

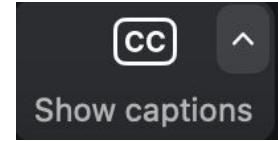
# Advocacy Strategies to Build Community Power

January 30, 2025



# English and Spanish Captions

- To turn on English captions, click the "Show Captions" button at the bottom of the screen.
  - If you'd prefer to view them on a separate window, please use this link: [recapd.com/w-pcy2nE](https://recapd.com/w-pcy2nE)
- To view **Spanish captions**, open this website on a new window: [recapd.com/w-99gVNO](https://recapd.com/w-99gVNO)



# Speakers

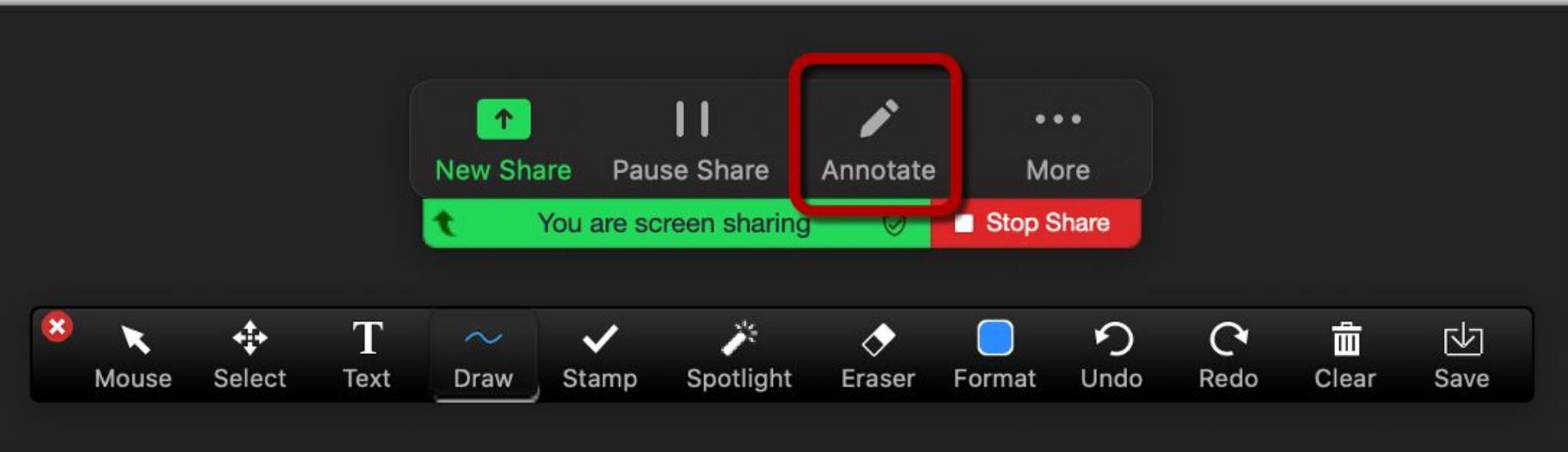


**Kim Nguyen**  
*Program Director*  
Statler Nagle



**Sophie Simon-Ortiz**  
*Organizing Project Director*  
Human Impact Partners

# ZOOM REFRESHER



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1



2



3



4



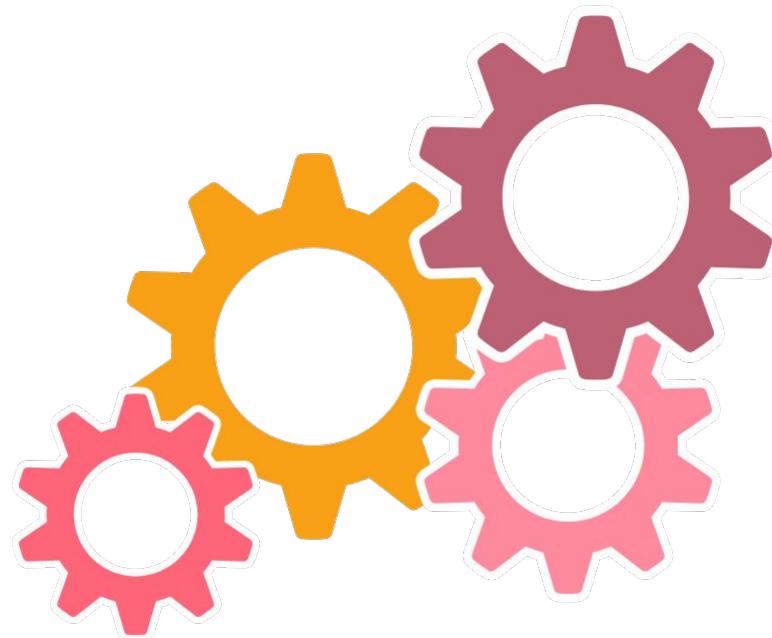
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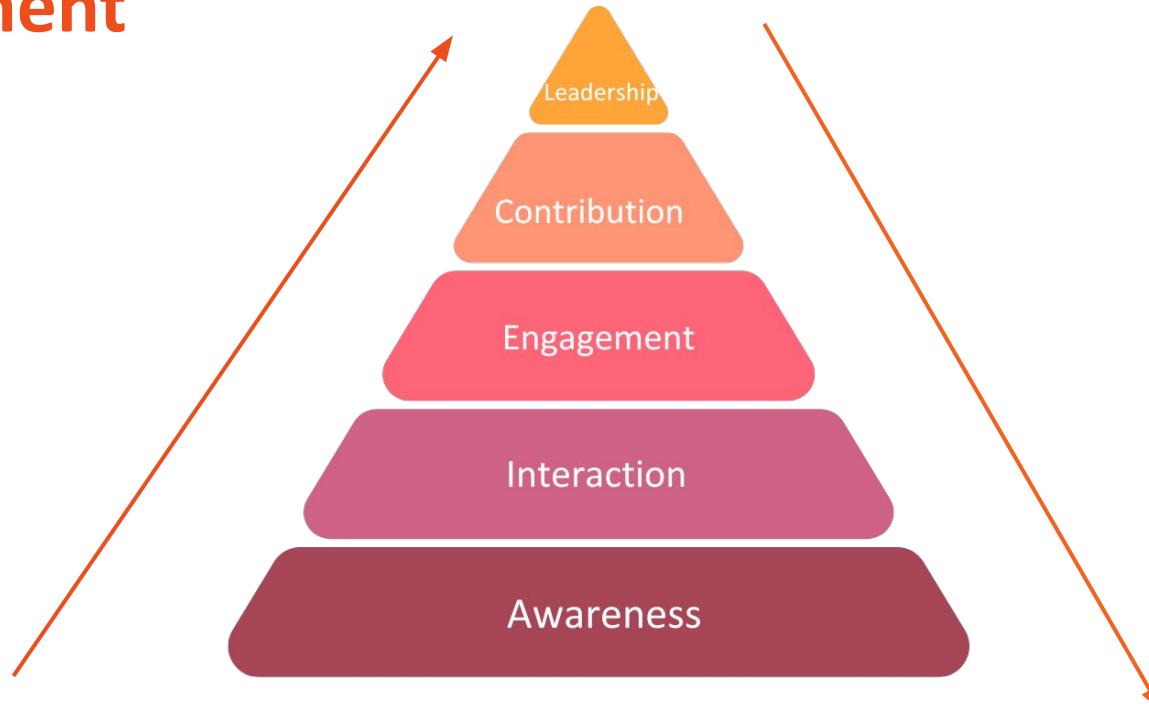
6



