

CHANGING STATES

BUILDING POWER ON THE FRONTLINES: *MISSOURI*

CREATED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE USC PROGRAM FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGIONAL EQUITY

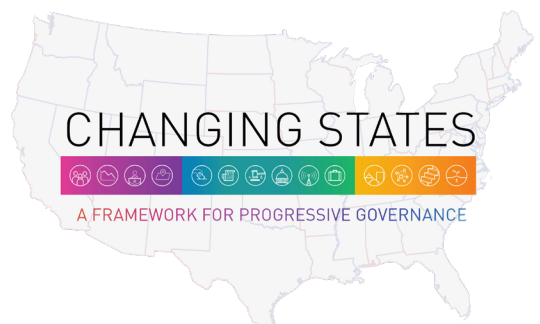




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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW: GOALS AND APPROACH OF THIS POWER AUDIT

THE CHANGING STATES FRAMEWORK

Changing States: An Analytical Framework for Progressive Governance (May 2016) is a research-based framework for assessing possibilities for, and pathways to, progressive governance in the U.S. states. *Changing States* proposed three main shifts in thinking among progressive philanthropy and movement leaders:

1. To cast their sights beyond winning power to wielding power, thereby emphasizing the idea of governance or governing power;
2. To challenge the dominant, transactional approach to states driven by short term campaign and electoral strategy and instead invest in organizations that deeply engage constituency bases, develop leadership, and have dynamic capacities across multiple arenas of change;
3. To engage in a rigorous assessment of states that goes beyond geography and lifts up the conditions, capacities, and arenas for power building.

To support these shifts, *Changing States* advocates for a set of strategies that run contrary to the ways in which many donors, operatives, and national organizations typically construct and invest in state “infrastructure.” First, it lifts up state-based, deeply rooted organizations and capacities needed to deploy the kind of power that can challenge inequalities in the U.S. Second, it defines the terrain for contesting for power and the approaches to building power in multiple arenas. Thirdly, *Changing States* emphasizes a state level approach, pushing back against national-to-state investments for short-term gain.

The goal of this approach is to encourage an urgent shift in how states are invested in that will result in building long-term power. This means using this framework as a guide to invest in existing indigenous organizations as well as new formations that organize broad and deep constituencies consistently over time, leverage that power to win elections and ultimately have the ability to govern.

As UC Santa Barbara political scientist Hahrie Han described these organizations:

“We need organizations that have the ability to link authentic grassroots power with elite lobbying relationships, can consistently demonstrate the ability to move a constituency, and that have the strategic capacity to effectively navigate the uncertainties of politics.”

POWER AUDIT APPROACH

This “power audit” is meant to synthesize and apply the *Changing States* framework in real time, on the ground, with specific examples and opportunities for building a path to progressive governance. The qualitative research we conducted prioritized local leadership and those with deep knowledge to ask four interrelated questions laid out in the original *Changing States* documents:

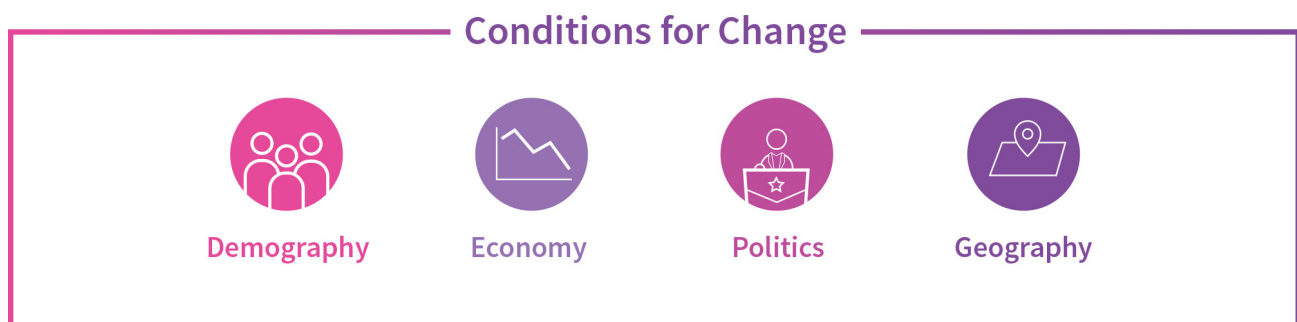
1. What are the conditions (i.e., demographic, economic, political, and geographic) that create the context for social change efforts?
2. What are the arenas (i.e., electoral, legislative, judicial, administrative, corporate, and communications) in which progressive change is won, implemented, and protected?
3. What are the barriers to change (i.e. anti-progressive interests, corporate power analysis) that progressives face? And
4. What are the capacities (i.e., organizational breadth, networks and alliances, leadership ladders and lattices, and resource bases) for building power toward governance?

This approach differs from many state-mapping projects in moving from analysis to shared vision, equipping key state players and organizations with tools and a framework to allow them to develop ideas for future planning and action.

The strategic considerations put forward in this document are for the purpose of accelerating the path to progressive governance in Missouri. The *Changing States* framework defines progressive governance “as the ability to implement and sustain long-term change that can further social justice.” “Progressive” refers to a commitment to equity and justice and is rooted in the values of economic inclusion and democratic participation. In using the term “progressive,” we are not referring to any particular political party; rather, our analysis is directed at understanding what changes in the broader policy and institutional contexts would allow social justice goals to be achieved. In using the term “governance,” our analysis is much broader than government; rather, we are referring to the political and power structures and processes that shape decision making and include institutions that are both outside of and a part of government.

It is the deep belief of the authors of this report that this can only be achieved by independent political power anchored by organizations that cultivate and are democratically accountable to a definable base of people.

Finally, this report was commissioned by Philanthropy for Systemic Change and underwritten by Missouri Foundation for Health and Deaconess Foundation. This project is intended to inform these foundations as they embark upon ambitious strategies to support a diverse network of organizations working toward progressive governance. The idea is not to create a proscribed or narrow approach but rather to present multiple choices on ways in which specific investments can further bolster the ability of partners to win and ultimately to govern.



MISSOURI CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

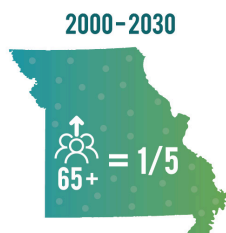
A thoughtful analysis of current conditions —as well as past and future trends— will help us ground our recommendations in the world as it is. In this section we examine Missouri by looking at demography, geography, politics and economics.



DEMOGRAPHY & MISSOURI: INCREASING DIVERSITY BUT SLOW GROWTH

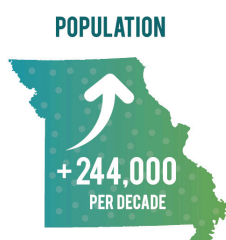
Missouri has slipped to the nation's eighteenth most populous state as a result of lower than average growth. Missouri's rank among the nation's most populous states has been on the decline since the turn of the previous century, when Missouri ranked the fifth most populous. Missouri has fallen from 15th to 18th just in the past two decades. Demographically, Missouri's trends are similar to other Midwestern states.

An analysis shows three key trends. **By 2030 Missouri will:**



Grow older, on average. Residents over age 65 will make up more than one-fifth of all Missourians by 2030. Older adults are expected to increase 87% between 2000 and 2030 when the state's population is projected to include 1.4 million seniors.¹

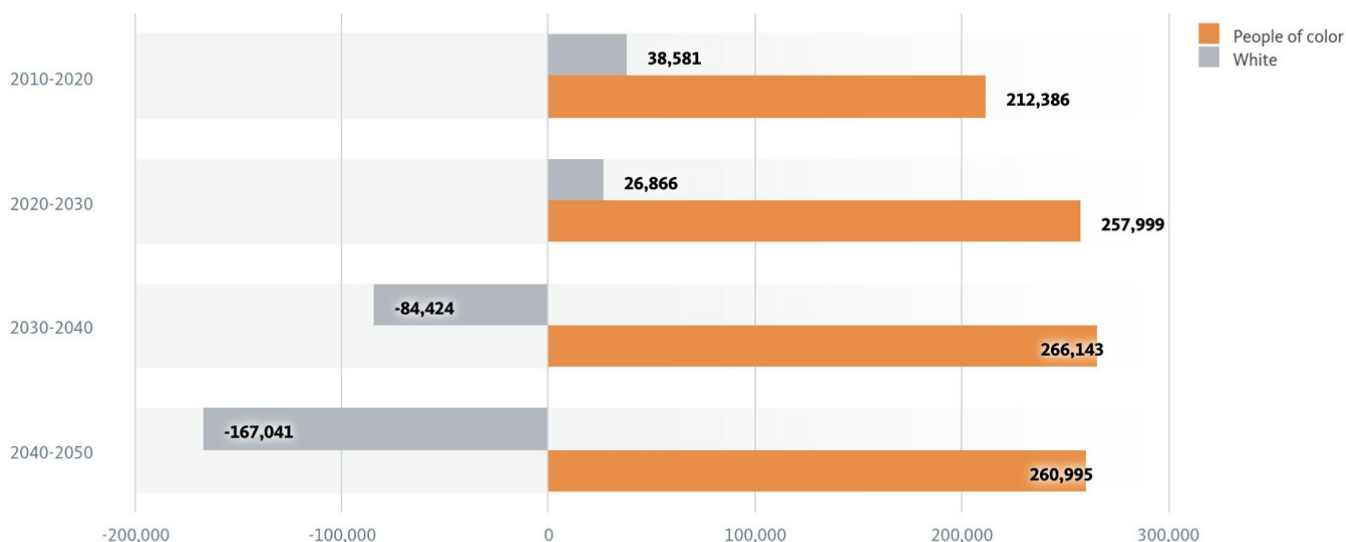
Grow in proportion of people of color: In the next 40 years, people of color in Missouri are projected to increase by 997,523 persons. During that same period, white residents are predicted to slightly increase in the next twenty years and then decrease from 2030 to 2050. However, this does not represent a demographic tipping analogous to other more rapidly changing states.²



Maintain its population with limited growth and migration. Natural change is expected to add an average of 244,000 Missourians per decade. Moreover, net migration (those migrating in compared to those migrating out) is expected to increase Missouri's population by 139,000 persons every 10 years.³

Considering these trends together, leaders in Missouri are compelled to build strategies that are multiracial and engage working class people across racial and geographic lines. While migration and growth of people of color is driving political and electoral changes in the southern and southwestern regions of the country, this is not the case for Missouri or the Midwest. The graph below shows that while these changes are happening in Missouri, they are occurring at a slower pace:

Change in population by race: Missouri, 2010-2050



U.S. Census Bureau; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.
PolicyLink/PERE National Equity Atlas, www.nationalequityatlas.org

1 https://www.missourieconomy.org/indicators/population/pop_proj_2030.stm

2 Data provided by University of Southern California Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, www.nationalequityatlas.org

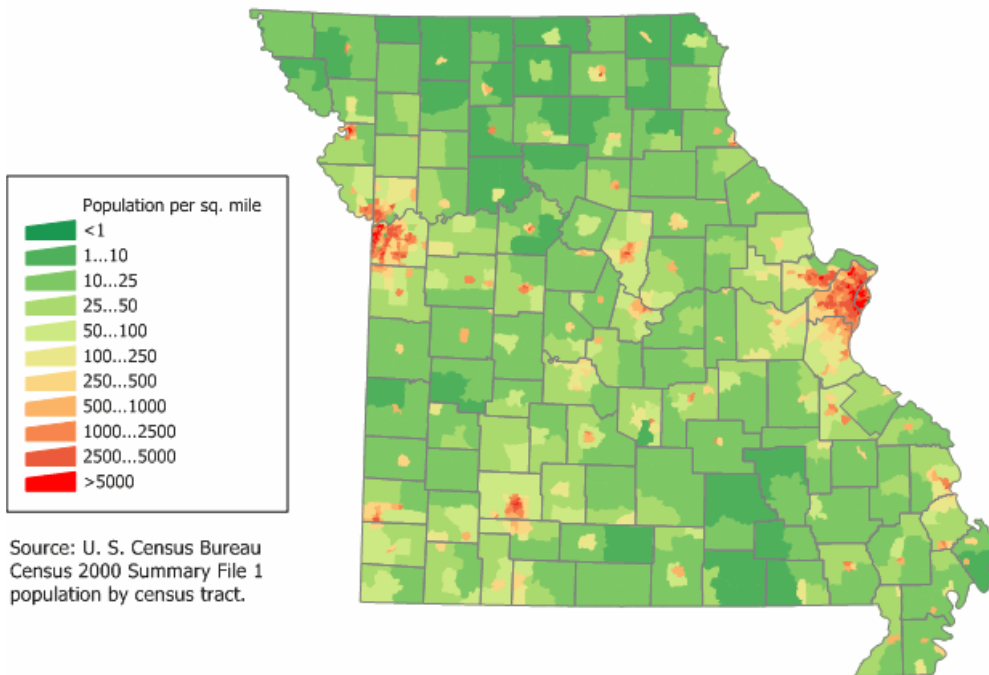
3 <https://oa.mo.gov/budget-planning/demographic-information/population-projections/population-trends>



MISSOURI GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

I think that the urban-rural divide is often times a proxy for racial issues when like urban-rural is often a more peaceful way of talking about the racial divide. So I think that there is that legacy of out state Missouri working against St. Louis.

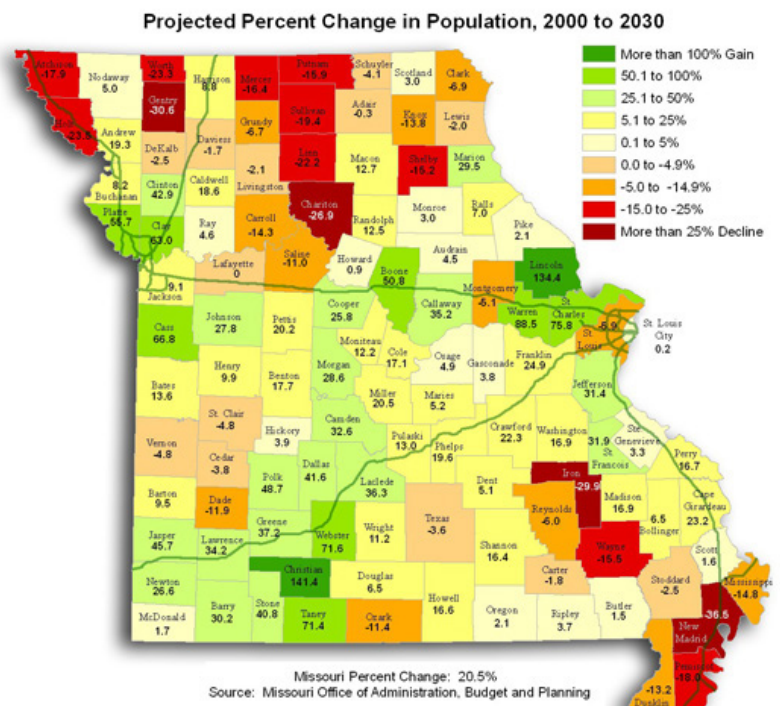
-MO State Leader



The state of Missouri is book-ended by two large metropolitan areas, St. Louis and Kansas City. Those metropolitan areas hold roughly half of the state's population with the rest of the population living in small towns and rural areas. Projections suggest that Missouri is likely to continue this trend with more people moving to the inner and outer ring suburbs over the next 30 years. The map at left shows Missouri's population density today.

