FIGHT FOR OUR FUTURE:

A COUNTRY FOR ALL. OF. US.

How *Deep Canvass for Democracy* Built Power in the 2024 Election and Is Key to Winning an Inclusive Democracy and Economy

APRIL 2025

PEOPLE'S ACTION

FIGHT FOR OUR FUTURE

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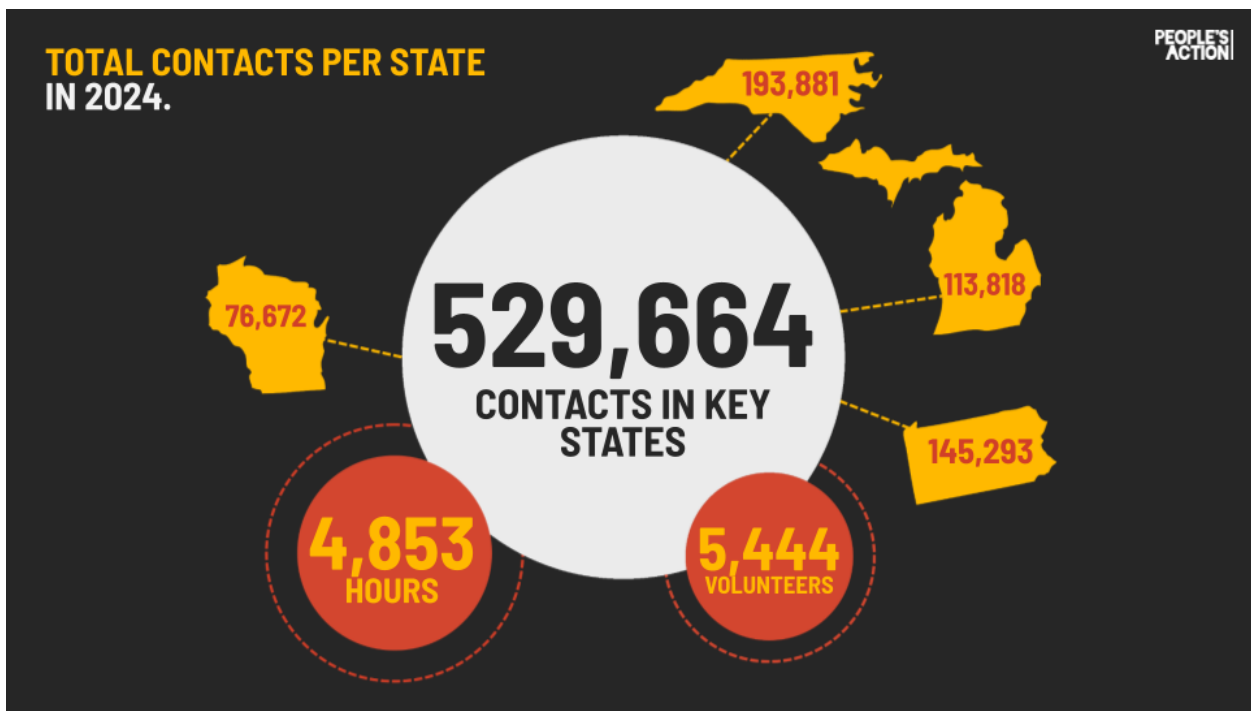
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fight for Our Future:
The Impact of *Deep Canvass for Democracy* in the 2024 Election

As the United States slides into deepening polarization and rising authoritarianism, People's Action's *Deep Canvass for Democracy* program played a pivotal role in mobilizing working-class communities to build power through deep canvassing, which achieves lasting shifts of opinions and perception of divisive issues. Whether we are organizing in big cities or small towns, this evidence-based persuasion strategy has been a cornerstone of our efforts to engage conflicted and undecided voters on issues like health care, economic justice, climate policy, and immigration.

In 2024, People's Action's **deep canvassing project reached 529,664 voters** across four battleground states. Together with Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Down Home North Carolina, Michigan United Action, Pennsylvania United, and Pennsylvania Stands Up, we influenced political perspectives and strengthened grassroots organizations committed to building a multiracial democracy. The campaign's structure, which combined on-the-ground canvassing with a national deep canvass phone program, allowed for both relational persuasion and large-scale voter mobilization.

Key Outcomes

- **529,664 total voter contacts** across North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin.
- **193,881 contacts in North Carolina**, **145,293 in Pennsylvania**, **113,818 in Michigan**, and **76,672 in Wisconsin**.
- **5,444 volunteers mobilized and trained**, many of whom were new to political engagement.
- **9.7% total persuasion rate** in the national phone program, demonstrating deep canvassing's transformative impact on both voters and volunteers.

Additionally, our federal PAC, People's Action Power, designed and deployed the movement's first Deep Canvass **Randomized Control Trial (RCT),** attempting to merge the proven issue-persuasion methodology with express advocacy for a presidential candidate. While the study found no direct correlation to an increase in Vice President Kamala Harris' overall vote margin, it confirmed

significant movement in voters' perceptions of Vice President Harris' alignment with their values and qualifications for office. The findings emphasize deep canvassing's role in reshaping political narratives, particularly in highly polarized environments.

Strategic Insights & Recommendations

Despite the challenges posed by the 2024 election, we demonstrated the power of deep canvassing to shift hearts and minds, engage new organizers, and lay the groundwork for a long-term progressive agenda. Moving forward, sustaining and expanding these efforts will be crucial in building a multiracial democracy that resists right-wing extremism and advances policies that help all communities thrive.

1. **Invest Early in Deep Canvass Volunteer Programs**
   Building long-term volunteer infrastructure is essential for scalable civic engagement, and this requires investing early in campaigns to shape foundational opinions about candidates and policies before voters are flooded by mis- and disinformation.

2. **Expand Organizing Infrastructure to Counter Authoritarianism**
   Year-round civic engagement strengthens community and governmental resilience to anti-democratic pressures by forging relationships that can channel conflicts through democratic structures.

3. **Prioritize Intersectional, Issue-Based Engagement**
   In a polarized environment, we can break through conservative narratives and reach conflicted voters by tackling divisive issues, fostering empathy, and using data-informed messaging.

4. **Secure Long-Term Funding for Sustainable Deep Canvassing**
   Year-round deep canvassing requires sustained funding to expand outreach, train new canvassers, and maintain a base of active volunteers.

5. **Cultivate Local & State Leadership for a Year-Round Movement**
   Investing in local and state membership-based organizations builds leadership pipelines and strengthens community-driven electoral power.

6. **Use Data & Storytelling to Refine Strategies**
   Emotional storytelling remains a powerful tool to challenge dominant narratives and build solidarity across divides.

Call to Action

The data proves that deep canvassing works, but it requires long-term investment to support sustained infrastructure. The success of this program demonstrates its potential to shape political outcomes, advance progressive policies, and strengthen democracy. To sustain and scale this work, we need committed funding and infrastructure support at the local, state, and national levels every year.

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We are now facing the reality of a second Trump presidency and the urgent need to push back against the *Project 2025* agenda being advanced by the Trump regime and the MAGA Republicans in control of Congress. We must confront the failures inherent in the corporate-friendly politics that led us here, and we can't just play defense. This means going on offense to organize at every level so we can build a bold, common-sense economic and social agenda that speaks to the majority of Americans.

WE KNOW WHAT WORKS.

We are doubling down on what works: organizing people to make real change through our *Organizing Revival*. The Organizing Revival calls us to reinvigorate the practice of community and worker organizing all across America as the antidote to authoritarianism.

WE WILL CALL YOU TO GREATNESS.

Movements don't start in the halls of power; they begin with everyday people organizing their friends, family, and neighbors. They grow when we connect our communities and stand together for a future that belongs to us.

WE WILL MAKE NEW MEANING AT SCALE.

We will expose the real forces driving economic pain and division, and we will fight for a people's economic agenda that puts working people first. The powerful will try to divide us, using lies and fear to keep us apart. They don't care about unity—only control. But the good news is that they don't get to decide our future. We do.

No matter where we live or what party we belong to, families across America share the same struggles: skyrocketing rent, unaffordable groceries, expensive health care, and rising utility bills. Under Trump, things will get worse for all of us. But this is where we dig in, build stronger communities, and bring more people into civic life. Because no matter who we voted for, we are all in this together. We need community now more than ever. Deep canvassing is how we can advance the *Organizing Revival* and build the power we need to confront authoritarianism and win. It starts with each of us, and it starts now.

Sulma Arias, Executive Director, People's Action

Deep canvassing works.

Deep canvassing is a specific, structured, research-established and extremely effective methodology for persuading voters. It works by creating an opportunity for people to connect their own life experiences to political questions. We do this by talking directly with people we don't know, who might disagree with us. We invite people to share authentic stories and help them explore the dissonance between their personal values and how they are voting. In these conversations, both participants can be transformed and see themselves as more connected to others, becoming more supportive of positions and policies that reflect care and equity.

Deep canvassing is performed by people-powered organizations who use the program to develop volunteer leadership, recruit new members, and build their deep-canvassing skills on both issues and elections, depending on the year, so their programs grow stronger each cycle. This method builds empathy and connection, making it possible to shift perspectives and inspire support for fair, inclusive solutions on issues that often polarize, including immigration, LGBTQ+ rights, racial justice, climate change, and economic justice.

Beyond elections, deep canvassing is a fundamental element of long-term political organizing infrastructure. Deep canvassing works at the scale our resources can support. It is one of the only proven strategies to shift presidential vote choice and is an estimated 102 times more effective per person than the average presidential persuasion program, as documented by academic research cited throughout this report.

People's Action has been developing, adapting, and sharpening deep canvassing practices in partnership with the New Conversations Initiative since 2019 as a proven way to change hearts and minds on complex issues and elections. People's Action's *Deep Canvass for Democracy* is part of an arc that has involved years of refining and expanding methods to address the unique challenges of each political moment. This journey is evident in the program's deep roots in grassroots community organizing, which have shaped the approach to voter engagement and persuasion on the most divisive issues and elections.

WATCH: A Story from Arthur

Beginning in 2008, the marriage equality movement worked tirelessly to defeat Prop 8 in California. The movement's failure to stop this ballot proposition led to the innovations in modern deep canvassing that culminated in a breakthrough in Minnesota four years later. In 2012, Minnesota became the first state to vote down a proposition defining marriage as only between a man and a woman — a true watershed moment, whose success influenced the development of modern deep canvassing by the organizers who formed the New Conversation Initiative. Deep canvassing has since become a key component of People's Action's political organizing work to 'build a bigger we' and deepen voter engagement. Our deep canvassing has evolved into a targeted persuasion method, incorporating grassroots strategies from labor organizing and Black liberation movements, and was ultimately formalized as a nationwide outreach program by People's Action Power for the 2020 election, aimed at mobilizing key communities and shifting voter perspectives.

In 2020, the team adapted swiftly to pandemic conditions by connecting with people first on issues and then shifting the program to focus on the political cycle. The Defeat Trump and Heal America national phone program launched in the process, which allowed volunteers to maintain meaningful voter engagement remotely. This innovative program contributed to over 202,182 deep canvass conversations across seven battleground states, playing a pivotal role in electing President Biden and defeating Donald Trump. It established a robust infrastructure that seamlessly integrated phone-based outreach with in-person door-knocking, creating a scalable model for future electoral cycles.

The results demonstrated the transformative power of deep canvassing. An independent analysis of our 2020 deep canvass phone program found that it had a substantial impact[1] on **decreasing Trump's vote margin among independent women, respectively 4.9% with women and 8.5% independent women and an overall 3.1% impact.** *That is larger than the 2016 margin of victory in nine key battleground states including Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Florida which would translate to 108 electoral votes.* The canvasses persuaded voters of all backgrounds.

> *Voters who approved and disapproved of President Donald Trump; Democrats, Republicans, and independents; men and women; and voters from all three states became more supportive as a result of the deep canvass, showing this canvassing can be broadly applied.*

People's Action's deep canvasses generated around 8 new supporters of undocumented immigrants in an expanded health care social safety net for every 100 conversations. [2] These kinds of results persisted for at least 5 months. [3] It is very rare to observe persuasive effects of political communication persist for more than a couple weeks.