# Points of Intervention/Engagement



# Pyramid of Engagement



## Level 1: Awareness

**HAS KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR ISSUE,  
CAMPAIGN OR CAUSE**

Awareness

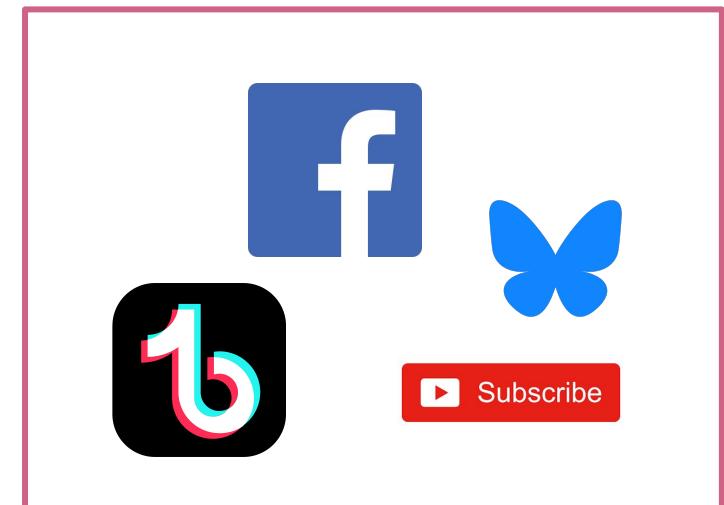


## Level 2: Interaction

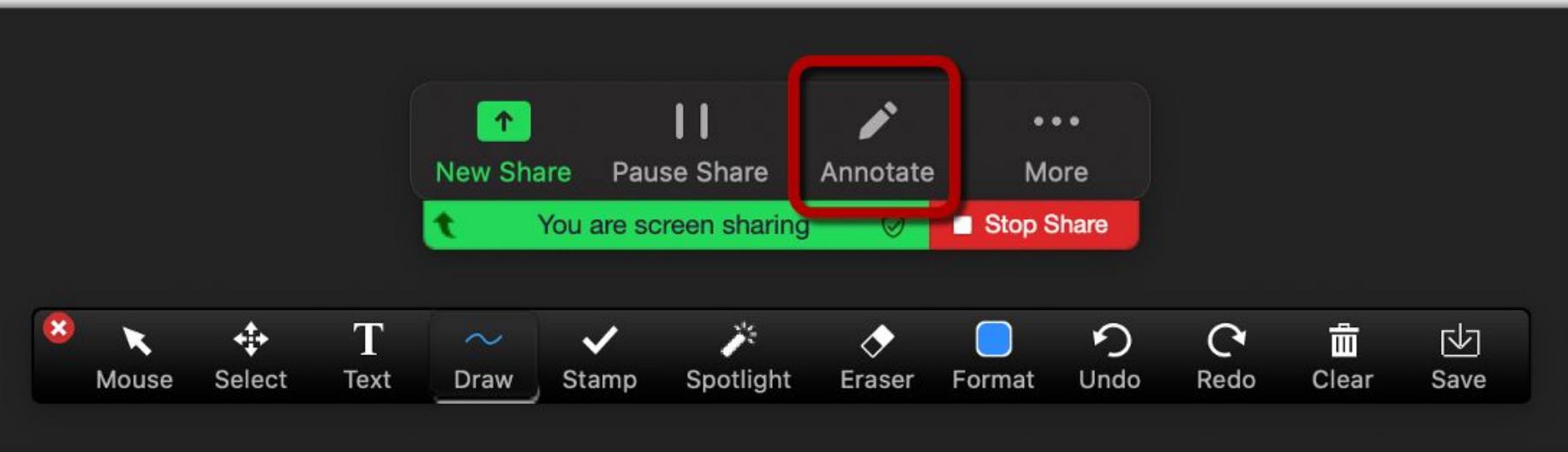
**UNDERSTANDS YOUR CAUSE AND IS  
INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE AND PERHAPS  
PARTICIPATING**

