



CHANGING STATES



A FRAMEWORK FOR PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE

USC PROGRAM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGIONAL EQUITY
BY MANUEL PASTOR, JENNIFER ITO, AND MADELINE WANDER
MAY 2016

PRIMARY AUTHORS

Manuel Pastor
Jennifer Ito
Madeline Wander

CONTRIBUTORS

Chris Benner
Vanessa Carter
Robert Chlala
Jared Sanchez
Alejandro Sanchez-Lopez

ABOUT USC PROGRAM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGIONAL EQUITY

Established in 2007, the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) is a research center within the University of Southern California (USC) Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts & Sciences. PERE conducts research and facilitates discussions on issues of environmental justice, regional inclusion, and social-movement building. PERE's work is rooted in three R's: rigor, relevance, and reach. It conducts high-quality research in its focus areas that is relevant to public policy concerns and that reaches to those directly-affected communities that most need to be engaged in the discussion. In general, it seeks and supports direct collaborations with community-based organizations in research and other activities, trying to forge a new model of how university and community can work together for the common good. For more information, please visit <http://dornsife.usc.edu/pere>.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	6
PROJECT PURPOSE AND METHODS	7
REPORT ROADMAP	7
PATHWAYS TO PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE	9
DEFINING PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE	10
STATES VERSUS STATES	10
A CHALLENGE TO PROGRESSIVES	11
CHANGING STATES FRAMEWORK: CONDITIONS, ARENAS, CAPACITIES	13
CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE	15
ARENAS OF CHANGE	21
CAPACITIES FOR CHANGE	34
FROM THEORY TO APPLICATION: LESSONS FROM FIVE STATES.....	36
NEVADA	38
NORTH CAROLINA	40
OHIO	42
TEXAS	44
WASHINGTON	46
LOOKING FORWARD: TEN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FIELD.....	48
GEOGRAPHY OF CHANGE	50
STRATEGIC ARENAS OF CHANGE	52
POWER BUILDING	54
PUTTING THE IMPERATIVES TO WORK.....	57
CONCLUSION: BEYOND 2016	59
SELECTED REFERENCES	60
APPENDIX A. ADDITIONAL PROJECT RESOURCES	62
PATHWAYS TOWARD PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE: THE CHANGING STATES ARENAS.....	62
PUTTING PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE IN PLACE: THE CHANGING STATES FRAMEWORK IN ACTION	62
ARENAS OF CHANGE BRIEFS	62
MAPPING PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE: THE CHANGING STATES DATA AND TOOLS.....	62
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	63
APPENDIX B. DETAILED EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	64
APPENDIX C. LIST INTERVIEWEES	66
APPENDIX D. LIST OF STRATEGIC ADVISORS	68
ENDNOTES	69
IMAGE CREDITS.....	72

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It certainly took a village to complete this multi-year, multi-state, multi-product project. For being part of our village, we first and foremost thank the organizers, advocates, strategists, elected officials, funders, academics, and many more whom we interviewed as we traversed the country. We also thank the strategic advisors who let us share (occasionally misdirected) preliminary ideas with them in the form of two rather lengthy webinars. We list all the interviewees and advisors in appendices of this report. The collective wisdom from these interviews and convenings deeply informed our analysis and recommendations—and we could not be more grateful to them for taking the time to share their experiences and knowledge with us.

This project generated a wide range of products and required a team effort. The authors thank the following individuals: Graduate Researcher Robert Chlala for leading the literature review process, helping with site visit prep, developing the arena measures matrix and co-authoring the arena briefs, and providing writing support for this report and the site visit briefs; Senior Data Analyst Vanessa Carter for planning both Strategic Advisors convenings, conducting interviews in North Carolina and Ohio, and writing site visit briefs; Data Analysts Alejandro Sanchez-Lopez and Jared Sanchez for leading the quantitative analysis, conducting interviews in Texas (in the summer!) and, for Alejandro, North Carolina, and helping write site visit briefs.

We also thank: Communications Specialist Gladys Malibiran and former Communications Intern Chrystal Li for so beautifully designing this and other Changing States products; former Graduate Researchers Heddy Nam, Sheila Nem, and Stephanie Canizales for working on the literature review and site visit prep; Undergraduate Researcher Erika Petroy, Graduate Researchers Sandy Lo and Victor Sanchez, and Data Analyst Pamela Stephens for research support and data checks; Administrative Assistant Lauren Portillo for covering logistics at both convenings; and long-time colleague and collaborator UC Santa Cruz Professor Chris Benner for conducting interviews in Nevada and Texas and providing guidance and writing support along the way.

