



Andrew Gillum Plans to Turn Florida Blue by Registering 1M Voters Who Are Likely to Vote Democrat

`su_note note_color="#efefef" text_color="#000000" radius="5"]Democrat Andrew Gillum, the Tallahassee mayor who lost the governor's race by less than half a percentage point, seeks to turn Florida blue by registering new voters, and is targeting 1.4 million former felons in line to have their voting rights restored under a constitutional amendment approved by voters last year. He is also trying to enroll tens of thousands of Puerto Rican refugees who flocked to Florida following Hurricane Maria. Gillum's PAC, Forward Florida, has assets of almost $4 million. Florida is the biggest swing state in the nation, with 29 of the 270 electoral college votes needed to win.[/su_note]`

Andrew Gillum announced a plan Wednesday to register and turn-out 1 million new and low-propensity Florida voters in an effort to crush President Donald Trump's reelection chances in the nation's largest swing state.

“Voter registration is red flag No. 1,” the former Tallahassee mayor told POLITICO, calling increased voter registration crucial to the Democratic Party’s ability to survive and thrive in Florida.

“We’re looking at a target of 1 million,” he said. “We’ve got over 3 million people eligible to vote, and that’s to say nothing of the 1.4 million returning citizens” – former felons in line to have their voting rights restored under a constitutional amendment approved by voters last year.

Gillum’s staff wouldn’t give specifics about the targeted number of new voters he hoped to register or the number of voters they hope to reengage after they decided not to vote in the past two general elections.

At the same time, the Florida Democratic Party said it will spend \$2 million in the next year to register 200,000 voters ahead of the 2020 presidential primary.

Florida Democratic Party Chairwoman Terrie Rizzo said the party hasn’t dedicated enough resources to registering voters in

recent years.

There are currently 4.96 million registered Democrats in the state, compared to 4.7 million Republicans and nearly 3.6 million voters with no party affiliation.

Progressive activists who supported Gillum in last year's gubernatorial race have speculated that he might mount a bid for president. In an interview with POLITICO before a speech today at the historically black Florida Memorial University in Miami Gardens, Gillum said it's more important for him to grow the state's voter rolls to help the Democratic nominee.

He noted a decline in the party's voter edge since President Barack Obama's first campaign.

"In 2008, Democrats had an advantage of almost 700,000 more Democrats than Republicans when Obama ran," Gillum said. "In my last race, that advantage had shrunk to the 260,000 range. It was a very precipitous decline."

Gillum supporters registered a voter outreach group – Bring it Home

Florida, named after his signature campaign phrase – with the state last week.

Trump's campaign is heavily focused on Florida, the biggest swing state in the nation, with 29 of the 270 electoral college votes needed to win. Without the Sunshine State, the president's path to re-election narrows significantly.

If a Democrat can carry Florida in 2020, he or she could win the White House by capturing just one other swing state—Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, or Pennsylvania—if the remaining states vote the way they did in 2016.

Trump won Florida and some other swing states by razor-thin margins, raising hope among Democrats that their 2016 turnout woes can be remedied by growing voter rolls and persuading swing and first-time voters to cast ballots against the incumbent.

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