And the map at right shows the projected movement of people over the next 20 years.

Missouri's politics are informed by its geography with the tug and pull between St. Louis, a culturally eastern city, and Kansas City, a culturally western city. The north is the rural breadbasket while the south is a socially conservative Bible Belt. While Missouri is clearly a Midwest state, the southeastern part of the state, the Bootheel (pronounced Boothill in the region) is on the edge of the Mississippi Delta and has some characteristics of the South. Its relatively large Black population makes it distinct from the rest of rural Missouri. The black population ranges from about 26% in Pemiscot County, to 15% in New Madrid County, and about 9% in Dunklin County. However, cultural generalizations based on geography are at best noted carefully here in Missouri given the legacies both of slavery and Jim Crow, reality is nuanced across all geographies with a complex cultural pull towards many points of the compass.





MISSOURI POLITICS

So you have an economic identity struggle happening, but you also have the events in Ferguson and all of that. I think Missouri is uniquely positioned to serve as an example of how can you acknowledge, like mend and build a multi-racial coalition moving forward. Like for all of the bad things that caused and came out of Ferguson it is also a unique opportunity for this state and the community to have an honest assessment of where it's at. Are you willing and able to deal with that and make the coalitions necessary and pass the legislation necessary to help move past the things that caused that to happen?

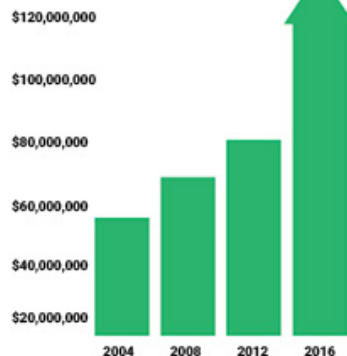
-MO State Based Leader

Statewide offices in Missouri in recent decades have been consistently mixed in terms of party control. Only since 2016 has there been a "trifecta" at the state government level, where one party controls all three branches of government. Missouri mirrors other Midwestern states where the party in control has influenced a set of policies that favor the participation of specific voters—converting a slim electoral majority into super majorities in the statehouse and a lopsided Congressional delegation, both of which foster financial and organizational advantage. These policies include gerrymandered legislative districts, voter suppression tactics such as requiring photo ID as well as no limits for campaign contributions and lobbyist gifts.

Growing use of these tactics began in 2008 when the state legislature repealed voter-approved contribution limits. Following passage of the law, hard-dollar contributions essentially doubled in Missouri coming from half as many donors. In a no-limits world candidates now focus their time and attention on the biggest donors, many (or most) of whom are not actual constituents.

In a world without limits, campaign spending exploded.

In a decade, campaign fundraising in Missouri more than doubled.



For more evidence of the partisan impact of these policy changes, we need look no further than two Missouri mega donors. The contributions of anti-union businessman David Humphreys and his family members total more than \$20 million over the last 20 years with virtually all of their money going to extremely conservative candidates, PACs and the Republican Party. Rex Sinquefeld has given more than \$45 million to candidates and campaigns since 2008 following the same pattern. And these totals do not account for the extensive networks of 501c3s and c4s in the state that are designed to move money from a small network of super wealthy donors.

But the number of actual donors actually declined. Dramatically.

There were almost 50% more donors in 2008 - the year our legislature repealed contribution limits.



Second, voters recently approved a constitutional amendment putting in place a "voter ID" requirement for voting that went into effect last summer.⁴ Measuring the impact of this law is complicated and will take time, but understanding it is simple: adding steps to a process—for voting or any other activity—will reduce the number of people who complete the process, create confusion and spawn new accessibility issues. Studies in other states have found that not only do laws like these serve to disenfranchise voters who do not possess an ID, they also have a disparate impact on voters of color.⁵

4 http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/as-missouri-photo-id-voting-law-goes-into-effect-opponents/article_6c965577-46eb-53fc-86b6-802bfcf86651.html
5 https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/02/15/do-voter-identification-laws-suppress-minority-voting-yes-we-did-the-research/?utm_term=.1543e89e7ebe

Tactics that foment political division through a racial lens cannot be underestimated as a factor in these strategies. Whether through racially coded language or tactics to suppress votes, voters of color have been key targets of the legislature. In a special election in the Kansas City region in 2017 now State Senator Mike Cierpot's campaign ads argued that the "St. Louis riots have made Missouri a national disgrace," and advocated policies that support mass incarceration.⁶ The Missouri legislature's passage of SB43 in 2017, a law that essentially limits legal recourse for victims of housing, employment and public accommodation discrimination, prompted a travel warning by the NAACP for African American visitors to the state.⁷ Missouri also lost \$600,000 in funding from HUD because the law was out of compliance with the Fair Housing Assistance Act.⁸

Missouri's policy landscape has been dominated for years by policies pushed by a MO legislature that hurt working families. Since 2017, the pace and extent of these policies has accelerated as state government have advanced a series of regressive policies negatively impacting the most vulnerable Missourians:

- More than 100,000 working families in Kansas City and St. Louis saw meager paychecks slashed further as the state preempted local increases to the minimum wage.
- Nearly 10,000 seniors and people with disabilities have lost access to critical in-home care and support.

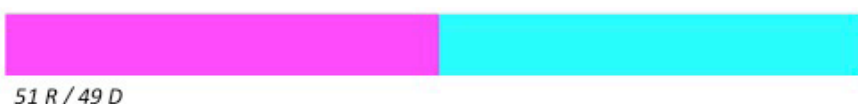
- Missouri has failed to expand Medicaid resulting in 300,000 people not receiving coverage.

- The Missouri legislature passed a right to work law in early 2017 although this law was overturned by a victorious ballot initiative led by the We Are Missouri coalition during the August, 2018 primary with 67.5% of Missouri voters rejecting the legislation and supporting workers' rights.⁹

- The state passed an unconstitutional ban on access to vital reproductive health access services.

A review of recent Missouri election results over the past decade shows a disconnect between vote share and representation. Republican and Democratic candidates are consistently competitive in statewide contests, with opportunities for Missourians to have a say in who represents them as U.S. Senator, Governor and other executive offices. However, Republican majorities in the Missouri General Assembly have steadily increased with each of the past two apportionment plans, to the point that Democratic Caucuses now hold super-minority status in both legislative chambers. Very few legislative seats are drawn to be competitive, leaving citizens with few opportunities to hold their legislators accountable in general elections. This is especially true for Missourians who live in poor communities and communities of color, many of whom live in "packed" districts in urban areas.

**Actual Votes Cast on
Statewide Candidates,
2008-2016**



**State House District
Partisanship, as
districts drawn, 2010**



**Partisanship of
those actually
elected, State
House, 2016**



⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOPCj5WUOAY&feature=youtu.be>

⁷ <https://www.naacp.org/latest/travel-advisory-state-missouri/>

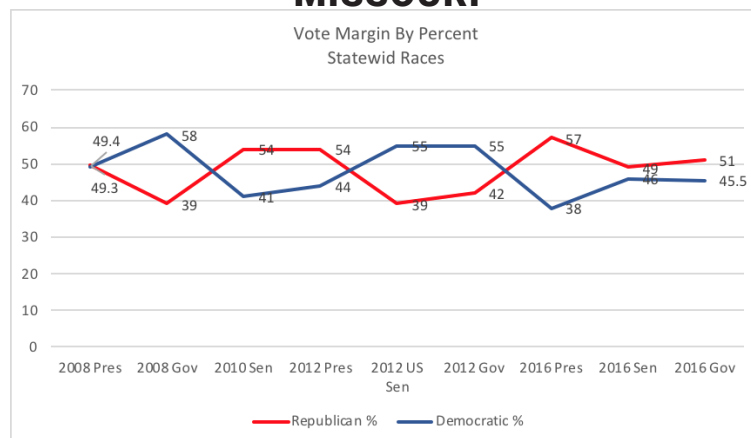
⁸ https://www.stltoday.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-a-bad-discrimination-law-prompts-federal-repercussions-for-missouri/article_48fb268f-2bf4-5d3d-80ca-35c00cfabd53.html

⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/07/business/economy/missouri-labor-right-to-work.html>

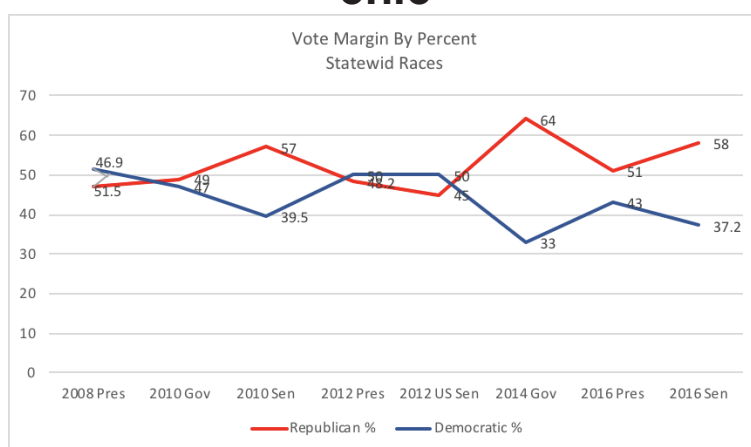
The recent 2016 election and gerrymandering of the state legislature has led many outside and inside the state to wrongly assume that the state is no longer competitive and that it has tilted ideologically to the Right.¹⁰ An objective analysis of voting patterns shows that **Missouri has actually been more competitive than Ohio when looking at US Senate, governor, and Presidential results combined since 2008.** And there is no comparison between Missouri and its neighbor, Kansas, where recent election results have given the state a deep red lean.

Below and at right: Top of ticket race margins and wins by party in three states 2008 to 2016.

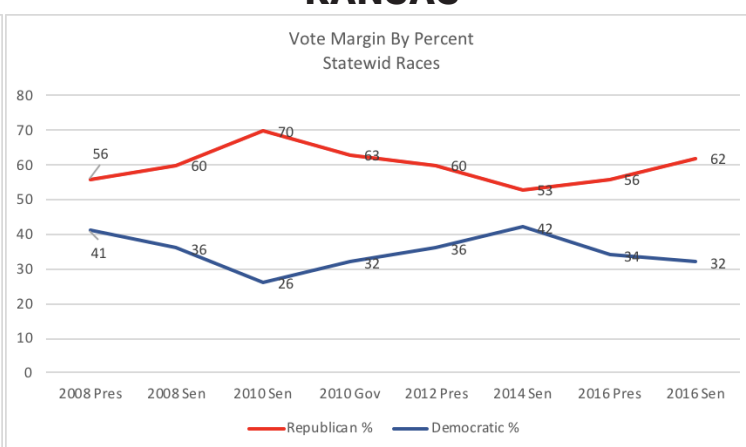
MISSOURI



OHIO



KANSAS



Affiliation	Party (Shading indicates majority caucus)		Total	Vacant
	Republican	Democratic		
End of previous legislature	24	9	33	1
Beginning of present legislature	24	9	33	1
Current			33	1
June 5, 2018 ^[3]		10	34	0
Latest voting share	71%	29%		

Missouri's legislature is primarily decided in the primaries with only a handful of competitive seats in the house and senate. The current makeup of the legislature is outlined in the charts at left. Top: Missouri Senate - 24 Republicans and 9 Democrats; bottom: Missouri House - 114 Republicans and 47 Democrats.

Missouri's new governor Mike Parson assumed office on June 1st, 2018 in the wake of the scandal that forced the resignation of Eric Greitens based on invasion of privacy charges and illegally obtained donor lists as well as accusations of sexual assault. The legislature had been moving forward with impeachment proceedings as Greitens announced his resignation.¹¹

Affiliation	Party (Shading indicates majority caucus)			Total	Vacant
	Republican	Democratic	Ind		
End 2016 session	115	45	1	161	2
March 18, 2018 ^[15]	114	47		161	2
Latest voting share	70.81%	29.19%			

¹⁰ <http://www.kmov.com/story/33307600/missouri-no-longer-a-swing-state>

¹¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/15/us/governor-eric-greitens-history-facts-accusations.html>



MISSOURI'S ECONOMIC CONDITIONS: SLOW GROWTH AND INEQUALITY

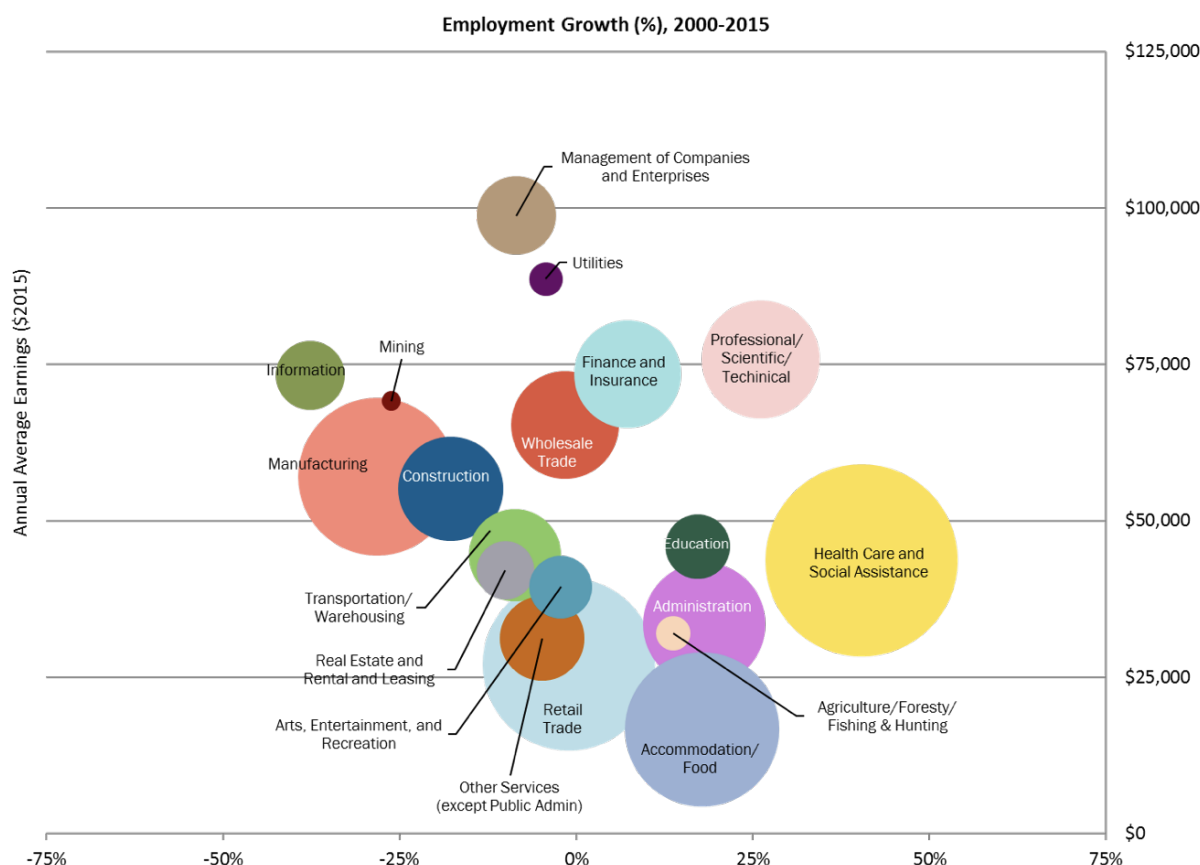
Job growth is lousy. Personal income isn't booming. The overall economy is among the nation's weakest.