Interaction

Awareness



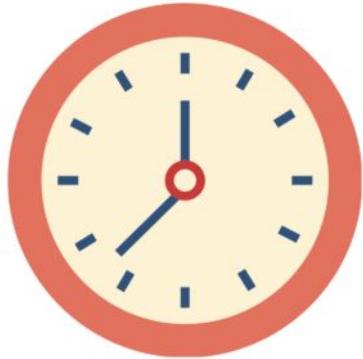
# ZOOM REFRESHER



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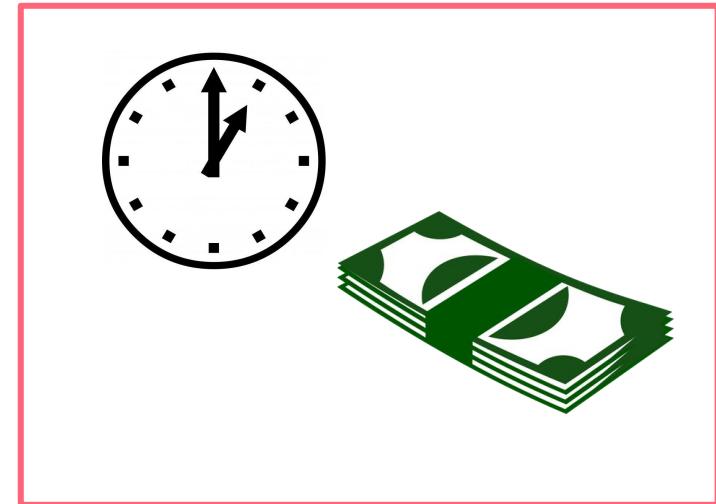
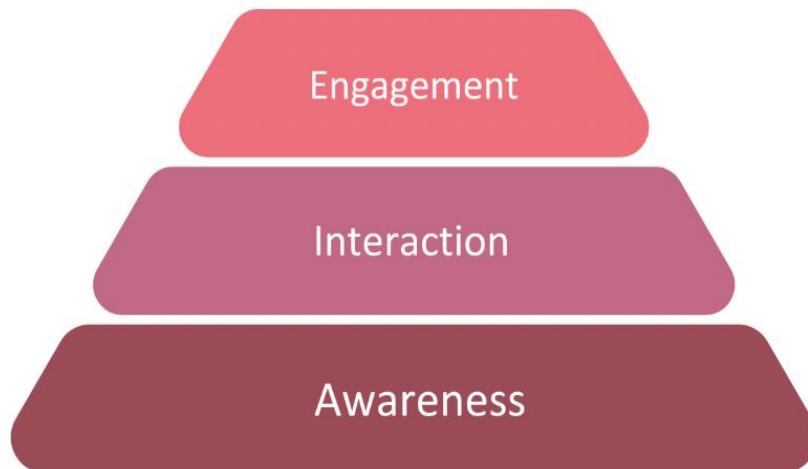


# Level 3: Engagement



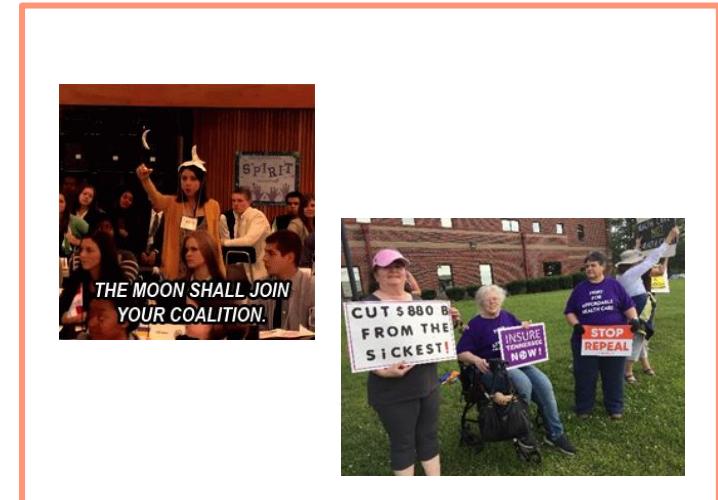
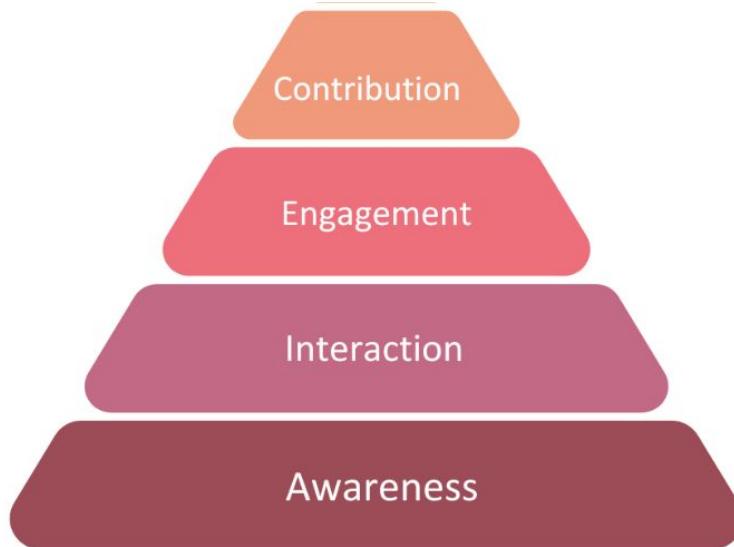
## Level 3:Engagement

**CONTRIBUTES TIME, MONEY OR SOCIAL CAPITAL  
TO YOUR ORGANIZATION OR CAMPAIGN**



## Level 4: Contribution

FULLY INVESTED IN THE MISSION AND SUCCESS OF  
YOUR ORGANIZATION OR CAMPAIGN



## Level 5: Leadership

**BECOMES A DECISION-MAKER OR THOUGHT LEADER AND ENGAGES AND LEADS OTHERS**





## ***Moving and Grooving Through the Levels***

Awareness

Interest



- **Gather information on interests & potential hooks**
- **Phone banks**
- **Door-to-door canvassing**
- **Get on mailing lists**
- **Be consistently visible and present**
- **Make small and specific asks**

Interest

Participation



- **Partner with organizations in the communities you're trying to reach**
- **Target your asks**
- **Meet people where they are**
- **Be a resource**

## Participation



## Contribution

- **Schedule a one-on-one meeting**
- **Match your ask with capacity and interest**
- **Address challenges that limit participation**
- **Focus on building skills and confidence**
- **Provide guidance, support and fun along the way**

Contribution

Leadership



- Who else can they engage, train and bring up the Pyramid?
- Opportunities to represent the base on an external committee such as government advisory board or coalition working group
- Serving on an internal working committee

# Power of the Pyramid

Ensures that organizations are not simply engaging community members but that they are doing so in a meaningful and intentional way.

Prompts organizations to think critically about their areas of strength and areas where they need improvement.

