

The Women's Political Group Spending \$1 Million to Beat a Liberal Democrat

Control of the United States Senate after the 2016 elections is perhaps the second most-watched aspect of the coming political year. Now in Republican hands, a shift to Democratic control would create a firewall against a Republican president in 2017, or help a Democratic successor to President Barack Obama enact elements of their agenda.

In Maryland, a solidly Democratic stronghold, the battle to succeed retiring Democratic Sen. Barbara Mikulski is being joined by a group that helped put Mikulski in office 30 years ago, the pro-abortion political action committee known as EMILY's List. The group, whose one-sentence mission statement reads "We elect pro-choice Democratic women to office," has pledged \$1 million to the primary campaign of Rep. Donna Edwards, a 57-year-old Congresswoman from Prince George's County, Maryland.

According to *The Baltimore Sun*, a pro-Edwards ad sponsored by WOMEN VOTE!, the EMILY's List super-PAC, will air on cable and local television stations in Baltimore, where Rep. Chris Van Hollen, ranking Democrat on the House Budget Committee, has a two-to-one lead over Edwards in Baltimore, a Democratic stronghold.

"'Donna Edwards knows what it's like to struggle, a narrator says in the 30-second spot as the camera flashes through pictures of Edwards and her son,'" the newspaper reported. "'But Donna overcame. She persevered. Then she put that backbone to work for us.'"

In a separate report, the *Sun* noted that along with a progressive political agenda, "Edwards, 57, has pitched a

second broad message: As an African-American woman, she has touted the historic significance her election would have on an institution composed almost entirely of white men.” Carol Mosely Brown, a Democrat, was the first and so far only, African-American woman to serve in the Senate, representing Illinois from 1993 to 1999.

Edwards is also featured on an EMILY’s List web page as “A progressive leader who will stand up for families.”

Ironically, a Van Hollen win in the primary would not mean a pro-life Democrat on the 2016 ticket. According to , an independent group, Van Hollen gets a 100-percent pro-abortion rating from NARAL, which formerly was known as the National Abortion Rights League, and a zero percent score from the National Right to Life Committee.

The Maryland primary is scheduled for April 26, and with roughly five months to go, one variable remains: Whether or not Baltimore Democrat Rep. Elijah Cummings, also an African-American, decides to try for the open Senate seat. Cummings is wildly popular in Baltimore and would outpace either Edwards or Van Hollen in a primary there.