-February 2016, *Kansas City Star* Editorial about the Missouri economy¹²

Missouri has been slow to recover from the Great Recession as its economy was already suffering as a result of deindustrialization, the rise of factory farms, and slower population growth. This has hit working class people extremely hard. In many cities, median home values are just today returning to 2006 levels in a brutally slow recovery. These economic conditions have made the state vulnerable to the rise of a type of populist messaging tinged by racist and xenophobic rhetoric. The state's voting electorate is majority working class and 57% of voters in the last election were White working class.¹³ Missouri represents the struggle of the middle of the country and has not felt the "economic recovery" in the ways that the East and West Coast have over the past ten years.

Missouri ranks between 20 and 30 among the 50 states on various measures of income inequality, according to a 2012 report from EPI and CBPP.¹⁴ These inequities are stark – the top fifth of households, for instance, made more than seven times as much as the bottom fifth of households, according to the report. Racial inequities in the state are particularly stark. In St. Louis, for example, median household income for White households is more than twice that of Black households – \$52,425 versus \$25,631.¹⁵ The college attainment rate is more than three times higher for White students as compared to Black students, 46% versus 14%.

Recent job growth has been concentrated in the service sector, with healthcare, professional services, construction, and retail and food services adding the most jobs. This chart below illustrates wage level and job growth from 2000 to 2015:



¹² <http://www.kansascity.com/opinion/editorials/article61384462.html>

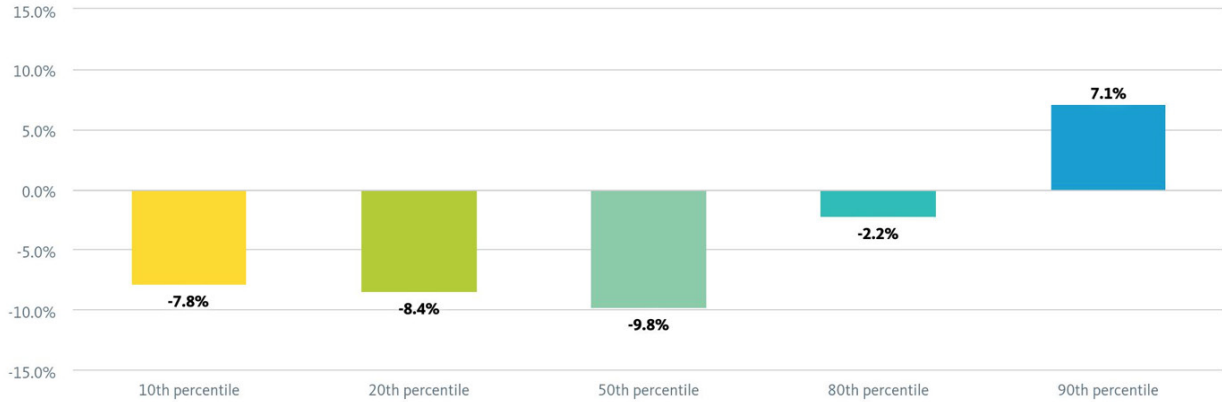
¹³ Working class defined as "non college educated" in the Census data

¹⁴ <https://www.epi.org/files/2012/Pulling-Apart-11-15-12sfp.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://100resilientcities.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/St-Louis-PRA-Final-PDF.pdf>

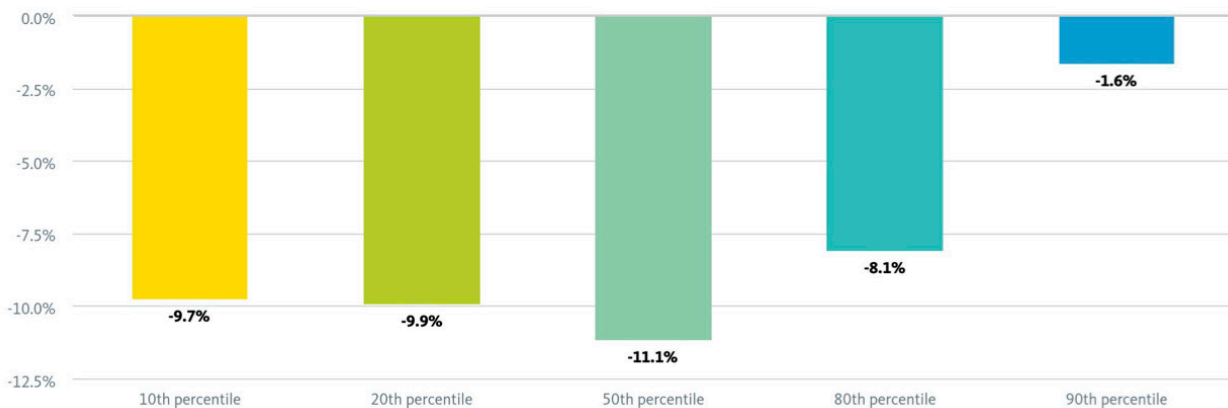
Over the past thirty five years, earned income growth has declined for every group of workers except the top 10% of earners. The hardest hit of these workers are middle and working class Missourians as the graphs below illustrate:

Earned income growth for full-time wage and salary workers: Missouri, 1980-2015



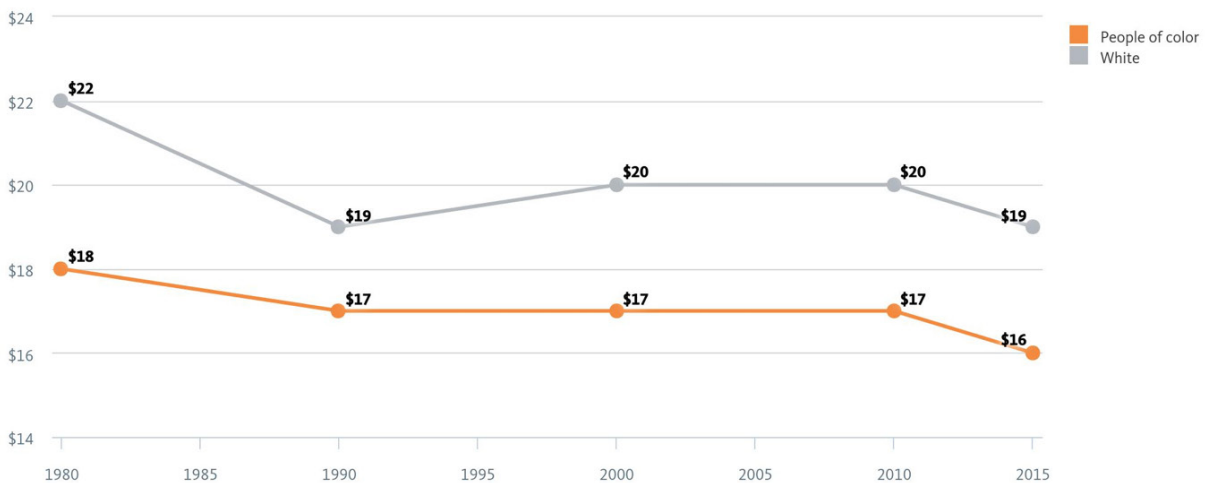
IPUMS
PolicyLink/PERE National Equity Atlas, www.nationalequityatlas.org

Earned income growth for full-time wage and salary workers: Springfield, MO Metro Area, 1980-2015



IPUMS
PolicyLink/PERE National Equity Atlas, www.nationalequityatlas.org

Median hourly wage by race/ethnicity: Missouri, 1980-2015



IPUMS
PolicyLink/PERE National Equity Atlas, www.nationalequityatlas.org

MISSOURI HEALTH INDICATORS

The demographic and economic conditions of Missouri illustrate a trend that is seen across the Midwest: declining opportunity for working class communities. A recent report from the Missouri Foundation for Health looked specifically at the plight of white working class communities. It highlights the anxiety among these communities who believe their children will be worse off than them. From the report:

Death rates have generally been decreasing in the United States and other industrialized countries, due to advances in public health and medicine. However, a reverse pattern has been observed among young and middle-aged whites in Missouri, whose death rates have increased since 2000.

Rural areas have been especially impacted by this trend: The 33 counties in Missouri where mortality increased by more than 50 deaths per 100,000 among whites ages 25-59 years were primarily in the rural south central (the Ozarks), southeastern (Bootheel), southwestern and northwestern regions.

The largest mortality increases occurred in the Ozarks and Bootheel regions. These populations are overwhelmingly white and have experienced persistent poverty (defined as 20 percent or more of residents having lived in poverty for the last 30 years). In contrast, whites in major metropolitan areas (Kansas City and St. Louis) and along the I-70 corridor that links these cities were largely spared—their mortality rates decreased.

The study examined the 79 counties where death rates rose after 1995 among whites age 25-59 years, all of which were located outside of the major urban centers of Kansas City and St. Louis. The characteristics of the 33 counties with the largest increases in death rates (death rates rising more than 50 deaths per 100,000) were compared to those of the 46 other counties with more modest increases (death rates rising 50 or fewer deaths per 100,000).

People living in the 33 most impacted counties had less education; lower household incomes; higher rates of unemployment, poverty, and food insecurity; and a larger proportion of foreign-born residents. Residents of these counties had less access to health insurance, health care

providers (primary care and mental health), a vehicle, parks, or public transit.

At the same time (1995–2014) that death rates were increasing among young adult and middle-aged whites in Missouri, mortality rates among blacks, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, and Asians decreased by 23 percent, 24 percent, and 26 percent, respectively. Mortality rates among Hispanics in Missouri decreased by 53 percent. Nonetheless, troubling health disparities persist: Missourians of certain races (notably blacks) live shorter and less healthy lives than whites, Asians, and Latinos. By 2010–2014 the death rate among blacks remained 1.2 times that of whites. Continued efforts are needed to reduce the persistently high mortality rates among people of color. In addition, the unprecedented reversal of the usual decline in death rates among whites requires attention. This potential cause of the narrowing gap between blacks and whites has implications for people of all races and ethnicities, and is therefore examined here.¹⁶

Death rates in the state are exacerbated by a wave of hospital closures affecting small towns and rural areas not just in Missouri but across the country. A recent profile in the *New York Times* of shuttered hospitals in the Bootheel region argued that:

Medical help is growing dangerously distant for women in rural America. At least 85 rural hospitals — about 5 percent of the country's total — have closed since 2010, and obstetric care has faced even starker cutbacks as rural hospitals calculate the hard math of survival, weighing the cost of providing 24/7 delivery services against dwindling birthrates, doctor and nursing shortages and falling revenues.

The reality is that pregnant mothers and infants bear the brunt of these hospital closures with poor Missourians often needing to travel 100 miles or more to find basic obstetric care, delivery rooms or neonatal intensive care units.

¹⁶ <https://mffh.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/White-Death-Rate-in-Missouri-Report.pdf>

MISSOURI HEALTH INDICATORS

A second report also illustrates these demographic pressures on African American communities. *From the Sake of All* report:¹⁷

Since March of 2013, scholars from Washington University in St. Louis and Saint Louis University have been exploring how this unequal distribution of health in the St. Louis region is related to what are called social determinants of health — factors like education, income, the quality and composition of neighborhoods, and access to community resources like healthy foods and safe public spaces.

In one year alone, the loss of life associated with low levels of education and poverty among African Americans was estimated at \$4.0 billion.

African American health and well-being has been at the center of this work because of the particular history and demographic make-up of the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County, which make up the project's targeted geographic area. Differences in social and economic factors by race play a significant role in explaining the differences in health.

There are very real ways in which these differences in health and life outcomes affect everyone in the St. Louis region. Of course, the most important and immediate impact is the loss of our neighbors, co-workers, family, friends — our fellow St. Louisans — to deaths that could have been prevented. The economic costs of that loss of life are staggering as well. In one year alone, the loss of life associated with low levels of education and poverty among African Americans was estimated at \$4.0 billion.

These are just some of the costs and potential savings associated with the social and economic factors that are linked to health. We cannot afford to continue like this. Something has to change in order for everyone in the St. Louis region to be able to thrive and contribute to its growth and vitality. For the Sake of All is a project with just that purpose in mind.

The four project goals were to:

- 1. Inform the general public about the social determinants of health as they impact African Americans, as one of the populations most impacted by health disparities.***
- 2. Present the regional economic and health consequences of intervening (or failing to intervene) on social determinants of health.***
- 3. Provide evidence of the impact of persistent disparities on all members of the region, regardless of race or socioeconomic status.***
- 4. Influence the policy agenda on health disparities by broadening the conversation beyond personal responsibility and the delivery of medical care alone.***

Other economic impacts:

- 1.** More than 2,000 African American students dropped out of high school in 2012. They are likely to earn about \$7,000 less per year than high school graduates. Their lifetime earnings loss (ranging from \$347,000 to \$739,410) reduces purchasing power at regional businesses, lowers tax receipts, and adds to the costs of social services and unemployment assistance. Using earnings alone, St. Louis leaves \$694 million to \$1.5 billion "on the table" when we let dropouts occur.
- 2.** Eliminating racial and ethnic differences in mental health could save as much as \$27 million in inpatient hospital charges. Other economic impacts associated with poor mental health include crime, imprisonment, reduced earnings and employment, and family disruption.
- 3.** If we reduced the disparity in chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, St. Louis could save \$65 million a year in inpatient hospital charges, which would be a significant cut in the \$1.1 billion on just these three diseases.

¹⁷ https://forthesakeofall.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FSOA_report_2.pdf

Arenas of Change



Electoral



Legislative



Judicial



Administrative



Cultural



Corporate

CHANGING STATES: MISSOURI ARENAS OF CHAGE

Changing States lays out six decision-making arenas as target areas for organizing efforts to push, pass, and protect progressive policies and systemic change. These include the electoral, legislative, judicial, administrative, cultural, and corporate arenas. Together these define the full terrain where ideas, policies, and power are contested—and this tool is designed to help facilitate an ongoing understanding of what opportunities exist to shift power in each arena.

Missouri organizations' ability to successfully contest for power in these arenas are developed by gradually increasing sophistication in two competencies:

One, they must create a clear analysis about the power structure and key actors that pull the levers in that arena. This is built through ongoing research and a nuanced understanding of alliances, relationships, and influential players.

Second, they must develop the ability to deploy multi-layered strategies that disrupt the current power structure and create progressive alternatives.