By 2022, this approach scaled to nearly half a million in-depth conversations, leading to 107 down-ballot wins, preventing a conservative supermajority in Congress as Democrats retained control of the Senate. This outcome was critical in maintaining a balance of power and activating previously unengaged voters. Today, as the U.S. faces intersecting crises—including authoritarian threats, economic insecurity, crises of social isolation, climate change, and a polarized political environment—this work has taken on heightened urgency.

Building on these earlier results, the *Deep Canvass for Democracy* program expanded its scope in 2024 to deepen its impact. Leveraging lessons learned in targeting, volunteer training, and sustained engagement, the program advanced its mission of countering authoritarianism and fostering multiracial, working-class democracy. Anchored by People's Action's national network of over 40 organizations across 30 states and informed by the innovative strategies of the New Conversation Initiative, the 2024 program further enhanced its capacity to create lasting voter shifts through authentic, empathy-driven connections. [4]

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[1] People's Action. (2020, September 14). *How to Defeat Trump and Heal America: Deep Canvassing and Political Persuasion in the 2020 Presidential Election*. People's Action. https://peoplesaction.org/wp-content/uploads/PA-ReportDeepCanvassingResults09.14-FINAL.pdf
[2] Ibid.
[3] People's Action Institute. (2020, March). *Building a Bigger We: Changing Hearts & Minds on Immigration in Rural and Small-town America*. People's Action Institute. https://peoplesaction.org/wp-content/uploads/PA-Deep-Canvass-Final-Report-v5.pdf
[4] Deep Canvass Institute. (2023). *Deep Canvass Institute Impact Report 2021-2023: Conversations Transforming America*. People's Action Institute & New Conversation Institute. https://peoplesaction.org/wp-content/uploads/Deep-Canvass-Institute-2021-2023-Impact-Report_PAI.pdf

Substantial funding for this election season began to flow in late July and early August 2024, allowing the deep canvassing team to amplify its efforts in a remarkably short time. The team mobilized resources, trained new canvassers, and quickly scaled up outreach to target key battleground states, focusing on advancing social cohesion and countering disinformation. Within the compressed timeline, the team scaled the work rapidly, creating meaningful voter connections with agility, towards impactful, people-centered political engagement. The initial phase in August focused on educating voters about Project 2025, offering context on two distinct futures and the anti-authoritarian implications. This political education laid the groundwork for subsequent deep canvassing aimed at voter alignment with Vice President Kamala Harris.

Centered on defeating Donald Trump, electing Vice President Kamala Harris, and promoting progressive candidates in key battleground states like Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and North Carolina, *Deep Canvass for Democracy* not only aimed to influence this election but also to strengthen people-powered organizations in their efforts to build a sustainable, multiracial democracy. The initiative prioritized issues critical to working-class Americans—affordable housing, health care, and climate resilience—while confronting divisive disinformation directly at the grassroots level. It employed both deep canvassing for persuasion and mobilization to transition supporters into organizing efforts for immediate action, such as voter turnout. The two-pronged approach included:

Deep Canvassing in the States

Five People's Action member organizations—Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Down Home North Carolina, Michigan United Action, Pennsylvania United, Pennsylvania Stands Up—led this ground-level outreach, combining persuasion and mobilization efforts to foster community trust and commitment among voters.

National Volunteer Deep Canvass Program

This program exclusively employs deep canvassing techniques via phone to move voters in hard-to-reach swing districts, creating broad, cumulative impact.

Collectively, these initiatives engaged 529,664 voters, persuading 9.7% toward progressive candidates. In a polarized and rapidly changing political landscape, this year's campaign represents a crucial investment in progressive organizing, with the potential for far-reaching impact beyond Election Day.

Randomized Control Trial (RCT)

We also conducted a Randomized Control Trial (RCT)—one of the largest field persuasion experiments in recent memory—to evaluate the impact of our political persuasion program this cycle, offering critical data to refine future efforts. The results of this trial demonstrated that our deep canvass led voters to be more likely to say Vice President Harris agreed with them more on issues and was more qualified to be President. However, there were no clear effects on Vice President Harris's vote margin or favorability. By analyzing subgroup effects and timing variations, we now have a deeper understanding of the conditions under which deep canvassing moves voters, informing recommendations for scaling, targeting, and adapting persuasion programs in future cycles.

While no effort or program, including ours, succeeded in tipping the outcome of the 2024 presidential election, there is evidence that our program was able to effectively influence voter perceptions of Vice President Harris and foster political engagement, even in highly polarized environments.

> *Between the RCT study's scale and the effectiveness of our program methodology, we can confidently present a roadmap for future deep canvassing strategies—identifying where and how this approach is most effective, what barriers remain in shifting voter preferences, and how to refine approaches for greater impact.*

Deep Canvass for Democracy program

Deep Canvass for Democracy addressed the urgent need to connect people through conversation, build social cohesion, and equip organizers with the tools to protect democracy. The project taught the practice of deep canvassing to organizers, activists, volunteers, and movement leaders. Deep canvassing guided participants to listen without judgment and share heartfelt stories to persuade conflicted voters to elect Vice President Kamala Harris and protect the promise of multiracial democracy.

The program was anchored by People's Action member organizations in priority states, which ran both paid and volunteer deep canvass persuasion voter contact programs. It was augmented by a national volunteer deep canvass phone program driven by People's Action national staff, building on a successful model developed in the 2020 election. Evidence from multiple cycles and experiments proved that volunteers could execute successful deep canvass conversations with impacts comparable to those of paid canvassers.

The deep canvass political persuasion program targeted voters conflicted about their choices in the presidential election and critical down-ballot races, with a focus on suburban and rural districts in battleground states. Member organizations anchored a door-to-door deep canvass program, while the national volunteer program executed deep canvass phone conversations. Deep canvassing focused on persuading frequent voters to support Vice President Harris in the lead-up to the November election, targeting voters with partisanship scores of 30-80 and vote propensity scores of 70 and above.

Throughout the year, we worked closely with voter engagement tables in each state to refine targeting and voter universes, adapting as trends developed and polling became available. While challenges arose, including a compressed timeline for scaling programs and responding to evolving voter attitudes, our work demonstrated the enduring power of deep canvassing to build authentic connections and shape the political landscape.

Deep canvassing in the states was a cornerstone of the program, led by dedicated state partners who bring deep local knowledge to voter engagement. Partners in our all-in states—Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Down Home North Carolina, Michigan United Action, Pennsylvania United, and Pennsylvania Stands Up—used face-to-face conversations to foster genuine connections and mobilize communities. This approach combines deep canvassing techniques with localized outreach, allowing canvassers to address pressing, community-specific issues directly at the doors. By inviting openness and empathy, canvassers aimed to shift perspectives on polarized topics like economic justice, immigration, and climate resilience. Through this collaboration, in-person canvassing efforts can increase voter engagement and provide valuable insights into public sentiment, reinforcing a foundation for long-term social change.

We strengthened the power of our member organizations' capacity:
- We trained organizers from 13 organizations on the deep canvass methodology and how to build lasting infrastructure through their political programs.
- Organizations in four states developed an infrastructure that could deploy a deep canvass field program year round and into the next federal election.

In North Carolina, Down Home North Carolina[5] ran the largest rural field program in the state's history, breaking the Republican supermajority and defending public education, also defeating the Republican candidate for governor, Mark Robinson, a self-avowed "Black Nazi." To achieve this, Down Home knocked on 636,874 doors, while People's Action's national volunteer program contacted an additional 193,881 people via calls throughout the state.

Down Home North Carolina's Electoral Work

In a cycle where 90% of the nation's counties moved appreciably to the right, Down Home's rural counties bucked the trend,[6] reducing the rate of rightward movement and reversing in six counties. You can see their efforts in the circled outlier counties, representing the impact of Down Home's year-round organizing and electoral work, on the *New York Times* map[7] below:

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[5] Down Home North Carolina. (2024, November 7). *Down Home Outliers in a Red Wave — Organizing Works*. Down Home North Carolina. https://downhomenc.org/2024/11/07/down-home-outliers-in-a-red-wave-organizing-works/ downhomenc.org
[6] Ibid.
[7] Bloch, M., Collins, K., Gebeloff, R., Hernandez, M., & Khurana, M. (2024, November 6). *Early Results Show a Red Shift Across the U.S. The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/11/06/us/politics/presidential-election-2024-red-shift.html

More Dem.   More Rep.
Compared with 2020 presidential vote margin
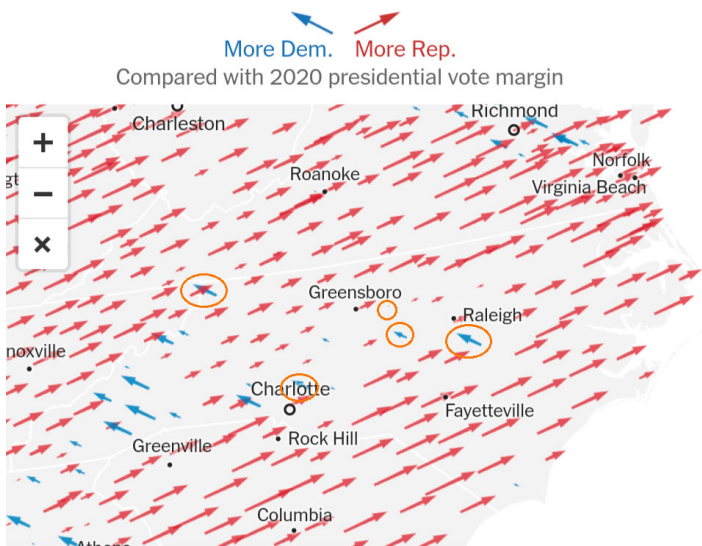
By The New York Times

Compared to national averages, the counties where DHNC deep canvassed bucked the trend by the following metrics:

- Alamance County overperformed by 4.3%
- [Ashe County](#) overperformed by 5.3%[8]
- Cabarrus County overperformed by 5.8%
- Chatham County overperformed by approximately 6%
- Johnston County overperformed by 5.5%
- Transylvania overperformed by 6.1%

> *"What we saw in North Carolina proves that year-round base building and organizing work. We have to be with our people building leadership, and building trust in our communities if we wanna see the changes that we need... Thank you, People's Action, for throwing down with us. Every time our new governor vetoes bad legislation–the next abortion ban, the next bill to fund a school voucher program–he is doing it with the power of working people under his pen."*
>
> *— Vicente Cortez, Down Home North Carolina political director*

While Republicans won the top of the ticket, [Missouri Jobs with Justice (MOJwJ)](#) helped overturn the state's abortion ban and won Proposition A, a ballot initiative for a $15 minimum wage and paid sick leave, which won with more than 58 percent of votes—significantly outperforming the Harris turnout in big cities and small towns. They also helped overturn the state's abortion ban while passing a $15 minimum wage and paid sick leave ballot initiative.

