many labor unions, our allies in labor will likely be fighting for their very existence.

The Potential in 2018

Despite the challenges, the 2018 election offers many opportunities to grow our Democratic majority so we can help build a brighter future for families and communities across New Mexico.

In 2016, Republicans kept control of 9 state House seats won by Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton (*see map, opposite*). These are prime opportunities to show voters how their incumbent Republican representatives are out of step with their values and priorities.

Goals of the NM House Victory Project in 2018

- ✓ **Protect our Incumbents**
- ✓ **Grow our Majority**
- ✓ **Meaningfully Engage Voters**

Protect our Incumbents

Unfortunately, more than a half dozen of our incumbents are vulnerable to Republican challengers this cycle—especially those representing districts won by Donald Trump in 2016. Clearly, ensuring that all of our incumbents in swing districts are re-elected is of paramount importance.

Grow our Majority

We must take advantage of our opportunities in districts where Republican incumbents have voted in stark contrast to the interests of their constituents. With strong challengers, the potential exists to gain a few seats—enhancing our power to enact policies that better serve New Mexicans.

Meaningfully Engage Voters

Our ability to grow and sustain an enduring Democratic majority in the House is dependent on building meaningful relationships with voters—not just parachuting in every two years to ask for their votes. Instead, we must invest time, energy, and resources into listening to constituents' concerns, valuing their input, helping meet their needs, and developing an ongoing dialogue on issues and priorities.



Republican-Held House Districts Won by Clinton in 2016

The New Mexico House Democratic Leadership Team: *Leading the nation in diversity*



Rep. Brian Egolf, Speaker of the House

Representative Brian Egolf was elected Speaker of the New Mexico House by acclamation in 2017, after serving in the House since 2009. Speaker Egolf led the effort to regain Democratic control of the House in 2016. Among his legislative successes, Speaker Egolf championed equal pay for equal work for the women of New Mexico, a statewide independent ethics commission, and penalizing the distribution of sensitive images, such as child pornography. Speaker Egolf resides in Santa Fe with his wife and two daughters.

Rep. Sheryl Williams Stapleton, House Majority Leader

Born on the island of St. Croix, Sheryl earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in education from NMSU, and her doctorate from UNM in Educational Leadership. Sheryl has been a classroom teacher, an Assistant Principal, Coordinator of the Schools to Careers program, and is now the APS Carl Perkins Project Director and Coordinator of Career and Technical Education. She was first elected to the legislature in 1995, and subsequently chaired both the Education and Labor & Human Resources Committees.



Rep. Doreen Gallegos, House Majority Whip

Doreen received her bachelor's and master's degrees in social work from NMSU. A champion of children and families for two decades, she currently works on behalf of kids in foster care and neglected and abused kids. She was first elected to the House in 2012, representing rural areas of Doña Ana county and parts of Las Cruces, New Mexico. She lives with her husband, Scott, and son, Nicolas, in the Las Alturas area of Doña Ana county.

Rep. D. Wonda Johnson, House Majority Caucus Chair

In 2016, Rep. Doreen (Wonda) Johnson was elected to her second term representing parts of McKinley and San Juan counties. Originally from Crownpoint, NM, she earned her B.A. in Business from Marymount University. Before joining the state House, Wonda served as senior staff to the Navajo Nation President. Previously, she spent eight years with the National Indian Education Association in Washington, DC, where she also worked for the National Indian Health Board.



Why Invest in the NM House Victory Project?

The NM House Victory Project is the centralized effort to protect and grow our Democratic majority in the state House. By implementing a strong coordinated campaign for House Democratic incumbents and challengers, we can ensure that investments are fully leveraged, resources are allocated efficiently, and campaigns are managed to consistently high standards.

The Risk

Losing the state House to Republicans in 2018 would be nothing short of catastrophic. A new Democratic governor would have no hope of enacting strong policies, and the Senate and Executive branch would be forced to focus on fending off radical attacks on workers, women, immigrants, and families. Republicans would be in the driver's seat for post-2020 redistricting, jeopardizing congressional, legislative, and regulatory maps for the next decade or more.

The Opportunity

In 2016, the NM House Victory Project built an innovative and effective operation that helped NM House Democrats succeed where many other efforts did not. At the same time, we learned valuable lessons that will improve our campaigns for 2018. We are already strategic and sophisticated, yet we're also evolving to meet new and more complex challenges.

I'm in. How do I help?

Contributions to the House Victory Project through the House Democratic Campaign Committee are a worthy investment. In addition, House Democratic incumbents and candidates are fundraising aggressively to meet their targets, and would benefit from your help individually.

For more information on opportunities to support the House Victory Project, please contact Meredith Dixon, Blue Advantage Partners, at meredith@blueadvantagepartners.com or **505.401.8339**.

We accept personal and corporate funds within the campaign finance limits as established by New Mexico law. Contributions support political activity and are not deductible for income tax purposes.



Why is the number 558 so important?

Look inside for the answer.



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Paid for by the NM House Democratic Campaign Committee, Alyssa Mitchell, Treasurer. Printed by Don Mickey Designs.

