

## Florida Democrats Make Historic Gains in 2018 Midterms

In advance of 2020, Florida Democrats made historic gains, built a strong bench, and improved infrastructure statewide

### **EXPANDING DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION AT THE FEDERAL AND STATE LEVEL:**

For the first time in more than a decade Florida Democrats have a voice in the Florida cabinet directing the second largest economic driver of Florida's economy and oversight on key issues of gun safety, land and water management and consumer affairs. Commissioner-elect Nikki Fried's election was historic not only because she was the first woman to be elected to the position, but also the first Democrat.

"Nikki will be champion for all Floridians, working to ensure Floridians have access to the medicine they need, protecting families by ensuring firearm background checks are upheld, working with our farmers to ensure Florida continues to have access to safe, American grown food and fighting for land and water regulations that protect our environment," said FDP Chair Terrie Rizzo. "Democrats and Floridians need her voice in the cabinet."

Led by the historic election of Nikki Fried, Florida Democrats had significant gains across the state, including:

Flipping two Congressional seats from Red-to-Blue with the victories of Donna Shalala and Debbie Mucarsel-Powell

With the election of Janet Cruz to the Florida State Senate, and Annette Taddeo in the 2017 special election, Florida Democrats have narrowed the GOP margin in the State Senate to 23-17

Florida Democrats flipped 7 State House seats -- preventing a super majority and giving Democrats an opportunity to make waves in the legislative session

### **BUILDING A BENCH:**

Throughout the state, dozens of Democrats were elected to municipal seats, flipping seats in red counties because of investments made by the Florida Democratic party in rural areas. In red Lee County, Democrats flipped three school board seats, including the first African American woman.

"We are building a bench in Florida that stretches far and wide, and we will continue to invest in these future leaders," said Rizzo.

In addition, to pick-ups in red counties like Lee -- in the 2018 election cycle Florida Democrats have had significant wins in municipal and county elections, including:

Flipping Orange County leadership, the fifth largest county in the state, from red to blue

Flipping Miami-Dade County Commission, the largest county in the state, from red to blue

Picking up seats in deep red counties and municipalities that had no Democratic representation -- including in DeSoto, Seminole and Union counties

### **EXPANDING OUR BASE:**

In addition, Florida Democrats expanded their voting pool, turning out new voters -- nearly 1 in 4 Democratic voters who cast early ballots had never voted in a midterm election

Democrats had record turnout among African American and young voters

Hispanic voters, voted for Democrats by significant margins, compared to 2014 when Democrats lost the Hispanic vote to Republicans

Passage of felon-restoration rights in Florida, which could add more than 1 million people to the voting rolls

### **LOOKING AHEAD TO 2020**

Florida Democrats will launch rigorous voter registration programs statewide

Improve outreach to persuadable voters and expand the rural outreach programs we began in 2018

Florida Democrats will continue building on their infrastructure, investing in new data and technology to expand its base in 2019

Will prioritize voter education in all 67-counties, with even greater investments in our County Democratic Parties.

Expand candidate recruitment and investment in municipal races in to build a bench of strong Democratic elected leaders statewide