

# MARIA'S LIST

Maria Jobin-Leeds  
DEMOCRACY & EDUCATION

## 2016 Results Summary

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**Lisa Blunt Rochester**  
Delaware

**Lisa Blunt Rochester** has the experience and understanding to change the political dialogue in Delaware. She won the primary on September 13th and won again in November with 56% of the vote.

**Lisa** has worked in two different state administrations, serving as Secretary of Labor and State Personnel Director.

In her role as Personnel Director she commissioned a study that reviewed racial and sexual discrimination within the Delaware State Police. As Secretary of Labor she made certain that citizens on welfare and those leaving Delaware prisons were provided significant support as they looked for employment opportunities.

**Blunt-Rochester** is willing to take on the gun lobby and is unafraid of drawing the parallels between the lack of economic opportunity in a town like Wilmington to the crime and gun violence that ultimately makes for problematic community development.

The former CEO of Washington Urban League has what it takes to lead. **Lisa Blunt Rochester** is a visionary and advocate for citizens that need a voice.

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## Governor Kate Brown Oregon

**Kate Brown** has had a whirlwind cycle. The former Governor was forced to resign soon after his re-election amid ethical challenges and Secretary of State **Kate Brown** took the helm while also preparing for what would be her own successful re-election effort in 2016 with 51% of the vote.

Thrust into the media spotlight **Kate** has succeeded resoundingly in making state government work. In tandem with Speaker Tina Kotek, and Senate President Peter Courtney, the trio has made substantial investments in education a centerpiece of their leadership.

They've pushed to add even more investment resulting in a 9% increase in funding to decrease class sizes, and aid graduation rates. **Governor Brown** also signed legislation to provide free community college tuition to many students. She was chosen for the National Governors Association's Education Committee.

Her commitment to democracy as Secretary of State includes; enforcing the constitutional ban on paying per signature for ballot initiatives, implementing online voter registration, and using tablet technology to increase accessibility for active-duty service members and voters with disabilities.

**Kate Brown** has the distinction of serving as the first openly bisexual Governor in the country. She was instrumental in prohibiting discrimination in employment and housing on the basis of sexual orientation and recognizing same-sex relationships as domestic partners.

She put Oregon on the map as the first state to require insurance companies to cover annual breast exams for women.

Her collaborative efforts are winning over her critics too but she cannot take anything for granted. In 2016 she was re-elected to serve out the remainder of the current term, and then in 2018 another election looms for a full four-year term.

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**Catherine Cortez Masto**  
**Nevada**

**Catherine Cortez Masto** won the seat left open by the retirement of Senator Harry Reid. She was victorious with 48% of the vote and now heads to Washington. Maria's List was an early backer of the Senator-Elect for her compelling case.

**Catherine Cortez Masto** recently served as the Nevada Attorney General from 2007 through 2015. She gained national accolades for her effective negotiations during the National Mortgage Settlement.

She secured an estimated \$1.9 billion from big banks for Nevada homeowners, a significant sum considering the entire 2012 settlement reached \$26 billion in totality. Also praiseworthy is her tenacity in support of women and children. Her leadership led to further assistance for victims, and training of judges, particularly regarding sex crimes. Prosecutors now have more tools to protect people.

In the Senate **Catherine** will be another strong voice for equal pay. She has made strengthening the middle class the theme of her campaign and she will be the first Latina senator ever elected in the US. The Republican machine made this race difficult but progressives came through.

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**Val Demings**  
**Florida**

Maria's List endorsed **Val Demings** when she ran for Congress for the first time in 2012. In 2016 she completed her mission and won 66% of the vote.

**Val** is a former Orlando Police Chief now running for Congress in Florida's 10th District. Orlando violent crime dropped nearly 40% while under her steady leadership.

The solutions she created to help deter crime included innovation mentoring programs and job skills trainings.