For whatever insights we offer, much of the credit is due to this support system; as to whatever shortcomings are evident, that is pretty much on the authors. We are indeed aware that we are taking a number of leaps of faith in this analysis, positing that states matter, that conditions and capacities are key, and that power can and should be contested in multiple arenas. But leap we must—albeit with the research safety net that we carefully constructed over the course of this project. After all, at such a worrisome moment in American politics, a commitment to patient power building is necessary but so too is a sense of urgency about offering a new vision and concrete strategies for progressive governance.

Executive Summary

For progressives and their allies, it is—to not coin a phrase—the best of times and the worst of times. The country is finally lumbering out of a deep recession, the first African-American president is rounding the corner on ending his second term, and the nation has seen the emergence of vibrant movements devoted to protecting immigrant rights, ending police brutality, and addressing economic inequality.

Yet those movements are contesting policy in a terrain marked by shifting electoral rules, a judiciary often hostile to progress, and a set of reactionary forces that have been successful at capturing state capitols and the national narrative. Looking at the fundamental forces that should be pushing change in the other direction—rapid demographic change and a widening economic divide ought to be fuel for the Left and not just fodder for the Right—one is forced to wonder: What has gone wrong?

A full answer to that would require a report far longer than what we offer here. We instead try to provide what we hope will be a more effective framework for analyzing possibilities and charting pathways to power in the future. Drawing a page from the Right's own geographic path to influence, we stress how states can and should become the battleground for forging a progressive national movement. But we do not stop there: We offer an open-source approach that can be applied at multiple geographic scales, to multiple issue areas, and to multiple arenas to contest power.



We acknowledge that the idea of state-level organizing is not new—but we believe that the framework we offer to analyze pathways to power is. Based on two years of quantitative and qualitative analysis, a series of field visits to five very different states, and vetting and discussion with experts on, and organizers of, social movements, we emphasize three main shifts in thinking, three main dimensions for analyzing possibilities, and ten recommendations for moving forward.

The three main shifts in thinking involve:

1. An attention to wielding and not just winning power that thereby emphasizes the idea of progressive governance;
2. An approach to "changing states" that is not just about states as stepping stones, but as building blocks for progressive change; and
3. An assessment of "states" that goes beyond geography and lifts up the conditions, capacities, and arenas for power building.

On the first, we argue that often too little attention has been paid to the full range of what we call progressive governance—or, the ability to implement and sustain long-term change that can further social justice. This involves elections to be sure but it also involves implementation, administration, and the law. A failed website, for example, set a tone by which health care reform extending coverage to millions was portrayed as a disaster—and sustaining change requires paying attention to governing capacities as well as continuing organizing to sustain pressure.

On the second shift, we suggest that most state strategies for national change have tended to focus on how to “flip” states that are poised for electoral wins. This leads to a focus on states that may be tipping—ready to go in one political direction or another—and can lead to neglect of the in-depth organizing infrastructure that is necessary for long-term change. We instead emphasize a building-blocks approach that essentially seeks to move all fifty states, even if at different speeds and with different strategies.

Because of this, our third shift in thinking involves going beyond the geographic definition of states in two ways. First, in many states, the appropriate approach to progressive power involves working a metropolitan angle that can link together urban and suburban (and eventually rural) interests. Second, “changing states” refers to not just space but the broader terrain—judicial, administrative, ideological, etc.—on which battles are fought and victories secured. In short, the fight for change is not just in every state but in every sphere—and new creative approaches are needed.

To understand the terrain and the possibilities for progressive governance, we offer this Changing States framework that looks at three main dimensions that set the stage for pathways to power:

1. The **conditions** (i.e., demographic, economic, political, and geographic) that create the context for social change efforts;
2. The **arenas** (i.e., electoral, legislative, judicial, administrative, corporate, and communications) in which progressive efforts for change are being waged, won, implemented, and protected; and
3. The **capacities** (i.e., organizational breadth and depth, networks and alliances, leadership ladders and lattices, and resource bases) for building power toward governance.