# Defining Actions and Metrics

*Interaction*

Leadership  
DEEP INVOLVEMENT  
ENGAGED BECOMES ENAGER  
LEADER, COLLABORATOR

Contribution  
RECURRING ACTIONS  
MULTI-STEP ACTIONS

Engagement  
ONE TIME ACTIONS  
SINGLE STEP ACTIONS

Interaction  
CONSENT TO RECEIVE INFORMATION  
INTERACTION WITH CONTENT

Awareness  
WARENESS, KNOWLEDGE, AND/OR  
INTEREST IN CAUSE

LEVELS

DEFINING  
ACTIONS

*Interaction*

Leadership  
# SUPER VOLUNTEERS  
# LARGE DOLLAR DONORS  
# COMMUNITY LEADERS  
#CHAPTER/COMMITTER LEADERS

Contribution  
#RECURRING VOLUNTEERS  
#RECURING DONORS  
#OF PEOPLE THAT CONSISTENLY LEND THEIR  
EXPERTISE

Engagement  
# OF ONE TIME DONORS  
# OF PEOPLE WHO COMPLETED ACTION  
#SHARED A SOCIAL POST  
# OF PEOPLE SIGNED A PETITION

Interaction  
# SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS  
# LIKES ON POST  
# ONEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

Awareness  
#SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS  
POLLING  
WEBSITE TRAFFIC  
# SOCIAL MENTIONS

LEVELS

SAMPLE  
METRICS

# A Deeper Dive: President Obama's Campaign

1

Friend on Facebook



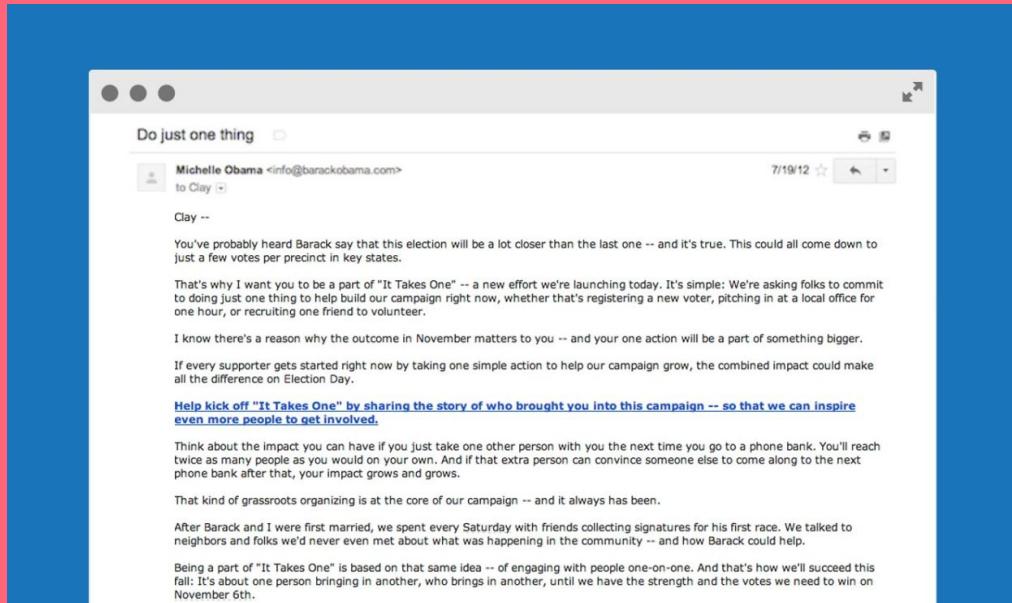
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Targeted Small Ask