Currently, the general approach to these arenas has been siloed with most of the activity among progressive organizations centered on the electoral and legislative arenas. Organizations often lack the sophistication necessary to operate powerfully in many of the arenas while also navigating between them.

This is not an argument to try to contest in all of these arenas at once, much less that each organization should engage in all of them. In fact, there are few states that have the capacity and resources to do so. Instead, we argue here that understanding several arenas simultaneously can illustrate the interplay between them and opportunities in real time to help progressive leaders make choices about where, how and when to contest for power.

For our Missouri power audit, we will focus primarily on the corporate, judicial and electoral arenas for three main reasons:

1. The electoral arena is often over emphasized when measuring state power. We need a fresh approach that examines organizational leadership and capacity over several cycles, more deeply aligns this work with other arenas, and goes far beyond data and numbers;
2. Conversely, the corporate arena is largely ignored at the state level, although corporate power defines the economy, jobs, wages and trade and corporate leaders play decisive roles in shaping/limiting what is politically possible in Missouri.
3. Finally the judicial arena is both critical but largely neglected particularly given the way in which it shapes the lives and fates of many poor people and people of color across the state.



ARENA FOCUS: ELECTORAL

We need to apply the best evidence [and] best practices on power building, especially with electoral work. We need to discard some of our approach that hasn't worked, that we are used to doing. Our message hasn't worked. I think that is on the top of mind for leaders, especially those who are trying to build this infrastructure.

-MO State Leader

Missouri's electorate mirrors much of the Midwest. It is predominantly White with a significant Black population and small but growing immigrant communities. Missouri has a relatively high percentage of registered voters – of Missouri's population of 6.1 million, 4.67 million are eligible voters of which 74% are registered, and 1.1 million are eligible but not registered. Missouri continues to have a significant percentage of younger voters, those 18 to 44 years old, that make up 45.6% of eligible voters. Below is a snapshot of Missouri's electorate.

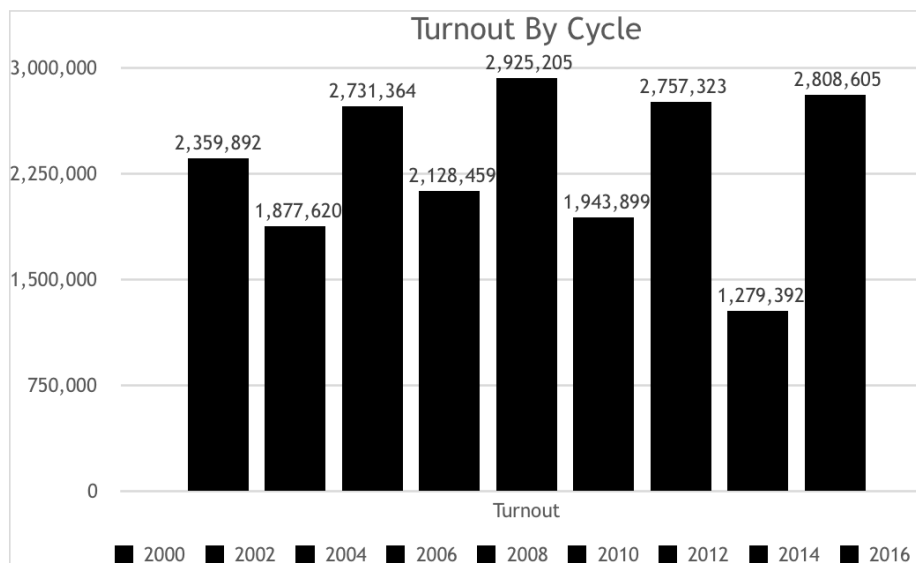
Number and Percent of Registered and Not Registered Voters (among citizen voting age population) by Race/Ethnicity, Missouri, 2016

	Registered	% Registered	Not Registered	% Not Registered
Non-Hispanic White	2,832,425	75%	946,204	25%
Black	384,836	78%	105,762	22%
Latino	59,387	64%	33,407	36%
Asian or Pacific Islander	21,025	57%	15,808	43%
Native American or Alaska Native	9,169	48%	10,077	52%
Other or Mixed Race	26,522	39%	41,747	61%
Total	3,333,364	74%	1,153,005	26%

Source: USC PERE analysis of 2016 Current Population Survey (CPS) from IPUMS-CPS; universe is citizen voting age population (CVAP), defined as age 18 and over and citizen.

The 2016 electorate was generally reflective of the demographics with White voters representing 84.2% of the citizen voting age population and 85.5% of the vote share. African Americans voters are also equally represented in the electorate being 10.9% of the population and 11.2% of the vote share. Asian and Latinx voters are significantly underrepresented.

However, turnout from cycle to cycle in Missouri has varied greatly. The state reached a high water mark in 2008 with 69.4 % turn out and a low water mark in 2014 with 35% turn out. Based on historical trends, there is likely to be a drop off in turnout and voter engagement in 2018 of at least 13% and possibly as high as 20%. At right is a graph that illustrates voter turnout levels over the last sixteen years.



In 2017, pollsters Celinda Lake and Joshua E. Ulibarri conducted an analysis on the predicted drop off of the Rising American Electorate in the 2018 cycle for states across the country including Missouri (the Rising American Electorate consists of young voters, voters of color and unmarried women). They predict that, without programmatic intervention, the 2018 drop off for Missouri RAE voters will be 39.5% or 531,392 voters. This would be a net loss of 149,864 younger voters, voters of color and unmarried women in the 2018 MO electorate compared to non-RAE voter drop off. See below.¹⁸

	RAE		NON-RAE	
States (Ranked by Highest RAE Drop-off)	2018 Drop-off %	2018 # of Drop- off Votes	2018 Drop-off %	2018 # of Drop- off Votes
Missouri	39.5%	531,392	24.5%	381,528.9

An example of this is African American voter participation over time and in particular the motivational difference between presidential and non presidential years (not to mention having an African American candidate at the top of the ticket). In St. Louis, where nearly half the population is African-American, voter turnout was 67.6 percent in 2016, compared to 74 percent in 2012 and 83 percent in 2008.¹⁹ A staggering 46,000 Black Missourians who voted in 2012 did not turn out in 2016—more than 10% of the Black electorate. Missouri leaders point to platforms that rarely embrace racial justice issues, like ending the school to prison pipeline, dismantling the prison-industrial complex, or addressing police brutality.

One black leader summarized her work to engage Black voters this way:

And so, you know, we're trying to define a politic... [the] idea that we don't believe in arrest and incarceration. We believe in restorative justice. We believe in economic justice and trying to really create these values and cement them as standard politics for people who have maybe voted once or twice, kind of didn't have a deep analysis of how they vote or how they engage candidates but understood voting as one of the many tools at our disposal toward this idea of larger social change.

501c3 groups can play a critical role in the electoral arena through a set of strategies to expand the electorate. They can do this effectively by expanding voter registration, issue education, engagement in progressive ballot issues and get out the vote efforts targeting infrequent voters. This requires an investment in integrated voter engagement and year round organizing in these communities.

Or as one Missouri funder explained:

We think about the electoral maps, we see folks who literally never get touched in some rural areas. And so there's some attention that needs to be given to that, [and] if you enter into communities of color it is also as if they do not exist from a voter contact, education and turnout standpoint.

¹⁸ Comparing the Voting Electorate in 2012-2016 and Predicting 2018 Drop-off: How the Electorate has Changed Over the Years and How that Informs the 2018 Cycle

¹⁹ http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/voter-turnout-in-st-louis-city-and-county-lower-than/article_f9e11b38-4b1e-5643-b570-a0d1eb78e55d.html

ELECTORAL ARENA SPOTLIGHT: BALLOT INITIATIVES

Through citizen-led ballot measures, voters in many states can use the power of direct democracy to bypass state legislatures and create new laws. These measures have been instrumental in recent years in pushing forward major legislation on health care, election reform, drugs, and other policy areas that have hit an impasse in statehouses. In 2018, these initiatives—and efforts by legislatures to stop or negotiate them—will be critical factors in determining who really controls government, and just exactly how it works.²⁰

Missouri advocates have grown their muscles in this arena starting in 2006 with the passage of a statewide minimum wage increase. In 2008, advocates stopped an anti-affirmative action amendment in its tracks through a grassroots “decline to sign” campaign that combined sophisticated analyses of the legal process alongside aggressive organizing. The amendment didn’t even appear on the ballot despite a 10 to 1 spending advantage that favored proponents.²¹ Also in 2008 Missouri organizations successfully passed an initiative that expanded collective bargaining rights to home health care workers. While progressive efforts have hit real stumbling blocks in 2012 and 2014, the collective capacity to learn and grow through both challenges and successes have made ballot initiatives the critical element of a broader, long-term strategy for transformation of the state.

In 2018, Missouri organizations are deeply invested in two ballot initiative strategies, a constitutional amendment to reform structural barriers to the democratic process in Missouri (Clean Missouri) and an initiated statute to raise the minimum wage (Raise Up Missouri). During Missouri’s August primary, We Are Missouri repealed Right to Work legislation passed by the Missouri legislature in early 2017. The effort, led primarily by organized labor, was critical to restoring workers rights in the state and the repeal succeeded with a stunning margin of victory (67% to 33%).

There is considerable debate about whether or not ballot initiatives are an effective tool for increasing democratic participation and the extent to which they advance long term governing power. Critics point to research that suggests initiatives don’t increase voter turnout, are expensive and don’t build organization while arguing that a determined focus on electing the “right” candidates is a better path. Meanwhile supporters of ballot initiative strategies argue that they not only motivate unlikely voters, build organization and leaders, but also are a core strategy of governing in real time when gerrymandering makes legislative strategies nearly impossible. Missouri is a case example for the latter and illustrates how ballot initiatives, when properly designed, should be at the center of a strategy for progressive governance.

Missouri’s 2018 ballot initiative approach rests on critical tactics with clear and important implications for future organizing in the state as well as lessons for other states:

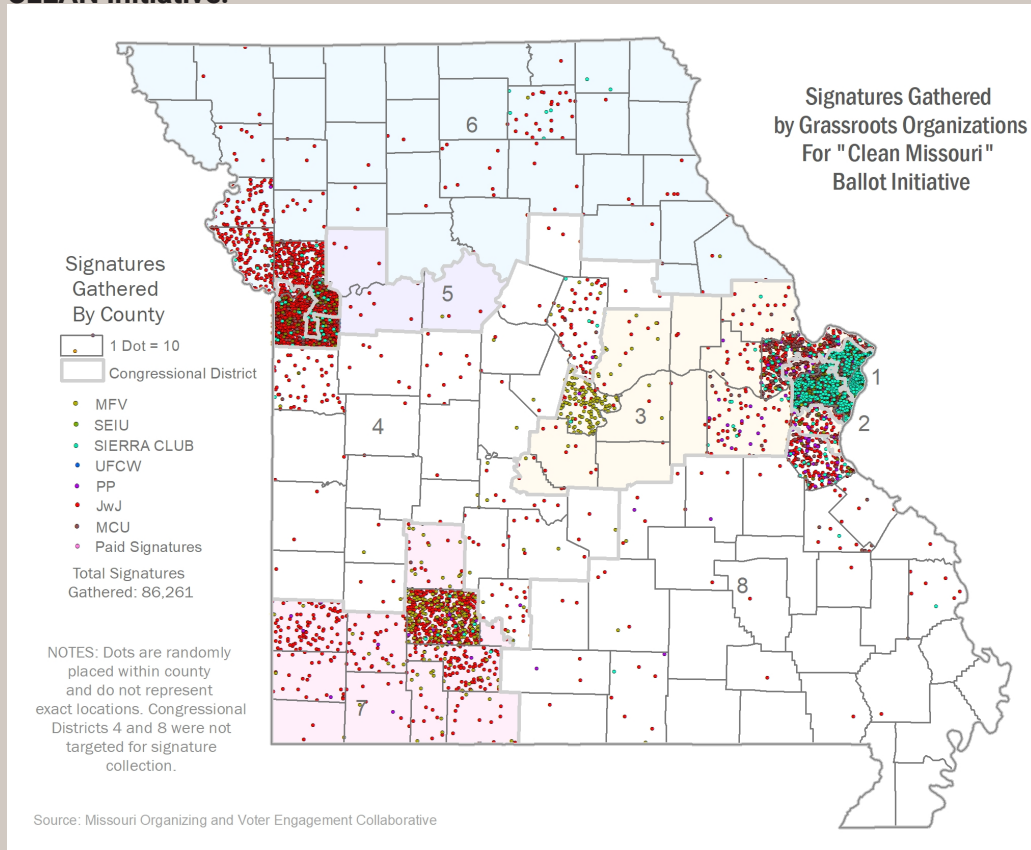
Do not Cede Your Terrain: Missouri organizations anchor their campaigns with key in-state leaders who shape both policies and strategy without ceding the terrain to out-of-state vendors and operatives.

Build Your Own Power: Grassroots organizations today are delivering significant (and growing) capacity to these campaigns while the campaigns deliver new power and capacity to the organizations. Organizations collected nearly 200,000 (approximately half) of the signatures required to qualify the measures (131,577 for the CLEAN initiative and 69,027 for the minimum wage increase). Grassroots organizations played not only a critical role in qualifying the initiatives but used signature collection to build their lists, identify new leaders and increase their brand recognition among everyday people. On the next page are two GIS maps that illustrate the kind of reach and impact groups can have through using ballot measures as an organizing tool.

²⁰ The Atlantic, American Voters Are Turning to Direct Democracy, April 2018

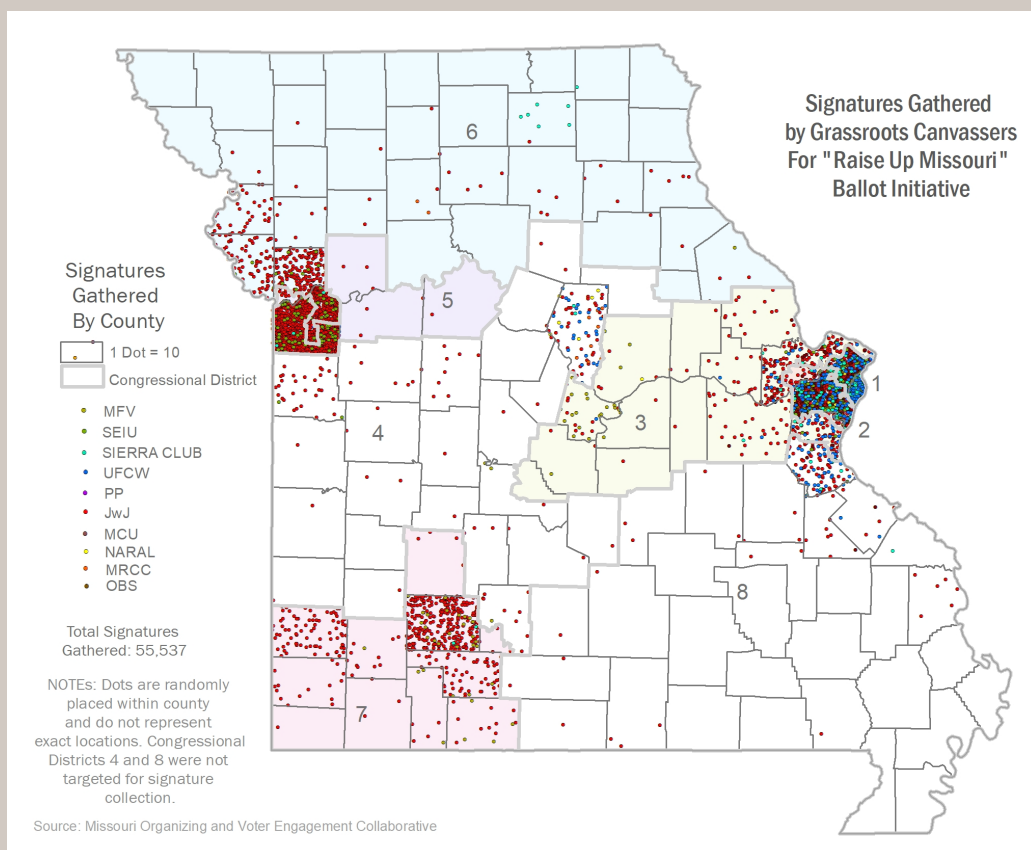
²¹ In 2008, \$3 million was spent by California-based conservative Ward Connerly to qualify the anti-affirmative action amendment, to \$300,000 by grassroots groups who stopped it.

