

To: NOW National Board  
From: Sara Mitchell  
Date: February 19, 2020

## **POLITICAL REPORT**

### **2020 Political Outlook**

As of February 19, Iowa and New Hampshire voted and we are waiting for results of the February 22 Nevada caucus. The first two votes resulted in 22 delegates for Mayor Pete Buttigieg, 21 for Senator Bernie Sanders, 8 for Senator Elizabeth Warren, 7 for Senator Amy Klobuchar and 6 for Vice President Joe Biden. It is a historic moment to see two women candidates on the board! The latest ABC News/Wash Post poll had Sanders in a double-digit lead in the primary among Democrats, trailed by Biden, Bloomberg, and Warren. Every candidate has their own argument about how they are the candidate to turn out the voters to take the White House and Senate in November.

The U.S. Senate has 53 Republicans and 47 Democrats (including two independents both of whom caucus with the Democrats.). There are 35 seats up in 2020 - including special elections in Arizona and Georgia - of which 23 are held by the GOP. The most vulnerable Democrat is Senator Doug Jones (AL), who NOW PAC has endorsed. There are two open Senate seats – a deep Red Tennessee seat and a safe Dem seat in New Mexico, where NOW PAC has endorsed Rep. Ben Ray Luján. Democrats will need to gain three (if they win the presidency) or four seats (if they lose the presidency).

Senator Susan Collins has the highest disapproval rating of any sitting Senator, with 52% disapproval. Collins, Senator Cory Gardner (CO) and Senator Martha McSally (AZ) remain the three most flippable seats. Senator Joni Earnst (IA), Senator Thom Tillis (NC) and an open Kansas seat are the next-likeliest pick-ups.

The House has 232 Democrats, 197 Republicans, 1 Independent and 5 vacancies. There are about 36 relatively vulnerable Democratic-held seats. The DCCC announced their 12 Red to Blue target seats, which includes three of our endorsed candidates – Christy Smith (CA-25), Betsy Dirksen Londrigan (IL-13), and Carolyn Long (WA-03).

The Center for American Women in Politics reports that there are about 88 women (of all parties) who lost their bid in 2018 for a statewide or federal seat but are running again in 2020. These “Rebounders” are all coming back with better fundraising, field, name recognition, and a higher turnout election. We will likely see a new record of women in the House and Senate after November.

### **PAC Endorsement**

NOW PAC has endorsed 116 candidates for the House and Senate, including 2 candidates for open seats and 13 House challengers. Every single incumbent has co-sponsored or at least voted Yes for:

- Equality Act
- VAWA Reauthorization
- Paycheck Fairness Act
- EACH Woman Act

We anticipate we'll have at least 3-4 Senate challengers in the next month or two as well as a handful of more House challengers once the filing deadlines and primaries are finished for various states. We may ultimately make 200+ federal endorsements by the end of the cycle.

**PAC Meeting**

The PAC met February 1, 2020 and approved one of the largest early endorsement slates ever. This is because the state leaders have been very organized in getting incumbent recommendations early. The PAC also approved a candidate contribution structure. Thanks to increased fundraising efforts – like a Telefund campaign in January – the NOW PAC will be able to make its largest direct-contribution investment ever in a campaign cycle, with a focus on flipping the Senate and supporting women House candidates in competitive races.

The board also discussed the creation of a national #AskThemMore campaign to encourage our members to ask women-specific questions at campaign stops and debates and to pressure the media and candidates to talk about how all issues uniquely impact women and girls. The NAC is working on this toolkit. Additionally, the board discussed the creation of a monthly training series to engage more members in non-direct-electoral political work such as election security, legislative scorecards, voter suppression, etc. The NAC is working on this structure.