



To: Interested Parties

From: DGA Executive Director Meghan Meehan-Draper

Date: October 13, 2026

Subject: DGA on Verge of Making History, Funding for Gubernatorial Races is Biggest Obstacle

DGA is Aggressively Going on Offense and Expanding the Map: The DGA is aggressively going on offense and there is a very real opportunity for Democrats to govern a majority of the states in our country for the first time since 2010.

However, the path to do that requires holding challenging Democratic-held swing states like Arizona, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Kansas, while also flipping Republican-held states like Georgia, Nevada, Ohio, Iowa, and Alaska. There are also increasingly competitive races in states like Texas, Florida, Oklahoma, and Nebraska.

That means at this point in the cycle the playing field has largely boiled down to states Trump won in 2024, where there is no such thing as an easy statewide victory for a Democrat. For example, Georgia, Iowa, and Ohio have not elected a Democratic governor in 20 years.

We also believe our candidates in each of these states can win. That's why the DGA is aggressively going on offense. We do not outline all of our future spending plans to avoid tipping off our Republican counterparts, but **the DGA is investing at least \$10 million each in states like Arizona, Georgia, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio and Wisconsin**. We are also investing seven figures in Alaska, Kansas and Texas and exploring all opportunities to keep [expanding the map](#).

That includes investing over \$37 million in states where Black candidates like Keisha Lance Bottoms, David Crowley, and Aaron Ford could make history. The DGA's \$10 million investment in Georgia makes us Keisha Lance Bottoms' largest donor. The DGA has also helped fund over \$5.5 million in Spanish-language ads in Nevada and Arizona, two perennial toss-up states where winning back Latino voters is deeply consequential.

The Challenge: While the DGA and all of our Democratic governors have worked hard to raise more money for races like these than previous cycles, Republicans are still drastically outspending us. There are two key reasons.

First, in states like [Georgia](#) and Ohio, we are running against self-funding billionaires and their allies who are spending over \$100 million each. In Wisconsin, three GOP megadonors have

teamed up to spend [\\$24 million](#) in just the last reporting period. Other right-wing groups like Turning Point USA are dumping more than [\\$18 million](#) in Arizona, where polls have tightened, to make it the first swing state with an election denier in charge.

Second, it still remains a significant challenge to raise national money for state-level races. Over the last ten years, the Democratic Party - from major donors to the grassroots - has increasingly recognized the importance of electing governors. Unfortunately, a large gap still remains. As Politico recently wrote, Democrats “[may fall short](#)” in state-level races because of underfunding. The New York Times called this dynamic a “longstanding problem in Democratic politics.”

Additionally, as the DGA contends with navigating different state-level campaign finance laws in governor's races nationwide, grassroots money is the most critical and the hardest to come by – especially in the final weeks.

The Stakes: Democratic governors are some of our country's most dynamic and consequential leaders. They are also some of the Democratic Party's most popular figures. They deliver real results for the people in their states every single day and are a firewall against Trump's harmful agenda and attacks against the rule of law, whether or not Democrats hold majorities in Congress.

Electing Democratic governors also has massive implications for the future of our democracy, with major consequences for redistricting congressional maps and thousands of future state-level judicial appointments that serve as a pipeline for the federal judiciary. We are running against [election deniers](#) or candidates who have echoed Trump's lies about elections - including in Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin - and could undermine efforts to certify the 2028 presidential election results. Simply put, in states where we do not win, the GOP will continue to rig elections, overturn the will of the voters, and rip away voting rights.

Additionally, the path to the White House runs through states with Democratic governors. When a Democratic candidate wins their race for governor, it puts that state on the map for 2028, creating more opportunities to get 270 electoral votes.

Conclusion: At one point in 2017 during the first Trump Administration, there were only 15 Democratic governors. Thanks to our bench of strong Democratic governors, great candidates, and growing attention on the importance of governors' races, all backed by the DGA's battle-tested strategies, today we have 24 Democratic governors who represent nearly 60% of the U.S. population.

Now, we're on the verge of making history if we can overcome fundraising challenges. In the meantime, the DGA's focus remains squarely on winning as many races as possible by stretching dollars in the most efficient ways and deploying strategies we've learned and refined from working on elections every single year. Most recently, that includes winning landslides in Virginia and New Jersey last year, holding North Carolina and every other Democratic state in 2024, and winning in Kentucky in 2023.

The DGA has been building for this moment, cycle after cycle, and we feel confident we can make history in November with a late surge in investments totaling at least \$20 million to help us expand the map and close the gap with Republicans who are drastically outspending us.

###