



TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Third Way
RE: The No Labels Third-Party Bid: A Plan that Will Re-elect Trump

No Labels is planning to field a bipartisan “unity ticket” in 2024. They call it an “insurance policy,” claiming to fear “both major political parties could nominate divisive presidential candidates that a majority of the country finds unacceptable.” For No Labels, the moderate President Biden falls into this “unacceptable” category.

The bottom line: Their candidate cannot win the presidency—and, as Paul Begala noted, such a candidate “will succeed in electing Trump.”

The No Labels Third-Party Bid is Serious

- **Money:** No Labels told David Brooks for his NY Times column that this is a \$70 million project, and they had more than \$46 million pledged or raised as of September 2022.
- **Personnel:** They have more than 400 circulators actively collecting signatures.
- **Ballot Access:** They are on the ground seeking spots on the ballot in multiple states, including battlegrounds like Arizona, Florida, North Carolina, and Nevada, and claim they will compete in at least 23. They have already won ballot access in Colorado.
- **Plans:** A nominating convention is scheduled for April 13, 2024, in Dallas.
- **Recruitment:** They haven’t announced who they will propose to nominate, but press reports show they are courting political moderates in both parties.

The No Labels Third-Party Bid Can’t Win

No Labels is arguing this is a unique historical moment that gives their “unity ticket” a real shot at winning the White House. But that is an illusion. The data and historical evidence are clear: no third-party candidate would come close to winning.

- **History of Failure:** Voters don’t back third parties. Since 1900, third-party candidates didn’t win enough electoral votes *in sum* to win one election.
- **The Polling Mirage:** Third-party candidates poll well at first before plummeting; Gary Johnson hit 10% in 2016, Ross Perot 36% in 1992, John Anderson 26% in 1980. But by Election Day they had cratered and failed to win a single electoral vote.
- **Base Illusion:** No Labels says a plurality of Americans identify as Independents. It’s actually 9% when partisan leaners are taken into account. That is not a base that can win.
- **Fantasy Map:** No Labels has laid out their purported path to Electoral College victory in the attached map. Among other imaginings, they claim their candidate could win solid blue states like Connecticut, Washington, and Minnesota. They argue an incumbent president would win only six states (plus DC). In their biggest stretch, No Labels claims they could beat Biden in his home state of Delaware.

The No Labels Third-Party Bid Would Re-elect Trump

Rather than producing a third-party ticket that would defy the overwhelming odds and win, No Labels is on track to field a spoiler who would re-elect Trump or a Trump-like Republican.

- **2016 Third-Party Voters went for Biden in 2020:** According to AP VoteCast, Biden won voters who had backed Jill Stein and Gary Johnson by 30 points. Such voters could peel away to the No Labels candidate in 2024 and hand victory to Trump.
- **“Double Haters” Went for Biden:** Voters who do not like either major party candidate would tend to back Democrats in a forced choice. Biden won “double haters” in 2020 by 15 points. (Clinton lost those voters by 17 points in 2016.) Giving them a third-party choice clearly helps the GOP.
- **Biden is More Vulnerable in Close States:** In 2020, Biden won six of the seven states where the margin was three points or less. Even a paltry third-party performance would put 79 Biden electoral votes at risk (GA, AZ, WI, PA, NV, and MI).
- **No Labels is Targeting Blue States:** The No Labels map gives away the game: they project to win 2/3 of their electoral votes in states that Biden won in 2020. So, by their own admission, their prime targets are voters who would otherwise back the Democrat.
- **If it isn’t Trump, No Labels is Helping Elect a Trump Clone:** Even if the GOP nominee isn’t Trump, it will almost certainly be a MAGA-aligned candidate. It’s preposterous to even imagine that a candidate like Larry Hogan or Liz Cheney could win that primary.

No Labels says they will “stand down” if “this path outside the two major party candidates is not needed.” But they have not explained their criteria for that assessment. Nor have they explained how that would work, since the GOP nominee likely won’t be known until June, long after the No Labels ticket is nominated and on ballots.

Moreover, No Labels casts Biden and Trump as equally extreme and frames their ticket as an antidote to a rematch. But this is a smokescreen. Joe Biden has governed as a mainstream moderate, passing more bipartisan legislation than anyone dreamed possible. Meanwhile, No Labels has previously bestowed on Trump their “problem solver” award, given to elected officials who agree to work in a “bipartisan” manner.

Given the overwhelming odds against a third-party candidate and the mountain of evidence about who their ticket would hurt, the conclusion is inescapable: No Labels is committed to fielding a candidate that will, intentionally or not, provide a crucial boost to Republicans – and a major obstacle to Biden. As a result, they’ll make it far more likely—if not certain—that Donald Trump returns to the White House.

