

Report — The Most at Risk

Incumbent Governors: Democrats

[Jacob Bliss](#) 15 Mar 2022



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As the midterm elections are only months away, a recent article in *Governing* acknowledged that incumbent Democrat governors are the most vulnerable, as the outside Republican groups go on the offense across the country.

While the Republicans currently hold 28 of the 50 governorships across the country, the article [indicated](#) that outside Republican groups such as the Republican Governors Association (RGA) are gearing up for what can turn into a war later this year.

As the article notes, since 2014, there has not been an incumbent Democrat running for reelection that lost. However, with President Joe Biden seeing falling polling numbers and Democrats lining up behind him to enact far-left policies nationwide, the Republicans, more specifically the RGA, are looking to use that to their advantage.

"It's the prerogative of the out party to blame incumbents for things that are going wrong, and Republicans don't hesitate in blaming President Biden and other Democrats for inflation, rising gas prices, and crime," *Governing* wrote. "In recent midterms, usually just one or two governors have lost their jobs in general elections."

Although incumbents and previously elected officials typically have the upper hand, as a preview to this year's election, Republicans swept Virginia's executive offices last November with Gov. Glenn Youngkin, Lt. Gov. Winsome Sears, and Attorney General Jason Miyares. Additionally, in New Jersey, Democrat incumbent Gov. Phil Murphy narrowly survived his reelection.

However, while it is rare that voters split tickets for Congress, Virginia voted for the Democrat presidential nominee but elected Republicans to statewide office. In fact, ten states currently have a governor from the opposite party the state voted for in 2020.

Even though the Republicans appear to have the upper hand across the country, *Governing* pointed to two states — Massachusetts

and Maryland — held by Republicans that are stepping down, even though they have retained some of the highest approval ratings in the country. Typically, a move like this creates an opportunity for the opposite party.

Still, throughout the country, Republicans are going on the offense in many more states and looking to hold the states they have while potentially picking up more — hoping to break the cycle of incumbent Democrats winning reelection.

While the Democratic Governors Association (DGA) deputy communications director, Christina Amestoy, admittedly acknowledged that the Democrat incumbents are facing “headwinds,” the RGA deputy communications director, Joanna Rodriguez, said, “The most vulnerable incumbent governors are all on the Democratic side.”

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