iVote Fund

What if everyone voted?

A PROJECT TO ELECT DEMOCRATS TO SECRETARY OF STATE OFFICES IN BATTLEGROUND STATES IN 2014

IVOTE OVERVIEW

2016 will be a close election in which every vote in a Battleground State will matter. While we spend massive amounts of time and energy trying to turnout every voter, the Republican Party is discouraging participation. They attempt to create and pass laws that make it harder to vote, use their discretion as secretaries of state to wipe eligible voters off the rolls, work to curtail voting hours and sponsor a slew of other measures that keep us in a constant legal battle to protect the right to vote.

Leading up to the tightly contested 2012 presidential election, 15 states passed laws or executive actions that attempted to make it harder for eligible voters to cast their ballots. These laws included restrictions on early and absentee voting, changes to registration practices, and photo ID requirements. These 15 states represented 203 electoral votes, or nearly three quarters of the 270 needed to win the presidency.

Although courts delayed or overturned many of the laws, the trend has continued in the lead up to 2016. In 2013, 92 bills were introduced that would require voter IDs, increase wait-times at the polls, restrict early and absentee voting, and make registration more difficult. In 2014, Battleground States across the country will elect secretaries of state who will preside over the implementation of these laws and voting in 2016.

The most important thing we can do in 2014 to elect a Democrat in 2016 will be to kick out of office Republicans who would suppress the vote by electing secretaries of state who will promote MORE voting in Battleground States.

WHY SECRETARIES OF STATE MATTER

In most states, the secretary of state administers elections – often with the power to interpret election laws, determine acceptable forms of ID, manage voter registration systems, and oversee early vote and Election Day.

These responsibilities give secretaries of state considerable control over implementing voting laws and the liberty to make influential policy decisions that impact key communities. Their decisions impact every potential voter, and Republican tactics that make it harder for certain populations to vote can swing a close election by 1-3%.

As a result, right-wing secretaries of state represent a critical threat to full participation in elections and to Democratic success in 2016 and beyond.
We can protect voting rights by electing progressive secretaries of state in key races in 2014.

Currently, the states of Ohio, Iowa, and Colorado all have Republican secretaries of state who are working overtime to create barriers for voters. They spent the last three years in office investigating so-called “voter fraud,” supporting photo ID and fighting against every proven way to increase voting from early voting to simple registration. They are all up for re-election in 2014. They all will have credible Democratic challengers who, if elected, would use their office to EXPAND voting opportunities.

iVote will run independent expenditure campaigns in 4 Battleground States, supporting Democrats who seek to encourage participation by expanding access for eligible voters. Our work will include data-driven research and message development, people-centered grassroots organizing, and cutting-edge digital strategies.

Secretary of state campaigns present clear opportunities for iVote to make a sizable impact. Over the last three election cycles, 36% of Battleground States have elected a secretary of state from a different party than the Governor. These races have had lower turnout – with average drop off of 3% from the top of the ticket – and lower spending – with an average budget of $500,000 for Democratic candidates.

By persuading undecided voters who care about voting rights issues, motivating drop-off voters who might not participate otherwise, and providing an influx of campaign resources, iVote will change the game in secretary of state races nationwide.

iVOTE WILL IMPACT SECRETARY OF STATE RACES BY RUNNING THE FOLLOWING TARGETED CAMPAIGN PROGRAMS:

- **RESEARCH**: Conduct polling and focus groups to identify the most effective messages to persuade voters to prioritize voting rights and to motivate progressive voters to increase participation.

- **ANALYTICS**: Use data-driven analytics to identify target voters for persuasion and mobilization.

- **GRASSROOTS**: Deploy organizers to mobilize grassroots volunteers and community leaders to amplify the iVote message and to educate, persuade, and turn out target voters via local calls, canvasses, and events.

- **DIGITAL**: Create cutting-edge digital strategies to engage supporters and message to target voters via email, social media, online ads, microsites, and video.

- **MEDIA**: Use targeted earned and paid media – such as television, mail, and radio – to amplify and drive the iVote message for persuasion and mobilization.
iVote anticipates investing in 4 states, based on selection criteria such as the competitiveness of the race, the views of the candidates, and the importance nationally. Based on our initial review, the targets are OH, IA, CO, and NV.

**THE iVOTE TEAM**

The iVote Board of Directors includes campaign and policy veterans Jeremy Bird, Doug Sosnik, Ellen Kurz, Michael Blake, Wendy Smith, Ralph Paige, Pete Giangreco, Rachael Cobb and Frank Smith. The iVote advisory team will include 270 Strategies, AKPD, David Binder Research, and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research.