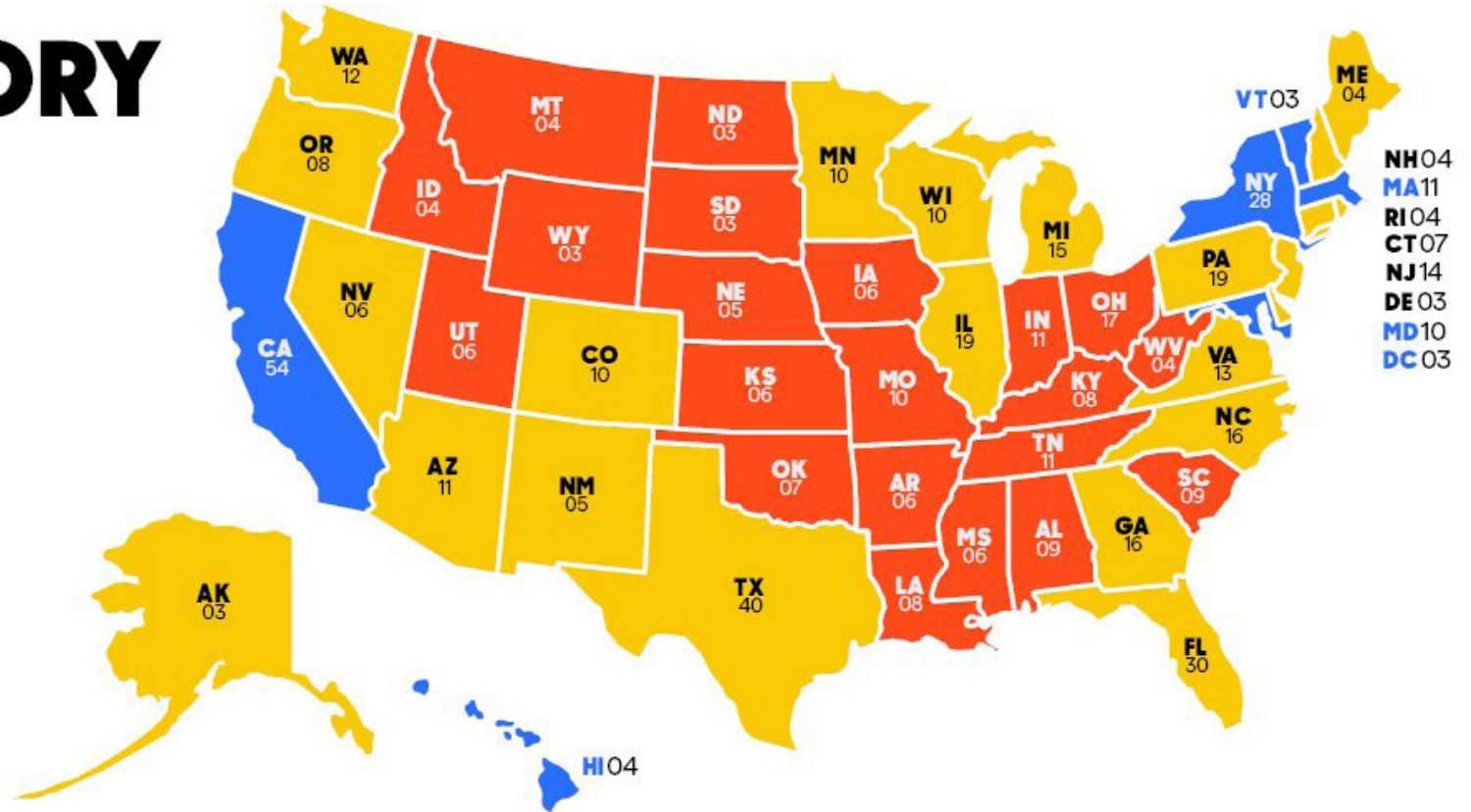
DEMOCRATIC STATES 113

AMERICAN UNITY STATES 279

REPUBLICAN STATES 146

THE PATH TO VICTORY

PROJECTIONS



VOTES NEEDED: 270

Source: Submitted Photo from No Labels. "The Path to Victory Projections." Bipartisan Group No Labels Targets Delaware as Battleground State in 2024, Bay to Bay News, 4 Dec. 2022, <https://baytobaynews.com/stories/bipartisan-group-no-labels-targets-delaware-as-battleground-state-for-unity-ticket-in-2024,95710>.