**Chief Demings** is not afraid of outlining her support for initiatives such as the Affordable Health Care Act, expanded background checks for guns, and historic investments in education. She also maintains a unique perspective from her time in law enforcement and has proven to the citizens of Orlando that she can bridge the growing divided between police and the communities they protect and serve.

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### **Attorney General Kamala Harris California**

**Kamala Harris** has been a fighter for the people of San Francisco and California. After winning her Senate race she is bringing the fight to Washington.

She is consistently advocating for consumers. She took on the big banks during the settlement negotiations and now she took on for-profit colleges that have preyed on unsuspecting students.

A Homeowners Bill of Rights that she proposed in the state legislature further protected consumers. As San Francisco Attorney General she convened colleagues from across the country to find solutions to hate crimes and problems associated with prosecuting these cases. She has made transparency an important issue and will be a progressive fighter and leader.

In 2010 she ran a spirited campaign for Attorney General and won a very tight race against strong Republican opposition. In 2014 Californians expressed their appreciation for her efforts and re-elected her by a margin of 15%. California is solid blue territory and **Kamala** has seized the opportunity and has built a formidable coalition.

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### **Governor Maggie Hassan New Hampshire**

**Maggie Hassan** has an impressive record as Governor, in 2014 we endorsed her re-election bid. In 2016, she took on Republican Senator Kelly Ayotte and defeated her to win with a razor thin margin.

**Maggie** performed well despite difficult fundamentals. **Maggie** expanded Medicaid and legalized medical marijuana. The worker protections she has fought for at the state senate were a stabilizing force for the New Hampshire economy and state budget.

And after a long stand-off with Republicans, Governor Hassan negotiated a budget compromise in 2015 which ensured New Hampshire services are effectively funded before large scale tax cuts take place.

Though moderate when compared to some of the far-right Republicans, incumbent Senator Ayotte is out of step with New Hampshire values and was held accountable for obstructing the confirmation of a Supreme Court Justice. Ayotte was fundraising for five years in preparation for this moment, **Maggie** had mere months but found a way.

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### **Pramila Jayapal** Washington

**Pramila Jayapal** is a fighter for progressives and the people she represents. This Washington state Senator was resoundingly elected to Congress with a strong 15% margin of victory against a fellow Democrat. Her leadership is well regarded and the diversity she brings will only enhance her strong progressive value. Read more about why we thought **Pramila** was such a fine candidate.

Like so many, her call to service came on September 11th, 2001 and the unjust response she saw coming from intolerant segments of our society. Responding to critiques **Pramila** created the Hate Free Zone which later evolved into One America, organizations that seek inclusion and acceptance for immigrant communities within our political structures.

She later served as co-director of We Belong Together - a campaign to empower women and keep immigrant families together.

She decided to further challenge the status quo and won a seat in the Washington state Senate in 2014. Then when her Congressional seat opened she naturally answered the call again and threw her hat in the ring, attempting to become the first Indian American woman elected to Congress. Supported by liberal leaders like Bernie Sanders, **Pramila** had a chance to make Congress a hospitable place for progressives. She succeeded. Her top priorities are income equality, climate change, social security and college affordability.

In November she faced another Democrat but having come in with over 40% of the vote in a three-way primary race, **Pramila** was in decent position to win.

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### **Senator Patty Murray** Washington

**Senator Patty Murray** is heading back to the Senate as incumbent. She won with 60% of the vote.

While Democrats will not control the Senate, **Murray** will have a consequential voice.

Once described by a state legislator as "just a mom in tennis shoes", this mother of two has embraced her role as the most powerful woman in the Senate.

After first being elected to the Senate in 1992, **Senator Murray** has amassed an impressive record of accomplishment, and sometimes compromise - which could hurt her with some but from this perspective shows much needed common sense.

In 2002, **Murray** was one of only 21 Democrats in the Senate to vote against the invasion of Iraq. She was also front and center during negotiations with Representative Paul Ryan to end the government shutdown and pass the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. Though not a perfect solution, the 2013 legislation increased caps on sequestered budgets. Most recently she supported (fast track) Trade Promotion Authority.