131,577 Signatures Collected by Grassroots MO Organizations to qualify the CLEAN Initiative:



Missouri organizations plan today is to effectively use progressive ballot measures to increase low propensity voter turnout. With a targeted issue focus-raising wages and fair elections – Missouri organizations can drive narrative, volunteer recruitment, and collaborate across c3 and c4 structures while speaking to the self interest of voters. For instance, during the August primary vote on Right to Work, the total vote on the issue - nearly 1.4 million - exceeded the number of statewide ballots cast on behalf of all candidates in both party primaries that same day by more than 100,000 votes. As of Labor Day, 2018, grassroots organizations have already had more than 200,000 conversations with voters about these issues in the signature collection phase and can reach another 500,000 with a fully funded GOTV program.

69,027 Signatures Collected by Grassroots MO Organizations for Minimum Wage:



Last, and perhaps most importantly, Missouri organizations can win real (and previously unattainable) victories for families in an otherwise hostile legislative climate. More than 677,000 Missourians would get a raise if Proposition B is passed creating better prospects and real income gains for our lowest wage workers. As illustrated by the We Are Missouri win, if properly designed these campaigns can provide an opportunity for deep leadership development, base building, and the power to build a more engaged and representative electorate that drives politics and policy in Missouri.



ARENA FOCUS: CORPORATE

There are ten Fortune 500 companies headquartered in Missouri, though none of them are in the top 20 statewide employers.²² The top 10 employers in Missouri range from consumer chains like Walmart and Hy-Vee to several different hospitals and medical centers.²³ Industries such as payday and installment lending and tobacco are key players, and frequently assert themselves aggressively in Missouri politics.

Corporate Influence: Planning and Advocacy

The Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry is the major statewide chamber of commerce. Its policy priorities, as outlined in its Missouri 2030 plan, included bringing right-to-work to Missouri, “an accomplishment decades in the making,” although now defeated by Missouri voters at the ballot box as well as defeating the initiative to raise Missouri’s minimum wage in November.²⁴ In the Missouri 2030 report, it cheers the political shifts that made this possible:

In 2017, things changed. Missouri voters and a united business community sent a staunchly pro-jobs governor to Jefferson City alongside record numbers of business-friendly legislators who were empowered to act on several long-neglected priorities.

The St. Louis Regional Chamber is the biggest regional chamber in the state in terms of revenue, followed by the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. Three business councils, Civic Progress and the St. Louis Regional Business Council and the Kansas City Civic Council, convene the CEOs of major corporations in each respective metro area. In many cases lobbyists work both for these councils as well as respective cities themselves creating ongoing conflicts that favor corporate interests. Other key business groups include the Associated Industries of Missouri (a National Association of Manufacturers affiliate), the Missouri Farm Bureau, the Missouri Hospital Association, and the Missouri Restaurant Association.

Several think tanks advocate for business interests in the state. The most high-profile, hardline group is the Show-Me Institute, a right-wing think tank affiliated

with the State Policy Network. The organization is backed in large part by co-founder Rex Sinquefeld. The Center for Media and Democracy has compiled a helpful guide to the Show-Me Institute, its priorities, and Sinquefeld.²⁵

Show-Me advocates a fairly extreme set of pro-business policies, and while it promotes many policies backed by the corporate community, it does not attract broad participation from the state’s most prominent corporate leaders, and at times is at odds with elements of the state’s corporate power structure. In 2015, for instance, the Greater Kansas City Chamber and the Kansas City Civic Council aligned against a state legislative proposal to eliminate earnings taxes in St. Louis and Kansas City, a crucial source of revenue. Elimination of earnings taxes has been a major priority for the Show-Me Institute.

Corporate Political Spending

Though a full analysis of political spending on the state level is outside the scope of this report, top corporate donors gave significantly to both US Senators from Missouri, Claire McCaskill and Roy Blunt, and the Republican Governors Association, a major source of support for now former Governor Eric Greitens.

Outside of corporate political spending, there are several important right-wing mega-donors in Missouri. The biggest, by far, is Rex Sinquefeld, the retired founder of Dimensional Fund Advisors. From 2011 through the end of 2016, Sinquefeld has given more than \$45 million in large contributions (more than \$5,000) in Missouri, more than three times as much as the next biggest donor (and also spent in excess of \$1 million both in 2017 and 2018).²⁶

Dark money, moved through chains of nonprofits that do not need to disclose their donors, is playing an increasingly important role in Missouri politics. For instance, former Governor Greitens benefited from millions in dark money contributions, including a \$1.9 million contribution from a PAC called SEALs for Truth. It was later revealed that the PAC had received all of its funding from a Kentucky-based nonprofit called the American Policy Coalition, which has ties to an Ohio-based attorney who has been described by the Center for Public Integrity as being

²² <https://www.missourieconomy.org/industry/top50/index.stm>

²³ <https://www.missourieconomy.org/industry/top50/index.stm>

²⁴ <https://mo2030.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/MO2030-report-2017.pdf>

²⁵ <https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/taxes-income-earnings/how-would-you-replace-earnings-tax-let-us-count-ways>

²⁶ <https://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article106274927.html>

central to a significant dark money nexus.²⁷ In other words, it is unclear where the money came from.

Additionally the now failed push for right-to-work in the state attracted a great deal of dark money. A dark money nonprofit tied again to Greitens, A New Missouri Inc., has been a central driving force and funder behind right-to-work efforts.²⁸ Missouri Rising, a nonprofit affiliated with the national group America Rising Action Squared, has prioritized right-to-work over the past year, and ranks among the most active organizations in the state in terms of lobbying.



JUDICIAL ARENA

Authors: Shuya Ohno and Denise Lieberman

The events in Ferguson and surrounding communities, along with recent elections, have showcased key fault lines in the judicial arena that perpetuate systemic biases and block efforts to build power. Identifying these fault lines and supporting organizing efforts to impact those systemic processes is critical to building an effective progressive power base that deeply engages all communities in Missouri.

The spontaneous mobilization of communities in Ferguson, North St. Louis County, and St. Louis protesting the police killing of Mike Brown eventually led to several significant organizing, advocacy, legal, and electoral efforts that have won advances and victories while continuing to push for meaningful change in the judicial arena.

Targeting the Criminal Legal System: Activists, Organizers, and Movement Lawyers

Municipal Courts

In January of 2013, ArchCity Defenders implemented a court-watching program to observe the region's 81 municipal courts.²⁹ Law students, volunteers, and lawyers completed observation forms and signed declarations regarding the illegal practices they observed. The practices ranged from denying the right to counsel to the illegal jailing of poor people

for their poverty and the issuance of warrants for the inability to pay fines and fees.

In 2014, Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment and ArchCity discussed a campaign focusing on bench warrants in the region's municipal courts. MORE's membership shied away from protest because they feared arrest as a result of warrants stemming from unpaid traffic tickets, not due to any hesitation with civil disobedience as a tactic. ArchCity Defenders' work focused almost exclusively on resolving warrants for people experiencing homelessness so that they could access housing, treatment, and jobs.

ArchCity compiled its findings from the court observation program and began writing a report in the summer of 2014 while continuing conversations with MORE regarding a broader campaign against the municipal court system.

Three days after the murder of Mike Brown, ArchCity published its report detailing the systemic abuses in the region's municipal courts.³⁰ The report found that by disproportionately stopping, charging and fining the poor and communities of color, by closing the Courts to the public, and by incarcerating people for the failure to pay fines, these policies push the poor further into poverty, prevent the homeless from accessing the housing, treatment, and jobs they so desperately need to regain stability in their lives, and violate the Constitution.³¹

Ferguson Consent Decree

When Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson murdered Mike Brown and protests began to shut down the small city of Ferguson, the Department of Justice came to St. Louis to investigate Ferguson's police department. During the course of the DOJ's time in Ferguson, local organizations and community members repeatedly raised awareness of widespread misconduct in St. Louis County's municipal court system that included the City of Ferguson. After gaining a greater understanding from individuals and local organizations dedicated to supporting their community, the DOJ expanded its investigation to include Ferguson's municipal court. They reported that the City of Ferguson engaged

²⁷ <http://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article110647117.html>

²⁸ <http://www.kansascity.com/opinion/editorials/article210997414.html>

²⁹ Koran Addo, ArchCity Defenders saw problems with municipal courts before Ferguson turmoil (April 2015) St. Louis Post-Dispatch, available at https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/archcity-defenders-saw-problems-with-municipal-courts-before-ferguson-turmoil/article_f1493907-7c8c-55af-a68b-6e36df0c2cae.html

³⁰ Thomas Harvey et al, ArchCity Defenders: Municipal Courts White Paper (2014), available at <http://www.archcitydefenders.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/ArchCity-Defenders-Municipal-Courts-Whitepaper.pdf> [hereinafter ArchCity White Paper]

³¹ See generally ArchCity White Paper.

in illegal patterns and practices of discrimination against Black people. The City of Ferguson denied the finding, yet reluctantly entered into a consent decree with the DOJ. The City of Ferguson did not admit that it committed the violations, but agreed to make recommended changes as a party to the case. The consent decree process lasts for at least five years.

The Ferguson Collaborative is the primary group that holds the City of Ferguson, the Department of Justice, and the independent monitor accountable to the people of Ferguson, Missouri. The Collaborative is comprised of Ferguson residents and concerned citizens from the region who want to see the City of Ferguson held accountable and ensure that the DOJ keeps its promises. They are the people's representatives.

Litigation

The findings in the report and the collaboration with MORE, OBS, and St. Louis Action Council led to federal civil rights litigation against more than 30 cities in the region for illegal fines and fees, illegal use of cash bail, debtors' prisons, police misconduct, the criminalization of dissent, and jail conditions.

In December of 2014, litigators brought a successful action against the City of St. Louis Police Department, the St. Louis County Police Department, and the Missouri Highway Patrol to stop the widespread use of teargas and chemical munitions against peaceful protesters after the non-indictment.³² Frontline protesters from MAU were the named plaintiffs in the litigation brought by ArchCity Defenders, Advancement Project, and SLU Law Legal Clinics.

Between August of 2014 and February of 2015, within 6 months of the murder of Mike Brown, litigators and organizers worked together to find plaintiffs in class actions against the City of Ferguson and the City of Jennings, challenging the

debtors' prisons run by those two municipalities.³³ The lawsuits asserted that impoverished people in those two municipalities were jailed because they were unable to pay debts owed for traffic tickets or other minor offenses, without any judicial inquiry into their ability to pay those debts. This started a national trend in debtors' prisons and bail litigation and preceded the Department of Justice's report on the Ferguson police department.

In 2015, ArchCity Defenders brought suit against the Velda City for their unlawful cash bail scheme. The lawsuit eliminated the use of cash bail in Velda City and has been used as a model for systemic bail litigation in other municipalities such as Maplewood, Foristell, and Florissant to eliminate the cash bail process that disproportionately impacts low-income communities of color.

In 2016, a federal judge approved the terms of a landmark debtors' prison class action brought by ArchCity Defenders, Saint Louis University Law School's Legal Clinic, and Civil Rights Corp against the City of Jennings Missouri, a community that borders Ferguson. The settlement ends cash bail, debtors' prisons, and payment dockets.³⁴ The \$4.7 million claim includes debt forgiveness of approximately \$2 million.³⁵ Organizers from Organization for Black Struggle canvassed neighborhoods to alert North County residents about their claims. The collaboration between organizers and litigators led to a massive increase in claims made in the class action.

As of the writing of this report, more than \$8 million has been paid out to victims of this racist, predatory system and more than \$4 million in debt has been recovered. The combined efforts of organizers, activists and litigators has also led to the recall of more than 200,000 warrants for arrest, wholesale shifts in court procedures, and a reduction in revenue raised from \$54 million in 2014 to \$22 million in 2018.³⁶

32 Trymaine Lee, Ferguson Protesters Win Injunction To Prevent Cops From Using Teargas MSNBC (December 2014) available at <http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/ferguson-protesters-win-injunction-stop-cops-using-tear-gas>

33 Spencer S. Hsu, Missouri Cities Sued Over Municipal Court Practices, Washington Post (Feb. 2, 2015), available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/ferguson-and-jennings-mo-sued-over-municipal-court-practices/2015/02/08/256da2d2-ae4f-11e4-abe8-e1ef60ca26de_story.html?utm_term=.eebb726ddc2e

34 Spencer S. Hsu, Town Near Ferguson, Mo., Agrees to Pay \$4.7 Million to Settle 'Debtors Prison' Case, Washington Post (July 14, 2016), https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/town-near-ferguson-mo-agrees-to-pay-47-million-to-settle-debtors-prison-case/2016/07/14/37b42078-49db-11e6-acbc-4d4870a079da_story.html

35 See Spencer S. Hsu, Town Near Ferguson, Mo., Agrees to Pay \$4.7 Million to Settle 'Debtors Prison' Case, WASH. POST (July 14, 2016), https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/town-near-ferguson-mo-agrees-to-pay-47-million-to-settle-debtors-prison-case/2016/07/14/37b42078-49db-11e6-acbc-4d4870a079da_story.html

36 Jeremy Kohler, Traffic enforcement, court collections continue to drop in post-Ferguson era (April 2018), St. Louis Post-Dispatch, available at https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/traffic-enforcement-court-collec-tions-continue-to-drop-in-post-ferguson/article_e289b576-7d5d-5b1e-a5ab-676561c1a848.html

Policy Advocacy

MORE, OBS, the members of Action St. Louis and other social justice advocates also continued to demonstrate and publicly call for municipal court reforms which led the Missouri Supreme Court to amend its rules to clarify that municipal courts must accept payments in installments.³⁷ In February of 2015 MORE released a list of demands for reform—including the consolidation of the region's municipal courts, elimination of the use of incarceration as a punishment for inability to pay, and abolishment of failure to appear ordinances.³⁸ MORE also called for a system in which economic sanctions would be proportioned to income and alternative sanctions made available, and in which public defenders would be provided to all indigent defendants.

