



To: Interested Parties
From: Sara Schreiber, LCV Victory Fund Senior Vice President of Campaigns
Date: November 5, 2025
Re: **How Our State Affiliates Helped Deliver Wins in Key 2025 Elections**

Tuesday's election results were a clear demonstration that [our movement's multimillion-dollar efforts to respond to voters' concerns around their energy bills](#) is a winning strategy.

In Georgia, New Jersey, and Virginia, voters rejected MAGA Republican-backed rate hikes by electing candidates who campaigned on affordable clean energy solutions that [help reduce utility bills](#). In these states, LCV Victory Fund's state affiliates ran robust campaigns to engage voters around rising energy costs.

Our state affiliates applied lessons learned from 2024 to innovate new tactics in digital paid media, door-to-door canvassing, ad testing, and more, with the goal of helping to elect pro-affordability, pro-clean energy candidates to two governors' seats, dozens of state legislative seats, and two crucial utility board commissioner seats.

This is the power of a data-driven approach to elections, our deep campaign expertise, and our strategic collaboration across a nationwide network of affiliates.

GEORGIA

Thanks to the work of Georgia Conservation Voters Action Fund, two new pro-clean energy commissioners are joining the Georgia Public Service Commission. This is a huge win for Georgia residents and ratepayers, who have suffered through [numerous utility bill rate hikes](#) that were approved by the incumbent commissioners running in this race.

The Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) oversees the state's largest utility company, sets utility bill rates, and determines future energy development. The PSC is made up of five commissioners who are elected statewide, and all five seats are currently occupied by Republicans who have repeatedly voted to hike rates — [raising bills by over \\$500 a year](#) for the average family.

Elections for the PSC were delayed due to a Voting Rights Act lawsuit followed by anti-democratic state government actions. This election marked the first time Georgia voters had the chance to make their voices heard on the PSC since November 2020 — and they did.

Clean energy champions **Peter Hubbard** and **Dr. Alicia Johnson** defeated their incumbent opponents by double digits — a whopping 25 percentage points. Hubbard and Johnson made rising utility costs central to their campaign with a statewide ["My Power Bill's Too High"](#) tour.

In the run-up to Election Day, our affiliate, **Georgia Conservation Voters Action Fund** (GCV Action Fund) made these races their top priority. GCV Action Fund invested over \$2.2 million in robust voter outreach and communications, making them the single largest spender in these elections.

GCV Action Fund launched a creative, surround-sound messaging campaign that centered on Georgians' affordability concerns. Our state affiliate led the charge in paid media advertising and spending, and, critically, on coalition coordination. They did this by:

- ✓ **Collaborating with allied groups** at a political table to align spending decisions, share data, identify key program gaps, and maximize efficiency.
- ✓ **Commissioning multiple rounds of research** that identified the importance of costs to this race and how to best deliver that message, resulting in powerful ads such as "[\\$500](#)", "[Wallet](#)", and "[No Accident](#)," — which collectively garnered over 29 million impressions — as well as an informative [campaign webpage](#).
- ✓ **Delivering three rounds of direct mail to millions of Georgia voters** who were identified as the most likely to support Hubbard and Johnson, if they knew more about the race and what was at stake.
- ✓ **Investing in 92 billboards statewide in key zip codes** with high Democratic support. The program was designed to be testable post-election to learn lessons for future elections.

Thanks in part to GCV Action Fund's work, this election marks the first time a Democratic candidate in Georgia has won a statewide, nonfederal office in nearly 20 years.

"I'm going to the Public Service Commission to ensure that every Georgian has a voice at the table, to lower costs, modernize our grid, and make energy policy that works for the people, not just the powerful."

— Commissioner-elect Dr. Alicia Johnson, via social media, Nov. 4, 2025

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey LCV Victory Fund went all out for the state's gubernatorial race, investing more than ever before in a single election to ensure that voters understood that who they voted for would affect their utility bills.

In June of this year, New Jersey ratepayers were hit with a 22% increase in utility bills from last year. This is the second-highest increase in the nation.

Democratic U.S. Representative **Mikie Sherrill** (NJ-11), a former Navy pilot first elected to Congress in 2018, ran on an [affordability agenda](#), which includes a clean energy plan that aims to reduce costs for New Jerseyans. In stark contrast, her opponent, MAGA Republican Jack Ciattarelli, ran on a plan that would result in [New Jerseyans paying \\$850 more per year on energy costs](#).

A pre-election [Fox News poll showed that voters favored Mikie Sherrill by 10 points on energy costs](#), and early election results show **Sherrill won by more than 13 percentage points** — a much wider margin than Governor Phil Murphy's tight 2021 victory of just 3.2%. This is solid evidence that voters want leaders to address kitchen table issues and fight for lower costs, including utility bills.

Our state affiliate, **New Jersey LCV Victory Fund** executed a robust campaign that included earned media, direct mail, and paid digital ads. They employed innovative media strategies, such as:

- ✓ **Creating four weeks of unskippable digital ads** that ran on Youtube, Meta, and other online video platforms, garnering nearly 70 million impressions during the race's home stretch. This program featured an [ad called "Jacking Up Prices"](#) that was [tested and found](#) to drive up Ciattarelli's unfavorability by 6 percentage points while moving viewers to vote for Sherrill by nearly 4 points.
- ✓ **Sending two rounds of bilingual mailers** to more than 135,000 Latino voters who were identified through polling as a top persuadable audience for utility rate messaging.
- ✓ **Commissioning an [independent analysis](#)** that demonstrated that Ciattarelli's proposed energy plans would increase household costs by \$850 a year.