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[8] *The New York Times*. (2024, October 20). *Election in North Carolina: Helene's Impact* [Video]. *The New York Times*.
https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/americas/100000009802360/election-north-carolina-helene.html

> *"We deep canvassed on the issue for two years, and it paid off. While we're disappointed in federal and state and state elected official outcomes, we remain curious about how to reach this overlapping set of people and bring them into power-building and organizing that actually improves their lives."*
>
> *— Kai Sutton, an organizer for Missouri Jobs with Justice in Springfield*
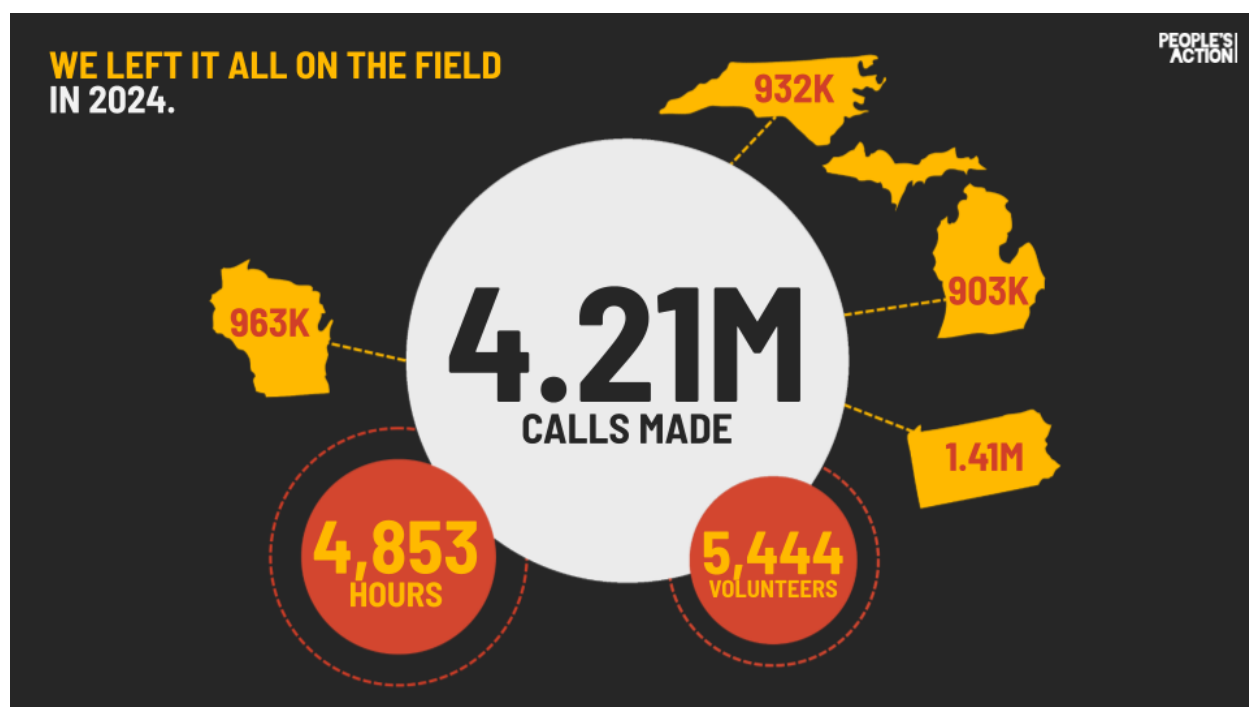
People's Action affiliates won more important victories that hold important lessons, such as Progressive Maryland, who helped defeat a billionaire-backed initiative to fire half of the City Council in Baltimore, and helped elect a Black woman, Angela Alsobrooks, to the U.S. Senate. The Maine People's Alliance defended a Democratic trifecta in the most rural state in the nation, electing two-thirds of their endorsed candidates all across the state, and helped reelect Jared Golden to the U.S. Congress, overcoming a MAGA challenger whose out-of-state supporters spent nearly $10 million to flood the airwaves with attack ads. Yet, setbacks like Florida's rejection of abortion protections and Oregon's failure to pass a universal basic income measure show the complexity of voter priorities.

THESE HARD-WON VICTORIES OFFER CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT GOOD ORGANIZING WORKS.

From North Carolina to Missouri, our affiliates delivered decisive margins, mobilizing tens of thousands of contacts over months. Their efforts not only secured key wins but demonstrated the power of consistent, year-round organizing and the effectiveness of deep canvassing as a tool to connect with voters on the issues that matter most. Moving forward, these examples offer a roadmap for how we can build the power necessary to defend and expand democracy through an Organizing Revival.

National Volunteer Deep Canvass Program

The *Deep Canvass for Democracy* national phone program partners closely with member organizations across key battleground states, including Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Down Home North Carolina, Michigan United Action, Pennsylvania United, and Pennsylvania Stands Up. Designed to support both national and local canvassing goals, this program enables member organizations to prioritize door-to-door outreach while supplementing these efforts through phone-based deep canvassing.

WE LEFT IT ALL ON THE FIELD IN 2024.

932K
903K
963K
1.41M
4.21M CALLS MADE
4,853 HOURS
5,444 VOLUNTEERS

By targeting more 4.32 million persuadable voters to have 327,000 deep canvassing conversations across key districts, the program achieved a persuasion rate of nearly 10% toward support for Vice President Kamala Harris and Governor Tim Walz and down-ballot progressive candidates. Many of the c4 affiliates of People's Action drove volunteers to the national phone bank, in addition to mobilizing staff and members to phone banks in nearby battleground states.

Training Program

People's Action engages staff and volunteers in a progressive training model, starting with an orientation to deep canvassing techniques, followed by direct voter contact simulations, role-playing, and breakout sessions. This highly structured and engaging training approach was central to the phone program's success, emphasizing leadership development, empathy, and resilience. Structured around skill-building and leadership development, the program enables canvassers to discuss shared values with participants, address disinformation, and pivot toward persuasive narratives grounded in local realities.

During a typical four-hour shift, new volunteers spent about an hour and 15 minutes in initial training before beginning their calls, with a final 45-minute session at the end for debriefing. For returning volunteers, the shift structure allowed for a brief grounding session, enabling them to be on the phones for nearly three hours. This structure combines thorough training with extended calling time, enhancing each interaction's depth while fostering meaningful volunteer growth. Each session's reflective debrief allows canvassers to discuss their conversations and insights, creating an affirming community atmosphere that prioritizes both connection quality and volunteer

leadership development. This approach has strengthened canvasser skills and helped build a leadership pipeline within the program.

To meet the organization's goal of increasing volunteer-led roles, the training process incorporates a progression of responsibilities. Volunteers begin with foundational training sessions, and as they gain experience, they move through a structured mentorship system where seasoned canvassers guide new leaders, allowing for a continuous feedback loop that reinforces best practices and helps address challenges in real-time. This training program not only prepares volunteers to be effective canvassers and positions them as future leaders, it ensures that People's Action can maintain and expand the national volunteer program by nurturing an engaged, skilled, and adaptable volunteer base.

Recruitment and Leadership Pipelines

People's Action's approach to volunteer recruitment and leadership development in the deep canvassing phone program has been foundational to sustaining momentum and building a resilient base. Rather than seeing recruitment as a transactional process, the program focused on creating transformational experiences for volunteers by embedding leadership development and skill-building opportunities at each stage of involvement.

"Your work is what will protect our communities, democracy, and reproductive freedom in 2024. Let's keep pushing to elect Kamala Harris and Tim Walz."

WATCH:
A Thank You from Kerry Washington

The goal from the beginning was to build a strong base that could foster sustained change beyond the election. This strategy began by attempting to reactivate 32,000 past volunteers from the 2020 cycle, a key foundational group for relaunching engagement. Volunteers were not only recruited to join phone banks but were gradually trained to take on roles with greater leadership—from call participation to leading phone bank training sessions, greeting, facilitating, and debriefing.

This recruitment pipeline started with National Volunteer Recruitment Week, during which all People's Action staff participated in recruitment, handling specific outreach tasks to reengage previous volunteers. Staff also leveraged influential partnerships with cultural figures like Kerry Washington, Cynthia Nixon, and musicians, as well as support from elected officials like Senator Bernie Sanders and Rep. Rashida Tlaib, amplifying recruitment efforts across digital and community platforms. Volunteers entered structured development pathways where, after initial calls, they attended "power hours" designed for deeper skill training and leadership immersion. The leadership development strategy also included "talent scouting" to identify volunteers who showed promise and potential for higher roles, with structured support systems in place to help them succeed.

Volunteer Story: Yvette

Yvette found her calling when an email from People's Action introduced her to deep canvassing. The training, rooted in storytelling and building empathy, resonated deeply with her background and values. She embraced the work despite initial nerves, captivated by the idea of meaningful conversations that could truly move people. "This isn't just canvassing," she shared. "It's deep, personal work that makes change stick."

Over time, Yvette honed her storytelling, drawing on her life experiences to connect with voters. She often shared memories of her childhood in Guyana and her teenage years in Jamaica, where gunfire became an everyday sound. These raw, personal stories of survival struck a chord with voters who had also faced hardship or conflict.

Her conversations often began with an immediate sense of what to expect. "I can tell how it's going to go just from the way someone says hello," she explained. Warm greetings signaled openness, while dismissive tones often foreshadowed defensiveness.

Yvette vividly remembered a call with a young woman who dismissed the loss of women's rights saying "That's just the way the cookie crumbles. Women have always been oppressed." The young woman noted that she was financially secure and that the economy should foster "survival of the fittest." Instead of shutting down, Yvette shared a story about a friend who fell into financial trouble despite doing everything "right." The young woman softened a bit, admitting that she worried about her friend who was still unemployed following graduation from college.

Another story that resonated was about Vice President Kamala Harris' efforts that secured $20 billion for middle class families of California who faced foreclosure, and helped pass a homeowner bill of rights. It demonstrated that Vice President Harris was willing to stand up to powerful men leading the "big banks" and fight for poor and middle-class people to deliver real results, inspiring disillusioned voters to trust in progressive female leadership. "When you can point to what someone has done, not just what they say they will do, it hits differently," Yvette said.

Yvette admires the care and empathy modeled by People's Action staff and volunteers. "They don't just say the words—they live them," she said, appreciating the team's commitment to checking in and supporting one another and the volunteers. This culture of mutual respect and connection fuels her dedication to the work.

For Yvette, deep canvassing is about more than elections—it's about building a world where empathy drives action. She continues to fight for justice, envisioning a future where shared stories inspire collective change. "This work is hard," she said, "but it's worth it." Based in Maryland, Yvette and her family have decided to double down on their commitment to staying, fighting, and making justice real.

Volunteers came from more than two dozen states, which provides an opportunity to involve people beyond the states of member groups. In turn, after completion of the program, recruitment and leadership focused on absorbing volunteers into both member organizations (where there's overlap of geography and constituency) and/or the national organization (where the volunteer team will be maintained).

Ongoing follow-up was vital to sustaining this transformation. Volunteers were continuously re-engaged through personalized calls and texts, helping to foster a community environment where individuals felt valued and committed. This dynamic recruitment and leadership approach has nurtured a volunteer community deeply engaged in climate and social justice work, transforming participants into long-term advocates and leaders within the People's Action network. The emphasis on personal storytelling and community connection fosters a dedicated volunteer base that is both skilled and invested in the mission.

In 2024, we aimed to expand our volunteer base by 50% and put 10% of our members into leadership roles. The phased approach also established incremental goals to transition leadership responsibilities from staff to volunteers to prepare for the October 25th Weekend of Action and the ramp up for GOTV. The phased approach was also strategically designed to not only scale capacity but also reinforce community-driven leadership by allowing volunteers to take ownership of critical campaign functions. Each volunteer's journey was carefully tracked, with follow-up calls and shadowing sessions to solidify their roles and ensure they felt supported and connected to the team.

> *One volunteer, Ian, joined our team early in the cycle. He went from making volunteer recruitment calls for our issues work to taking leadership roles to help run the deep canvass phonebank. Our volunteer, Nathaniel, who has been with us since 2020 took on advanced data roles this cycle and now has plans to transition to becoming a full time organizer.*

Each volunteer's growth is seen as integral to the persuasion process, ensuring that conversations resonate on a personal level and that volunteers are ready to step into pivotal roles within the organization's advocacy framework. This leadership model not only scales the program's impact but also strengthens community resilience, preparing a cohort of leaders committed to advancing political goals on a national scale.

Leadership Development Outcomes (10/12 – 11/5/2025)

- **262** total roles held by staff (not including on the dialer):
- **51** total roles held by affiliate staff/leaders (not including on the dialer):
- **155** total roles held by People's Action leaders (not including on the dialer)
- **44%** total roles held by non-staff (206 out of 468)

By November 5, 2025, nearly half of all leadership roles were held by volunteers, marking a significant shift toward a sustainable, people-powered model. This transition demonstrated the growing capacity of volunteers to lead persuasion efforts, mobilize their communities, and strengthen our long-term organizing infrastructure.