When the Department of Justice announced shortly after the death of Michael Brown that it would investigate Ferguson's police department, its focus was on the task of determining if there was a pattern and practice of constitutional violations related to use of force, stops, searches, and arrests, or in Ferguson's jail.³⁹ Policy efforts came largely through collaborative participation in an organizing table comprised of representatives from the region's foremost organizers, activists, and policy organizations including but not limited to Action St. Louis, MORE, OBS, ArchCity Defenders, CAPCR, MCU, Jobs With Justice, and Empower Missouri. Members of this table, co-sponsored or otherwise participated

in: 1) an accountability meeting that brought Mayor Slay, Attorney General Chris Koster, Regional Business Chamber President Tom Irwin, and other notable regional leaders before a group of 1000 people to make commitments to policy initiatives to improve the lives of poor people and families throughout the region;⁴⁰ 2) a candidates' forum for the Circuit Attorney that focused on the criminalization of poverty and race in the City of St. Louis and brought 300 people out on a Saturday afternoon;⁴¹ 3) a candidates' forum for the Mayoral race which brought more than 1000 people;⁴² 4) a series of town hall meetings in the City of St. Louis, Pine Lawn, and Ferguson which focused on divesting from jails, courts, and police and investing in true public safety and the improvement of the lives of families and children in low income communities of color;⁴³ and 5) a successful campaign to bail out mothers so they could spend Mother's Day with their kids, raising more than \$13,000 in 24 hours.⁴⁴

Action St. Louis followed up the abovementioned bailouts in May of 2017 with Father's Day bailouts in June in collaboration with MORE and OBS members. In August of 2017, ArchCity and Action St. Louis collaborated to respond to 117 degree temperatures in the local jail, where 90% of the people were being held pretrial solely because they could not afford cash bail.⁴⁵ After bailing out dozens of people, ArchCity and Action St. Louis turned the stories of the people bailed out into a class action lawsuit

37 Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment (MORE) calls for abolition of racist municipal courts, moratorium on municipal bench warrants. Available at http://www.organizemo.org/missourians_organizing_for_reform_and_empowerment_more_calls_for_abolition_of_racist_municipal_courts_moratorium_on_municipal_bench_warrants

38 Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment (MORE) calls for abolition of racist municipal courts, moratorium on municipal bench warrants. Available at http://www.organizemo.org/missourians_organizing_for_reform_and_empowerment_more_calls_for_abolition_of_racist_municipal_courts_moratorium_on_municipal_bench_warrants

39 See, e.g., CIVIL RIGHTS DIV., U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, INVESTIGATION OF THE FERGUSON POLICE DEPARTMENT 1 (2015) [hereinafter FERGUSON REPORT].

40 Valerie Schremp Hahn, A year after post-grand jury riots, a commitment to action (November 2015) St. Louis Post-Dispatch, available at https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/a-year-after-post-grand-jury-riots-a-commitment-to/article_3f74e244-328b-513f-82d0-e80d5f4a43be.html

41 Gardner, Carl stand out at circuit attorney candidate forum (July 2016) St. Louis American, available at http://www.stlamerican.com/news/political_eye/gardner-carl-stand-out-at-circuit-attorney-candidate-forum/article_c63beb7a-389a-11e6-98e5-1fd01bc153d1.html

42 Rebecca Rivas, Questions from the People, (January 2017) St. Louis American, available at http://www.stlamerican.com/news/local_news/questions-from-the-people-mayoral-forum-draws-huge-crowd-at/article_9d6657ae-e721-11e6-9205-af4d73eab84f.html

43 Tony Messenger, Pine Lawn Residents Take Back Their City (May 2016) St. Louis Post-Dispatch, available at https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/columns/tony-messenger/messenger-pine-lawn-residents-take-back-their-city-one-vote/article_281fe884-436c-50d8-84b6-e721df135405.html

44 Jenny Simeone-Casas, #BlackMamaBailoutSTL raised \$13K to get moms out of jail for Mother's Day (May 2017) St. Louis Public Radio, available at <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/blackmamabailoutstl-raised-13k-get-moms-out-jail-mother-s-day>

45 Doyle Murphy, St. Louis' Hot-as-Hell Workhouse Jail Could Get Temporary A/C (July 2017) Riverfront Times, available at <https://www.riverfronttimes.com/newsblog/2017/07/21/temporary-air-conditioning-possible-for-st-louis-hot-as-hell-workhouse-jail>

against the City of St. Louis for conditions of pretrial confinement at their Medium Security Institute, also known as The Workhouse.⁴⁶

Jails

Both the City Justice Center and The Workhouse have been subject to litigation and organizing over their unconstitutional and harmful conditions for 50 years. Ongoing litigation beginning in the early 1970's challenged inhumane conditions in St. Louis jails, but neither the promised renovations nor new construction created meaningful reform.⁴⁷ In 2015, organizers and activists began planning a campaign to shut down The Workhouse. In 2016, the campaign brought attention to the inhumane conditions and dangerous heat in the facility that largely houses those unable to make bail while they await their trials or those convicted of low-level offenses. Such reform efforts have met institutional resistance but have been garnering public support. This year a coalition of local grassroots organizations led by Action St. Louis, ArchCity Defenders, and MORE began the #CloseTheWorkhouse⁴⁸ campaign to permanently close this broken institution. The name was inherited from its history as a debtor's prison where inmates were subjected to forced labor. Today, The Workhouse continues to jail people who cannot afford exorbitant cash bail behind its walls under inhumane conditions – no heat or air-conditioning, over-crowding, inadequate or outright denial of medical care – that have led to multiple deaths. Over the past several months, the #CloseTheWorkhouse campaign that includes formerly-incarcerated individuals has grown substantially and is creating real pressure for substantive change in the City of St. Louis. In September of 2018, #CloseTheWorkhouse will release a report on the conditions in the jail and lay out their plan to close it for good during a town hall. Montague Simmons, the former Executive Director of OBS, is now the lead organizer for the campaign. The membership is expected to grow over the next 3 months when litigators and organizers will

collaborate to bring a lawsuit representing members who were held in The Workhouse because of unaffordable cash bail.

Prosecuting Attorneys

In addition to identifying the courts, police, and jails as clear targets for change, advocates in St. Louis acknowledge the inordinate power prosecuting attorneys have in shaping policy that impacts low-income communities of color. This work builds on a national movement to leverage electoral power to influence prosecuting attorneys' elections in order to modify the criminal legal system. While police impact the daily lives of poor people and Black people the most, prosecutors wield enormous influence within the criminal legal system.

In Missouri, African Americans constitute just 12 percent of the population, but almost 40 percent of the prison population. In St. Louis County, African Americans constitute a quarter of the population but make up two-thirds of the jail population. These racial disparities in the criminal justice are directly tied to prosecutorial discretion and exacerbate the prison industrial complex. According to the Center for Technology and Civic Life, 95 percent of elected prosecutors in the U.S. are white.

Thus, criminal justice advocates have turned their efforts toward finding prosecutors who better represent and stay accountable to the communities they serve, and who wield their discretion more fairly. Action STL (formerly St Louis Action Council, ArchCity Defenders, Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, and the Organization for Black Struggle organized successfully to educate citizens about the role and power of local prosecutors. These efforts led to the election of the City of St. Louis's first African American female Circuit Attorney in 2016.⁴⁹ They expanded these efforts in 2018 to rid St. Louis County of Bob McCulloch, the 26-year incumbent prosecutor who refused to prosecute Darren Wilson in Michael Brown's murder. Action St. Louis in particular, who

46 Rachel Lippman, ArchCity Defenders sues over conditions at St. Louis' medium security jail (November 2017) St. Louis Public Radio, available at <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/archcity-defenders-sues-over-conditions-st-louis-medium-security-jail>

47 Robert Patrick, Suit claims St. Louis 'workhouse' inmates forced by guards to fight (August 2012) St. Louis Post-Dispatch, available at https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/suit-claims-st-louis-workhouse-inmates-forced-by-guards-to/article_a8a6f0dc-1d0e-58f4-8c6e-b50fd7fc5b7d.html

48 Carolina Hidalgo, Activists launch campaign to close the Workhouse, reduce St. Louis jail population (July 2018) St. Louis Public Radio, available at <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/activists-launch-campaign-close-workhouse-reduce-st-louis-jail-population#stream/0>

49 Gardner, Carl stand out at circuit attorney candidate forum (July 2016) St. Louis American, available at http://www.stlamerican.com/news/political_eye/gardner-carl-stand-out-at-circuit-attorney-candidate-forum/article_c63beb7a-389a-11e6-98e5-1fd01bc153d1.html

pioneered their #ByeBob Campaign and held multiple WokeVoterSTL brunches to educate voters helped contribute to the defeat of a 30-year incumbent prosecutor – and elect St. Louis County's first African American prosecutor, Ferguson City Councilman Wesley Bell.⁵⁰

Non-Partisan Court Plan

One bright light in Missouri's judicial structure is its non-partisan court plan – a structure critical to keeping politics out of the judiciary that facilitates the protection of minority rights. In 1940, in response to an overly politicized judicial process, Missourians amended the state constitution to adopt the "Non-partisan Selection of Judges Court Plan," also known as the Missouri Plan.⁵¹ The structure, which provides for the selection of judges based on merit rather than on political affiliation through nonpartisan judicial commissions and judicial performance evaluation committees, has served as a national model and has now been adopted in more than 30 states.⁵² Recent years have witnessed efforts to discredit judges who uphold interpretations of civil and constitutional rights of minorities and due process of law in the criminal justice system.⁵³ Vigilant protection of the nonpartisan court plan is critical to ensure the courts protect the fundamental rights of racial, ethnic and gender minorities.

50 Jacqui Germain, How Brunch Helped Defeat a 7-Term Incumbent (August 2018) The Nation, available at <https://www.thenation.com/article/how-brunch-helped-defeat-a-7-term-incumbent/>

51 The referendum resulted from a public backlash against the widespread abuses of the judicial system by the "Boss Tom" Pendergast political machine in Kansas City and by the political control exhibited by ward bosses in St. Louis

52 Missouri Courts, Non-Partisan Court Plan, <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=297>

53 For example, in 2004, Judge Rick Teitelman faced a significant retention challenge after leading judicial opinions opposing the execution of juveniles, and overturning a murder conviction after the defendant had exhausted his appeals where there was evidence of innocence. The group "Missourians Against Liberal Judges" began what the St. Louis Post Dispatch described as a smear campaign to discredit the judge due to his rulings related to civil rights and due process. Under the nonpartisan court plan, Missouri attorneys rated Judge Teitelman highly (an 80% approval rating), and he was retained on the bench.

Capacities for Change



Base Building



Resource Base



Robust Organizational Landscape



Leadership Ladders and Lattices



Alliances and Networks

CHANGING STATES: MISSOURI CAPACITIES

This section applies the Changing States framework around five capacities necessary for change:

1. Base building capacity;
2. Alliances and networks;
3. A resource base;
4. A robust organizational landscape; and
5. Leaderships ladders and lattices.

Are there leaders and organizations on the ground ready to shift the tide toward progressive governance across the public and private sectors—and confront the obstacles? What are the core capacities we need to shape the conditions and to be able to contest for power across multiple arenas?

We've adopted the Changing States Framework to examine Missouri's capacities for change rating each arena as Forming, Building, Maturing and Governing. These capacities are fluid and it is entirely possible for Missouri organizations to make leaps with the right investments, training and strategy (or to lose capacity if not properly resourced).



BASE BUILDING: BUILDING

We need to build power that starts to dismantle the St. Louis and Kansas City versus everybody else, that we are finding ways to actually get unlikely people to be in the same room, Black People and white farmers in a room recognizing that you might not live in the same zip code, but you are still tied, your destiny is still tied to each other.

-Missouri Grassroots Leader

Missouri has a diverse, long standing set of community organizations in the state including faith based organizing, neighborhood organizing in communities of color, rural organizing, solidarity networks, and worker organizing. There is a breadth of organizations in state with grounded leadership, many of whom who have been in the state for a decade or more. In recent years these organizations have shown an increased capacity to deliver on civic engagement goals and have advanced a set of local campaigns. However, most of these organizations are small with limited staff and resources.

The base building groups that anchor the state are Missouri Jobs with Justice, Missouri Faith Voices, Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Organization for Black Struggle, Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, Action St. Louis, Metropolitan Congregations United, NARAL, Sierra Club, Planned Parenthood, NAACP, MORE2, MO Healthcare for All, Empower MO, and labor unions. Collectively these organizations engage hundreds of thousands of grassroots people in Missouri during the course of the year. The strength of these organizations includes strong alignment amongst each other, fairly broad geographic presence, and a variety of models and approaches.

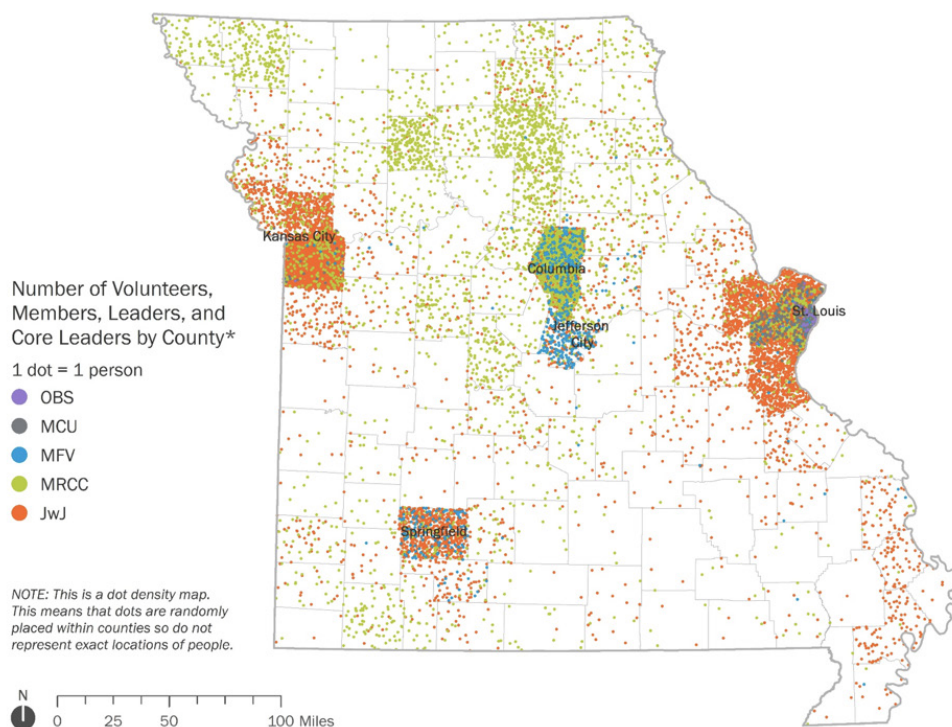
Locally organizations are working on issues ranging from payday lending to zoning ordinance fights to closing The Workhouse jail to putting a rental inspection ordinance on the ballot alongside several other campaigns.

