



# FLIPPABLE

2016-2020 REPORT

# LETTER FROM CATHERINE

Dear friends,

Since we started Flippable in 2016, **growing this community of volunteers, donors, candidates, staff, and subscribers has been at the heart of our work to build a stronger democracy.** We've shared in some major successes along the way—making Democratic inroads in solidly red states and flipping entire chambers blue—while shining a light on the harm done by voter suppression, rigged maps, and unchecked Republican power.

**This year, the fissures in our democratic institutions have been on full display.**

The devastating toll of COVID-19 has only exacerbated this country's long-standing inequity, and that was no different at the ballot box. While Democratic candidates grappled with Republican opponents and an orchestrated clampdown on election administration, voters were met with GOP-constructed barriers to voting access and the unprecedented challenges of this pandemic.

We recognize that these problems will persist in the new year; no single election can be a quick fix to the problems we face. Certainly, the upcoming round of redistricting in 2021 will be another pivotal moment, and staying engaged at the state and local levels will remain essential.

**Fortunately, we have strong advocates in the 113 Flippable alums in office today—the most enduring legacy of our community's efforts over the last four years.** These lawmakers are among the next great Democratic leaders who will chart a path forward for our democracy. We're so grateful for the opportunity to have supported them and so thankful to you for doing it with us.

Today we'll look back on our major milestones as an organization in our final Flippable annual report. We joined the Swing Left family in 2019, and all of our state legislative work will be carried out through Swing Left starting in 2021. **Let's continue to build a better democracy through the states, together.**

In solidarity,



**Catherine Vaughan**  
CEO and Co-founder

# OUR STORY

We launched Flippable in November 2016, the week after President Trump was elected, with the goal of strengthening our democracy. Since the rules of our elections—how we vote, when we vote, and how much our votes count—are set at the state level, **we knew that rebuilding our democracy had to start in the states.** But it wouldn't be easy.

Since 2011, the GOP's dominance in the states has allowed Republican lawmakers to maintain undue power through gerrymandering and voter suppression. This undermining of democratic processes has enabled the GOP to enact an increasingly conservative—and unpopular—policy agenda, further weakening our democracy by ignoring constituents' opinions.

At Flippable, **our strategy centered on using data to identify high-impact and competitive state legislative elections.** We targeted states where winning just a few seats could flip state chambers—or entire legislatures—or break GOP veto-proof majorities. Yet Flippable's mission has not simply been about flipping seats or chambers from red to blue, but **to build a better government and a stronger democracy**, one where people are represented fairly and equally, and where politicians put the will of the people before their party's.

# OUR IMPACT

**100K** Community members

**132** state legislative races won with our help

**7** Chambers flipped with our help

**3** GOP supermajorities broken with our help

**\$12M+** Flippable & Swing Left support for state candidates



**NOV 2016**

- Flippable is founded

**NOV 2017**

- Flippable's first election cycle
- A historic 14 House of Delegate flips in Virginia
- Washington State flips blue
- Flippable candidate helps break a GOP supermajority in North Carolina

**NOV 2018**

- 65 Flippable candidates win election in the midterms
- Colorado State Senate flips blue
- New Hampshire State House and Senate flip blue
- Minnesota State House flips blue

**MAY 2019**

- Flippable joins Swing Left

**NOV 2019**

- Virginia flips blue

**NOV 2020**

- 30 Flippable candidates win their elections
- 3 Flippable candidates prevent a GOP supermajority in Wisconsin



**FLIPPABLE ALUM JENNIFER CARROLL FOY RALLIES A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS AHEAD OF VIRGINIA'S 2017 ELECTIONS.**

# 2017

2017 was our first election cycle, and **we chose to focus on Virginia**, where all 100 seats in the House of Delegates were up for election. We targeted Virginia because harmful conservative policies, like loose gun laws, spread from state to state, and we also knew GOP gerrymandering and voter suppression would affect the all-important 2018 and 2020 elections.

**Nine of our Virginia candidates flipped seats in the House of Delegates.** There were several historic milestones included among those flips: Representative Danica Roem became the first openly transgender person to serve in a state house, Representative Elizabeth Guzman became one of the first Latinas to serve in the Virginia House of Delegates, and Representative Kathy Tran became one of the first Asian Americans elected to the House of Delegates.

That same year, **Washington State flipped blue** after Flippable candidate Manka Dhingra's win in the state Senate. In addition, **we helped protect the Democratic trifecta in Delaware** with the election of Senator Stephanie Hansen and **helped increase Democratic representation in Florida** with Annette Taddeo's win in the state Senate.



