

# DCCC



# Battleground Brief

The DCCC is beginning the 2014 election year ahead on all the metrics within our control: we have built a significant financial advantage, we have strong recruits in our top targeted districts, and we are on offense against this reckless Republican Congress that constantly focuses on the wrong priorities.

Republicans start 2014 on the wrong side of voters. The next few months will expose Republicans for ignoring the real problems middle class families face – and instead stacking the deck in favor of the wealthy, big oil, and special interests.

## DCCC ACTIVITY:

### DCCC BEGINS ELECTION YEAR WITH FINANCIAL EDGE

The DCCC continues its successful fundraising, breaking another off-year record by raising \$5 million in November outraising the NRCC by \$1 million for the month. The DCCC has raised more than \$13 million more than the NRCC for 2013, through November.

The Rothenberg Report called House Democrats' fundraising our "not-so-secret weapon," and wrote that with the cash advantage, Democrats could spend \$1 million unmatched by Republicans in a dozen or so districts. This could be critical to our efforts to expand the map and put red districts into play.

We continue to be in our best-ever position for this point in an off-year:

- The DCCC expanded our cash-on-hand advantage over the NRCC to \$8 million;
- The DCCC is already \$14 million ahead of our fundraising at this point in the 2012 election cycle;
- The DCCC has also conserved more resources than last cycle, spending \$2.7 million less so far in the 2014 cycle than the committee did at this point in the 2012 cycle.

### DCCC ON ACA OFFENSE: LAUNCHES 'FACES OF REPEAL' CAMPAIGN

The DCCC is on offense, reminding voters that the Republican plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act would take us back to a broken system that gave insurance companies free rein to deny care and drop coverage, discriminate against women and millions of Americans with preexisting conditions, and drive hardworking Americans into bankruptcy.

The DCCC launched the website, [facesofrepeal.com](http://facesofrepeal.com), which features real Americans telling their stories about how Republican repeal would hurt them and their families.

In conjunction with the website, the DCCC is running web advertisements in the districts of 56 vulnerable Republicans, featuring customized videos and links to the website.

Watch the national “Faces of Repeal” video [here](#):



Read some of the coverage of the campaign here:

- “Dems launch ads attacking GOP on O-Care” [The Hill, [1/7/14](#)]
- “Democrats’ Ad Hits GOP Calls to Drop Obamacare” [Wall Street Journal, [12/17/13](#)]
- “Dems go on Offense on Obamacare” [Washington Post, [12/17/13](#)]
- “LoBiondo criticized for vote to repeal ACA in new web ad” [Politicker NJ, [12/17/13](#)]
- “DCCC on Obamacare offense: paid web ads for ‘The Cost of Carlos Curbelo’s Repeal’” [Miami Herald, [12/17/13](#)]

## BATTLEFIELD UPDATE:

At the end of 2013 the DCCC added four new candidates as the final wave of our Jumpstart program—taking to 23 the number of candidates who are part of the new program to highlight top candidates and districts around the country. In the coming months we will launch our signature Red-to-Blue program for our top pick-up opportunities.

The Committee added the following candidates to the Jumpstart program:

- Former North Little Rock Mayor Patrick Henry Hays (AR-02)
- Former FEMA Director James Lee Witt (AR-04)
- Counterterrorism Specialist Bobby McKenzie (MI-11)
- Burlington County Freeholder Aimee Belgard (NJ-03)

Democrats also have new opportunities to expand the 2014 playing field in districts that moderate Republicans are leaving, driven to retire rather than attempt to defend this indefensible Republican Congress. There are now 9 competitive open seats that House Republicans are vacating this cycle, providing Democrats with new opportunities:

- **AR-02**—Tim Griffin’s unexpected retirement opened this seat, and Democrats have a top-tier recruit in Mayor Patrick Henry Hays – the former Mayor of North Little Rock who served the longest tenure in the city’s history. The Rothenberg Political report shifted the race towards the Democrats following Congressman Griffin’s retirement, and Republicans are facing a costly and divisive primary.
- **AR-04**—With Tom Cotton vacating this seat to run for the Senate, Democrats have an opportunity in this seat that Democratic Congressman Mike Ross represented this district for 12 years. Democrats are united behind James Lee Witt, the former Director of FEMA under President Clinton, while Republicans are in the midst of a divisive and increasingly ugly primary.
- **FL-13**—The special election this March is a true tossup. Business leader and Florida’s former Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink is running to fill the seat vacated by Congressman Young’s passing. Democrats have united around Alex, while Republicans failed to recruit a top-tier candidate, and their vitriolic, expensive primary slugfest ended in the nomination of lobbyist David Jolly.
- **IA-03**—Following Tom Latham’s retirement, UVA’s Center for Politics and the Rothenberg Political Report moved this race to “tossup,” based on the fundamentals of this district that President Obama won in 2012 with 52 percent. The Iowa Republican Party is in a perpetual state of civil war, increasing the likelihood of a divisive primary that results in an unelectable nominee, and so far no obvious first-tier Republican candidate has emerged.
- **MT-AL**—Roll Call named DCCC Jumpstart candidate John Lewis as one of “Six Democratic House Candidates with Plenty of Potential,” and Democrats hold multiple statewide offices in Montana. Republicans look to be headed for a divisive, ideological primary that could damage the eventual nominee.
- **NJ-03**— Burlington County Freeholder and DCCC Jumpstart candidate Aimee Belgard announced her candidacy just one day after Jon Runyan announced he was retiring due to his frustration with the government shutdown and Republican gridlock. While Democrats unite behind Belgard, more than a dozen Republican are running, including failed Tea Party Senate Candidate Steve Lonegan.
- **PA-06**—Jim Gerlach is the latest centrist lawmaker to abandon House Republicans in this district that President Obama won in 2008 with 53 percent, and nearly won in 2012. West Point graduate and businessman Michael Parrish was in conversations with the DCCC about a potential run prior to Gerlach’s retirement, and has already raised \$100,000 in just two weeks.
- **VA-10**—Longtime Republican Congressman Frank Wolf’s retirement puts a seat in play in a region that has been trending rapidly towards Democrats. This district – comprising the exurbs of Washington, D.C. – was hit particularly hard by House Republicans’ government shutdown and sequester furloughs for military families. Virginia Republicans are already poised to nominate a radical extremist candidate who stands far outside Virginia’s mainstream – just as they did during the 2013 statewide elections, with disastrous results.
- **WV-02**—Public accountant and community leader Nick Casey is running in this seat that Shelley Moore Capito is vacating. The University of Virginia Sabato Center for Politics called Casey “a strong contender,” and Casey’s likely Republican challenger only recently moved to West Virginia from Maryland.

## RELEVANT NEWS

- **Nancy Pelosi raised \$35M for Democrats in 2013** “House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who is waging an intense push to seize back the speaker’s gavel from John Boehner, raised more than \$35 million for her party in 2013 That figure, which was provided by a Pelosi aide, far surpasses the amount the California Democrat raised at similar points in previous election cycles...New York Rep. Steve Israel, the DCCC chairman, wrote in an email: ‘Nobody works harder than Leader Pelosi to make sure House Democrats have the resources we need to bring leaders to Congress who will dedicate themselves to strengthening the middle class instead of protecting special interests.’” [[Politico, 1/9/14](#)]
- **House Democrats’ Not-So-Secret Weapon for 2014: Cash** “House Democrats are stockpiling cash, and some GOP strategists have expressed concern that Democrats could use their financial advantage to expand the playing field... When total spending between the parties is separated by thousands of dollars, it probably isn’t the deciding factor in a competitive race. But if one side is spending millions more, that’s another story.” [Roll Call, [12/4/13](#)]
- **Democrats Turn to Minimum Wage as 2014 Strategy** “‘The more Republicans obsess on repealing the Affordable Care Act and the more we focus on rebuilding the middle class with a minimum-wage increase, the more voters will support our candidates,’ said Representative Steve Israel of New York, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Democratic planning on the issue has picked up in recent weeks, as the 2014 elections approach. [New York Times, [12/30/13](#)]
- **House GOP Trims Agenda, Looking to Avert Election-Year Trouble** “The ‘do nothing’ Congress is preparing to do even less. Representative Eric Cantor of Virginia, the House majority leader, is quietly playing down expectations for any major legislative achievements in the final year of the 113th Congress, which passed fewer laws in its first year — 65 — than any single session on record.” [New York Times, [1/6/14](#)]
- **Dems, GOP Try to Repackage Arguments for 2014** “Democrats say they’ll run as the party of average Americans and paint Republicans as out-of-touch allies of the wealthy, with a stubborn streak that forced a partial government shutdown and still prevents practical solutions for national problems. They’re advocating populist positions like a minimum wage increase and an end to tax breaks for energy companies, and they’re already reminding voters of Republicans’ struggle to connect with women, non-whites and younger Americans. They’re also looking to exploit the rift between tea party conservatives and establishment Republicans.” [AP, [1/2/14](#)]
- **Jobless benefits not top priority to House GOP** “President Barack Obama’s desire to renew emergency jobless benefits is running into a familiar avalanche of indifference: the House. House Republicans are showing little appetite, urgency and interest in extending the program, and are hinting that they are content to let the issue disappear if the Senate fails to pass its own legislation.” [Politico, [1/9/14](#)]
- **DCCC chair slams GOP on jobless benefits** “Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chairman Steve Israel (D-N.Y.) on Friday attacked House Republicans for failing to extend unemployment benefits... ‘Republicans in Congress have failed this country on so many fronts — failing to create jobs, failing to focus on the right priorities, failing to strengthen the middle class — and this weekend, 1.3 million Americans who are looking for work will personally pay the price for Republicans’ failure to extend unemployment insurance,’ Israel said in a statement... A key part of the