As a member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee since 1997, **Murray** ascended to the role of Ranking Member with the retirement of Senator Tom Harkin. During her tenure on the Committee charged with crafting education policy, **Murray** was instrumental in increasing the size of the Pell Grant program for low-income students, and reauthorizing Head Start programs. **Murray** also has been working to fundamentally fix some of the flaws created from No Child Left Behind. She was there during attempts in 2011 to make improvements and once again this past July, when she worked with a bipartisan group to find common ground on improved legislation that would not provide a perfect compromise, but is certainly much more palatable for progressives than the House version of the bill.

This cycle **Murray** has drew a challenge from the deeply connected former head of the Washington Republican Party. The political environment in Washington is never completely predictable but she found a way to put this race out of reach by mid-summer.

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**Carol Shea Porter**  
**New Hampshire**

**Carol Shea Porter** has the determination of a champion. She has the distinction of running every term, winning every other time, and being the only candidate to appear on every cycle's Maria's List!

She wasn't afraid to take on defense contractors who pollute, Afghani bureaucrats who levy taxes on the US military and special interest groups opposed to revising the US constitution so big money has limits. She even cosponsored public financing of elections, disclosure rules for c4 political money, and giving states the power to regulate money in federal elections.

Scandal plagued Congressman Frank Guinta is steadfastly ignoring bipartisan calls for his resignation. **Carol** challenged him and voters made their decision.

In the past we gave a fair assessment of her work in Congress. We highlighted her interest in reforming the NSA but also her support for gun control legislation that was detrimental to her election. However her interest in net neutrality, maintaining social security, and of course education tip the scales. Let's support this leader to make a difference and finally pass the student debt refinancing as she has championed.

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**Louise Slaughter**  
**New York**

**Louise Slaughter's** inclusion on Maria's List may have surprised some but her slim win in 2014 of 869 votes provided progressives with motivation that propelled Slaughter to an 11% point victory, if only that motivation was felt in other areas we would all be in a different space.

Slaughter is a veteran lawmaker that has been a progressive champion since first being elected to Congress in 1986.

**Congresswoman Slaughter's** credentials are as impressive as they come. She was out front on breast cancer research, securing some of the first resources for NIH studies back in 1993. In 1994 she co-authored the Violence Against Women Act. As the powerful Chair of the Rules Committee.

**Slaughter** was the architect behind the passage of critical progressive legislation during Obama's first term. Obama Care became law thanks to her underreported stewardship. The American Clean Energy and Security Act was also passed by the House under her guidance, of course the Senate could not muster the votes to send it to the President's desk. Given her long and storied career **Louise Slaughter** has developed an exceptional resume. She is a true progressive public servant that has likely focused too much on governing and not enough on fundraising.

**Congresswoman Slaughter's** incumbency and reputation has led many Democrats to take her re-election for granted. In 2014, with New York sporting the 49th best voter turnout percentage, **Slaughter's** election was razor thin — 869 votes thin. Though retirement will soon be inevitable, that day is not today.

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**Bonnie Watson Coleman**  
**New Jersey**

**Bonnie Watson Coleman** turned conventional wisdom on it's head when her 2014 campaign for Congress in New Jersey 12th proved successful. In 2016 she faced token opposition and won with 62% for the vote.

The former New Jersey General Assembly Majority Leader has a record of accomplishment that highlights how impactful state legislatures can be. She has been an outspoken leader on ending the schools to prison pipelines. Prisoner re-entry programs were a critical focus of her leadership and she convened thoughtful conversations with key stakeholders to help develop what could be a much-needed blueprint.

The NJ STARS program, a higher education tuition assistance program is one of her most profound achievements, because of her forward thinking college tuition at New Jersey

Community Colleges can be free for qualifying residents. It should also be noted that she is the first African American woman to represent New Jersey in Congress.