At right is a GIS map of active leaders from five of these organizations using data entered in the VAN (a shared voter file) that shows the reach of an emerging leadership base in the state. The biggest challenge for base building organizations in Missouri is depth and ability to consistently operate at scale all year every year given small staffs. The sheer diversity and breadth of organizations is a strength but it also creates structural limitations in terms of both aggregating power and moving a shared strategy. While MOVE provides tools and coordination, Missouri groups need to take another leap to build a strategic organizing center with a unified agenda bound by an overall theory of change. Progressive partners in Missouri have struggled to reach the scale and shared power analysis necessary to move thousands into statewide campaigns. This is in part because aside from recent ballot initiative efforts there have been few windows to move statewide policy in the past ten years and limited resources for statewide organizing. New analysis is necessary to move local, county and statewide issue campaigns in ways that build organizations, involve new leaders and pass a set of policies that will impact their membership.

There is deep commitment among Missouri leaders to build a multi-racial alliance that unites urban, suburban, and rural communities. Leaders reject the false choice of having to choose between organizing working class whites in ex-urban and rural areas versus building strong Black led organizing in core cities. Like other Midwest states, it isn't possible to win without doing both.

Missouri Strategic Considerations

- **Anchor and supercharge a set of base building organizations** who together reflect the progressive majority in Missouri and are equipped to run transformative base building campaigns. There are key gaps that could be met either through incubating new organizations or supporting existing ones to grow in this arena. These gaps are 1) Black and other people of color communities, 2) youth, and 3) seniors alongside a targeted



focus on 4) suburban/exurban regions and 5) small towns. New organizing muscles need to be built and additional capacity leveraged to fill these gaps.

♦ **2018-2019 Opportunity:** Grants to organizations for immediate post-election organizing to keep the best and brightest electoral program staff, build membership and solidify leadership gains as well as create powerful relationships with newly elected officials.

♦ **2019 to 2020 Opportunity:** Support 2019 base building programs to elevate organizing in key geographies where 2020 voter registration and GOTV efforts will occur. Use 2019 to test GOTV strategies such as layering text and digital strategies in local races that directly impact these communities (i.e. St. Louis City Board of Alderman, the 2019 mayoral race in Kansas City, St. Louis Public School Board). Invest early to develop plans for 2020 that embrace an integrated voter engagement strategy that includes ballot initiatives.

♦ **2019-2020 Opportunity:** Scale up current anchor base building groups and advance consistent campaigns, organizing and power building. Ensure none of the dynamic voter engagement and capacity building is lost in a post-election drought. Immediately after the election, organizing groups must have the capacity to go back to their voters and invite them into membership and organize local activities to defend the ballot initiative policy wins.

BLACK LED ORGANIZING

Analysis Conducted by Tammy Thomas Miles based on 11 interviews with in-state leaders

In 2014, the uprising centered in Ferguson Missouri launched the national Black Lives Matter movement when thousands took to the streets to protest the murder of Mike Brown, an unarmed 19 year old Black man who was shot and killed by police. This suburb just outside of St. Louis Missouri became a national battleground for issues of police violence, a broken criminal justice system, and the nation's inability to deal with race. More than fifty national organizations had staff or members in the state, millions of dollars were raised and allocated, local groups saw real investments and national leaders were born along with new organizations.

Yet, the capacity of Black led organizing has improved only slightly despite Ferguson as the flashpoint that elevated #blacklivesmatter to national prominence. Today Black led organizations in Missouri are thinly staffed, have small budgets and rely heavily on volunteers. In fact, the Washington Post reported in 2015, that *"Activists had been tracking more than 100 bills related to criminal justice and policing, but just one of substance had made its way out of the legislature, they say."*⁵⁴ Despite the work of the Ferguson Commission and the Ferguson Consent Decree, many reforms that would have required diversity and sensitivity training, reduced racial profiling, protected witnesses, changed the practices of municipalities relying on fines for revenue and set body camera requirements have remained stuck in City Councils, the state legislature or actively stymied by the courts.

Moreover the Missouri legislature has worked strenuously moving laws to the detriment of Black and poor people such as gutting the Missouri Human Rights Act and Stand your Ground, Voter ID, Right to Work, and expanded conceal and carry laws. One could argue that since Ferguson, Black communities have less access to democratic participation and institutions, and that the majority of criminal justice policies passed have made those communities more vulnerable. In fact recently the ACLU notes that three years later, *"African-American drivers were stopped at a rate 85 percent higher than whites in 2017, despite the fact that blacks and Hispanics are less likely than whites to have contraband."*⁵⁵

We lift this up because while many remember the events of Ferguson, few ask about what was built in the state of MO, how emergent leaders were supported over time, and how long-term capacity was or wasn't built. One Missouri leader in a Black led organization summed it up as follows:

There were resources directly intended to build structure in ways that were never done before. We had paid staff, formalized trainings, ran programs, a fellowship program, continued to do direct actions but couldn't contain the space to hold everyone together. We were used to operating from a place of scarcity. There were conversations about us on the national level happening without us. The type of thinking we needed to do couldn't happen during the crisis. We were wrestling with internal contradictions.

Understanding why local organizations were not built via the huge influx of national investments is an important lens on how to understand what kinds of investments could accelerate Black led organizations and Black leadership in the state as a critical component of power building for progressive governance. Many Black leaders also had other key observations:

- Resources raised, ie. money, people, materials, etc. that came in during the Ferguson uprising were a temporary salve and did not permanently fund existing organizations or address the infrastructure vacuum. At the time of the uprising the only organization in place was Organization for Black Struggle who had no paid organizers in place.
- Black led organizations continue to be marginally funded or unfunded, have minimal staff and rely heavily on volunteer resources. Organizations need to build and fund pipelines that develop leaders

⁵⁴ https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/govbeat/wp/2015/05/15/the-missouri-legislature-is-about-to-end-its-session-having-passed-almost-none-of-the-dozens-of-ferguson-related-bills-proposed/?utm_term=.02be87b66bed

⁵⁵ <https://www.aclu-mo.org/en/news/four-years-ferguson-where-are-we-now>

and the next generation of organizers in Missouri.

- Black led organizations understand the need to turn out the Black vote but feel that many Black voters do not truly feel represented, their issues aren't prioritized, and apathy is high due to the racialized nature of the state as a white power structure foils change.
- MO needs Black led organizations that can work across the state and in cities and towns outside of St. Louis and Kansas City. This should include training and investment in organizations that can build strategies that work post Ferguson.
- The values around criminal justice, restorative justice and racial justice are aligned amongst Black led organizations. The August primary victory of St. Louis County Prosecutor challenger Wesley Bell who unseated 27-year incumbent Bob McCulloch by a 10-point margin demonstrates the exciting possibilities in this arena. Bell is a Ferguson city council member and McCulloch is the very prosecutor who declined to file charges in the killing that ignited the Ferguson uprising and international movement for Black lives. In addition, the election of Kim Gardner as Prosecutor and Vernon Betts as Sheriff in St. Louis City were both firsts for African Americans and are products of Black organizing.

In 2018 there are Black led/Black base organizations including A. Philip Randolph Institute, Organization for Black Struggle, Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, NAACP and Action St. Louis that have the potential to be stronger anchor organizations in the overall ecosystem. There are also talented Black executive directors or key leaders of multiracial organizations such as Communities Creating Opportunity, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Jobs with Justice, Missouri Faith Voices, Metropolitan Congregations United, NARAL, One Struggle KC, Hands Up United and Reproaction.

Strategies for Supporting Black Led Organizations:

- **Supporting Black Led Organizations:** The Ferguson uprising clearly planted the state of Missouri at the center of the Movement for Black Lives, and the expansion of the Black electorate is a cornerstone for progressive change. To fully flush out these recommendations we'll need further research and perhaps even a separate report that specifically details a program to catapult new energy, resources, talent and vision in existing organizations as well as potentially founding new cross-organizational spaces to foster a shared agenda and broader impact. Despite that caveat we do have recommendations today that include:

♦ 2018-2019 Opportunity - Cross-Organizational Black Centered Convening & Strategy Space:

Build, fund and convene a coalition for Black progressive leaders working in both Black-led and multiracial organizations across the state to strategize, collaborate, support and learn from one another. Convening just such a group periodically could allow a cross-section of state and national organizations that facilitates deeper strategic alignment. There is potential here to deepen the healing process and learn from the trauma that so many experienced in the wake of the killing of Michael Brown and the organizing that followed. Potential exists for this to be housed at a trusted institution and the process would be led by organizers of color from multiple organizations.

♦ **2019-2020 Opportunity - Leadership Training:** Invest in beginning and mid-level organizing training as well as executive director mentorship and support. While a handful of local organizers have gone through and benefitted from Black Organizing for Leadership and Dignity (a national organization dedicated to training and recentering Black leadership in US social justice movements), cost is often prohibitive for small, grassroots organizations. This training is necessary as Black leaders continue to evaluate and launch post-Ferguson strategies across the state.

♦ **2019-2020 Opportunity - Build an Organizing and Technical Assistance Fund:** Build a statewide fund explicitly supporting the above goals, invest directly in new staff organizers and assisting Black led organizations to build capacity for development and fundraising, communications, administrative assistance and deeper engagement/building relationships with national and other organizations outside MO.

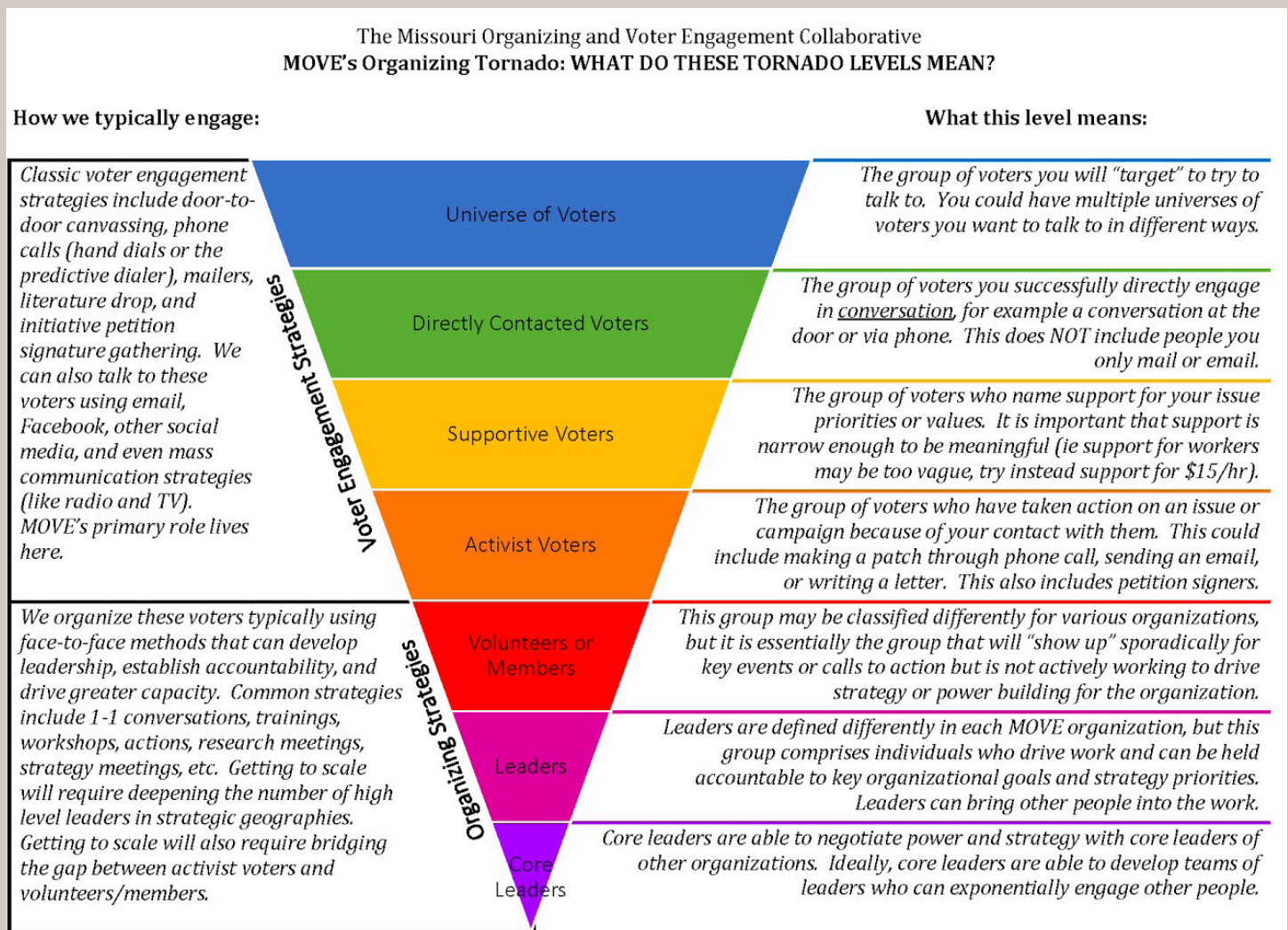


ALLIANCES AND NETWORKS: INFLUENCING

MOVE represents a significant advancement in the Missouri landscape to provide a set of tools to groups, coordinate strategy and program particularly on the electoral side in a way that builds a unified integrated voter engagement approach (which leaders call the “organizing tornado”. MOVE has built an alliance that networks together progressive Missouri organizations and donors.

Yet there are also several key networks and alliances that shape progressive politics in the state. For more than a decade, MO Jobs with Justice has played a significant alliance role, supporting alignment of grassroots groups and labor in a way that was central to many campaigns. BIG MO has been the ballot initiative research hub although there are ongoing discussions about potentially absorbing it as part of MOVE Action. There have also been discrete coalitions that have formed over the years to organize for specific policy changes such as the Medicaid Expansion Coalition as well as ongoing efforts with limited capacity such as the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition. Finally as noted above, Jessica Wernli also staffs an informal “Organizers Table” which meets at Deaconess Foundation that helps align St. Louis based groups working on police accountability and other issues arising from the Ferguson Commission report.

The Organizing Tornado model, developed by MOVE, asserts that voter engagement can act as a funnel to bring people into organizations and that community leaders can anchor civic engagement work.



Missouri Strategic Considerations:

- **Centralized technical support to encourage alignment and allow organizations to focus on their core organizing:**

♦ **2019-2020 Opportunity** - On the 501c3 side, state tables will be far more effective in their role with a **fully funded data director, expanded programmatic support staff**, and resources to support experiments that make the case for future investments and support learning for key leaders in the field in-state.

