



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 12, 2020

Bloomberg Plans To Flip Texas Blue; Begins \$10 Million Spending Campaign

Everytown for Gun Safety, the anti-Second Amendment group that is funded by Michael Bloomberg, is [starting to roll out ads](#) targeting what the group thinks are the most vulnerable Texas incumbents in November.

The first \$250,000 of the \$10 million Bloomberg has earmarked for Texas — \$2 million to Swing Left, the balance to Everytown — is being spent on digital ads aimed at U.S. Representatives Dan Crenshaw, Michael McCaul, John Carter, and Chip Roy. They are also targeting Beth Van Duyne, a former mayor of Irving who is running for a Dallas-area congressional seat.



The strategy is simple, according to Charlie Kelly, Everytown's senior political advisor. He said Texas is "clearly emerging as a top battleground state — there's just no question about it — and it's why we're investing \$8 million in the state this cycle. Between the investment and our network of 400,000 grassroots supporters, our goal is to do whatever it takes to elect gun sense candidates up and down the ballot in the state."

What do those "gun sense" candidates want, assuming they succeed? Kelly explained that mandating universal background checks for every sale of a firearm between consenting adults in a private transaction will be just a starting point: "Our goal is obviously [to] move forward on that front, and there are other places that we'll go, but the key here is we have almost universal support [for universal background checks]."

Executive Director for Brady PAC (which is planning on spending \$500,000 in the state), Brian Lemek, was more forthcoming: "no assault weapons produced and then sold from a retail store" in Texas.

The strategy worked last November in Virginia, where Bloomberg's front group invested \$2.5 million and harvested a state government that is now rabidly anti-gun and anti-Second Amendment. Anti-gun Democrats took control of both the state's executive and legislative branch for the first time in a generation.

The Republican majorities in Virginia had been razor-thin, and the anti-rights groups see a similar trend developing in Texas. In 2015 there were 98 Republicans and 52 Democrats in the Texas House. In 2017, Republicans lost three seats: Republicans 95, Democrats 55. In 2019, Republicans lost 12 more: Republicans 83, Democrats 67. That means that anti-gun groups need only flip nine seats and they've captured the House.

The groups will no doubt do polling on the effectiveness of their initial ads and then refine them to target incumbents in the state House whom they consider to be the most vulnerable. Kelly said that his group "made an example of Virginia Republicans and we intend to do the same in Texas."



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Alan Gottlieb, chairman of the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (CCRKBA), reacted to the planned initial foray of anti-incumbent ads in Texas: “The Lone Star State is not for sale, Mike.” Gottlieb added that Bloomberg “couldn’t buy his way into the White House so Michael Bloomberg’s surrogates at Everytown are trying to buy the Texas Legislature in Austin. Apparently Bloomberg has forgotten how Texans love their liberty and independence, and how they will fight to protect it.”

But he warned that it will be a fight: “Last month CNN reported that a Bloomberg-aligned group [Students Demand Action] was targeting 13 states to register more than 100,000 young voters in an effort to win congressional and legislative seats for anti-gunners. Texas is one of those states, so this big money effort must be taken seriously.”

Everytown knows that the constituency in Texas is changing. In addition to hiring a former Moms Demand Action volunteer from North Texas, the group has also added full-time positions for James Aldrete and Adrian Saenz, who will serve as special advisors on Texas and Spanish-language media. Both have extensive experience, particularly with Latino outreach.

Image: [Gage Skidmore/Wikimedia Commons](#)

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