New Jersey's 12th Congressional District was long considered relatively safe terrain for Democrats but **Bonnie** pushed the limits and is leading even further to the left. The first-term Congresswoman made a name for herself in Congress, through her membership in the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and the 2014 class of new Representatives.

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## 2016 CANDIDATES WE'D LIKE TO SEE RUN AGAIN

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[Denise Juneau \(Montana\)](#)  
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[Zephyr Teachout \(New York\)](#)

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**Emily Cain**  
**Maine**

**Emily** ran for Congress in Maine's 2nd Congressional District for the second time and once again the national environment proved too burdensome. Much like 2014, she came up short with only 45% of the vote.

Emily Cain ran a campaign the elevated tissue like education, health care and more robust employment opportunities.

In 2012, then Minority Leader **Cain**, helped to lead House Democrats to the Majority and in the process held the line on many radical proposals from right-wing Governor Paul LePage.

She fought to maintain Pine Tree development zones which help to spur small businesses in areas most in need and maintain investments in progressive projects like the Mars Hill Wind Farm.

**Emily's** youth and energy will be a breath of fresh air as her election could have yielded a second state, following New Hampshire, with majority female congressional delegations. Cain's first-hand experience with higher education affordability and accessibility will live

the Democratic caucus in Washington. A push from Joe Baldacci, who ended his campaign early, encouraged **Emily** to embrace more progressive values.

Poliquin is out of step with Maine values. He is the only member of the congressional delegation to oppose a woman's right to choose. He is leading the roll back of Wall Street restrictions from his seat on the Financial Services Committee and is a reliable vote for right-wing legislation aimed at gutting social services and lowering taxes for the wealthy.

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**Morgan Carroll**  
**Colorado**

Morgan Carroll ran about as good of a campaign as you can but still came up short in her bid to win Colorado's 6th Congressional District. She won 43% of the vote but is young and ambitious enough to make another bid in the future.

**Morgan Carroll**, the Democratic Leader in the Colorado Senate, has had enough with Mike Coffman and the do nothing congressional leadership he supports. During her time in the state legislature she pushed for, and eventually passed yearly funding increases for K-12 education, passed civil unions and domestic partnership laws, and increased ballot access.

She also has the presence and humility to evolve on controversial issues, like she did on in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants when she supported the measure after initially voting against it.

Colorado's 6th Congressional District is a place where Democrats seemingly always have an appealing opportunity to oust a proud Tea Party Caucus member occupying a district that should be competitive every cycle. Congressman Mike Coffman has attempted to redefine rape, opposed the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and has tried to control women's reproductive rights throughout his career.

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**Linda Coleman**  
**North Carolina**

**Linda Coleman** was progressive before it was fashionable. She has been ahead of the curve on nearly every important issue except for the vote tally. Her 6% point defeat is tough to fathom given the closeness of the race four years ago but ticket-splitting and unusual vote patterns were clearly evident in North Carolina.

Republican control in North Carolina has decimated education and exacerbated problems that didn't even exist.

The bathroom bill is causing quite the stir and forcing businesses to rethink trade in North Carolina. Meanwhile, **Linda Coleman** was the first statewide candidate to announce her support for civil unions. Another area where **Linda** was ahead of the curve is with justice reform.

Reforming programs that help non-violent offenders re-enter society as productive and capable citizens has long been one of her leading priorities.

**Linda** is a strong woman of color that will help to heal racial divisions in whatever capacity she sees fit. A former County Commissioner and state legislator she has earned distinction within the education and environmental communities.

**Linda** had a rematch with her 2012 opponent with strong momentum at the top of the ticket never materialized. Republicans overreached and voters were thought to be ready to hold them accountable. Between school funding cuts and national embarrassment, Republicans were on their heels but still held on to quite a few offices across the state.

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**Colleen Deacon**  
**New York**

**Colleen Deacon** ran in a competitive House District not unlike the rust belt areas that trended against Democrats this cycle. Like other Democrats in the areas she was defeated.