# A Deeper Dive: President Obama's Campaign

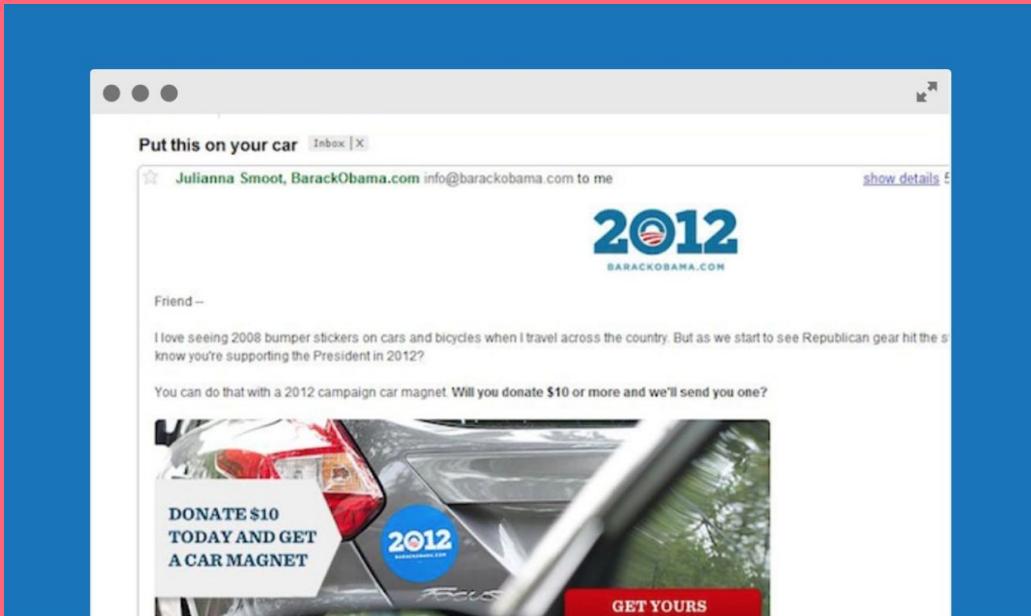
3



Gather More Data, While Also Giving Back

# A Deeper Dive: President Obama's Campaign

4



The Ask, Small Donation for Campaign Swag

# It's all about the strategy!

Creating  
Opportunities

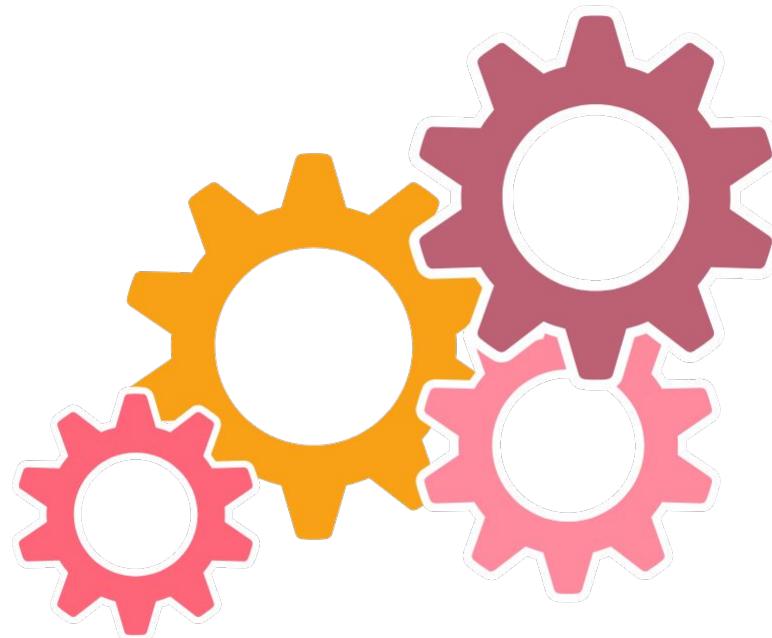
Having the  
Right Hooks

Targeted  
Engagement

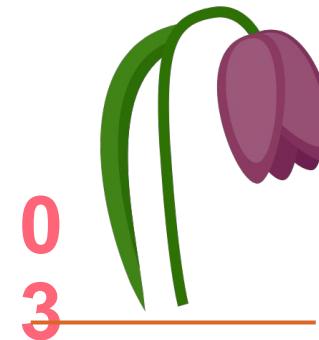
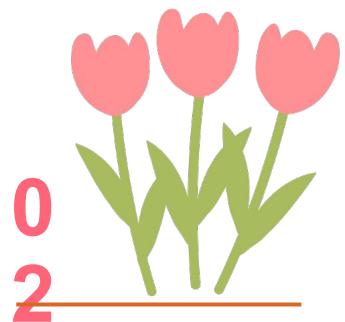
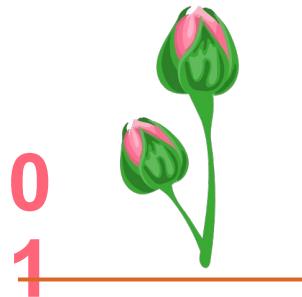
Meet People  
Where They  
Are At

Build  
Relationships\*

# Points of Intervention/Engagement



Click **View Options** at the top of this screen, then **Annotate**. Use **Stamp** tool to mark where you are.



# BREAK



*Note: Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication*

# **Reimagining Public Health Advocacy to Support Community Power-Building & Social Justice Movements**

Sophia (Sophie) Simon-Ortiz, MPH  
Human Impact Partners

**Human Impact Partners** transforms the field of public health to center equity and builds collective power with social justice movements.