# 2017 CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT



**JENNIFER  
CARROLL FOY**  
VA STATE DELEGATE

Former Delegate **Jennifer Carroll Foy** was elected to Virginia’s House of Delegates, representing parts of Prince William and Stafford Counties, in 2017. She was the chief sponsor of a House bill to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, which would ban discrimination on the basis of sex and guarantee equality for women under the U.S. Constitution. The bill finally passed in January 2020 because Virginia flipped blue in 2019—making Virginia the 38th state to ratify the ERA. In May, Delegate Carroll Foy stepped down from her second term in the House of Delegates to focus on running for governor in 2021.



**ANNETTE  
TADDEO**  
FL STATE SENATOR

**Senator Annette Taddeo** of Florida was elected to District 40 in southern Miami-Dade County, in a 2017 special election. In flipping that seat blue, Senator Taddeo became the first Democratic Latina elected to the Florida Senate. Senator Taddeo has sponsored legislation that would put Medicaid expansion on the ballot and introduced bills to ensure a living wage for public school teachers. After her re-election in 2020, Senator Taddeo was named Minority Whip for the Florida Senate Democrats.

# 2018

In 2018, we expanded our reach and **targeted 130 seats across 10 states**. We identified states with a history of gerrymandering and voter suppression, where flipping a few seats could flip a chamber or break veto-proof GOP supermajorities.

Our strategy succeeded in North Carolina, where Flippable candidate Christy Clark was part of the wave of flips that helped Democrats win more than two-fifths of the seats in the General Assembly, breaking the GOP's veto proof-majority. Flippable candidates also helped flip enough seats to break the GOP's supermajority in the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

Colorado turned blue after our candidates flipped three seats in the state Senate and voters elected a Democratic governor. In Texas, nine Flippable candidates flipped seats in the state House, helping drive the largest shift in the lower chamber since 2010. Our candidates also flip the New Hampshire legislature, the Minnesota State House, and break the GOP supermajority in the Michigan State Senate. All told, **Flippable had 65 wins in the 2018 midterms**.

Thanks to Democratic gains in 2017, we saw progressive policy wins in 2018. **Washington State approved automatic voter registration** in March, becoming the 10th state, along with Washington, D.C., to pass AVR. In May, **Virginia state legislators finally passed Medicaid expansion** in the first legislative session following Democrats' 2017 wins in the House of Delegates.



In Florida, **voters passed Amendment 4, enfranchising 1.5 million returning citizens** through the efforts of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition. Florida was one of few remaining states that barred formerly incarcerated people from voting—even after they completed their sentences. As a result, Florida had the highest number of disenfranchised citizens in the country.



**Voters passed Proposal 2 in 2018 in Michigan**, establishing a nonpartisan citizens redistricting committee to draw the state's legislative and congressional electoral maps. The ballot measure, which was backed by the organization Voters Not Politicians, was a critical reform for a state that has one of the most gerrymandered maps in the country.



# 2018 CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT



**JOHN BUCY**  
TX STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**Representative John Bucy** was elected to represent north-Austin-area House District 136 in the Texas State House in 2018. In his first year in office, Representative Bucy was named Texas House Democratic Caucus Freshman of the Year. Bucy, who was re-elected in 2020, has been a leader in the fight for Medicaid expansion in Texas, one of twelve states that has currently opted out of expanding Medicaid, despite having the largest number of uninsured residents in the country.



**ANNA  
ESKAMANI**  
FL STATE REPRESENTATIVE

In another win for progressives in Florida, 2018 saw the election of **Representative Anna Eskamani**, making her the first Iranian-American elected to public office in Florida. Representative Eskamani's Orlando-area district is home to Pulse, the nightclub which was the site of a deadly mass shooting in 2016, and she has been a strong advocate for LGBTQ rights and gun safety. Along with fellow Democratic Representative Carlos Guillermo Smith, Representative Eskamani successfully pushed for an eight-fold increase in the state's arts and culture funding for the 2020 budget. She was re-elected in November 2020.

# 2019

We returned to Virginia, our **first program with Swing Left as a combined organization** since joining forces in May of that year. Having contributed to flips in the House of Delegates in 2017, we knew that control of the Virginia General Assembly was within reach and that victory would pave the way for more progressive policies and fair redistricting in 2021.

Together with Swing Left, we targeted 20 state House and state Senate districts and mobilized a community of over one million volunteers, donors, and activists. **Fourteen of our candidates won their elections**, with six Democratic holds and eight flips, allowing Democrats to gain control of both chambers of the General Assembly and **making Virginia the country's 15th Democratic trifecta**.

## WORKING TOGETHER TO FLIP VIRGINIA:

**\$863K**

raised for our candidates

**72%**

of funds sent to races decided by 5% or less

**229K**

letters written

**88K**

doors knocked

**39K**

calls made

After the New Hampshire State Senate flipped blue in 2018—with the help of Flippable alums—**New Hampshire became the 21st state abolish the death penalty**, overriding the GOP governor's veto to do so.



In October, **Pennsylvania passed its biggest election reform package in over 80 years**. The bill, which received the support of several Flippable alums, allowed no-excuse mail-in voting and lengthened the voter registration deadline, changes that had a huge impact on the 2020 elections.