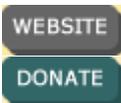
**Colleen** was a strong candidate that was unable to fully connect with voters but we know her life in public service is not over.

**Colleen Deacon** has made the most of every opportunity she has earned. Forced to raise her son as a single parent working as a waitress, she understands the value of vibrant

government services. Medicaid, food stamps and the WIC program were fundamental to the welfare of her child.

**Colleen** utilized student loans to help pay her way through Syracuse University before ultimately working for the Mayor of Syracuse as Press Secretary and eventually Senator Kirsten Gillibrand as District Director. Between her personal experiences and those of the constituents she serves on a daily basis, **Colleen** gets it.

The incumbent in New York's 24th Congressional District is out of step with his constituents. John Katko voted against the Paycheck Fairness Act and has supported quite a few restrictions on women's health, including denying women coverage for certain forms of birth control.



**Donna Edwards**  
**Maryland**

Despite a severe cash on hand disadvantage **Donna** made a valiant effort in the open Maryland Senate race but came up short in the Democratic primary back in September.

**Donna** is a progressive leader that utilized a diverse set of levers to advance causes such as the Violence Against Women Act and most recently equal pay. She was the catalyst behind the recent campaign of women in the House to promote the idea that when "women succeed, America succeeds". Her ratings from progressive interest groups set the standard. The Human Rights Campaign, NARAL, AFT, and NEA all gave her 100% on their recent scorecards.

The League of Conservation Voters has given **Donna** a 97% lifetime score.

First elected to Congress in 2008, many dismissed **Donna's** chances against a well-funded, entrenched incumbent. She ousted him, but only after her second try. The dynamics of this Senate race had her running against Chris Van Hollen with many decrying her push, he was favored by "Leadership". She's started out strong, and was initially propelled by 6,000 supporters and volunteers committed to the effort, however the haul wasn't big enough to compete with the white guys on their turf.

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**Lucy Flores**  
**Nevada**

This cycle **Lucy Flores** ran in Nevada's 4th Congressional District. She lost a competitive primary that featured multiple candidates.

**Lucy Flores** is a former Nevada Assemblywoman whose personal experience and political views have prompted others to take notice. She credits her education and specifically Community College, as her pathway out of her challenging upbringing. A former gang member, she has brought an edge to politics in Nevada. During her tenure in the state legislature minimum wage was increased to \$10-\$15/hour and Medicaid was expanded. Education being a top priority, she was the voice of reason when conservatives attempted to divert more funds from traditional public schools to charter schools.

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**Denise Juneau**  
**Montana**

**Denise Juneau** had an uphill climb in her effort to represent Montana in Congress which proved to be too much. Her spirited effort yielded nearly 40% of the vote in a state that supported the Republican at the Presidential level but re-elected a Democrat Governor.

**Juneau** currently serves Montana as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Her election to this post represented another step for American Indian women, as she became the first to be elected to statewide executive office in the entire United States.

Under her leadership, graduation rates have steadily improved to 86% in 2015, equaling the highest rate ever recorded in the state. **Juneau** has also made historic investments in reservation schools with programs such as Schools of Promise that provide comprehensive services and improved education opportunities. **Juneau** will be a champion for education, the native people, veterans and conservation of land in whatever office she holds. Having first-hand knowledge of the Native American's assets and challenges, she understands the issues, like health care where the average US per capita spending for patient health is \$8,000 while Indian Health Service spending hovers around \$3,100.

Her endorsements reflect the type of leadership **Denise** would have shown in Congress. Education and teacher's unions, environmental groups, labor, and the National Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund. **Denise** was attempting to become the first American Indian woman, and first lesbian woman of color elected to Congress.

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### **Sue Minter Vermont**

**Sue Minter** was running to be the next Governor of Vermont. After outpacing two well-known competitors in the Democratic Primary to replace outgoing Governor Pete Shumlin, she could not overcome the anti-incumbent headwinds that well-financed current Republican Lt. Governor Phil Scott presented and she was defeated by 10 % points.

