



To: All Democratic National Committee Chair candidates

Fr: Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill, Candidate for New Jersey Governor

Re: The future of the Democratic Party runs through New Jersey

I flew helicopters in the Navy, where I had the advantage of seeing things from the air – the big picture.

And after being a mom who commutes to having the honor of representing New Jersey in public office, I also know a lot about roads. And I can guarantee that the road to a successful future for the Democratic Party runs straight through New Jersey — starting now, with the 2025 election.

New Jersey is one of only two states with a gubernatorial campaign this year and it should be a place where the national Democratic Party fully engages. But Democrats need to focus on New Jersey for reasons far beyond the immediate election calendar.

To get the future right, Democrats can start by getting New Jersey right. We are urban, suburban, and rural. We are the most diverse state in the nation. We are blue-collar and white-collar. We have strong Democratic constituencies, a whole lot of unaffiliated voters, and, yes, Republican communities. In other words, we are America.

New Jersey shares something else with the rest of America: We face challenges ranging from how much things cost today to how much faith we have that tomorrow will be better. We are absolutely tuned into the fact our rights and freedoms are under relentless attack. People are rightfully anxious, and some are asking whether the Democratic Party still understands them. Too many voters think Democrats are out of touch and we paid the price in November.

Here in New Jersey, we are proud of our success electing Democrats who care deeply about delivering for families — from local races to battleground congressional districts to the United States Senate. **Yet that record should not give false comfort to anyone.** In the last 32 years, Republicans have won the governorship just as often as Democrats: 16 years of Democratic governors and 16 years of Republican governors.

And in 2024, the state of New Jersey shifted 10 points in Trump's direction — as clear of a warning as the Democratic Party could get.

All of this is why I am charging into 2025 determined to win and with zero complacency about the terrain. Let me be really clear: The DNC must show up in New Jersey because the next generation of the party cannot take anyone, anywhere — even in "blue" areas — for granted. The kind of politics that brought us to this moment will not deliver us the future we aspire to in New Jersey and across our country.

Democrats must stand up to Donald Trump in the countless ways he is a threat to American values and American progress. And we can't stop there. To win the future, Americans need to see Democrats as more than the anti-Trump party. Democrats need to be the party that makes things work for families and makes things better for the American people.

That's why, as the next DNC Chair, you need to commit at least \$10 million dollars to New Jersey starting Day 1. In previous cycles, the DNC has donated approximately \$200,000 annually. That's not going to cut it — the national and state Republicans already have their sights set on flipping New Jersey in 2025 and previous levels of Democratic spending in New Jersey will not be sufficient.

The new DNC Chair must work hand in hand with New Jersey to build up and expand the Democratic base in the Garden State and bring new voters into the fold. Our party and candidates **MUST** be both willing and prepared to move confidently into spaces where voters may disagree. We need to invest in new and nontraditional media, reaching lower information voters across platforms that meet people where they are and disseminating our message not only during election season, but year-round. We also must invest in voter registration as Democrats continue to lose ground to Republicans when it comes to registering voters — and then we need to immediately and consistently communicate that our party will be fighting for what families need. Bottom line: we need to build a meaningful and long-term relationship with voters rather than a fleeting and transactional one come election time.

My record of running with a winning message is clear. I delivered the largest red-to-blue swing in the nation in 2018 and I have consistently outperformed the top of the ticket. I've also worked hard to build our party down ballot from crafting messaging guides on Supreme Court decisions affecting access to abortion and reproductive care to raising money for local candidates. As a result, when New Jersey shifted to the right in 2024, I helped down-ballot Democrats not only defend their seats but *expand* their footprint in my district — of the 39 candidates who ran, all but one won their seats. I am ready and willing to partner with you to take this success into 2025 when we face down the Republican onslaught and elect New Jersey's next Democratic governor.

The Navy taught me that you have three choices when things are tough — lead, follow, or get out of the way. I have always chosen to lead. I know leadership means bringing real solutions to the table — and that begins with actually listening to what voters have to say. That's something our party needs to do better and needs to do right now.

New Jersey is a state built on innovation, dating back to our founding — the perfect laboratory for testing the ideas, tactics, and technologies that will shape the next Democratic Party. But make no mistake, this isn't just an academic exercise now with Donald Trump in Washington. State leadership matters more than ever. And our party may not know it yet, but it's counting on us to get this right.

New Jersey is ready to lead, and I'm asking the DNC to join us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mikie Hecht". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "M" and a long, sweeping underline.