

# Blueprint To Win

**EMILYs  
LIST** 

**Elect Women.  
Take Back Power.**

*At a time when the Democratic Party is trying to figure out the path back to power amid unprecedented chaos coming from the Trump administration, the results of the 2025 elections clearly proved —*

**Winning in 2026  
runs through  
EMILYs List  
women.**

With the backing of EMILYs List, Democratic pro-choice women led the charge — AND WON BIG — in the first major elections of Trump’s second term. In 2025, EMILYs List-endorsed candidates flipped every major red to blue race — a clear and unequivocal demonstration that investing in women candidates is a smart electoral strategy.



**Winning two governorships, the Virginia lieutenant governor’s office and 10 seats in the VA House of Delegates, a critical special election in Minnesota to keep Democratic control, and four mayoral races – the 2025 elections proved our model of how to win tough campaigns with candidates who bring the bold leadership voters are demanding of us right now is the blueprint to win the 2026 midterm elections.**

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EMILYs List’s Blueprint to Win is a data-driven and dynamic approach, rooted in the fundamentals of winning campaigns, that will leverage the lessons from these critical wins into taking back the U.S. House of Representatives and securing crucial state centers of power in 2026 and beyond.



# EMILYs List Blueprint to Win

Our experience delivering hard-fought electoral wins has found a clear formula for success — **recruit strong candidates** who provide bold leadership that **connects authentically with voters** and **build out winning campaigns**.

## *Community-based recruiting:*

The strongest candidates come out of communities across the country, but someone has to find them, convince them to run, and help them build strong campaigns. Our team of expert campaign strategists have spent years on the ground developing relationships with community leaders and key stakeholders, and in the weeks after the 2024 election they got right to work, recruiting and working with candidates who are ready to run strong campaigns and win. In 2026, we have a slate of bold leaders ready to take on the system because they are not from the system.

Here are just a few of the women who will take back the majority:



**Paige Cognito (PA-08)**

who defeated a corrupt political machine to become mayor of Scranton and return power to the people.



**JoAnna Mendoza (AZ-06)**

a former drill instructor who grew up in a farmworker family.



**Kaela Berg (MN-02)**

a single mom, flight attendant, and union leader.

# 2026 could be breakout year for blue-collar Democratic women

Female hopefuls tout message that meets the moment in fight for working-class support

## Roll Call

### *Data-driven strategic approach:*

Securing electoral wins requires a deep understanding of what voters are experiencing. After the 2024 election, EMILYs List Action undertook an extensive research project, examining reams of public and private data to understand views on public policy issues and conducting our own polling to face 2025 and 2026. The resulting project gave us a fuller picture of the instability voters are facing, who is feeling the pain most acutely, and what voters are looking for in Democratic candidates.

That research made it very clear — voters aren't just struggling economically, they're in crisis. The challenge for us is that these voters are so despondent, they have a hard time believing anyone in power truly understands the hardships they face.

A plurality of Americans are struggling, with women feeling this most acutely. 45% of women are falling behind or barely making it day to day. And it's even worse among younger women and women of color.

An overwhelming majority of voters think the economy isn't doing well and nearly 70% believe Republicans bear that responsibility.

A staggering 82% of voters who are struggling are looking for candidates who will fight for them. They say they are desperately seeking leaders who have lived their struggles and understand what they truly need.

# *Building winning campaign operations from the ground up with the support of the EMILYs List community:*

EMILYs List's best-in-class strategists are experts in how to help campaigns build to win — we know campaigns don't come in a box, and neither should campaign strategies. Our team is often a candidate's first call in the morning and their last call before they go to sleep.

*From launch to Election Day, EMILYs List is the only organization there every step of the way:*

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When a candidate decides to run, the EMILYs List team is on the ground coaching her through building out a strong team, roledexing the candidate's networks to develop a finance plan, and pitching press on the distinct strengths she brings to the race.

As campaigns scale up, EMILYs List is in the weeds working with campaigns to implement innovative media strategies, fill budget gaps, and prepare for debates.

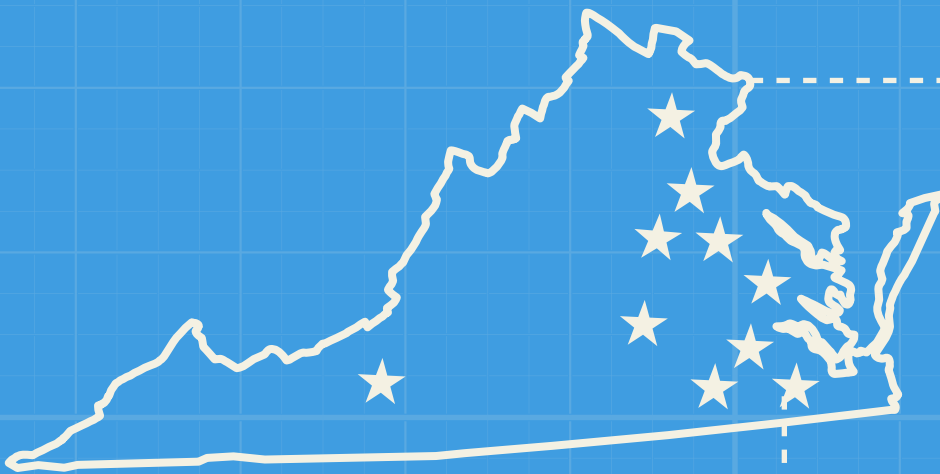
Throughout the campaign, EMILYs List taps into our community to help candidates raise resources and build a profile online, with press, and in donor networks.