**Sue's** priorities as Governor included higher education support with a goal of ensuring at least 75% of students are enrolling in post-secondary education. She has proposed tuition-free community and technical college and further invest in logistical support mechanisms like health care, expanded early childhood education and child care at community colleges. She has well thought out ideas about gun safety measures that provide common sense regulations in a state where gun ownership is common. **Sue** would also like to raise the minimum wage to help foster growth and make certain that all working families are earning a living wage.

**Sue** proved an effective executive during the response to Hurricane Irene; her leadership won praise among colleagues and ultimately led to her traveling the country to help other states in their preparations for similar events. She served as the Secretary of Transportation after a six-year run in the state legislature.

**Sue Minter** was prepared for Governor like no other candidate. Her well thought out ideas and working relationships that prove she can accomplish what most think impossible. It just may have to wait a few years.

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### **Deborah Ross North Carolina**

**Deborah Ross** ran a surprisingly hard campaign in North Carolina, losing by 5% points, mirroring the result at the Presidential level. **Ross** was the unlikely candidate from the start but made a name for herself within state and national political circles with the campaigns she developed.

**Deborah Ross** is a former state legislator who previously served as the Executive Director of the North Carolina ACLU. She also oversaw the regional transportation commission in the research triangle. She has made raising the minimum wage and same day voter registration the platform of her candidacy. Having already spearheaded much need ethics reform during her tenure in the legislature, you know she was fighting for campaign refinance reform in Washington. Equal pay for women serves as a strong message during her campaign.

Many have long thought that Democrats had little to no change at winning the North Carolina Senate seat when Kay Hagan lost in 2014. But conventional wisdom has changed thanks to both a Republican over-reach and the exceptional candidacy of **Deborah Ross**. Republicans have made a national argument against treating gays, lesbians and transgendered people fairly. They've slashed education funding and lost enough business that Republicans suddenly find themselves in a very defensive posture. Additionally, the electorate is diversifying.

North Carolina was a unique state in 2016 with so much on the ballot. Unfortunately the results for **Deborah** will undoubtedly help another Maria's List endorsee, Linda Coleman for Lt. Governor. This race is most certainly winnable and could play a role in control on the Senate but resources are scarce and competition for support down the stretch can be tough so please consider **Deborah** as her race ascends to the top of the target lists.

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**Victoria Steele**  
**Arizona**

**Victoria** lost a tight primary though given her commitment to service I am sure she will find other ways to lead.

**Victoria Steele** comes from humble roots, the daughter of a coal miner; she has dedicated her life to improving the welfare of her fellow Arizonians. She ran to win back the seat previously held by

Gabbie Giffords.

Martha McSally captured Arizona's 2nd Congressional seat by a mere handful of votes in 2014. Despite the slim margin, McSally has decided to align herself with hard-right Republicans, degrading the "war on women" by comparing advances made in the United States to those in Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia.

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**Zephyr Teachout**  
**New York**

**Zephyr Teachout**, came up just short in her Congressional bid, losing by 5% points. Zephyr ran a smart strategic campaign but just could not overcome some of the larger narratives of the cycle.

**Law professor Zephyr Teachout's** past includes stints with Howard Dean's highly innovative 2004 Presidential campaign as the Director of Internet Organizing and the Occupy Wall Street movement. She was the first national director of the Sunlight Foundation, an organization committed to transparency in democracy. She also co-founded an organization deliberately established to counter the power of big banks,

A New Way Forward, since re-branded as the Antitrust League. Another organization she co-founded was the Fair Trial Initiative which helps to provide competent legal representation in critical legal cases.

In 2014 **Zephyr** challenged the NY Governor and while lacking the resources and institutional machine of the Governor Cuomo, she earned 34% at the polls, in the primary. In 2014 had the liberal New York establishment taken her candidacy more seriously she would have been governor. Despite these 2 setbacks, her future remains bright.