

Deep Democracy 2.0 – Massachusetts **Strategy, Research, and Endorsement Criteria for Maria's List**

Background on Deep Democracy 1.0

In 2018, Rivera Consulting, Inc. worked closely with Maria's List to develop a formal and informal qualitative and quantitative methodology for political giving that includes literature review of local/regional newspapers, local election results, voter history research, and stakeholder interviews (e.g. campaign staff, candidates, movement staff and consultants). Driven by core values of equity and access, [deep democracy](#) is a political giving strategy of stacking your political and philanthropic contributions EARLY and VERTICALLY over a political cycle in a geographic region to candidates, movement organizations, and intermediaries who strategically complement each other. This increases the likelihood to win races formerly deemed impossible when using only traditional indicators like polling, TV spending, and fundraising. The cornerstones of Maria's List is applying a mixed method research approach that reviews primary and secondary sources from across traditional political research, movement organizations and leaders, and donor collaboratives. This allows us to better connect the dots to leverage political giving for the short term and/or long term. In 2020, after a year and half of research and working closely with Maria Jobin Leeds, Progressive Mass Funder Collaborative, and Mass Alliance, we are launching deep democracy 2.0 strategy, research, and endorsement criteria for Maria's List.

Future of Deep Democracy 2.0

The sustainability of the public commons is about the art of political decision making. The spread of COVID-19 has made it clear the arc of decision making has broken down across our democracy and public institutions. Even prior to this public health and political crisis, Beacon Hill found itself in a progressive stalemate. Now, the conservative Democratic and Republican stronghold stubbornly persists stronger than ever, which is compounded by a widening, economic crisis and a larger the national electoral emergency.

Despite our collective progress in the last 3 decades, Republicans and conservative Democrats are the chief policy makers in both Beacon Hill and the Office of the Governor. They stand ready to consolidate their power in a more obscure legislative making process, where votes will likely not be public at all.

So, what can we do? Electorally, we know what to do. But we must resist the tendency to support incumbents in winnable districts for progressives challenging the status quo. This means investing in individuals and collective efforts that are willing to buck tradition by taking

risks seen as unconventional. It also means increasing direct financial support for social justice infrastructure and supporting a new set of actors that can lead this next stage for progressives in Massachusetts. No matter the actor, most stand to lose too much to adequately engage in this fight. And the politics of process negotiations will not yield the needed concessions or policy transformation. Furthermore, electing an inclusive and progressive Democrat to the Governor's office in 2022 is a north star that must guide us all.

In Beacon Hill, however, it requires a strategy of permanent interests that agree to a package of rules changes for the House that brings together progressives, republicans, unenrolled and democratic voters, including donors on both sides of the aisle. Often the current rules of engagement marginalize both sides of the political spectrum, albeit not equally. We need committees to have real power so bills with overwhelming support make it to the floor for a public vote. We need to unlock the centralization of power by reestablishing term limits for the Office of the Speaker, term limits for all committee chairs, and other rules reform. There is more than one solution. That requires us to build a movement, so voters and legislators support a robust package of fixes that recalibrates the policy making process in Beacon Hill.

We must be bold, creative, and strategic in order to articulate this kind of change. To build a more sustainable coalition of voters, all of this must be tied to expanding the likely Democratic electorate in the 2020 and 2021 election cycles.

It will require deeper courage and innovation as the November 2020 election will likely be a remote GOTV and Election Day effort. Facing this reality now and incorporating it into Maria's List research and endorsement process will strengthen our understanding of the political landscape. Historic turnout is likely to be depressed while declining voter enthusiasm should be of great concern to all Democrats and democracy donors.

Using RC's deep democracy strategy and research, the goal of Maria's List MA is to elect and protect movement leaders, candidates, and elected officials, particularly those in the Black, Latino/a, African, Asian, Asian Pacific, South East Asian, and LGBTQIA communities. This work is guided by the goal of recalibrating the Beacon Hill policy-making apparatus in this moment and for the future of the public commons. It does so by matching political giving to candidates and movement organizations with philanthropic giving to movement organizations within targeted Massachusetts legislative state house districts. It also focuses on issues of government transparency, election reform, and progressive revenue.

**THE FOLLOWING DEEP DEMOCRACY DATA WILL
BE COMPILED FOLLOWING THE STEPS BELOW**

Step A: Reviewed Past and Current Maria's List Endorsees, Political, and Philanthropic Giving

- 1) 2019/early 2020 Marias List candidate tracker for MA down ballot races and outreach memos
- 2) Work with Margo Brathwaite, Partnership accountant, to compile and map down-ballot political giving by district

- 3) Work with staff at Partnership to compile and map down-ballot philanthropic giving by policy, organization, and location by Massachusetts legislative districts
- 4) RC will work closely with 5th and 7th floor staff to identify additional synergies for cross functions programming, including donor cultivation and webinars to activate more donors for Marias List MA endorsees (candidates and organizations)
- 5) Work closely with Mass Alliance on local electoral landscape and Beacon Hill trends, including ongoing review of Progressive District Index Score
- 6) Work closely with Progressive Mass Funder Collaborative of on local electoral landscape, local movement and political trends locally and nationally

Step B: Compile New Data for MA Legislative District (House/Senate)

- 1) Maria's List Deep Democracy Candidate Tracker of Open Seats, Challenges, Progressive and Incumbents (contested re-elections only)
- 2) Key candidate and movement organizational memos
- 3) Ma Sec of State Voter Turnout & Voter Registration Data
 - a. 2016 Turnout General Election Turnout by precinct and legislative district
 - b. 2018 Primary and General Election Turnout by precinct and legislative district
 - c. 2020 Presidential Democratic Vote Share by D candidate (Sanders, Warren, Biden, Buttigieg, etc.)
 - d. Overall registered voters
 - e. % of Registered voters overall by party enrollment within District
 - f. % of Registered voters overall by gender within District

Census, American Community Survey, Demographic Statistical Atlas, other sources

- g. % Non-white Population within District
- h. % Difference in Non-white Population within District Compared to Overall Statewide Average
- i. % College-educated within District
- j. % of people living at the FPL level
- k. % of people living at the median income

Step C: RC will use all this compiled data to identify target deep democracy districts and races

- 1) Develop baseline criteria for endorsement based on step A and B to finalize candidate and movement organizations recommendations for political giving:
 - a. Mass Alliances Progressive District Index Score
 - b. Review Town /City Specific Electoral Turnout
 - c. Review state campaign finance
 - d. Stakeholders interviews
 - e. Alignment with short term to long term policy agenda of Access Strategies

Step D: RC will conduct ongoing political and organizational outreach to makes deep democracy endorsement recommendations to Maria's List

- 1) Candidate and organizational outreach to conduct semi-structured interviews
- 2) Review communication from intermediaries, consultant, and another key though pattern as identified by MJL

Step E: RC will share endorsement recommendations to staff at Partnership, PFMC and MJL

Step F: Final approval of endorsees and political giving by MJL