DCCC's strategy this cycle is to paint Republicans as out of touch on economic issues.” [The Hill, [12/27/13](#)]

- **For House GOP, a primary problem** “House Republicans worry they may be facing a Todd Akin problem as they seek to hold a number of open competitive seats. After a rash of recent retirements by entrenched incumbents, Republicans are unexpectedly defending a number of seats in tossup or GOP-leaning districts. And to the national party’s chagrin, many of those controversial candidates are already running or planning to — and if they emerge as the nominee, it could endanger the GOP’s hold on the critical seats. [...] Privately, Republicans agree with Democrats’ assessments, actively worrying that those landmine candidates could derail their chances.” [The Hill, [1/11/14](#)]

## BY THE NUMBERS:

Americans overwhelmingly side with Democrats and against House Republicans on critical economic questions being debate right now, a [new Quinnipiac poll](#) confirms:

- Voters support raising the minimum wage by an overwhelming 71 percent to 27 percent margin—even 52 percent of Republicans support raising the minimum wage
- By a margin of 58 percent to 37 percent, voters want to extend emergency unemployment insurance that Republicans cut off for 1.3 million Americans over the holidays

Polling also shows that fewer Americans than ever want to be associated with the Republican Party. A new [Gallup poll](#) shows that the percentage of Americans who identify as Republicans has dropped to a 25-year low of just 25 percent.

- The percentage who identify as Democrats has stayed constant at 31 percent.
- Gallup wrote: “Americans’ increasing shift to independent status has come more at the expense of the Republican Party than the Democratic Party.”

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Friday, January 31, 2014**  
**DCCC Luncheon with First Lady Michelle Obama**  
San Francisco, CA  
Contact: Lisa Presta, (415) 681-1049
- **Monday, February 10, 2014**  
**DCCC Luncheon hosted by Rep. Himes**  
Greenwich, CT  
Contact: Manjiri Machak,  
[Machak@dccc.org](mailto:Machak@dccc.org), (202) 741-1846
- **Friday, January 31, 2014**  
**DCCC Chairman’s Council Political Update**  
New York, NY  
Contact: Manjiri Machak,  
[Machak@dccc.org](mailto:Machak@dccc.org), (202) 741-1846
- **Tuesday, February 18, 2014**  
**DCCC Reception hosted by Rep. Ted Deutch and Tracy and Alonzo Mourning**  
Miami, FL  
Contact: Amelie LeBreton,  
[lebreton@dccc.org](mailto:lebreton@dccc.org), (202) 485-3403

- **Thursday, February 20, 2014**  
**DCCC Luncheon hosted by Rep. John Lewis**  
Atlanta, GA  
Contact: Amelie LeBreton,  
[lebreton@dccc.org](mailto:lebreton@dccc.org), (202) 485-3403
- **Saturday, March 15, 2014**  
**DCCC Reception hosted by Rep. Henry Cuellar**  
Laredo, TX  
Contact: Amelie LeBreton,  
[lebreton@dccc.org](mailto:lebreton@dccc.org), (202) 485-3403
- **Saturday, March 15, 2014**  
**DCCC Luncheon hosted by Rep. Joaquín Castro**  
San Antonio, TX  
Contact: Amelie LeBreton,  
[lebreton@dccc.org](mailto:lebreton@dccc.org), (202) 485-3403
- **Friday, March 21, 2014 - Sunday, March 23, 2014**  
**DCCC New York Issues Conference and Weekend**  
New York, NY  
Contact: Michael Lewis, [mlewis@dccc.org](mailto:mlewis@dccc.org),  
(202) 485-3508
- **Monday, March 31, 2014**  
**DCCC Women's Issues Conference**  
New York, NY  
Contact: Manjiri Machak, [Machak@dccc.org](mailto:Machak@dccc.org), (202) 741-1846

## SAVE THE DATE

- **Friday, August 15, 2014 - Sunday, August 17, 2014**  
**DCCC Napa Valley Weekend and Issues Conference**  
Napa, CA