



Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund

Ensuring the Next Congress Invests in Our Future

A WONKISH EXPLANATION OF THE CANDIDATE SLATE

While the policies the Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund is seeking to achieve are not partisan, the 15 candidates selected for initial support are all Democrats. This is based upon a recognition that, given the current make-up of Congress and the polarization that exists there, enacting significant and needed investments in children requires a continued working Democratic majority in the House and two additional votes and voices in the Senate.

WHY THE FOCUS UPON DEMOCRATS. Public opinion polling shows that child and family policy investments have strong public support. While support is stronger among those who identify as Democrats, those identifying as Republicans also support these investments. Similarly, the public supports financing such investments through tax changes that reduce tax breaks and loopholes directed to the wealthiest individuals and corporations.

The Vote Kids! Campaign Fund is directed to enacting such investments in Congress and financing them through closing tax loopholes and special tax breaks directed to the wealthy.

In recent years, however, Congress has been very polarized.

On a purely partisan basis and when in control of the Presidency and both chambers of Congress, Republicans in 2017 enacted \$1.6 trillion in tax cuts, with many provisions almost exclusively directed to those with the highest incomes and greatest wealth. They did so in the Senate through sequestration that required a simple majority to pass.

While, under Biden and a Democratic Congress, a bipartisan plan for investing in physical infrastructure was achieved (the Infrastructure Investment Act), the same did not hold for other investments. The American Rescue Plan Act and the Inflation Reduction Act both were enacted through sequestration –

which required that all 50 Democratic senators voted for it (with the Vice-President cast the tie-breaking vote). In effect, any one Democratic senator could veto enactment. In fact, two Senators were unwilling either to raise the tax base or expand the Inflation Reduction Act to include investments in the child infrastructure.

The Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund is targeting its investments to give the greatest opportunity to enact the agenda that came within two votes in the Senate. This means a working majority in both House and Senate, and a working majority requires that this comes from within the Democratic party. The Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund hopes this also will attract Republican member votes, but the fact is it must have a working majority of Democrats to do so.

WHY THE FOCUS ON THE HOUSE AND THE SPECIFIC HOUSE CANDIDATES. In 2021, the House did pass the child investment infrastructure in its Build Back Better plans, but it has done so with a small majority (223 Democrats and 212 Republicans). Retaining a House majority is projected as an uphill battle by a number of forecasting organizations, including Politico, the Cook Report, and Fivethirtyeight. Traditionally, the party of the President loses seats during mid-term elections. As of September 18, for instance, Fivethirtyeight gave Republicans a 71 percent chance of securing a majority in the House. 2022 is the first year under redistricting, with some new districts and a number which are very different from what they were in 2020.

The Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund looked at various forecasts to identify what seats are considered the most competitive seats and narrowed its choices among these seats to nonincumbents, reasoning that incumbents, even if they are not favored to win re-election, have a historical funding base and will be able to raise funds needed to run competitive races. From the remaining competitive seats, the Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund identified those identified by the Cook Report and/or Fivethirtyeight as being potential pick-up seats, but with current uphill battles (less than a 50 percent forecast of winning). Carrying only those seats where Democrats are currently favored to win does not secure a majority. This led to the identification of 10 seats where Democrats needed to secure some victories to retain the majority. The Campaign Fund selected ten of those with backgrounds and campaign emphases upon children and families for initial funding. The Campaign Fund also identified four other candidates who could be difference makers themselves, and the Vote Kids! Campaign Fund could also be difference makers and, with changes in political outlook or funding need and opportunity, warrant support and warrant change in the distribution of Vote Kids! Funding.

The Vote Kids! 2022 Campaign Fund believes that, if half of the 10 House candidates it selected initially are elected, the House will have a working majority, as well as strong new voices and votes for children and families.

WHY FOCUS UPON SENATE CANDIDATES. Control of the U.S. Senate and a working majority for children involves different dynamics than the House. First, only 35 of the 100 Senate seats are up for election, (with 21 of those now held by Republicans and 14 held by Democrats). Forecasters currently are projecting a slight edge to Democrats, but this does not extend to having an additional two votes in the Senate. There is general consensus on the key races that will determine the outcome in the Senate. Several Senate seats currently held by Democrats running for re-election (in Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, and Colorado) are regarded as competitive, but, like House races, the incumbents are well-financed. The five Senate races selected by Vote Kids! Campaign Fund are considered the most competitive for

maintaining or adding to the Senate majority, with all candidates already voices and votes for making infrastructure investments in children and families.

Again, if two of these candidates are elected, Vote Kids! 2022 believes there will be a working majority able to enact infrastructure legislation for children and families under sequestration.

WHY FOCUS UPON THIS MID-TERM. Much attention and speculation already is being given to the 2024 Presidential election, which will be very important in the direction the country takes. Yet the mid-terms represent a critical opportunity to follow through on the investments initiated in children and establish a record for the 2024 elections.

Most importantly, they represent a true opportunity for transformational investments in children and families and the future.