Policy & Organizing



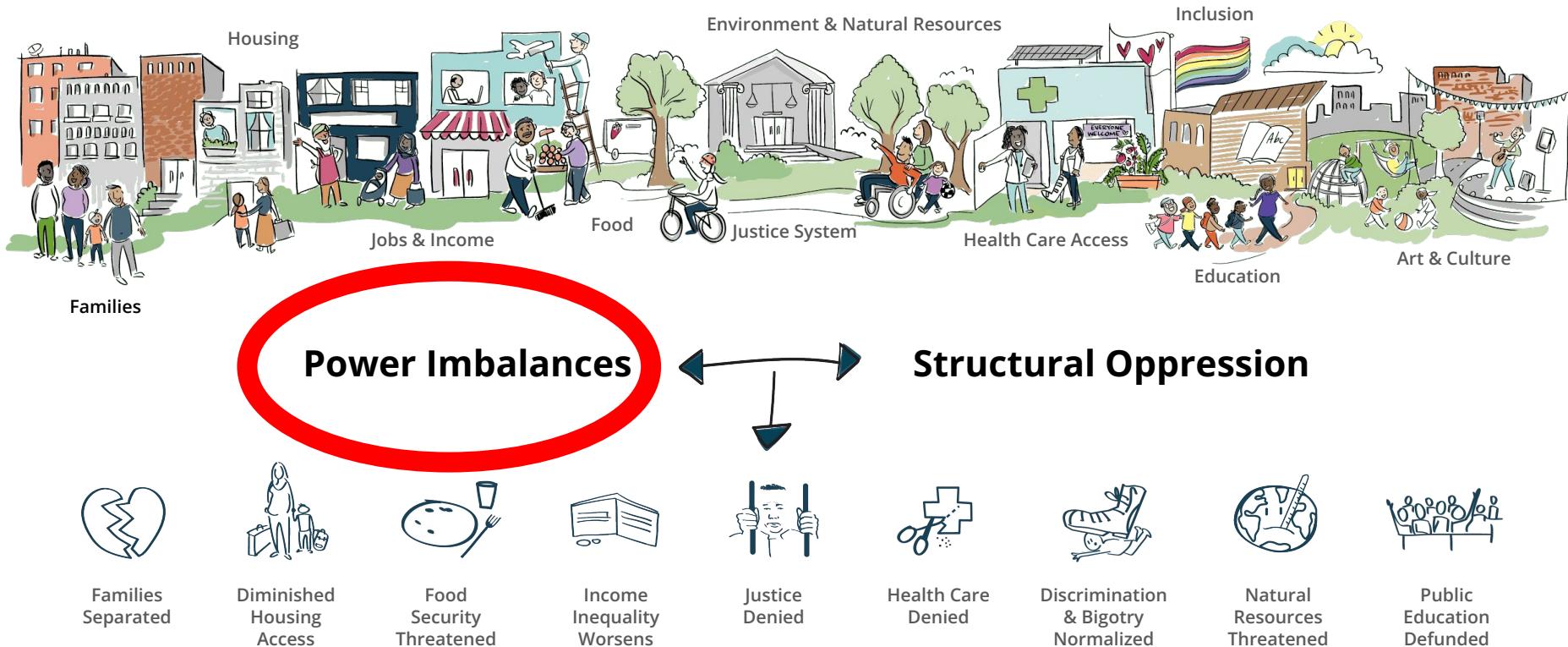
Bridging Partnerships & Strategies

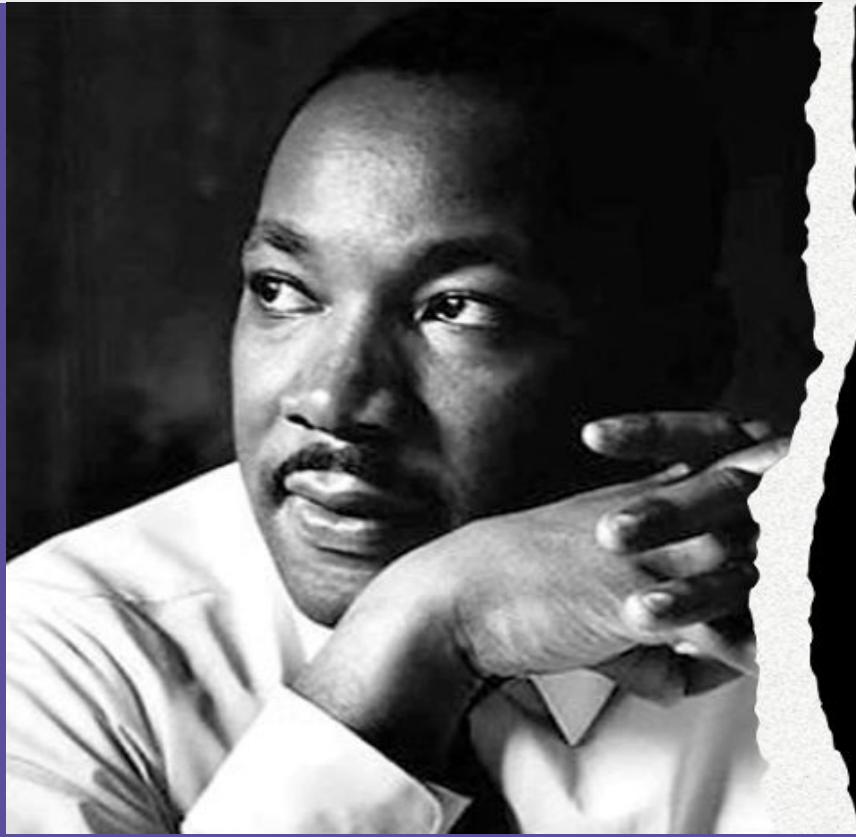


Capacity Building



# HIP's Theory of Change

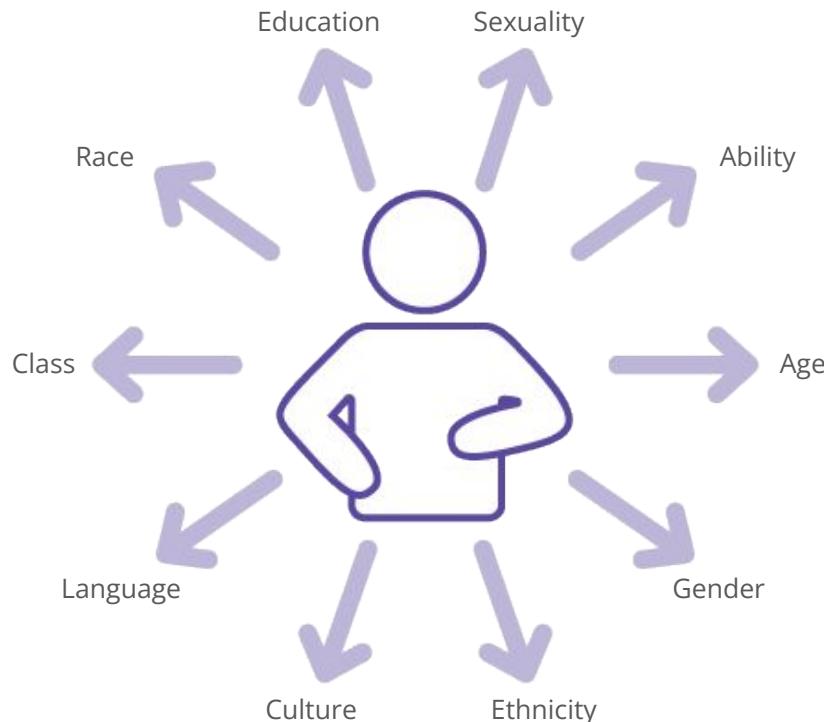




**“Power properly understood is nothing but the ability to achieve purpose. It is the strength required to bring about social, political, and economic change.”\***

\*<https://images.app.goo.gl/71f7daK6roM9VrZp7>

# Power can shift along dimensions of identity



## Power Over

Power is finite.

One must use fear to hoard  
and protect power.

## Power With

Power is infinite.

Power expands when it is  
shared with others.