Now, thanks in no small part to New Jersey LCV Victory Fund's efforts, Governor-elect Mikie Sherrill's affordability agenda is set to become a model for states in the region and nationwide.

"I'm going to declare a state of emergency on Day One to drive down your utility costs."

— Governor-elect Mikie Sherrill, during her acceptance speech, Nov. 4, 2025

VIRGINIA

Virginia [leads the nation](#) in electricity-hogging data centers, making increased energy costs a flashpoint in this year's elections. As residents saw their utility rates [increase by more than 11.25%](#) this year alone, rising energy costs dominated the headlines and were front and center at [every level of the ballot](#), especially in the governor's race.

Last night, voters across Virginia elected candidates up and down the ballot who championed clean, affordable energy during their campaigns, in an election that will shape the trajectory of the state's environmental and energy policies for the next four years.

Virginia LCV's Political Action Committee (VALCV-PAC) played a major role this cycle, spending more than \$3 million on field, mail, digital, and direct contributions to help elect former U.S. Representative for Virginia's 7th district **Abigail Spanberger** to the governor's office, preserve the pro-environment majority in the state's House of Delegates, and elect many more clean energy champions across the state. Their work included:

- ✓ Knocking on more than 200,000 doors
- ✓ Sending 660,000 pieces of mail
- ✓ Completing 400 volunteer shifts
- ✓ Making 42,000 phone calls and texts
- ✓ Garnering 6.3 million ad views
- ✓ Reaching 8.5 million digital impressions

Earlier this year, VALCV-PAC completed robust polling across battleground state House districts, including traditional surveys and focus groups, to [create campaign messaging that would resonate with voters](#). Poll after poll found that voters are concerned about rising household costs, including

their energy bills, and that standing up for affordable clean energy and holding polluters accountable would be a winning message.

Governor-elect Spanberger focused relentlessly on affordability in her campaign. She directly addressed the need for data centers to “pay their fair share” and to build out clean energy projects stalled by both Governor Youngkin and the Trump administration. (Her opponent, Winsome Earle-Seares, chose to focus on culture issues to divide the electorate.)

Pro-clean energy candidates for the House of Delegates also championed energy affordability in their campaigns. The data center issue was prominent in several races in Northern Virginia, which is home to roughly one-third of the world's data centers.

Thanks to VALCV-PAC's research-backed messaging and robust investments in field programs, Virginia now has a pro-environment trifecta (new governorship and maintained control of both chambers of the state legislature) that will work to secure a clean, affordable energy future, and a safe, healthy environment for all Virginians.

“We're going to lower costs, and we're going to do it by producing more energy here in Virginia. And we're gonna make sure that large utility users pay their fair share.”

— Governor-elect Abigail Spanberger, during her acceptance speech, Nov. 4, 2025

TAKEAWAYS FOR 2026

LCV Victory Fund and our state affiliates will continue to communicate with voters on one of their top affordability concerns: energy costs. In states and districts across the country, our work to ensure voters understand that Republicans are responsible for rising costs, despite promising to lower them, is just beginning.

As we develop our campaigns, we'll work to ensure that voters know the stakes for energy affordability. We'll provide a clear choice between candidates who promote cleaner, more affordable energy options, versus those who rubber-stamp Trump's agenda to take clean energy off the grid while increasing costs.

Working with our state affiliates, we did things differently in 2025 based on 2024 findings, and we'll continue to do that in 2026. **Some key learnings that drove our programs this year include:**

- **Refine our messaging for maximum impact.** A big takeaway from 2024 was that our messaging didn't convince voters that our candidates could help bring relief from high prices. Since then, we've refined our messaging alongside our partners and tested new strategies, and we saw real poll movement in the above races and elsewhere. Moving forward, we'll keep refining our language and innovating our tactics to reflect voters' pressing concerns about affordability.
- **Meet voters where they are online.** We know from 2024 analysis and 2025 testing that media attention has changed drastically in recent years. Young voters, for example, spend a significant time on YouTube, while more voters than ever are abandoning cable and

broadcast TV for streaming services. Investing in premium, unskippable ad inventory is a proven approach to getting in front of these voters at the most important moments in a race.

- **The timing of an ad launch matters.** According to post-election analysis, paid ads had the strongest impact in a rolling 10-day window between 11-21 days after launch. After that, they typically plateaued or declined. When deciding when to air ads, we'll take this data into consideration and launch ads within the ideal timeframe.
- **Test and improve our field program to be more effective.** LCV Victory Fund is considered to have a top-tier field program among national partners, *and* we're continually looking to improve our impact. Following our 2024 post-election analyses, we revamped how we train canvassers to deliver compelling door-knocking scripts, and we're doubling down on persuasion training for undecided voters. For example, VALCV-PAC incorporated a randomized controlled trial into the Virginia field program to measure the program's effect on voter turnout and reassess best practices ahead of 2026.
- **Social pressure tactics still work.** Multiple studies conducted in 2024 show that [social pressure tactics](#) continue to increase turnout across a wide variety of modes, platforms, and audiences. In partnership with our Virginia state affiliate, VALCV-PAC, we field tested how layering modes of social pressure (canvassing and mail) increases turnout compared with one of these tactics alone. We'll continue to employ these highly effective tactics in 2026.

RACES TO WATCH IN 2026

Want to know which races we're focused on in the 2026 midterms? [Check out our "What's At Stake" memo, here.](#)

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