This recruitment effort was about intentionally creating opportunities to grow the base and bring people into the fold for the long haul. By focusing on alignment and relationships, we've only increased our base and fostered transformative experiences for those involved, laying the groundwork for the kind of power that goes far beyond one election.

GOTV Strategy and Leadership Mobilization

The GOTV effort, held from November 1-5, 2024, was designed to maximize voter contact through a goal of 1 million dials, driven primarily by volunteer leaders. By Election Day, the program aimed to have 90% of roles filled by volunteers, with staff serving in support and high-impact persuasion capacities. This approach made a strategic shift toward a volunteer-led model that reinforces community trust and peer leadership, consistent with the broader goals of deep canvassing and

persuasion. Staff were integral to recruitment, training, and pre-GOTV phone banking efforts, laying the groundwork for this intense final push.

The GOTV schedule included strategically targeted shifts across battleground states—anchored by Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Down Home North Carolina, Michigan United Action, Pennsylvania United, and Pennsylvania Stands Up—prioritizing undecided voters and those rated as likely supporters. Each day from November 1-5, volunteer and staff teams operated in multi-hour shifts with specialized rooms for new callers, returning callers, and high-persuasion conversations with previously contacted undecided voters (rated 4-7). This segmentation ensured focused follow-up with undecided individuals, maximizing persuasion opportunities.

To maintain momentum, daily targets progressively increased from 220 volunteers on November 1 to 260 volunteers on Election Day, supported by targeted recruitment and GOTV texting efforts. Contingency plans, such as backup voter lists from allied organizations, ensured adaptability. Staff not deployed on the ground were reassigned to super-persuader roles to bolster critical conversations. Detailed planning meetings, debriefs, and daily prep calls were scheduled to maintain alignment and adapt to real-time needs, with regional directors providing local updates to ensure the GOTV messages resonate with state-specific concerns.

Data Collection Methods and Analysis

The phone program was meticulously tracked through a hybrid data system that captured volunteer engagement rates, conversation duration, and persuasion metrics across all battleground states. A centralized dashboard enabled filtering by organization, state, and individual canvasser, facilitating in-depth analysis of volunteer retention, conversation quality, and voter response. The data system allowed for real-time adjustments to training and canvassing approaches, ensuring the highest possible impact from each interaction. Volunteer progress was monitored continuously, with clear metrics on volunteer participation frequency and conversion into leadership roles. This data not only informed program adjustments but also laid the groundwork for future canvassing strategies.

Challenges in Measuring Shifts

The 103,129 in-person conversations held in states like North Carolina, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania were largely deep canvassing in practice, even though the initial focus varied. Some conversations started on local issues or down-ballot candidates, gradually leading to discussions around the presidential race, while others focused on electing Vice President Kamala Harris and progressive candidates directly. However, not all these conversations were solely persuasion-oriented. Some incorporated mobilization elements, particularly to increase voter turnout among Democratic base voters. This mix introduces complexity in measuring the true impact of deep canvassing in this aspect of the program.

Early Voting

In states like Michigan with high early voting rates, many voters reported having already cast ballots by the time of their canvassing conversations. This factor highlights another layer in evaluating outcomes, as canvassing may have shaped early voting decisions in ways that standard election-day metrics might not fully capture.

State	All Attempts and Contacts			Did not Early Vote			Early Voted		
	Attempts	Contacts	Contact Rate	Attempts	Contacts	Contact Rate	Attempts	Contacts	Contact Rate
PA	1438188	119126	8.28%	1392881	115867	8.32%	45307	3259	7.19%
NC	962407	75631	7.86%	731463	56626	7.74%	230944	19005	8.23%
WI	1016591	73293	7.21%	856451	60897	7.11%	160140	12396	7.74%
MI	907492	58485	6.44%	756410	48640	6.43%	151082	9845	6.52%

Additionally, there are challenges in attributing voter movement solely to deep canvassing versus mobilization efforts. Mobilization effects may resonate more strongly with voters already leaning toward progressive values, while persuasion conversations specifically target conflicted or undecided voters, seeking to shift their positions over time.

This report addresses these nuances by distinguishing between the immediate effects of mobilization and the deeper impact of persuasion-driven conversations. While mobilization efforts often yield immediate action, like turnout increases, they don't necessarily indicate long-term shifts in voter beliefs or persuasion, which deep canvassing aims to achieve.

TRANSFORMATIONAL STORYTELLING

Emotional storytelling is at the heart of deep canvassing, making it a powerful tool for creating lasting shifts in personal beliefs. Across the national phones program and the large-scale doors initiative, storytelling played a central role in creating empathy and connection.

By encouraging canvassers and voters to share authentic, heartfelt stories, deep canvassing fosters openness and reflection, leading to a greater willingness to consider new perspectives. These personal narratives, which often reveal shared values and address internal conflicts, are essential to the persuasion process and build trust and mutual understanding.

Shifting Narrative Frames

Transformative storytelling is most powerful when challenging widely accepted beliefs that serve to justify inequality and keep power concentrated among elites. Dominant narratives, like the "American Dream" of self-made success, suggest that hard work alone determines a person's worth, obscuring systemic barriers such as racial discrimination, economic inequality, and limited access to education and health care. These narratives paint poverty as a personal failure, justify dismantling public programs, and promote free-market individualism over collective well-being. By reframing personal stories, a new narrative emerges—one that recognizes the role of community support, equitable economic and social policies, and shared responsibility in achieving true opportunity and security for all.

Narrative and digital communications played a major role in our recruitment and powerbuilding success:
- From July to Election Day, our social engagement skyrocketed by an extraordinary 5,000%.
- Our data, communications, and movement politics team collaborated to design a process in which leads from ads and social platforms received recruitment emails and personal follow-up calls from a dedicated volunteer recruitment team converting digital interest to engaged volunteers.
- We published an English- and Spanish-language narrative guide for the election, drawing on resources by Amplify, focused on our vision of the future and how the election is a stepping stone towards a future that works for everyone.
- We carried out our first-ever Spanish-language People's Action livestream, a pivotal moment in our intentional efforts to increase language justice.

Key Dominant Narratives and Counter-Narratives

WE & THEY   Poor and working-class people of all races share a common interest in challenging the billionaires and corporations that have rigged our economy and government.

URBAN VS. RURAL   Whether home is a big city or a small town, working people are on the same side.

GOVERNMENT   Government is the prize, not the problem. It can be a positive force and a powerful tool to meet the needs of our families.

MULTIRACIAL DEMOCRACY   Achieving a government that works for everyone requires a democracy led by poor and working-class people of all races.

RACE   Racial justice benefits all poor and working-class people.

GENDER   Gender justice is essential for all poor and working-class communities.

ECONOMY   The economy should serve the needs of people and the planet, not generate profits for a few.

How to find your story

Authentic storytelling is rooted in honest emotion. People can sense when it's real, and that makes it impactful. The story exchange in canvassing scripts invites both the volunteer and the person they're speaking with to share meaningful moments, creating a foundation of emotional connection before making any calls to action.

To find your own story, begin by reflecting on moments in your life where you faced a challenge, overcame a struggle, or recognized an injustice. Ask yourself where risk or vulnerability played a role, and how those experiences shaped your values. Real stories connect when they're personal and genuine, so identify a time when you felt a strong emotional pull—something that drives your commitment to the cause or your desire for change. Once you've identified your story, consider how it relates to the larger issues at hand and can shift the dominant narrative.

Guiding Questions to Discover Your Story:

1. What life experiences first made you aware of the need for justice and equality?
2. When have you felt the need to challenge the status quo? What motivated you?
3. How has your background or community shaped your view on issues like immigration, abortion, Trans and LGBTQ+ rights and health care, climate change, and how the economy has not worked for our families and why?
4. Who has influenced your understanding of fairness and justice, and why?
5. What risks have you taken or emotions have you felt that fuel your commitment to creating change?

Toplines

This cycle was all about building long-term power. The impact of our efforts will continue to shape our ability to make lasting change this year and beyond.

Together with our member organizations, we talked with 529,664 people in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin, focusing on persuading conflicted or undecided voters and began to lay the groundwork for winning and maintaining governing trifectas.
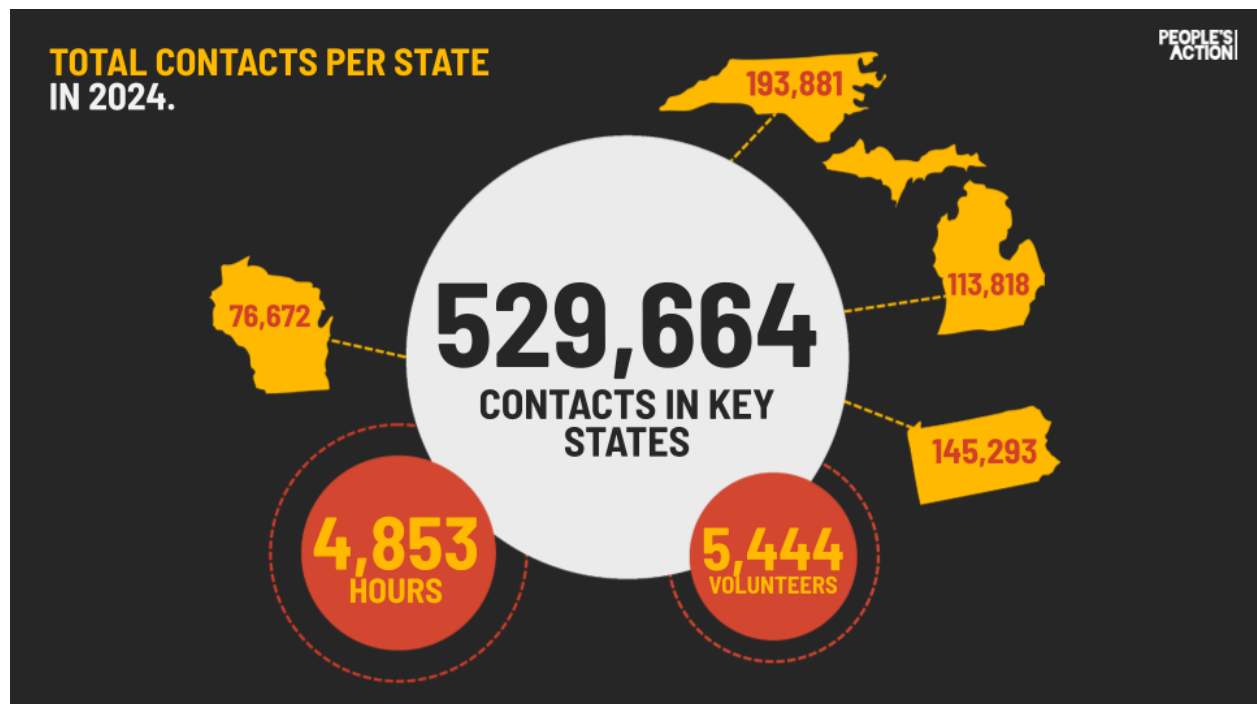
Across key states, deep canvassing efforts reached a significant number of voters. North Carolina received 193,881 contacts, followed by Pennsylvania with 145,293, Michigan with 113,818, and Wisconsin with 76,672.