2019 also had setbacks for democracy. **Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida GOP had worked hard to undermine Amendment 4** since its passage the previous year. They succeeded in June by amending the measure to require returning citizens to pay all restitutions, fines, and fees before they could register to vote. Not only did this change create a financial barrier for over one million people, it undermined the will of Floridians, who voted overwhelmingly for the amendment in its original form.

In June, **the Supreme Court also dealt a blow to democracy** by ruling that partisan gerrymandering was non-justiciable, leaving the responsibility of determining whether or not maps were unfairly drawn to the states. This ruling made our work at Flippable even more important; without the Supreme Court's oversight, electing pro-democracy Democrats is now one of the only ways to fight gerrymandering.



VOLUNTEERS PREPARE TO CANVASS IN VIRGINIA IN 2019.

# 2019 CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT

## **JOSHUA COLE** VA STATE DELEGATE

In his first run for Fredericksburg-area House District 28 in 2017, **Virginia Delegate Joshua Cole** was the youngest and first Black nominee in the district's history and came within just 82 votes of winning his election. Two years later, Delegate Cole successfully flipped a seat that has been held by the GOP since the 1980s. In June, Delegate Cole released his legislative priorities to address police brutality in the upcoming 2021 session, including the establishment of local and independent civilian review boards with subpoena powers and a review of school resource officers (SROs) and their authority within school buildings.



# 2020

**Thirty-eight of Flippable’s candidates, across 10 states, won their elections, including five 2018 alums who were re-elected.** However, not a single chamber flipped blue in 2020—and the New Hampshire state legislature flipped back to GOP control. There are a number of reasons for the lack of progress this election, from the difficulty of winning gerrymandered districts to the disproportionate impact that COVID-19 had on down-ballot candidates, who suspended in-person voter contact.

Still, the landscape for redistricting in 2021—and for the future of democracy—is more hopeful than it was in 2011.

- Thanks to voters’ passage of Proposal 2 in 2018, **Michigan’s maps will be drawn by an independent redistricting committee.** Democrats also now control the governor’s mansion and the state supreme court, providing further avenues to push back against any GOP-led challenges to the independent redistricting process.
- Pennsylvania had one of the country’s most gerrymandered congressional maps until 2018, when the state Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional. With a Democratic governor—who can veto congressional maps—and a majority on the state Supreme Court—which will hear any disputes over new maps—**Pennsylvania Democrats are in a better position for redistricting in 2021 than they were in 2011.**
- In Wisconsin, three Flippable candidates won their State Assembly races and blocked a GOP supermajority. This protects Democratic Governor Tony Evers’ veto power and **prevents the Wisconsin GOP from having absolute control over redistricting.**

Flippable alums have been hard at work in 2020, pushing for progressive reforms and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. **After Virginia flipped blue in 2019, the General Assembly was able to pass several sweeping reforms.** New election laws repealed Virginia’s voter ID law, made Election Day a state holiday, and expanded early voting. Virginia also became the first southern state to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a collaborative effort among Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the General Assembly passed a host of gun control laws, limiting handgun purchases, creating a red flag law, and instilling universal background checks.



In Colorado, State Senators and Flippable alums Jessie Danielson, Tammy Story, and Faith Winter supported **several pieces of legislation allocating over \$300 million in COVID-19 relief.** Senator Story’s bill provided \$5 million in grants to food banks while Senator Winter’s bill supplied small businesses with loans.



# 2020 CANDIDATE SPOTLIGHT



**CHRISTINE  
MARSH**  
AZ STATE SENATOR

Flippable first supported Arizona State **Senator-elect Christine Marsh** in 2018, when she lost her race by just 267 votes. This November, Senator-elect Marsh successfully flipped her district, Legislative District 28 in central Maricopa County. As Arizona’s 2016 Teacher of the Year and a leader during the 2018 teacher strikes after further cuts in education funding, Senator-elect Marsh will be a critical advocate for Arizona’s teachers and students.



**RICKY  
HURTADO**  
NC STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**Representative-elect Ricky Hurtado** will be the only Latino legislator in the North Carolina General Assembly after flipping the Alamance County seat blue for the first time in 10 years. As a first-generation college student, son of working-class immigrants, and public policy graduate of Princeton University, Representative-elect Hurtado will bring an invaluable perspective and commitment to serving North Carolina’s most vulnerable communities during this pandemic.

# THANK YOU!

We are grateful for the incredible community and team we've built over the years with your help and are eager to continue working together to strengthen our democracy. [Blueprint](#), Swing Left's new donation platform, is an important part of this effort. It allows you to support candidates, including those in state legislative races, and grassroots civic organizations engaged in year-round voter outreach.

**Thank you for partnering with us in this work. We look forward to continuing our mission together, with Swing Left.**

**FLIPPABLE**