

To: NOW Board of Directors

From: Linda Berg

Date: July 10, 2019

## Political Report

### 2019 Elections

Only 4 states have legislative elections in 2019: Virginia, Mississippi, Louisiana and New Jersey. Although each state's election is important for redistricting and legislative goals, we are prioritizing Virginia because of its unique opportunity to elect a legislature which can deliver the final state for ERA ratification. If 2 seats are flipped in the House of Delegates and State Senate the Democrats will control the legislature as well as the executive branch. Virginia has been trending more blue, and we made historic gains in the 2017 elections. Victory is within our reach, and with it enormous opportunity for constitutional equality. NOW is working closely with the Feminist Majority to develop a winning field Virginia plan. Additionally, since ominous reproductive rights legislation has been coming out of Louisiana we hope to take advantage of opportunity for feminist change in that state.

### 2020 Elections

It is very exciting that there are still 5 previously NOW PAC endorsed incumbent members of Congress still in the **presidential** race: **Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten Gillibrand, and Tulsi Gabbard**. All of them did well in the first set of presidential debates and the further this field continues the more normalizing it will become to have women seriously contending for the office.

Although the field looked bright as we looked ahead to the 2020 **Senate** races, our opportunities have narrowed. We need to pick up 3 seats if we win back the presidency and 4 seats if not. In addition, we need to retain our two previously NOW PAC endorsed Senators who are considered to be vulnerable: **Gary Peters** of Michigan and **Doug Jones** of Alabama. Notable pick-up opportunities include in Arizona where **Mark Kelly** (Gabby Gifford's husband) is challenging Martha McSally, in Maine where **Sara Gideon**, the Maine Speaker of the House, is challenging Susan Collins, and in Texas where **MJ Hegar** is challenging John Cornyn. We are also hoping that strong candidate rises to challenge Joni Ernst in Iowa, Thom Tillis in North Carolina and Cory Gardner in Colorado. And of course, nothing would be sweeter than defeating Mitch McConnell in Kentucky.

Clearly, we have many **House** seats to defend to ensure that Nancy Pelosi remains Speaker, but already there are a number of interesting races on our radar. Feminist **Marie Newman** is running again in the primary to challenge anti-choice Democrat Dan Lipinski in IL 03 and in IL 13 **Betsy Dirksen Londrigan**, who got 49% of the vote, is trying again to unseat Rodney Davis. In Montana **Kathleen Williams** is running again for that state's at-large seat which is now an open, and in NY-24 **Dana Balter**, who received 47% of

the vote in 2018, is running again to unseat Rep. John Ratko. Incumbents whose races we have to watch and protect include **Lucy McBath** in GA-06, **Katie Porter** in CA-45, **Abby Finkenauer** in IA -01, **Lauren Underwood**, in IL-14, **Elissa Slotkin** in MI-08, **Kendra Horn** in OK-05, **Elaine Luria** in VA-02 and **Abigail Spanberger** in VA-07.

## **The PAC and PAC Activities**

Make sure to join us for the PAC luncheon on Saturday. There will be terrific inspirational speakers, good food, and a chance for you to support your PAC. Former Minnesota candidate for governor **Erin Murphy** will receive the Woman of Courage award and then we will hear from former VA NOW chapter president and current member of the Virginia House of Delegates, **Hala Ayala**, Virginia State Senator **Jennifer McClellan**, **Meggie Wittof**, Executive Director of Women Winning, Nevada State Senator **Pat Spearman** (back by popular demand) and **Ellie Smeal**, President of the Feminist Majority.

The NOW PAC will meet for the first time during this election cycle on August 17-18 in Washington, DC. The purpose of the meeting is to strategize for the 2019 and 2020 elections, refine our electoral goals, plan grassroots political activities and develop fundraising and budgetary goals. In addition to the funds that we raise at this conference, the PAC currently has approximately \$60,000 in the bank and a fundraising letter coming out around Labor Day.