9.7% TOTAL PERSUASION RATE
FOR NATIONAL PHONES PROGRAM

The persuasion rate of nearly 10% demonstrates the transformative power of deep canvassing. That combined with the high rate of return of volunteers demonstrates that deep canvassing influences both the person being canvassed and the person canvassing.
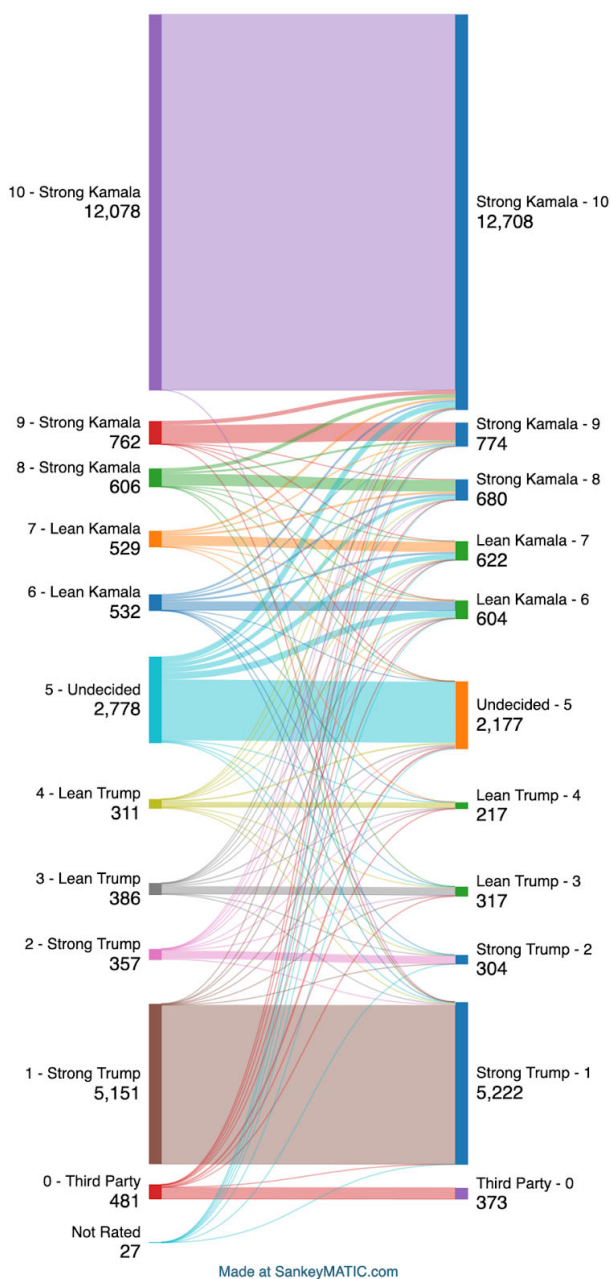
We mobilized and trained 5,444 volunteers through our National Phones Program, including many who have never done political work before.

Change by Vice President Kamala Harris Support Score Crosstabs

Harris Support Score	Attempts	Canvassed	Total ID'd	Canvassed %	Initial Rating											Starting Weighted Rating	Final Rating											Ending Weighted Average	Change
					0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Unknown	1185810	13556	8,625	1.14%	149	2612	153	185	137	1065	208	178	190	235	3504	5.966	130	2635	133	155	103	912	215	190	204	248	3700	6.100	0.134
00-04	109	1	1	0.92%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7.000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9.000	2.000
05-09	3224	30	22	0.93%	0	9	0	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	7	5.000	0	9	0	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	7	5.000	0.000
10-14	6480	67	50	1.03%	0	17	0	1	1	10	0	0	1	2	18	5.600	0	18	0	1	1	6	0	3	0	2	19	5.680	0.080
15-19	13603	122	70	0.90%	1	23	1	0	2	7	3	5	0	0	28	5.812	1	23	1	0	1	6	3	6	0	0	29	5.928	0.116
20-24	35986	276	173	0.77%	2	46	4	4	5	32	4	3	4	7	62	5.883	0	47	4	4	3	18	11	4	5	7	70	6.162	0.279
25-29	74716	590	352	0.79%	3	116	13	7	7	66	6	5	5	12	112	5.330	0	119	9	4	4	55	11	6	6	11	127	5.582	0.253
30-34	122595	944	577	0.77%	7	160	12	11	14	95	14	10	20	14	220	5.944	4	157	10	10	8	71	25	13	16	14	249	6.246	0.302
35-39	150595	1170	683	0.78%	11	204	15	19	13	84	20	19	13	17	268	5.882	7	208	8	15	12	60	23	30	22	17	281	6.071	0.189
40-44	155213	1250	731	0.81%	6	166	6	18	11	128	17	22	26	17	314	6.446	4	165	7	10	9	92	26	23	22	21	352	6.750	0.304
45-49	155552	1230	711	0.79%	16	175	12	14	1	105	16	17	12	23	320	6.458	14	176	11	10	4	78	20	29	15	19	335	6.597	0.139
50-54	158925	1314	802	0.83%	23	179	11	13	15	119	17	20	23	19	359	6.557	22	184	10	10	9	96	19	22	27	20	383	6.723	0.166
55-59	363968	3374	1,522	0.93%	33	357	28	13	24	155	31	21	39	37	782	6.806	25	364	24	16	14	129	21	34	45	33	817	6.915	0.109
60-64	284307	2257	1,084	0.79%	31	177	14	18	15	144	21	38	32	28	565	7.214	26	184	14	15	6	112	34	42	32	26	593	7.334	0.120
65-69	282229	2373	1,079	0.84%	23	176	24	20	13	107	24	29	34	43	584	7.322	16	180	18	15	8	85	28	38	35	38	618	7.483	0.161
70-74	270239	2044	1,087	0.76%	31	163	15	13	7	101	23	19	30	52	630	7.639	22	167	13	10	5	72	25	30	38	42	663	7.770	0.131
75-79	245778	1846	954	0.75%	29	112	6	5	9	90	9	19	24	31	617	8.084	22	110	5	5	7	72	21	21	24	29	638	8.186	0.102
80-84	292411	3182	1,212	1.09%	30	142	13	14	11	128	33	41	38	59	702	7.819	25	151	8	10	5	81	34	45	57	71	725	7.992	0.173
85-89	229388	3635	1,425	1.58%	35	125	15	13	10	120	31	31	36	73	934	8.301	24	127	19	9	6	76	40	32	50	81	961	8.422	0.121
90-94	174109	3690	2,185	2.12%	27	81	6	10	7	130	34	28	53	79	1730	9.099	16	82	4	9	5	83	30	30	56	77	1793	9.227	0.128
95-99	6556	132	87	2.01%	4	3	1	0	0	7	2	3	1	1	65	8.916	3	4	0	1	0	4	0	2	1	1	71	9.143	0.227
Total	4211793	43083	23,432	1.02%	461	5043	349	379	302	2697	513	509	582	749	11821	6.878	361	5110	298	310	210	2112	586	600	656	758	12431	7.028	0.149

Our data indicates a **positive shift in sentiment among voters across the 0–100 Vice President Kamala Harris support scale**. With a sufficiently large sample size in each support score category, we can confidently validate that deep canvass conversations contributed to this shift. The only exception is the 0-4 range, which included just one person, making it a statistical outlier.

On average, respondents who completed the survey showed a **0.149-point increase in support**—a strong and meaningful shift when weighted across all participants. Even in a challenging political environment, the deep canvass strategy successfully moved persuadable voters, confirming a net-positive impact on sentiment based on initial support ratings. Additional intersectional cross-tabulated data is available for those who are interested.
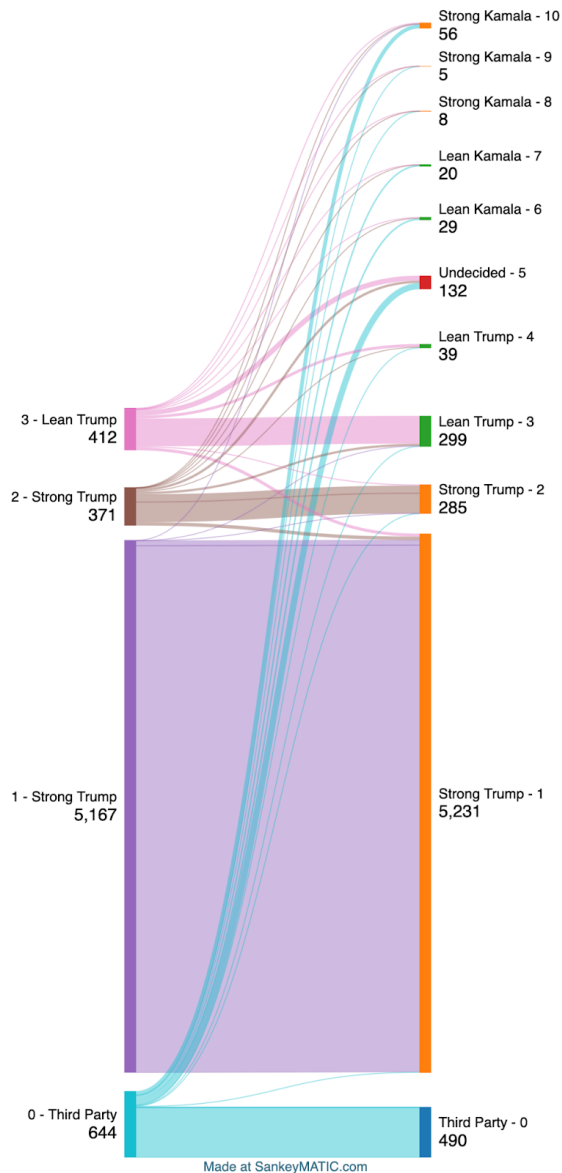
PEOPLE'S ACTION

10 - Strong Kamala
12,078

Strong Kamala - 10
12,708

9 - Strong Kamala
762

Strong Kamala - 9
774

8 - Strong Kamala
606

Strong Kamala - 8
680

7 - Lean Kamala
529

Lean Kamala - 7
622

6 - Lean Kamala
532

Lean Kamala - 6
604

5 - Undecided
2,778

Undecided - 5
2,177

4 - Lean Trump
311

Lean Trump - 4
217

3 - Lean Trump
386

Lean Trump - 3
317

2 - Strong Trump
357

Strong Trump - 2
304

1 - Strong Trump
5,151

Strong Trump - 1
5,222

0 - Third Party
481

Third Party - 0
373

Not Rated
27

Made at SankeyMATIC.com

Chart 1

The following charts visualize the measurable shifts in voter sentiment before and after deep canvass conversations, using a 0–10 scale of support for Vice President Kamala Harris. Each chart tracks how respondents moved across the support spectrum, from strong Trump to strong Vice President Harris, offering a clear picture of persuasion, retention, and base-building. Together, they provide compelling evidence that deep canvassing is not only changing minds—it's deepening commitment and breaking through polarization in ways that traditional outreach methods rarely achieve.

Chart 1: Overall Shift in Vice President Harris Support (Full Sankey chart)

This full-scale Sankey chart illustrates the shifts in Vice President Harris' support across the entire sample. Each support level is scored from 0 (Strong Trump/Third Party) to 10 (Strong Kamala), and the chart tracks how individuals moved from their initial rating (left) to their post-canvass rating (right). Notably, the largest blocks show strong retention among those already supportive of Vice President Harris, and meaningful shifts upward among undecided and lean voters. This confirms that deep canvassing is helping people clarify and strengthen their support for progressive leadership.

