

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Samuel Lau, Planned Parenthood Votes

DATE: Wednesday, November 6, 2019

RE: Victories in Kentucky and Virginia Show Support for Reproductive Rights is a Winning Strategy All Across America

Anti-abortion groups bet big on last night's elections, hoping their pattern of misinformation and attacks on abortion would help them hold on to power in Kentucky and Virginia — seats that have traditionally been favorable terrain for them. The poll results make it clear: That strategy failed.

With the stakes higher than ever before, voters booted anti-abortion extremist Matt Bevin from the governor's mansion in Kentucky and flipped both legislative chambers in Virginia, creating new reproductive rights majorities. **Taken together, last night's election results prove once again that candidates who run on an agenda of expanding reproductive rights and protecting abortion access win elections.**

But the results also demonstrate that the tired playbook of running misleading, fear-mongering, and outright disgusting attacks on abortion and a woman's right to make her own health care decisions — even in areas where conservative candidates should be at an advantage — simply does not work.

Nowhere was that more clear than in Kentucky, where anti-abortion crusader Governor Matt Bevin's [campaign of relentless and deceptive abortion attacks](#) failed to keep him in the governor's mansion — even in a state where Trump won by 30 points. Since taking office, Bevin signed into law some of the strictest abortion restrictions in the country, including four in the last year alone. His loss proves that voters want elected officials who will protect their reproductive health care and rights, instead of constantly working to undermine them. [There is no state in the country where banning abortion is popular](#), and [two-thirds of Kentucky voters \(65%\)](#) say it is important that women have access to all of the reproductive health care options available, including abortion. Gov. Bevin's dangerous record only motivated Kentuckians to raise the alarm, volunteer, and get to the polls.

Leading up to Election Day, Planned Parenthood Action Kentucky UCC ran its first-ever volunteer-based direct voter contact program. Since Gov. Bevin was first elected in 2015, the number of Planned Parenthood supporters in Kentucky has grown to more than 75,000 statewide. In addition to knocking doors and making phone calls in the weeks leading up to the election, Planned Parenthood's local advocacy and political organization ran targeted digital ads and sent mail pieces to highlight Bevin's record.

Meanwhile in Virginia, Democratic candidates flipped both state legislative chambers by running on bold platforms of supporting abortion access and reproductive freedom. While Republicans resorted to false attacks on abortion access, they failed to win over Virginia voters, [85% of whom support legal abortion](#).

These candidates were buoyed to victory in part through the efforts of Planned Parenthood Virginia PAC, which invested more than \$1 million in a layered campaign that reached hundreds of thousands of voters through an army of volunteers and canvassers, mail, and targeted advertising. As part of the group's voter education campaign, Planned Parenthood Virginia PAC:

- Knocked more than 68,000 doors (surpassing their door knocking goal by 36%);
- Reached more than 110,000 voters via targeted digital advertising in key districts;
- Sent mailers educating voters on the candidates' positions on reproductive health and rights to over 115,000 households; and
- Organized a total of 800 volunteer canvass shifts.

Key races Planned Parenthood Virginia PAC helped power to victory: Delegate Elizabeth Guzman (HD-31) Delegate Wendy Gooditis (HD-10), Delegate Haya Ayala (HD-51), Delegate Schuyler Van Valkenburg (HD-72), and Delegate Kathy Tran (HD-42) all won re-election, despite outrageous attacks. In fact, every single one of the delegates in Planned Parenthood Virginia PAC's top races won re-election. Planned Parenthood Virginia PAC also helped flip SD-10 and elect champion Ghazala Hashmi by nearly 10 points.

Now with historic reproductive rights majorities, **Virginians will expect their new legislators to transfer the enthusiasm from the campaign into legislative action — not only by eliminating the medically unnecessary restrictions on abortion currently in place, but by enacting laws that protect and expand reproductive health care and rights across the state.**

At the end of the day, these election results confirm what we learned in 2018: Voters want more access to health care and policies that protect their rights and freedoms, and they're making that known at the ballot box. It's crystal clear that access to reproductive health care — including safe, legal abortion — is not only [a top issue](#) heading into 2020, but it's a winning issue for candidates.

Every seat, up and down the ballot, is critical to ensure we can protect and expand reproductive rights, and we'll be carrying this momentum into 2020 and beyond.

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