

How we choose our races

U.S. Senate races

Without significant data on polling or modeling right now, our analysis relies on a synthesis of the following factors:

Previous electoral history

- How has the state voted in previous statewide elections?
 - Partisanship is the most important determinant of an election's competitiveness
- How has the state voted in previous midterm elections specifically?
 - Midterm electorates are notoriously different than presidential electorates and historically have leaned more Republican
- How has the state voted depending on the party in power in the White House?
 - Some electorates are "swingier" than others and voters will react against the nominee of the incumbent president's party more harshly than others
- How has the state's partisanship changed in recent cycles?
 - Electoral realignment of racial/educational groups that has driven partisan trends across the country is unlikely to reverse course in 2022

Incumbency

- Is the seat held by a Democrat or Republican?
 - Preserving the Democratic majority in an election year where Democrats control all levers of the federal government is the priority
- Is the incumbent running for reelection?
 - Incumbent candidates enjoy an electoral advantage that has been estimated to be up to +3%
- Does the incumbent have a history of running significantly ahead or behind of the state's overall partisan lean?
 - Not all incumbents are created equal, some are much stronger candidates that fit their states' electorates better than others

U.S. House races

Redistricting outcome

- How have the newly drawn district lines affected the answers to any of the questions under "previous electoral history"?
 - In the same way that partisanship is the primary determinant of competitiveness, district lines are the primary determinant of partisanship in Congressional elections

Previous electoral history

- How has the district voted in previous statewide elections?
 - Partisanship is the most important determinant of an election's competitiveness
- How has the district voted in previous midterm elections specifically?
 - Midterm electorates are notoriously different than presidential electorates and historically have leaned more Republican
- How has the district voted depending on the party in power in the White House?
 - Some electorates are “swingier” than others and voters will react against the nominee of the incumbent president's party more harshly than others
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Incumbency

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 - Preserving the Democratic majority in an election year where Democrats control all levers of the federal government is the priority
- Is the incumbent running for reelection?
 - Incumbent candidates enjoy an electoral advantage that has been estimated to be up to +3%
- Is the incumbent running in a dramatically reconstructed district?
 - Incumbents drawn into new or drastically reconfigured districts typically see a smaller incumbency advantage conferred to their candidacy
- Does the incumbent have a history of running significantly ahead or behind of the state's overall partisan lean?
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Gubernatorial races

Competitiveness of future federal elections

- Does the state regularly host competitive federal elections?
 - The administration of elections impacts competitiveness at the margins, governors are key only in states that are already competitive
- Will the state likely host a competitive election in 2024?
 - The administration of the 2024 presidential election is the largest current threat to American democracy and governors elected in 2022 will play an essential role in ensuring stability and electoral integrity

Voter suppression or attempted electoral malfeasance

- Has the state recently acted to restrict voting or have a history of restricting voting?
 - Governors elected in 2022 have the opportunity to prevent future restrictions on voting in the lead up to the 2024 presidential election
- Has the state seen attempts to invalidate the results during the 2020 election?
 - These states will likely be at the forefront of Republicans efforts to subvert the will of the people again

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- How has the state's partisanship changed in recent cycles?
 - Electoral realignment of racial/educational groups that has driven partisan trends across the country is unlikely to reverse course in 2022
- Is there any systemic bias towards one party or the other in district elections, when compared to federal elections?
 - In many states, voters will be much more friendly to Republican candidates for state offices, including governor, than for federal offices

Incumbency

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 - Preserving Democratic governorships in an election year where a Democrat occupies the White House is the priority
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State legislative races

Redistricting outcome

- How have the newly drawn district lines affected the answers to any of the questions under "previous electoral history"?
 - In the same way that partisanship is the primary determinant of competitiveness, district lines are the primary determinant of partisanship in legislative elections

Voter suppression and gerrymandering

- Has the state recently acted to restrict voting or have a history of restricting voting?
 - Stopping voter suppression is a starting point, but in order to truly strengthen American democracy, Democrats must win legislative majorities in key states to begin expanding access to the ballot
- Does the state have a history of gerrymandering its congressional and legislative districts for the GOP's political gain?
 - We are building for the long term by helping Democrats win control over a majority of congressional districts drawn by partisan processes by the time the 2030 redistricting cycle comes around

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Candidate reevaluation and additional criteria

We will evaluate additional statewide targets on a quarterly basis and all district-level targets on a rolling basis as soon as their district maps are approved. We will continue to incorporate additional data—such as polling, electoral modeling, and campaign finance reports—to determine how we prioritize our targets as new data becomes available.