*Adapted from Brené Brown, Just Associates*

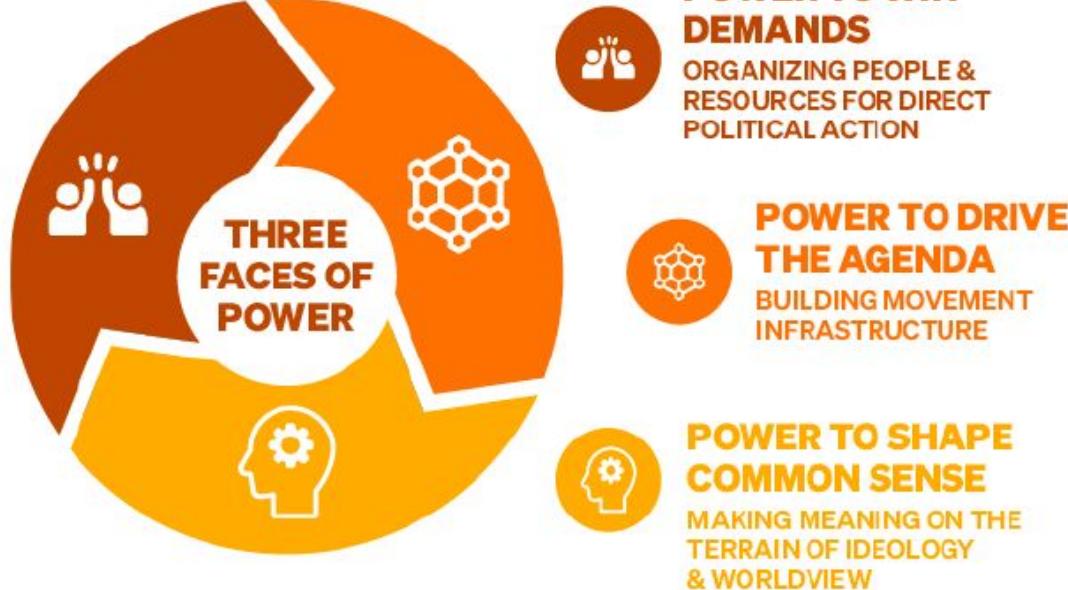
# Personal Power

VS.

# Collective Power



# Three Faces of Power



Source / Credit: The "Three Faces of Power" Framework was adapted by the Grassroots Power Project for the work of community organizers.

# What is Community Power?

the ability of communities most impacted by structural inequity to develop, sustain, and grow an organized base of people **who act together through democratic structures to set agendas, shift public discourse, influence who makes decisions** and cultivate ongoing relationships of mutual accountability with decision-makers that change systems and advance health equity

Source: [Lead Local Glossary](#)

# Who are Community Power-building Organizations (CPBOs)?

- most active in community power-building
- build and organize base of impacted people
- focus on collective action
- transform material conditions
- advocacy as one of many tactics
- shared geography, demographics, and/or issue(s)

Public Health



changing conditions & building power to support health



Community  
power-building  
organizations



# Project Goal AKA our North Star

**Expand the ecosystem of non-governmental public health organizations willing to ‘fight for the public’s health’ by joining in, supporting, and advocating for national and local organizing campaigns and movements — in deep and authentic partnership with community power-building organizations**

# Context for North Star

- Health equity will not be achieved without building community power AND directly engaging in social determinants policy change.
- Policy campaigns are usually led by national community organizing networks and local grassroots/community power-building orgs through strong advocacy.
- Public health has strong infrastructure to draw on, tons of data, and many values-aligned practitioners > but cross-movement relationships with those orgs are generally weak and underdeveloped.

# Landscape Scan: Background + Design

HIP conducted a national landscape scan to understand what it would take for nongovernmental public health to build relationships with, and provide advocacy support to, CPBOs and the wider social justice movements they lead.

## Data Collection:

Completed interviews of  
national community  
power-building networks  
[n= 13] + non-governmental  
public health organizations  
[n=22] + online research

Summer/Fall 2023

## Analysis

- Key takeaways extracted  
after each interview >  
based on established +  
emergent categories
- Developed themes
- Identified key findings

Winter/Spring 2024

# Landscape Scan: Key Findings

- Public health doesn't "get" power-building.
- Community power-building organizations don't "get" public health, though the field's focus on social determinants policy resonates for them.
- Public health NGOs do advocacy, but generally not in community organizing campaigns. They **can provide data and research but remain concerned** about doing advocacy for these campaigns.
- Community power-building organizations **value experiences with public health** partnerships and **want to see a bolder presence** in national campaigns.
- Public health and community power-building organizations are **facing the same threats and could be stronger together**.
- National public health NGOs seek **coordination and role clarity** to support CPBOs.

*Takeaway #1: Many CBPOs understand their work as public health but **still don't know what the field of public health does** – and often conflate public health and healthcare.*

*"I don't have a sense of what public health workers do every day to know what to do...**Movement needs education about what they do and who they are.**"*



*"Is there **narrative guidance** to give [us and other organizers] about how to talk about health so it's not individualistic?"*



*"While [our climate and environmental justice organization] is not an expert on public health...**it is the reason our communities are organizing.**"*

**Takeaway #2:** There is a **lack of bold public health presence** at the national policy advocacy level.

**"It can feel like we're fighting in different spaces.** I want to look back at some of the larger bills, maybe public health is there, but not in our space really that I've noted. I see environmental justice, unions, less public health. Not that they don't care or aren't interested but **we just haven't built those bridges.**"

## Takeaway #3: Despite that, CPBOs want **greater public health support + advocacy** for campaigns and members.

“There are all kinds of things that people who are impacted know, but it’s so helpful when PH people come and **give us data and scientific backing**, basically saying ‘you’re not imagining that, it’s real.’ This helps to **validate the experience of people who are most impacted**, and also for our folks to understand why they’re being impacted.”

Takeaway #4: Shared challenges can unite our fights, but in order to “go to bat” for public health, **CPBOs need to see the clear through line to their goals** and material changes in members’ lived experiences.

**“If people understood public health’s role they would come to defend it...People maybe don’t understand the attack on public health. Taking control of public health, demonizing it, is not good for all of us.”**

**“There is potential alignment but there would have to be clarity about how public health organizations are supporting the causes our members are fighting for. How do we clarify the interconnection?”**

**Finding #1:** Non-governmental public health organizations want a **coordinated ecosystem and clarity around roles** to support community power-building organizations (CPBOs). Not all groups expressed consistent interest in participating in a coordinated advocacy effort, should it be established.

“[We need more coordination] because we are all trying to swim in the same direction but we don’t know what each other are doing.”

“So much of how effective we can be in working with CPBOs is about relationships and trust. Having a coordinated approach might lead to more consistency in how non-governmental public health partners show up. That consistency could go a long way toward building that trust which would allow for deeper relationship building with CPBOs, which would in turn help them advance their social aims.”

**Note:** Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication

**Finding #2:** Public health organizations generally lack an understanding of power and community power-building. They are also **unfamiliar with the community power-building networks leading social justice movements**, and the impacts they have on the public's health.

“Within the public health field... There really isn’t a robust understanding of power, and the need for power building, and power as a determinant of health. This is why focusing on power building is essential, in order to make lasting transformative change, government systems need to grapple with that. There’s no robust understanding of that.”