And we step up to meet the challenges as they arise. For example, at a time when political violence is at an all time high, EMILYs List is working with candidates to help them run for office as safely as possible.

Taking back power hinges on recruiting and electing candidates who truly “get it.” There is no shortcut through this fight. We know that wins are built on doing the work. We don't just show up with a check, we show up with a blueprint.

## CASE STUDY

# Virginia Victories Show How We Win & Take Back Power



# 10

## *State House Wins*

Elizabeth Guzmán HD-22

Lily Franklin HD-41

May Nivar HD-57

Stacey Carroll HD-64

Nicole Cole HD-66

Jessica Anderson HD-71

Leslie Mehta HD-73

Lindsey Dougherty HD-75

Kimberly Pope Adams HD-82

Kacey Carnegie HD-89

EMILYs List came into the 2025 election in Virginia with a clear strategy — to secure a governing majority anchored by EMILYs List-backed women, and we were successful.

Successfully flipping both top executive offices from red to blue — including electing the first woman governor of Virginia — and expanding the majority in the Virginia House of Delegates by 10 seats was the result of a multicycle effort by EMILYs List built on decades of deep work in the Commonwealth.



Gov. Abigail Spanberger



Lt Gov. Ghazala Hashmi

After the 2023 election when five state house districts were lost by razor-thin margins, our team recruited a slate of strong candidates — moms, caregivers, immigrants, veterans, and small business owners who brought the lived experience voters were looking for in 2025.

## CASE STUDY CONTINUED

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*Because of EMILYs List's efforts, the Democratic nominee in every single one of the top flip opportunities in the Virginia state House this cycle was an EMILYs List-backed woman — and all 10 of them won.*

EMILYs List didn't just recruit these women, we helped them build strong campaigns. Our Virginia campaign services program included:



A dedicated team of campaign experts with extensive electoral experience in Virginia who logged thousands of miles recruiting and working with campaigns.



Guidance and strategic planning around primary elections, a time when other groups are on the sidelines and not on the field with the candidates, to make sure the strongest candidates were on the general election ballot.



1:1 finance and call time support for all of our House of Delegates candidates, leading to every one of them outraising their Republican opponents.



Providing around the clock communications support — from working with them to develop messaging that will resonate with voters in this moment, to helping them build press relationships and respond during breaking news moments.

These candidates demonstrated that when we run leaders who connect to the frustrations and struggles of their communities, and meet that frustration with bold leadership and decisive action, we win. From Abigail Spanberger's Affordable Virginia Plan to Ghazala Hashmi's focus on protecting public schools and Leslie Mehta's (HD-73) focus on fighting for health care accessibility and affordability inspired by her daughter's fight with a rare illness, our strong candidates were disciplined in communicating a clear vision around their leadership and their agenda that resonated deeply with voters. Candidates up and down the ballot also understood the power of reproductive freedom in driving votes and prosecuted a clear case against Republicans for their support for abortion bans.

Our work in Virginia will feed into 2026 wins as we look ahead to taking back the majority in the U.S. House with EMILYs List women. Our map of battleground House races we are targeting to flip from red to blue includes 25 seats that are R+4 or better. Election Day 2025 proved those races are all within reach next November, and EMILYs List is working to recruit and support strong candidates ready to win these seats.



# Winning in 2026 & Beyond

*In 2026, EMILYs List will leverage the strength of our community into the fight to take back power on two critical fronts — flipping the U.S. House of Representatives and securing crucial state centers of power.*

1.

## *Mission Majority: Elect Women. Take Back the House.*

The best and earliest opportunity to create a federal check on the Trump administration is by

***TAKING BACK THE HOUSE IN 2026.***

EMILYs List women are going to be at the center of this fight.

Early in 2025, we knew Democrats needed multiple paths to a Democratic majority, which is why EMILYs list put

***46 HOUSE  
REPUBLICAN  
DISTRICTS  
ON NOTICE***

as recruitment targets.

We have already endorsed

***12 CANDIDATES***

in the top flip districts in the country and are working with dozens of candidates across the battlefield.

EMILYs List-backed women will be a driving force in flipping control of the House.

2.

## *Crucial State Centers of Power.*

Building power in the states by electing more Democratic women who will stand on the front lines is critical to pushing back against the recklessness and cruelty coming out of Washington.

EMILYs List is targeting governors, attorneys general, secretaries of state, state legislative majorities, and state supreme court races in eight key states that will position Democratic pro-choice women to make an immediate impact and build for the future.



*EMILYs List has a proven  
record of winning, even  
when it's hard.*

Since our founding in 1985, we have helped elect the country's first woman as vice president, 193 women to the House, 29 to the Senate, 22 governors, and over 1,600 women to state and local office.

When every race and every election cycle is different, we can't rely on tired old playbooks or go all in on one-size-fits-all strategies. That's what's always set EMILYs List apart — the combination of deep expertise and innovative tactics, strong candidates and strategic campaigns, a plan and a community coming together to get it done. Democratic pro-choice women are the leaders we need, and EMILYs List has the blueprint to win.