



Progressive Majority Political Landscape Assessment

Just as important as an assessment of your personal viability as a candidate is a complete review of the political environment in which your campaign will be run. Accurately reviewing the landscape will help you make an informed decision, convince others you are up to the task and ultimately determine the strategy that will guide your campaign.

Your District

The factors you should investigate and consider are listed below; in most cases, the state party, legislative caucus and/or campaign committee will provide this information to you upon request.

- What is the Democratic performance?
- How many people are registered to vote? What is their partisan split?
- What was the voter turnout percentage in the last presidential and non-presidential elections?
- How many votes did the winner receive in the last like campaign and what was his/her margin of victory?
- How much was spent by each candidate in the last like election?

General Political Landscape

Your campaign will be part of a larger political environment among activists, volunteers, donors and voters in your district. Understanding the context in which your race will be run will help you realistically design your strategy and budget your time and resources. In preparation for the campaign, you should assess the following:

- What elections and initiatives will also appear on the ballot?
- Do you expect your district to be a focus of intense activity by other candidates?
- How do you expect top-of-the-ticket organizing to impact turnout?
- Do you run as a slate with others in your district, and if so, can you combine efforts in any way?

- What organizations and political leaders do you expect to line up in support of and in opposition to your campaign?
- Are there overriding national concerns that will impact your race, or that have particular relevance to your district?
- What resources can you expect from your state party or caucus?

Research on Requirements, Rules and Deadlines

You must follow certain state-imposed guidelines in order to file as a candidate and get a spot on the ballot; you must also adhere to legal regulations throughout the course of your campaign in order to stay in compliance with the law. You should answer—and add to your plan and timeline—the following:

- How many signatures do you need to get on the ballot?
- How many signatures should you obtain in order to avoid problems with eligibility or a potential ballot access challenge by your opponent?
- Is there a fee to file?
- When is the candidate filing deadline?
- When is the primary election?
- Under what circumstances might there be a runoff election?
- What requirements must you meet before you can begin soliciting contributions?
- When are you required to file financial disclosure reports and what expenses and contributions need to be included?
- By what date must you name a campaign treasurer and/or established an official candidate committee?
- What are the contribution limits in your race?
- What disclaimer language needs to be included on your campaign literature?