♦ **2019-2020 Opportunity - Bolster on-demand legal support for organizations** doing electoral work through multiple legal vehicles. As groups in Missouri increase their level of sophistication and involvement with electoral programs, there will be added pressures on the organization's day to day functions, as well as additional scrutiny and attacks from the right. It's crucial to layer additional support to allow groups to grow in ways that protect them legally. A pilot Missouri Unified Legal and Compliance Hub (MULCH) is working through this election cycle and if successful should be sustained for the long term.



RESOURCE BASE: INFLUENCING

The most effective organizations and programs cannot thrive in an environment that booms during Presidential years followed by several lean years where a trickle of funding flows to the state, a funding mindset that drops huge resources into organizations in the months before Election Day, with no commitment or ability to sustain infrastructure or grow capacities or develop leaders between elections. Missouri progressives are building collaborative and pooled funding, as well as a dedicated approach to strengthening individual organizations' abilities to engage and raise resources directly from state and national donors. MO leaders have launched two core strategies to leverage c3 funding for Missouri:

- **Philanthropy for Systemic Change:** Eight foundations in the state began meeting in October of 2016 to create a more unified and integrated approach for systems change funding in Missouri. In their first year they have prioritized building relationships and creating a shared power analysis of the state (this audit) following the USC-PERE "Changing States" framework. In 2018 they plan to align funding around a non-partisan Urban-Rural Integrated Voter Engagement Project organized through MOVE, as well as invest in a more formalized capacity assessment for the state. Participating founda-

tions include Deaconess Foundation, Missouri Foundation for Health, Incarnate Word Foundation, REACH Healthcare Foundation, the Healthcare Foundation of Greater Kansas City, Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Community Foundation of Central Missouri and the Community Foundation of Greater Kansas City.

- **Shared Roots Project** connects the time, talent and treasure of native Missourians now living in other states, with top social change leaders and organizations back home. The project has two investment funds housed at Tides, the 501c3 Show Me Capacity Fund and another 501c4 Show Me Action Fund, to finance work for at least a decade in Missouri. The steering committee is comprised of a combination of in-state leaders and donors.

Global Strategic Considerations

- **Normalize the practice of investing beyond short term deliverables** to include the organizations that work to build a long term path to power for progressive governance. For example, funding voter registration only on a per card basis is insufficient, rather we must fully fund electoral organizing in ways that build in operations and base building. While lip service is paid to these goals many organizations in Missouri still struggle with budgets that lack this commitment.

Missouri Strategic Considerations

- **Self-Determination is Critical:** National investments in Missouri have grown substantially in the last 18 months on both the c3 and c4 sides. Missouri has been "off the radar" for national funders over the last decade and this new interest could be a promising source of support that addresses significant gaps. Yet Missouri progressive organizations need to build strong coordinated communication and connection so that they themselves shape and determine long-term plans to fight for progressive power and governance in Missouri. National resources, absent authentic local leadership and collaboration, can "disorganize" important long term work.



ROBUST ORGANIZATIONAL LANDSCAPE: BUILDING

Missouri organizations need a nuanced communications strategy that both takes communities of color seriously and cultivates the sizable section

of white working class voters that could support progressive governance. The question is how to engage around race and class in ways that build solidarity, reduce division and scapegoating, and create a viable foundation for both electoral and policy victories. At the heart of this is the need to move away from an over reliance on traditional polling and focus group models that are isolated from deeper narrative testing and integrated field testing and invest a broader set of tools and approaches.

In Missouri, a significant gap in the organizational landscape is communications capacity. Progress Missouri anchored this work in recent years but is currently unstaffed. Some leaders have discussed how to revive this organization and the role it played. Other leaders have discussed the need for additional work in MO that goes beyond the role of this one organization and expands into narrative and messaging development. And last, very few grassroots organizations have communications capacity to be able to do messaging, digital organizing, and other communications work. This is a serious gap to address and there is currently no unified plan to do so. This is both an issue of bandwidth and resources.

The state of Missouri is 83% white and the state's electorate is 91% white. Yet the Ferguson uprising clearly planted the state of Missouri at the center of the #blacklivesmatter movement and the expansion of the Black electorate is the cornerstone of progressive change. There are countless opportunities to lift up the common threats to white working class, white rural and Black communities. From minimum wage to collective bargaining rights to the failure to expand Medicaid, these constituencies are under attack. Yet, cutting across racial division with organizing and a race conscious economic populist messages won't be quick or easy.

To address these challenges, Missouri like other Midwest states needs to develop a nuanced communications strategy that both takes communities of color seriously in all their difference and cultivates the sizable section of white working class voters that could become more supportive of progressive issues. The question is how to engage around race and class in ways that build solidarity, reduce division and scapegoating, and create a viable foundation for policy victories. Missouri needs its own unique expression of this.

Missouri Strategic Considerations:

♦ 2018-2019 Opportunity - Explore the revival

of a strategic communications hub. Top level leadership is needed to own the development of a communications hub and it needs two years of operating capital from funders who view this as a priority. Currently, neither of these things exist in MO. The revival of Progress Missouri should be considered as a potential part of this strategy.

♦ **2018-2019 Opportunity - Invest in a comprehensive narrative project** grounded in Missouri that researches and creates a set of core messages about multiracial economic populism against today's dominant messaging strategies on race and economic issues. The project will need to tackle deeply held racial bias, as well as narratives about the economy that undermine support for investment in the common good. This means gauging the performance of the new stories relative to today's two dominant frames: approaches stressing economic populism without mentioning race; and calls to concentrate on redressing harms to communities of color. And test against two additional frames: those that seek to raise awareness of implicit bias; and approaches that stress inevitable demographic change. Much research in this area has already been conducted by Anat Shenker Osorio in partnership with Demos, Lake Research Partners and Ian Haney López. We recommend Missouri leaders consider approaching this team for research and investigation specific to the Show Me state.



LEADERSHIP LADDERS AND LATTICES: FORMING

"[Conservatives] move people from the chamber, to the lobbyist group, to the firm, to running for office – I mean they're much more thoughtful than we are about that. Our candidate pipelines for the state, it's like, "Oh, yeah. Do a couple of years in the states and then you get your plum job in D.C."

-MO State Leader

The approach to leadership pipelines in states often comes in the form a small training institute with minimal staff and random recruitment of leaders and candidates for a series of workshops, a fellowship, or limited coaching. Missouri is a case study of the need for something beyond this that is intentional, methodical, and reaches across its entire ecosystem. The state needs dedicated staff that do nothing but think about talent – the talent currently in organizations, the talent passing through for

campaigns, the emerging talent in universities, and the talent that can be recruited to the state. There needs to be a particular focus on people of color, strategies for retention, and an approach that follows talent as it moves through the ecosystem from community organizations to labor to philanthropy to politics to policy groups.

Critical to this work in Missouri is (1) Support the emergence of leadership pipelines in Missouri for progressive candidates for elective office that are virtually non-existent today. Not only are these pipelines dependent on a scramble for viable candidates during electoral cycles but the approach is often haphazard promoting some and ignoring others with little rhyme or reason. (2) Create a leadership pathway where a certain percentage of engaged voters can over time become organizational leaders, deepening the reach of progressive organizations and directly leveraging electoral strength to build a base. A leadership ladder that allows first for baby steps and then big steps will help create a set of authentic voices for Missouri.

There are discrete training and leadership development opportunities that exist for Missouri leaders both through specific progressive partners as well as collective efforts. MOVE lead organizers meet quarterly in face-to-face strategy, planning, negotiating, and development sessions. Each session is 1-2 days. Additionally, voter program leads participate in monthly check in calls to advance next steps from face-to-face sessions, to maintain collective accountability, to share best practices, and to troubleshoot. Key progressive organizations in Missouri also offer discrete trainings such as the 3 day training offered several times a year by Jobs with Justice helping organizers building foundational skills such as how to do 1-on-1s, cutting issues, campaign strategy, power and coalition building. MORE2, an affiliate of the Gamaliel organizing network, also offers regular leadership trainings for their leaders that are open to allied organizations.

Global Strategic Considerations

- **Utilize defining political moments locally to accelerate leadership and build power.** The uprising in Ferguson was a defining crisis and a watershed moment for leaders in Missouri (particularly young leaders of color based in and around St. Louis). While these moments are hard to predict and plan for (and unfortunately as we note above did not provide sustained funding or infrastructure for Black organizing locally), we argue that Missouri organizations must be well positioned to build on such watershed moments and invest in emergent leaders.

Missouri Strategic Considerations

- **Radically invest in home-grown talent as a plan to govern.** It is essential to build a robust set of supports around key leaders in states to accelerate their ability to serve as sophisticated political strategists who run multi-faceted campaigns that both win elections and strengthen the movement. Missouri's small talent pool includes both organizers and leaders working in communities of color, rural Missouri and all across the state. Funders must resist the pressure to layer homegrown leadership of organizations with operatives and consultants who claim expertise and often stifle local talent. Investing in the new generation of organizational leaders with resources and options for external supports will allow them to truly lead and develop their skills in order to transform the state going forward.

♦ **2018-2019 Opportunity - Fellowship program** that places talented new staff and leaders who surfaced during the 2018 campaigns into an organizing cohort and field campaigns to develop organizing skills and new organizers (embedded in MO progressive partners).

♦ **2019-2020 Opportunity - Develop a weeklong organizing training.** In recent years states such as Minnesota and Ohio have developed highly successful training programs that have engaged hundreds of grassroots leaders across faith, community, labor, and geographic lines. This weeklong training would have three aims: to strengthen participants community organizing skills - creating organizations with leaders who understand not only the basics of organizing, but how to campaign in new ways, how to craft a clear race analysis, how to better link with policy work, and how to creatively integrate organizing models; to build a deeper collaboration between community, faith, and union organizing groups in the state of Missouri, creating space to build relationships at every level; and to cross-train leaders on fundamental issues that impact their respective constituencies. We must build a base of leaders who stay here in Missouri to fight for the long haul.

CONCLUSION

The Changing States Framework serves to lay out a set of choices – not about which state to invest in or what is the next hot issue campaign – but rather choices based on understanding the long-term building blocks in a state, and how distinct conditions, arenas, and capacities present a set of opportunities which, when properly seized upon, can advance a path toward progressive governance.

The MO Power Audit is intended to support a methodology for strategic decision-making for practitioners as well as funders; a mechanism for collective mapping of a path to governing power that can tackle structural inequalities and disempowerment in the state. At the center of this analysis is an assertion that it is only an entire ecosystem of state organizations and leaders that can accomplish progressive governance. And that we must disrupt a set of “bad habits” among progressive actors at all levels which impede the ecosystem and replace them with new norms that allow them to flourish.

Funding that is tied to nationally designed,

transactional and tactical policy campaigns focused

on “parachute politics” must be replaced with national campaigns that are derived from authentic state power plans. A dependence on the consultant class and national network intermediaries to steer state based work must be shifted to directly fund a set of trusted, and deeply rooted frontline leaders and state strategists.

For Missouri, we strongly recommend to initially focus on three key strategies. One, strengthen anchor base building organizations who embody the five characteristics of base building campaigns. Second, centralize and strengthen core technical support and tools to allow organizations to focus on core mission. And third, to radically expand leadership pipelines that reach across the entire ecosystem.

In conclusion, this power audit is meant to provoke a conversation about how we define winning, how we approach states, and how to shift from short term to long-term gains ultimately creating a renaissance of progressive governance across our country. ■

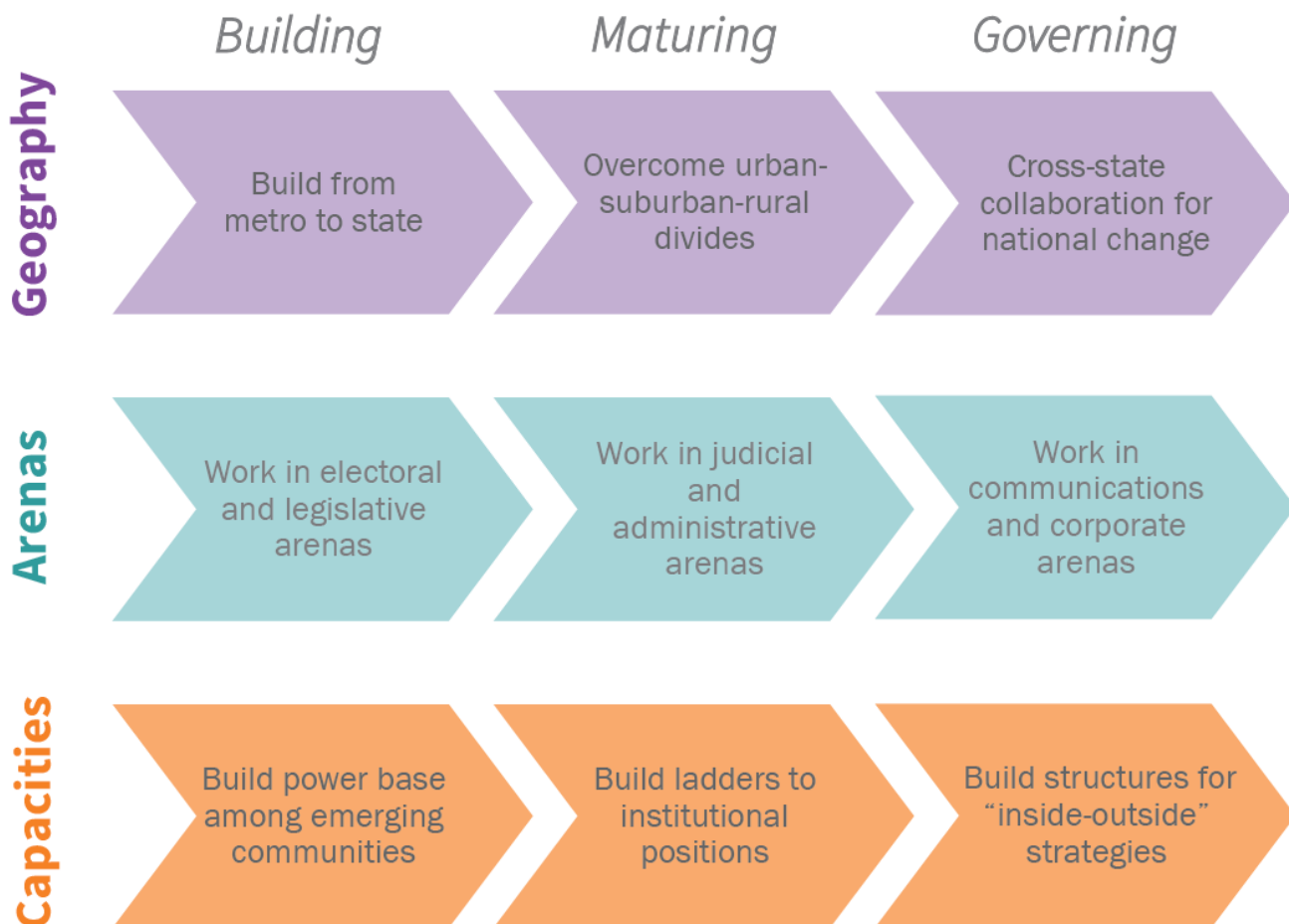


Illustration: pathways to progressive governance

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