Strong Kamala - 10
56

Strong Kamala - 9
5

Strong Kamala - 8
8

Lean Kamala - 7
20

Lean Kamala - 6
29

Undecided - 5
132

Lean Trump - 4
39

Lean Trump - 3
299

Strong Trump - 2
285

3 - Lean Trump
412

2 - Strong Trump
371

1 - Strong Trump
5,167

Strong Trump - 1
5,231

0 - Third Party
644

Third Party - 0
490

Made at SankeyMATIC.com

Chart 2

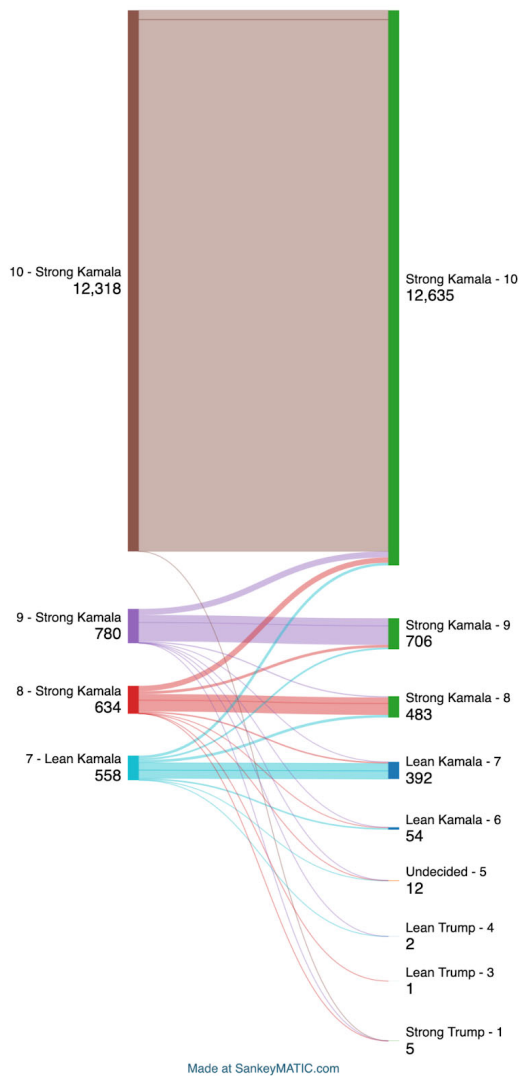## Chart 2: Strong Trump to Lean/Undecided/Vice President Harris

This chart zooms in on people who initially rated themselves as Strong Trump supporters. While many in this category remained firm in their stance, a meaningful number—more than 250 people—moved to softer Trump positions, undecided, or even modest Vice President Harris support. This defies common assumptions that hardline voters are immovable, and demonstrates how compassionate, value-based deep canvassing can reach even those considered politically entrenched.

Made at SankeyMATIC.com
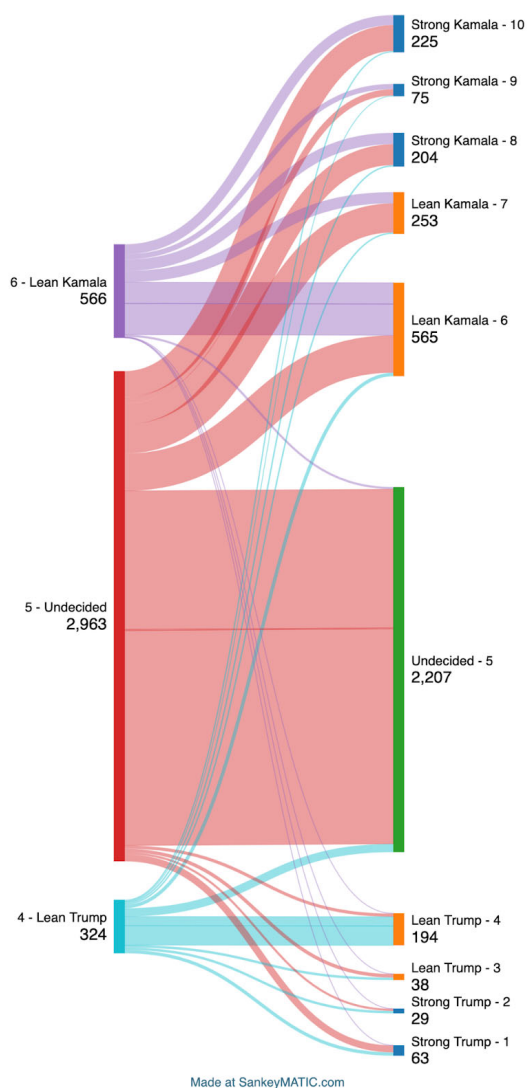
Chart 3

Chart 3: Lean Vice President Harris and Undecided Shifts

Focusing on those who started as Lean Kamala or Undecided, this Sankey chart shows some of the clearest evidence of persuasion. A significant portion of these voters moved up the scale toward stronger Vice President Harris support. In particular, many undecided voters transitioned to Lean or Strong Vice President Harris ratings after their canvass conversations—showcasing the power of listening, storytelling, and values alignment in breaking through political uncertainty.

Made at SankeyMATIC.com

Chart 4

Sankey diagram labels (left):
- 10 - Strong Kamala 12,318
- 9 - Strong Kamala 780
- 8 - Strong Kamala 634
- 7 - Lean Kamala 558

Sankey diagram labels (right):
- Strong Kamala - 10 12,635
- Strong Kamala - 9 706
- Strong Kamala - 8 483
- Lean Kamala - 7 392
- Lean Kamala - 6 54
- Undecided - 5 12
- Lean Trump - 4 2
- Lean Trump - 3 1
- Strong Trump - 1 5

Chart 4: Strong Vice President Harris Supporters Stay Strong

This final chart highlights the stability and slight growth among voters who already identified as strong Vice President Harris supporters. Not only did nearly all remain solidly supportive, but some who were previously leaners or mid-scale supporters moved into this category after their canvass. This reinforces how deep canvassing helps not only with persuasion but also with base consolidation—energizing supporters to become more confident and engaged.

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RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIAL (RCT) RESULTS

This experiment underscores the need to shift the political landscape itself—challenging barriers like gerrymandering, anti-voter laws, and disinformation that make it harder for persuasion efforts to translate into electoral wins.

People's Action along with our member organizations and our partners at the New Conversation Initiative led one of the largest field persuasion experiments in recent memory as part of the broader campaign to defeat Donald Trump and elect Vice President Kamala Harris in the 2024 presidential election. We worked with political scientists Josh Kalla and David Broockman to design and execute the experiment which is a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) designed to measure the impact of our deep canvass conversations in persuading voters to support Vice President Harris. The experiment had two treatments: a deep canvass persuasion conversation and a placebo treatment.

Script Iteration Process

The process of developing a deep canvass script is at the heart of why deep canvass conversations are so effective. In a typical script iteration process, a team of ten experienced organizers, led by a deep canvass expert, take three to six months of systematic phases to ensure the conversation at the door is truly resulting in the desired outcome. To persuade people in a lasting way, we must know what's really going on for people. During this process, we record or videotape (with permission) every conversation to rewatch like a sports game-day tape.

We use a 1-10 self-reported rating at the beginning and the end of the conversation as a tool to gauge a voter's opinions in a non-judgemental tone. The measurement instrument is a before and after online survey that is delivered to voters separately from their interaction with a canvasser.

Because of the dynamics of this program and how the election unfolded we only had 30 days to complete the deep canvass script. Condensing a 3-month process into 30 days, the iteration team made phone calls and took a trip on the ground to canvass in Nevada and Pennsylvania to test out different iterations as quickly as possible. Overall, the team tested 12 different versions of the script.

Script Theory of Change

Voters Core Concerns	Personal Stories	Intended Belief Change	Did we succeed?
The economy was better under Trump. Biden and Harris had 4 years and it only got worse.	American Dream Stories: Built trust and got the voter to talk about their own economic pain and experience	Ground in the idea that hard work does not guarantee economic success because our system is not working the way it should for working people. We must invest in a president who grew up as a working person.	No
Concerns with Vice President Harris [Inexperienced, where has she been the last 4 years?]	Personal stake stories: The choice between Trump/Harris does impact our lives - especially health care.	Harris has vast experience standing up to corporations and lowering costs Exp. As attorney general of California, Harris prosecuted pharmaceutical companies for price-gouging–exactly what corporations are doing right now to all of us.	Yes

While the script succeeded at increasing the favorability of Harris as a person and a leader, we struggled to impact vote choice. At the end of the day it is the script iteration team's belief that we did not find a way to instill confidence that Vice President Harris or the Democratic Party could ease their economic pain and lower cost of living. Without a narrative from the campaign or party that clearly combatted "the economy was better under Trump" concern, we do not believe there would have been a way to persuade people's ultimate choice to vote for Harris over Trump.

Challenges & Interventions

This experiment was conducted under very challenging and nearly unprecedented circumstances. The timing of resources to conduct the overall program and experiment and shift in presidential candidates afforded less than a month to build the universe; conduct the baseline survey; develop the persuasion script; and recruit and train the teams that would lead the experiment. Because the money came late in the cycle, we missed the opportunity to shape people's foundational relationships to the candidates before the onslaught of mis- and disinformation peaked. An earlier program might have inoculated some of our universe against racist and misogynistic rhetoric that obscured the real issues.

Scaling Up Hiring and Training at Late Stage in Electoral Cycle. Funders did not donate until late in the cycle, which proved challenging in terms of planning and preparing to launch the experiment. Late funding also presented a massive challenge to our member organizations in recruiting, training, and onboarding their deep canvass teams. We developed a voter universe of 2.6 million voters across six states for the initial baseline pre-surveys. We worked closely with our member organizations in all six states to build the universe and geography so that it would be segmented from their ongoing deep canvass and voter contact programs. The geography of the measurement universe presented challenges in re-deploying experienced canvassers. As a result, we needed to develop new infrastructure in nearly all states, which required more intensive training and on-the-ground support during the initial phase. However, the teams adapted well to these challenges and continued to show improvement. We witnessed measurable growth in canvasser's ability to have effective deep canvass conversations, specifically around their ability to complete the full script with voters; improve the story exchange rate; and this resulted in growth in the self-reported persuasion rates.

Experimentation with Voter Contact Vendor. The timing of the funding and the sheer scale of the experiment meant that two of our member organizations that were part of the original project were not able to participate, and we needed to identify a vendor with experience in traditional voter contact to add capacity. This was an interesting opportunity to explore how to adapt our training and onboarding methodology, and has also been challenging. Deep canvassing requires strong canvasser retention and consistency to be successful and thrives with a strong team culture. Most traditional canvass operations do not operate on that model so we have had some initial struggles on developing an approach to strengthen retention of canvassers. This slowed our progress in the initial weeks.

We made significant progress at several sites and are learning ways to adapt our training so that it could be scaled by larger entities.

Findings

The People's Action Deep Canvassing RCT was designed to measure the impact of deep canvassing on voter persuasion in key battleground states. The results show that deep canvassing had a meaningful effect on voters' perceptions, particularly in making them more likely to say Vice President Harris aligned with their values and was qualified to be president.

These findings confirm what past, smaller-scale studies have suggested: personal, story-driven conversations can break through the noise of political messaging and create real shifts in how voters think about candidates and policies. However, in a chaotic and highly polarized election environment, it was difficult to isolate the effects of deep canvassing from other mobilization efforts and external factors, such as competing campaigns, pre-existing political leanings, and widespread misinformation.

While the RCT did not find a direct correlation between deep canvassing and a net increase in Vice President Harris' vote margin, it provided crucial insights into how persuasion operates in today's electoral landscape. Previous studies in less turbulent election cycles showed clear movement on issues like health care and racial justice,[9][10] whereas this study revealed that topics like climate change resonated more in some states than others, underscoring the importance of local context.

Program Reach & Participation

- **2.7 million** voters were mailed invitations to join a survey panel across six battleground states (AZ, MI, NC, NV, PA, WI).
- **44,207** voters completed the baseline survey.
    - **12,160** voters completed a second baseline survey.
    - **10,433** voters completed the follow-up election day survey (64% reinterview rate).

Live calls were used to supplement survey responses and increase reinterview rates. We trained over 120 deep canvassers in six battleground states (Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) in our deep canvass methodology, script, and measurement protocols.

- **7,156** voters were reached for a deep canvass or placebo conversation.
    - **3,362** voters participated in a treatment (deep canvass) conversation.
    - **1,410** of these were fully completed conversations.
    - **3,794** voters participated in a placebo (non-canvass) conversation.

Key Findings and Impact

Here are some topline metrics from these conversations:

- **43.70%** conversation completion rate.
- **21.34%** of voters self-reported as undecided on the opening scale (4-6).
- **40.26%** of voters we contacted identified as "persuadable" (2-9 on the 1-10 scale).
- **23.01%** persuasion movement of unsupportive voters shifted to undecided (1-3 to 4-6) or supportive (1-3 to 7-10) in completed conversations.
- **4.3%** of all contacted voters, regardless of conversation completion, shifted from unsupportive (1-3) or undecided (4-6) to supporting Vice President Harris (8-10).
- The canvass increased voter recognition of the interaction, with **16.2%** of voters recalling being contacted at the door in the immediate post-canvass survey.

