

Impact Report



2024



**POPULAR
DEMOCRACY
IN ACTION**

Our Impact

In 2024, Popular Democracy in Action (PDiA) meaningfully advanced our fight for a world in which everyone can thrive. Here are just some of the victories we delivered across the country and in Puerto Rico:

HOUSING

In 2023 PDiA and our affiliates set out to collectively advance one big national campaign: House Every One! In 2024, in part due to our consistent advocacy, the Biden Administration announced a host of housing policies that would support struggling families, including the following:

- Biden announced his housing plan to **create 2 million more affordable homes**.
- The Federal Housing Finance Agency now requires 30-day notice before rent increases, **30-day notice before lease expirations, and a 5-day grace period before imposing late fees** in all multifamily properties with financing supported by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.
- The Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Postal Service, Department of Transportation, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Health and Human Services, and General Services Administration will **repurpose federal land for the creation of tens of thousands of affordable housing units**.

We also helped advance several wins across the PDiA network, including:

- In Maryland, CASA **successfully organized tenants in a four-year rent strike** over chronically unsafe and poor conditions in their apartment buildings. This year, the tenants reached an historic settlement with Arbor Realty Trust, Inc., an out-of-state investment firm who is required to pay tenants for these alleged violations.
- In Minnesota, COPAL won a **“Tenant Right to Organize” bill**. This guarantees that tenants, non-resident organizers, and advocates will all be able to defend renters’ rights to safe and affordable housing without facing retaliation.
- In Texas, VOCAL-TX organized residents at the Marshaling Yard shelter and won **critical improvements to the shelter’s conditions to support unhoused community members**. Their campaigns “Stop the Clock: Fix Austin’s Rapid Rehousing Program” and “Invest in Housing for the Poor” won investments in rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing.
- In New York, Churches United for Fair Housing successfully pushed the NY City Council to **pass the Fairness in Apartment Rental Expenses (FARE) Act**. This was passed, with a veto-proof majority, and ends the unfair practice of tenants being forced to pay broker’s fees for agents hired by landlords.
- In Arizona, where Fuerte and LUCHA pushed for greater renter protections, the state’s Attorney General announced **a lawsuit against Blackstone and nine corporate-owned landlords** that allegedly price-fixed apartments in the Phoenix and Tucson area.



JUSTICE TRANSFORMATION & EDUCATION JUSTICE

As part of our Before You Go, Joe campaign, PDiA and the People's Coalition for Safety and Freedom **called on President Biden to boldly use his clemency power and "Free Them All."** We engaged more than one hundred organizations and thousands of individuals in this effort, and held multiple press conferences alongside allies in Congress, including Reps. Pressley, Omar, Clyburn, and Scanlon. President Biden ultimately granted 4,245 acts of clemency, 96 percent of which in his final months, during the course of our campaign.



HEALTHCARE

For three years, PDiA organized a Medicaid Project that involved collecting hundreds of Medicaid stories and compiling that information to produce subsequent reports. We used these reports and partnered with activists and storytellers to secure significant wins across the network at the state level:

- PDiA affiliate Maine's People Alliance successfully pushed to amend a medical debt law with **"An Act to Prohibit Unfair Practices Related to the Collection of Medical Debt."** This changes Maine's "Fair Debt Collection Practices Act" by defining medical debt and addressing fees and interest, among other improvements.
- PDiA affiliate Florida Rising, in coalition with other groups, successfully secured enough signatures to get **"Florida Amendment 4, Right to Abortion Initiative" on the ballot** for the November elections—a critical opportunity for Florida voters to make their voices heard. Unfortunately
- PDiA affiliate Arkansas Community Organizations successfully **stopped work requirements for Medicaid health benefits**, and affiliate Spaces in Action **avoided millions of dollars in budget cuts to social programs** in Washington DC during 2024 budget fights.