*Note: Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication*

## **Finding #3:** Public health is understandably consumed and affected by right wing attacks on its work and authority. But it **lacks an expansive analysis of why these attacks are occurring**, and the value and role of partnering with social justice movements to fight back

“It’s easier to get public health on board with climate, housing, and transportation social determinants of health. Public health is under attack. When under attack, you can't get people to go into more controversial areas.”

“It’s very easy to get caught up in governmental public health’s agenda which is self preservation. Governmental public health has been under attack during the pandemic. There’s been tremendous turnover and stress on leadership to even do basic communicable disease control and those types of efforts. Governmental public health is often pleading for support for resourcing of its own infrastructure. To some extent our energy goes toward that.”

***Note: Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication***

## **Finding #4:** The structure of public health is **fragmented and often at odds** with what's needed for building across the field, and for aligning with social movements.

“I believe that if [public health and CPBO] organizations came up with a shared, aligned agenda, funding would follow.”

“We would benefit from someone that doesn’t just go up-down [thinking about verticals within public health], but thinks about relationships across. **At a minimum, building relationships at a horizontal level.** What will make us stand out from other verticals is to build across. We would benefit tremendously as an organization to have access to a table like that, because of how fragmented public health is.”

***Note: Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication***

**Finding #5:** Public health NGOs have experience using and are skilled at many advocacy tactics, and the **provision of research, data, and reports** was one of the primary ways that they reported being able to support CPBO campaigns and movements. But interviewees also reported **a lack of relationships** as a barrier to being able to provide this support.

“These [tactics] are right in line with things we try to do — every single one of these, and I think, not only do we try to do these because our partners ask us to do them, but because we know these are the types of tactics that influence the actors and decision makers and landscapes.”

***Note: Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication***

**Finding #6:** Different worlds, same lanes: There is a disconnect between public health's more "equity" focused approach on **service provision**, and CPBOs more "justice" focused approach to **build community power**, and there was not clear alignment across public health around the community power-building organizations' policy priorities that could become the basis for collective action in the future.

"You have to make the case for why it benefits health... Public health is under fire right now. I would be surprised if they all of a sudden wanted to get involved in incarceration issues. PH is being told you can't even work on chronic disease. You can't even say the word equity in a lot of states. I don't see them saying 'yes we are going to get involved in incarceration issues.' Aside from ensuring the health of incarcerated populations and recently released populations."

*Note: Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication*

# Recommendations

- Provide co-learning spaces for public health and CPBOs to learn about one another and explore deeper collaborations.
- Develop and disseminate expansive narratives about public health's structural and social determinants focus, and tie 'attacks on public health' to attacks on democracy more widely.
- Explore initial advocacy collaborations to build trust, and a sense of mutuality, with public health focusing on the upstream policy priorities of community power-building organizations.
- Create a coordinated public health movement infrastructure (e.g., coalition, alliance, network) for public health NGOs to provide ongoing advocacy for community power-building campaigns and movements.

***Note: Slides not for circulation, distribution, or publication***

# Where do we go from here?

- Discussed learnings with public health NGOs to explore interest and willingness to respond to the advocacy needs expressed by CPBOs
- Working with nearly two dozen public health NGOs to form and launch the ***Public Health for Community Power Coalition.***
- Our aim is to close the advocacy gap in the public health ecosystem that our findings illuminated, and to provide the infrastructure that both public health NGOs and CPBOs say is needed to cultivate deep partnerships across our sectors.

# Introducing the Public Health for Community Power Coalition!!



# Public Health for Community Power Coalition Members

- American Public Health Association
- Boston University School of Public Health Activist Lab
- ChangeLab Solutions
- Human Impact Partners
- National Association of Community Health Workers
- Network for Public Health Law
- Partners in Health-US
- Policy, Practice, and Prevention Research Center (at the University of Illinois Chicago School of Public Health)
- Prevention Institute
- Public Health Institute
- University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute/County Health Rankings & Roadmaps
- Voices for Healthy Kids, American Heart Association

# Federal rent cap sign-on letter

*Fall 2024*

Leading Public Health Organizations Call for Federal Rent Cap



RESEARCH ARTICLE | PUBLIC HEALTH

[HEALTH AFFAIRS](#) > VOL. 43, NO. 6: REIMAGINING PUBLIC HEALTH

# Community Power-Building Groups And Public Health NGOs: Reimagining Public Health Advocacy

[Sophia Simon-Ortiz](#), [Sari Bilick](#), [Maddy Frey](#), [Solange Gould](#), [Clara Long](#), [Emma Waugh](#), and [Lili Farhang](#)[AFFILIATIONS](#) ▾

PUBLISHED: JUNE 2024

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## Abstract

Public health frameworks have grappled with the inequitable distribution of power as a driver of the social conditions that determine health. However, these frameworks have not adequately considered building community power as a strategy to shift the distribution of power. Community power-building organizations build and organize a base of affected people to take collective action to transform their material conditions, using advocacy and other tactics. We conducted qualitative interviews with representatives of twenty-two

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Supplemental Materials

## Article Metrics



## History

Published online 3 June 2024

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# Thank you!



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HealthEquityGuide.org



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# National Organizing Network Interviewees (n=13 orgs)

Athena Coalition / United for  
Respect

Community Change

Center for Popular Democracy

Critical Resistance

Faith in Action

Gamaliel/WISDOM

Jobs with Justice

Movement for Black Lives

PowerSwitch Action

People's Action

Restaurant Opportunities Center  
United

Right to the City Alliance

Climate Justice Alliance

# Non-Govt Public Health Interviewees (n=22 orgs, 35 people)

- APHA Govt Relations
- APHA Alliance
- Big Cities Health Coalition
- Boston Univ SPH Activist Lab
- CAACPHE
- ChangeLab Solutions
- Health Begins
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg SPH
- Natl Assoc Community Health Workers
- Network for Public Health Law
- NNPHI
- Partners in Health US
- PHAB Center for Innovation
- Praxis Project
- Prevention Institute
- Public Health Institute
- Trust for America's Health
- UIC - PPPRC
- Univ S Florida SPH Activist Lab
- Voices for Healthy Kids - AHA
- Anonymous - 2