Voters who were canvassed were more likely to say Vice President Harris:

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[9] People's Action. (2020). *How to Defeat Trump and Heal America: Deep Canvassing and Political Persuasion in the 2020 Presidential Election.*
https://peoplesaction.org/wp-content/uploads/PA-ReportDeepCanvassingResults09.14-FINAL.pdf
[10] People's Action. (2019). *#WINRURAL: How to Build a Progressive Populist Political Movement in Rural and Small-Town America.* https://peoplesaction.org/wp-content/uploads/PA2019RuralVoterReport.pdf

- Agreed with them more on issues.
- Was more qualified to be president.
- Had a better health care plan.
- Would better protect Social Security & Medicare.

However, no significant effect was found on Vice President Harris' overall vote margin or favorability. A difference-in-differences analysis found that deep canvassing had a stronger recall effect and some issue-specific movement but did not show a significant change in final voting behavior. These metrics provide a clear view of the scale, reach, and nuanced impact of the deep canvassing program, highlighting its ability to shape perceptions while underscoring broader structural challenges in electoral influence.

> *The results reinforce that while deep canvassing is a powerful tool for changing minds, the broader democratic system must be rebuilt to ensure those shifts lead to real political change.*

Key Insights from Volunteers

Storytelling and Emotional Impact

Volunteers shared powerful, specific stories that connected personally with voters on key issues. For example, one volunteer spoke about their disabled mother and the need for a society that supports people in vulnerable situations, which resonated with voters concerned about health care access. Another described the struggles of a friend who went from a two-income household to zero income due to addiction and mental health crises in her family, highlighting the precariousness many face even when someone does everything "right." Stories around immigration were also impactful, with one volunteer sharing their own experience as an immigrant and the challenges of working without documentation. A volunteer described their mother's reliance on Social Security, leading to a connection with a voter who feared for the future of these benefits. Personal accounts related to reproductive rights, such as losing a pregnancy and needing critical medical care, struck a chord with those worried about recent restrictions.

Many volunteers heard voters express frustration that they only get contacted by politically interested parties during elections, with no follow up. This points to the importance of year-round deep engagement programs run by membership-based community organizations that can absorb people as members and leaders.

Focus Issues and Intersections

Phone bank volunteers reported a strong sense of polarization, with some voters deeply entrenched in their views and often voicing frustration toward the political landscape. Some expressed a general mistrust of both major parties. Frustration with frequent election calls and logistical challenges—such as one individual's delayed ballot for a disabled family member—reflected voters' weariness and concerns over election engagement processes. Skepticism about both parties also surfaced frequently, with several voters perceiving all politicians as self-interested and dishonest, leading some to withhold support for either side.

Based on phone bank reports, the intersections between economic security, gender justice, and health care issues created strong, relatable connections that resonated with voters on multiple levels. For instance, voters concerned about reproductive justice were often also anxious about rising health care costs and cuts to public health resources, which broadened the conversation to issues affecting both LGBTQ+ rights and gender equity. Similarly, many stories effectively combined economic concerns—such as affordable housing—with social issues, like safe environments for marginalized communities, making a compelling case for policies that addressed multiple needs simultaneously. This intersectional approach allowed callers to emphasize the interconnectedness of voters' day-to-day concerns with broader policy goals, which proved persuasive and expanded the scope of each conversation.

Project 2025

Project 2025, an anti-government and anti-worker policy agenda aligned with the Trump campaign, prompted a range of responses during voter outreach. Phone bank volunteers reported that many voters were unfamiliar with it, though those who engaged and learned more tended to express strong opposition, often rating their disapproval as a "10." Progressive-leaning voters reacted with notable concern, while Trump supporters often downplayed the project's relevance or framed it as partisan, with some disengaging entirely. Volunteers experienced a few voters who expressed curiosity and a desire to investigate further. These mixed reactions highlight the importance of empathy-building and storytelling when discussing polarizing issues like Project 2025.

Cost of Living and Economy

On phone bank calls, volunteers listened to voters' concerns about economic issues such as inflation, high grocery and housing costs, and financial stress. Stories often highlighted struggles to make ends meet, concerns about retirement, and challenges related to health care costs.

> *"I was able to have an in-depth conversation with one lady who was fed up with the cost of living and was basing her decision solely on that. I brought up the fact that Harris wants to make those in the middle class get tax cuts, which is something Trump will not do, as he only looks out for the rich and powerful."*
>
> *— Deep Canvasser*

Health Care and Reproductive Rights

Health care access and affordability were recurring issues among calls reported by phone bank volunteers, with voters sharing personal experiences related to high prescription costs, the Affordable Care Act, and family health challenges. Reproductive rights, particularly concerns for bodily autonomy and women's health, were also significant, with some voters expressing deep worry about future restrictions.

> *"One call was a man that was struggling to find a caregiver in his current situation and also waiting on his [social security] benefits. He told me that he was going to vote for Trump. That's when I stopped him in his tracks and told him about the policies that Harris will implement and changed his mind. He was completely unaware of what Harris has been promoting to protect health care and Social Security."*
>
> *— Deep Canvasser*

Education and Children's Future

Several conversations shared by phone bank volunteers centered on educational issues, from the content taught in schools to concerns about educational funding cuts. Parents and grandparents worried about their children's futures, discussing everything from cursive writing to curriculum content.

LGBTQ+ Rights and Gender Justice

During phone bank calls, strong voter concerns were voiced about LGBTQ+ rights and gender justice, especially the need for protections for transgender individuals and access to gender-affirming care. Many voters voiced fears about regressive policies that could jeopardize LGBTQ+ safety, particularly for youth, amid widespread disinformation targeting transgender health care and gender-affirming care in prisons. Callers addressed these misconceptions by sharing factual information about the minimal cost of such health care within public health budgets and emphasizing that all incarcerated individuals receive public health care by law.

> *"Just persuaded my first voter today. At first, she was undecided about voting this year and more than likely was going to vote for Trump if she decided to vote... I dropped her a lot of information and knowledge about Kamala Harris' campaign. She wants someone who will fight for the black community and LGBTQ+ people. She has a queer child and she really wants a candidate who will fight for them. She was unsure which candidate actually supports those communities. And I assured her that Kamala Harris will fight tirelessly for us and actually advocates for the LGBTQ+ community. On*

> *a personal note, I shared with her that I am a proud and openly black gay man. So, I totally understand how she felt about the future of her queer child. I cried over the phone with her because I said we LITERALLY can't go back, especially after my queer ancestors fought tirelessly for my rights. I even explained to her the harm Trump plans to do for us, as LGBTQ+ people, if he's elected. It was a personal moment for both of us. I gave her a few resources, including Kamala Harris' campaign website, as well as the website for Pennsylvania stand-up and Working Families party to pursue in her leisure. After speaking with her, she said that PROUDLY SUPPORTS KAMALA HARRIS FOR PRESIDENT."*
>
> *— Deep Canvasser*

Immigration and Crime

Immigration came up frequently in phone bank calls, often tied to concerns about crime, border control, and the economy. Disinformation was common, with some believing that governments provide immigrants with free housing, cars, and monthly checks. Immigration was also linked to issues in public schools, as some districts face budget and staffing pressures from an increase in immigrant, particularly Spanish-speaking, students, which highlights the challenges posed by the current school funding structure.

WATCH: A Story from Susana

In addition to frequent mentions of immigration in phone bank calls, two nonpartisan deep canvasses specifically engaged voters on immigration issues: one with OneAmerica in Washington State and another in Chicago with ONE Northside, which also explored the intersection of immigration and housing. The ONE Northside deep canvass found that concerns around

immigration were often tied to perceived competition for affordable housing and broader distrust in government support programs. Disinformation played a major role, with some voters believing that immigrants receive disproportionate benefits, including free housing. The canvass also revealed emotional conflicts around scarcity, disinvestment, and public trust, highlighting the need for solidarity-driven messaging in future outreach efforts.

Veterans and Military Support

Some voters shared personal or community stories about veterans with phone bank volunteers, emphasizing the need for better support and benefits. Military respect and support were also recurring themes, underscoring the community's value on these issues.

Gaza and Stance on War/Global Crises

Many voters expressed strong opposition to the Biden administration's support for Israel's actions in Gaza, with some considering third-party candidates like Jill Stein in protest. Volunteers encountered passionate responses, with some voters stating they would not support Vice President Kamala Harris due to her association with the administration. Attempts to emphasize Trump's policies on Palestine or potential influence over Vice President Harris rarely changed minds, highlighting a deep divide on this issue among voters.

WATCH: A Story from LaKeshia

THE MEANING WE'RE MAKING

Persuasion is a core part of any strategy to win elections.

Persuasion is difficult, especially in political campaigns.[11]

This political campaign was especially turbulent and challenging.[12]

Deep canvassing is one of the most proven and durable ways to persuade voters on issues.[13]

Despite the challenging political environment, canvassing remains the most effective mode of persuasion in a presidential election.[14]

Volunteer recruitment, training, and leadership pipelines are critical to scaling future impact.

Deep canvassing remains one of the most promising forms of canvass-based political persuasion.

The landscape is working against us—and must be changed.

This is about more than one election. This is chess, not checkers.

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[11] Broockman, D., & Kalla, J. (2018). *The Minimal Persuasive Effects of Campaign Contact in General Elections: Evidence from 49 field experiments. American Political Science Review*. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055417000363

[12] Wike, R., Fagan, M., & Clancy, L. (2024, December 11). *Global elections in 2024: What we learned in a year of political disruption*. Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2024/12/11/global-elections-in-2024-what-we-learned-in-a-year-of-political-disruption/

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PEOPLE'S ACTION

The 2024 election results painted a stark picture of the challenges ahead. Trump won with [77,303,563 votes](#) (49.9%)[15], a testament to the resonance of his messaging, often steeped in racism, sexism, and authoritarian rhetoric. Meanwhile, Vice President Harris received 75,019,198 votes (48.4%)—more than 6 million fewer than Biden in 2020—highlighting the difficulties in motivating turnout at sufficient levels to counter the MAGA tide. Alarmingly, a third of eligible voters stayed home, underscoring the urgent need for organizing at scale and with sufficient lead time to energize a multiracial working class.

While no program was able to shift the overall vote margin, *Deep Canvass for Democracy* influenced how voters understood the candidates and engaged politically—critical groundwork for long-term movement-building. The scale of this experiment gives us a rare opportunity to understand persuasion in today's hyper-polarized climate, and we need to ensure these insights shape how progressive campaigns approach engagement moving forward.

The political environment was turbulent, and we operated in some of the most challenging conditions for persuasion. Still, deep canvassing remained one of the most effective and durable methods for shifting voter perceptions. The results reinforce what we've seen in past issue-based campaigns: in the right conditions, this approach works. The question is not whether persuasion is possible but how to scale it strategically.

Racism and misogyny, weaponized by billionaires and MAGA-aligned forces, proved devastatingly effective in shaping the political landscape. This election demonstrated our continued struggle to counteract divisive narratives and inspire broad-based support. To fight back, we need a progressive populist agenda that speaks to economic security and justice. Organizing must be robust, proactive, and grounded in building long-term trust.

The results also showed the heightened importance of issue-based outreach. In battleground states, economic concerns drove Trump's wins. His expanded lead in Florida was fueled by strong turnout around economic and immigration issues. In Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, his campaign capitalized on rural and suburban voter anxiety about cost-of-living and energy policy. However, People's Action affiliates delivered critical victories that underscore the power of organizing.

This is chess, not checkers.