PUERTO RICO

- In a bid to attract wealthy investors, the Puerto Rican government passed the “Act to Promote the Relocation of Individual Investors to Puerto Rico” in 2012. Act 22, later amended into Act 60, gives wealthy outsiders an unprecedented 100% tax exemption on all income and investments if they move to Puerto Rico. The NYT published an article earlier this year detailing a whistleblower letter on the IRS’ Act 22 audit campaign, noting that the agency has only investigated a small portion of Act 22 decree holders and has yet to charge any individuals. [The whistleblower specifically mentioned last year’s Congressional House sign on letter in support of PDiA’s Freedom of Information Act Request as the impetus for coming forward](#). As a result of this increased pressure, the IRS announced that it will be significantly ramping up its Act 22 audits.
- For the first time in 20 years, advocates, including PDiA and our affiliates, New York Communities for Change and Churches United for Fair Housing, raised alarms with policymakers about how the NY legislation can have an impact on global communities. Thanks to these efforts the NY Legislature was able to [pass a sovereign debt bill in the New York Senate](#) during the 2024 legislative session. This “Champerty” bill would have prohibited the purchase of securities or other financial instruments for the purpose of litigation. It also would strengthen Champerty by making clear that it is unlawful for vulture funds to use New York law to profiteer from the distressed debt of struggling countries.
- With support from PDiA, pension holders and community groups worked to elevate the need for pension reforms to better support retirees in Puerto Rico. Thanks to these efforts the Puerto Rico House and Senate [passed legislation raising pensions in Puerto Rico to be in line with increased costs of living](#). While the legislation was ultimately pocket vetoed by the Governor, it represented a big step in protecting and raising pensions in Puerto Rico.

JUSTICE TRANSFORMATION & EDUCATION JUSTICE

As a result of advocacy campaigns in partnership with PDiA, affiliates won several important economic policies:

- Step Up Louisiana successfully organized – through an intensive organizer training program and extensive door-to-door canvassing – for the [New Orleans Workers’ Bill of Rights](#) which passed with a landslide 80% of the vote. The Bill creates an incentive for businesses to guarantee a living wage, with a minimum of \$15 per hour; paid leave for medical care, family, bereavement and vacation; the right to organize a union without intimidation from employers; and healthcare coverage.
- Make the Road Connecticut and their allies at Working Families Party CT worked to educate policymakers and allies about the need for universal Paid Sick and Safe Leave through meetings, actions and trainings and with strategic input from PDiA. Thanks to this effort the legislature passed [universal Paid Sick and Safe Leave](#), subsequently signed into law by the governor in May 2024.
- Make the Road New Jersey, through a canvassing and basebuilding program developed with PDiA, won a [corporate business tax](#) that imposes an additional 2.5% tax on corporations earning over \$10 million in profits. The proceeds from this tax will fund NJ transit and support public transportation infrastructure in the state.
- In 2023, Working Washington, after deep canvassing and listening sessions with gig workers to understand their issues, and with organizing and comms support from PDiA, successfully moved policymakers in Seattle to provide stronger benefits for gig workers. In 2024, Working WA successfully [defended the Pay Up standards](#) (minimum pay floor for gig workers) against a heavy lobbying offensive by corporate interests. Working Washington also helped to [pass an innovative third-party mechanism to enforce workers’ rights](#) (allowing for workers and their organizations to directly initiate enforcement actions) and a special fee to fund enforcement of the newly won gig worker protections.

VOTING RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY

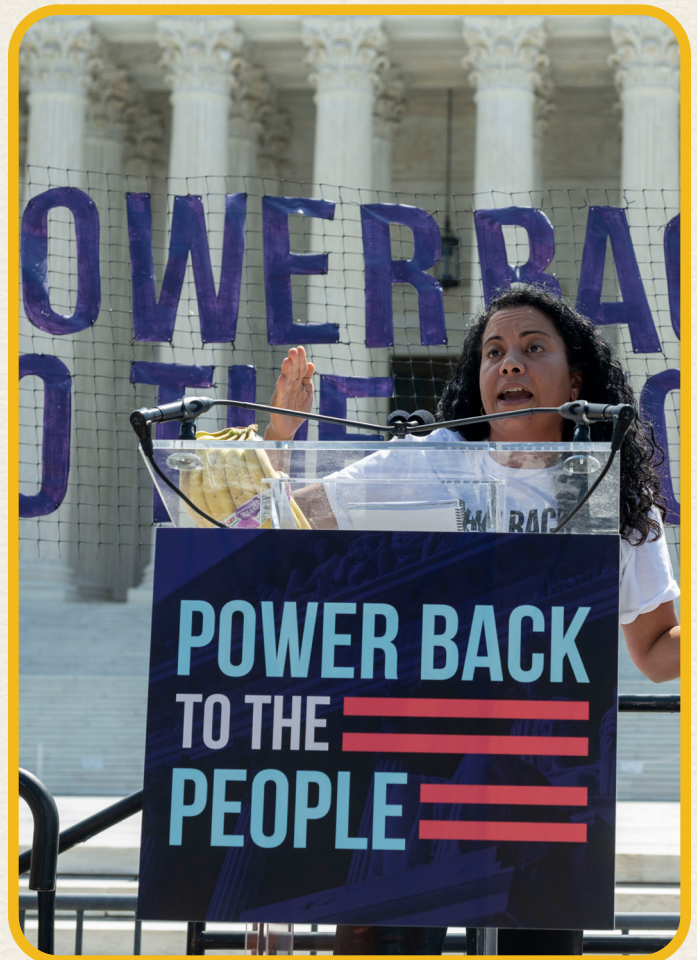
PDiA collaborated with affiliates, providing support through monthly strategy calls, policy analysis, base-building integration, leadership development, and popular education training, while also planning national campaign opportunities to unify policy platforms and narrative strategies. Highlights from across the network include:

- LUCHA educated policy makers about the importance of automatic voter registration. Thanks to these efforts AZ introduced an **automatic voter registration bill** in January, intended to increase voter access and mitigate recent anti-voter policies in Arizona, which target working class communities of color.
- PDiA supported affiliate OnePA in Pennsylvania **to advance a bill to establish same-day registration and early in-person voting** after it was introduced by the Speaker of the State House.
- PDiA submitted testimony in support of the **Michigan Voting Rights Act** in alignment with Detroit Action and allies, which passed the state senate in September. It was a package that included expanded language access, private right of action against vote dilution and suppression, and judicial approval of voting changes in places with prior voting rights violations.



JUDICIARY REFORM

- Given the rapidly moving political environment during 2024, PDiA shifted some of the focus of our reproductive justice and judiciary reform work to include a longer-term focus on state abortion bans. **We trained 20,000 people** on the dangers to abortion access in Project 2025. We partnered with Planned Parenthood Federation Action to hold **30 bird-dog trainings and 20 bird-dogging expeditions in 15 states** to lift up reproductive justice work. We also developed our cohort of affiliate organizations.
- Together with Stand Up America, we **created a coalition** called United for Democracy. This coalition has quickly become a center of gravity for SCOTUS reform and judicial ethics reforms.



2024 Elections

Using the insights from the Center for Popular Democracy's poll on housing as a political issue, Popular Democracy in Action (PDiA) designed a partisan strategy for injecting housing into the political discourse and communicating with renters about what was at stake in the election and where candidates stood on issues that impacted renters specifically. PDiA staff briefed the Biden campaign on our poll and urged his administration to take action. These targeted interventions by PDiA, its affiliates, and countless other partners and tenant-led organizations, directly led to the centering of the housing crisis in Biden's final State of the Union address when he declared we must bring those rents down as well as his proposal to **cap rents** for large corporate landlords.

Popular Democracy PAC's "We Rent, We Vote" Independent Expenditure campaign spent and leveraged over \$750K for digital advertising and direct mail targeting roughly 350,000 battleground state BIPOC renters, focusing on those residing in a battleground Congressional or State Legislative district, in addition to renters in communities where our affiliates have a tenant organizing presence.

Our **digital ads**, featuring tenant leaders from Make the Road Action Nevada's base, were generously produced by Tony Award-winning creator Lemon Anderson, and were targeted to Black, brown, and working class renters in battleground states, generating over 5.5M impressions.

Our **direct mail** campaign included two pieces to contrast Trump and Harris on housing affordability. Our research – coupled with insights from thousands of conversations with renters in our base – told us that when renters heard about the plans of the candidates and the impact they would have on their personal struggles, they overwhelmingly preferred Harris.

Board of Directors

The PDiA Board of Directors is composed of representatives from our key constituency groups: state affiliates, core national partner organizations, allied partners, and community members. The Board oversees and approves core strategic direction for PDiA, and holds us accountable to our stated annual goals and objectives.

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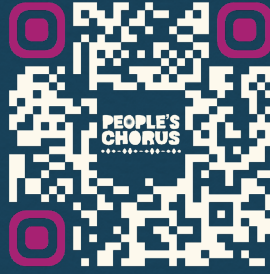
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WEEK OF PEACE
NY • VA • CHI • MS • ATL • AL
AUGUST 1 - 7, 2024



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