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[15] Associated Press. (2024). *2024 United States Presidential Election Results*. Associated Press. https://apnews.com/projects/election-results-2024/?office=P

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

> *"I think what happens now depends on what we do. What we built, what People's Action and others built, is quite beautiful and quite strong—strong enough and energized enough that if we continue, we can turn it around. We've been in hard places before, and we have turned it around."*
>
> *— Heather Booth, speaking to People's Action members after the 2024 election. Booth is a legendary and much beloved organizer, who founded the Midwest Academy, Citizen Action, and later U.S. Action which joined other groups to form People's Action as a new national network in 2016.*

As the U.S. faces intersecting crises—from the threat of authoritarianism to ongoing attacks on marginalized communities—the need for deep, meaningful connections across divides has never been greater. Deep canvassing provides one of the most effective tools for fostering these connections, offering voters a compassionate space to explore their conflicted emotions. This organizing method allows millions of people, who share the values of justice, fairness, and economic security, to process these feelings and move toward a vision of a truly multiracial, working-class democracy.

People's Action and our member groups advanced a strategy with a meaningful impact on the 2024 presidential election. Our methodology remained effective, but the work also revealed opportunities to expand our footprint, demonstrate full-scale replicability, and further build evidence about the efficacy of deep canvassing as a field persuasion tactic.

Across battleground states, conversations focused on emotional storytelling and direct voter engagement proved effective in fostering empathy and shifting voter opinions on critical issues such as housing, immigration, and climate justice. While the scale and impact of these shifts varied, deep canvassing consistently demonstrated its strength in mobilizing voters and driving meaningful persuasion. These findings will guide the refinement of future canvassing strategies, enhancing voter outreach in critical areas where persuasion is the only path to power, such as in Red states and rural communities. Looking ahead, this work will prioritize expanding organizational infrastructure as a long-term investment to counter authoritarianism, establishing a strong presence in key regions, and improving its ability to connect with people conflicted on issues and

electoral choices. This sustained commitment to organizing and training will help build a resilient movement that shapes future elections and drives positive change on policy issues in cities, counties, and states.

Deep canvassing's strength lies in its capacity to transform political dialogue by connecting with conflicted voters who do not yet identify with our issues and candidates. Scaling this method requires sustainable infrastructure, dedicated resources, and broad support across both c3 and c4 spaces. To build a future where communities thrive, the following recommendations are critical.

What's Next?

We anticipated this moment through scenario planning. Ahead of the election, we created a scenario planning workshop and ran it for more than 500 organizers, equipping them with strategic frameworks to navigate different electoral outcomes. We also shared the workshop with dozens of allies and donors, who further disseminated it within their networks. At the heart of this effort was a central question: What are the best cases for building power in every election scenario? As we move forward, we must apply these insights to sustain momentum, engage volunteers, and secure meaningful wins for our communities.

ACKNOWLEDGE We must allow space to feel and process this new reality, caring for ourselves and our communities as we reorient toward the work ahead.

ABSORB It's critical to retain the energy and skills of the volunteers and voters we engaged during the electoral season, ensuring they remain part of the movement.

ANALYZE We need to evaluate what worked, what didn't, and why we're here, using those lessons to recalibrate our strategies.

ACT With our insights, we must act decisively to build power, protect our communities, and secure meaningful wins for working people.

Defensive campaigns alone won't cut it anymore. It's time to pivot to an offensive strategy that addresses the economic struggles people face—rent, utilities, health care—and confronts systemic inequalities head-on through fights like progressive tax and budget reform that directly counter the Trump administration's plans to advance policies that transfer wealth from people and the public to corporations and the wealthy.

The landscape is working against us—and must be changed. The system isn't just tough; it's designed for us to lose. Gerrymandering, anti-voter registration efforts, a skewed communications landscape, and deliberate disinformation make persuasion harder. This report underscores that, to win, we can't just refine tactics—we have to shift the landscape. That means rebuilding democracy itself, challenging structural barriers, and changing the premises of electoral competition.

To do this, we're doubling down on power-building through efforts like our **Organizing Revival** and developing **10-Year State Power Plans** to guide our long-term work. We're also expanding "Bigger We" initiatives, including deep canvassing, political education, and a bold battle of big ideas to counter MAGA narratives and energize our base.

Immediate next steps include refining canvassing scripts and voter outreach strategies to amplify impact. We'll prioritize training and mobilization efforts to ensure canvassers are equipped to engage conflicted voters effectively. Long-term investments in organizing infrastructure will help withstand political challenges and deepen community engagement year-round.

Investing year-round, including "off-cycle," deep canvassing infrastructure in battleground states and counties pays dividends in federal election years. We are interested in testing what we believe to be true with our research partners at The Movement Cooperative. This will require investments in 2025 and 2026 to demonstrate the value of this infrastructure in simple cost per vote terms as well as other metrics.

While the 2024 election helped reveal both strengths and gaps in our approach, it also underscored the need to scale successful strategies like emotional storytelling and deep canvassing. Building a resilient grassroots infrastructure now will be key to shaping future elections and advancing a bold, common sense progressive agenda that appeals to the vast majority of Americans.

Ezra's Story:
Overcoming Misinformation, One Conversation at a Time

This election cycle, we [Pennsylvania Stands Up] were able to hire one of our members, Ezra, as our Deep Canvass Lead. When Ezra stepped into his new role, he knew the road ahead wouldn't be easy. Across Pennsylvania's rural communities, working families were struggling—grappling with rising costs and economic uncertainty. But instead of solutions, they were being fed a steady diet of misinformation from the right: immigrants were the problem, the government was against them, and the only way forward was to double down on the status quo.

Ezra and his team of 80 volunteers refused to let those narratives go unchallenged. Through patient, face-to-face conversations, they made sure these often overlooked voters could see the bigger picture. The enemy wasn't their neighbor—it was the billionaire class hoarding wealth, corporate greed driving up prices, and politicians protecting the interests of the few over the needs of the many.

These deep canvass conversations weren't easy. The Republican messaging machine had a head start, and it took real effort to break through. But by election day, Ezra had built a dedicated team—80 volunteers who had been trained and supported to knock on nearly 5,000 doors for Vice President Kamala Harris. This amazing team worked 138 shifts and held 333 deep canvass conversations in Lancaster and Berks Counties. In addition, they coordinated our deep canvass phone banking efforts with People's Action and PA United and achieved 1.32 million dials in PA and 111,000 completed conversations.

The biggest lesson? Deep canvassing works—but it takes time. If Ezra had been organizing year-round, he could have built that effective team months earlier, allowing them to have an even greater impact. That's why we're committed to expanding deep canvassing into a year-round effort, ensuring we're always ready to meet misinformation with real conversations that move people toward action.

Recommendations

1. Build on the Transformational Deep Canvass Volunteer Program

The Deep Canvass Volunteer Program sets us up to build long-term, permanent infrastructure for year long civic engagement which is critical in this divisive political climate. This infrastructure will further build a foundation of volunteers who can be folded into deep canvassing and direct voter outreach in future election cycles who will be even more practiced and thus skilled at persuasion.

Our persuasion rate of 10% illustrates the impact of deep canvass conversations on the voter's outlook. Qualitatively, volunteers and staff having conversations felt transformed by them as well. Volunteer retention was high because they felt they were doing something impactful that was part of a long term plan to shift hearts and minds in swing congressional districts.

2. Expand and Reinforce Organizing Infrastructure as a Long-Term Counter to Authoritarianism

Build a robust infrastructure in states and nationally that provide an enduring foundation for deep canvassing, fostering cultural shifts on critical issues like economic justice, immigration, and civil rights. This infrastructure should be designed for continuous, year-round engagement that builds community resilience and challenges authoritarian narratives. With this strong base, this foundational work into meaningful, long-term movement.

3. Prioritize Intersectional Issue-Based Engagement on Highly Divisive Topics

In an environment polarized by conservative messaging on issues like immigration, transgender rights, and economic blame, deep canvassing must prioritize proactive, issue-based engagements that cut through divisive narratives. Through targeted conversations, canvassing programs can gather crucial insights, allowing for data-informed messaging that resonates with conflicted or undecided voters. By understanding and addressing community concerns, we can foster empathy, build bridges, and effectively shift the narrative on these pressing issues.

4. Secure Long-Term Funding to Support Sustainable, Year-Round Deep Canvassing

To achieve lasting transformation, it is essential to secure sustainable funding that supports continuous, year-round deep canvassing efforts. Much of this work can be nonpartisan deep canvassing. This funding enables canvassing programs to expand into underrepresented regions, continuously train new canvassers, and build a resilient people-powered base. Nonpartisan funding will strengthen community organizing on key issues beyond electoral cycles, while electoral resources can intensify mobilization and persuasion during elections. This model ensures that communities remain organized and ready to respond to evolving challenges.

5. Cultivate a People-Powered Electoral Movement through Local and State Leadership and 365 Organizing

Invest in local and state organizations to lead deep canvassing initiatives, establishing leadership pipelines that persist beyond any single election. A "365 organizing" model empowers communities to actively participate in political discourse, shifting public opinion continuously rather than in isolated bursts. This approach builds a cumulative impact, enabling communities to retain agency and drive sustained progress on issues that matter to them. By fostering a people-powered movement, we can create a durable political base that withstands partisan cycles.

6. Leverage Quantitative and Qualitative Insights to Refine and Adapt Campaigns

Capturing both quantitative data and qualitative stories from canvassers and voters allows for a deeper understanding of the issues resonating within communities. Documenting emotional connections and personal stories provides insight into how best to approach conflicted voters and evolve progressive frames on polarized topics. This dual approach to data collection enriches our understanding, allowing for adaptive, empathy-driven campaign strategies that challenge dominant narratives and foster a culture rooted in justice, solidarity, and shared humanity.

CALL TO ACTION

The future of deep canvassing depends on continued investment in organizing infrastructure, for local, state, and national groups and networks. The success of this project shows that with proper support, deep canvassing can become an even more effective tool in shaping political outcomes, advancing progressive policies, and bridge-building toward a pluralistic democracy. It is essential to secure funding and build long-term capacity to ensure that deep canvassing and organizing efforts are sustained and scaled for future electoral cycles.

Appendix: Sample Phone Script

For a person who is planning to vote and is a 4 for Trump (1–10 scale)

Thank you for sharing. For better or worse, powerful people are making decisions that affect our livelihoods and while we're chatting with our neighbors about how people are doing, we also want to talk about how we're going to move forward together, as a country, to fix this situation.

I also want to ask you. When you think about your upcoming vote for President, on a scale from 1-10, where 1 is definitely voting for former President Trump and Senator J.D. Vance, 10 is definitely voting for Vice President Harris and Governor Tim Walz, with anywhere in between meaning you have mixed feelings. Where would you put yourself at this point?

Thank you for sharing. Why is that number the right choice for you?

What keeps you from definitely voting for Trump? What keeps you from definitely voting for Vice President Harris?

When you think about you and your family's well-being, and the future, what are your greatest concerns?

Do you mind telling me more about _____?

What? When? Where? How?

How does/did that feel for you?

Why did it feel that way?

What I'm concerned about and what matters to me most in this election is... _____

I have hope that things can be better, and I'm voting for Harris because..._____

When it comes down to it, I'm voting for Harris because she's done the work to make sure the richest among us and big corporations pay their fair share, by creating fairer tax policy and prosecuting banks for stealing money from working people.I really like that she wants to raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour, she'll protect Social Security and Medicare and lower grocery prices by holding corporations accountable for keeping prices high for workers like us even as they're raking in record profits.

I think our country needs a strong steady hand of Harris rather than the chaos of Trump.

What do you think about that?

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Thank you for sharing with me, _____. It feels really good to be able to have these conversations and learn from each other.

If you had to vote tomorrow, if you had to put yourself on a 1-10 scale where 1 is definitely voting for former President Trump and Senator J.D. Vance, 10 is definitely voting for Vice President Harris and Governor Tim Walz, with anywhere in between meaning you have mixed feelings. Where would you put yourself?

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People's Action is a national network of 38 member-led, power-building organizations in 29 states. Together, we build the power of poor and working people in urban, rural, and suburban areas to win change through issue fights and elections. Learn more about our work at peoplesaction.org.

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