In our analysis of conditions, the framework offers a largely quantitative approach that can be replicated and compared, mustering evidence on the nature of demographic change, the composition of job creation, the interaction between voter registration and voting, and the interplay between urban, suburban, and rural areas of a state. Such conditions can set the stage for progressive possibilities: In Nevada, for example, the combination of a rapidly growing Latino population, very fast job growth but subpar wages, low voter attachment (and hence room to grow), and a shared experience of suburban foreclosures has influenced politics.

But conditions do not singularly determine the destiny of a state, and elections are not the only arenas where power is contested: In America’s states, we also see battles over laws, choices on how to administer

programs, struggles about corporate influence, and tensions around communications, political, and social narratives—all of which we sought to capture in our Changing States framework. Consider the decision by state executive branches whether to expand Medicare as part of health care reform—and the implications that has had for people’s lives. Or listen to the organizers who stress the hegemonic strength of the “Texas Miracle”—a mythical vision of a vibrant economy that is simultaneously so fragile that wage hikes and environmental regulation might just kill it—and emphasize the need to offer not just set of alternative policies but also a coherent counter-narrative to shake politics free.

Of course, making sustained change requires the capacities to do so—and we stress in the report the need to going beyond parachuting into a state during elections to creating long-term infrastructure. This includes creating the ladders to take grassroots leaders from organizing to serving on government boards and running for office, as well as the lattices to support them once they are in office; understanding the broad ecosystem of organizations that need to be developed and networked; and exploring new models to generate resources so that organizations can free themselves from dependence on philanthropy and political parties.

Since all of this can seem a bit abstract, we deploy the framework to look at five states in detail:

- **North Carolina**, a place where the focus on just tipping for elections left the Left unprepared for a right-wing backlash;
- **Nevada**, where all the quantitative signs point to possibilities for progressive change and an on-site analysis confirms that view;
- **Texas**, where progressive change seems to be in the distant future but where dedicated organizers are exploring a promising metro strategy;
- **Ohio**, where creative networking between groups is countering the demographic and economic stagnation that could constrain the future; and
- **Washington**, where issues of actually implementing change (such as Seattle’s increase in the minimum wage) are coming to the fore.

The range of states is deliberate: We wanted to see whether our analysis worked in states that might be ripe for change, those that might be long hauls, and those where the central issue was consolidating power and delivering benefits. And what we found through a series of site visits and discussions with organizers and analysts in each state is that the framework is indeed both salient and flexible: In any locale, it helps to identify where the needs are and helps to chart potential pathways to power. It is, in short, more about how to change states than it is about which states may change—and, as such, it can be utilized nearly anywhere.

Of course, any work like this would not be complete without a set of recommendations and, recognizing the appeal of tightly drawn lists, we offer ten—nine relating to the pieces of our framework (conditions, arenas, and capacities), and one looking ahead to the timing of change:

1. Build from local to state.

The traditional bases of power for progressives have been in the nation's *urban metropolitan areas*—and that is the way to state power as well. Efforts like the Fight for \$15 are leveraging local change to press for statewide and national shifts in the minimum wage. This requires building locally-rooted institutions—community, labor, and faith-based organizations that connect with a constituency base. Core capacities needed at the regional level include: organizing, leadership development, research, policy analysis and development, communications, coalition building, direct services, and resource development.

2. Bridge urban-suburban-rural divides.

While building power in our cities is essential, it is not sufficient. The demographic reality is that many low-income families and people of color are pushed out to the suburbs, places where progressive infrastructure is weak and social networks are disperse—and we need new *suburban strategies* for civic engagement. A *rural strategy* is also critical: Consider Washington, where conservative state legislators from primarily rural districts hold back progressive change. Thus, we need to *connect the urban bases with suburban and rural constituencies*, working to support anchor organizations that can help seed and build other organizations within the ecosystem.

3. Cultivate cross-state collaborations.

States may be the fundamental building blocks—but we do not want change to stop there. *Cross-state collaboration* is required to shape national policy and governance, partly because there are limits to what can be achieved within a single state—such as immigration reform—and what impact that state governance alone can have, particularly as corporations are playing at a global scale. Victories and movement in multiple states can reach a tipping point at which victories can be consolidated for national impact, along the lines of what we witnessed with the issue of same-sex marriage. This will require multi-state alliances where shared learning and joint strategizing can occur.



4. Intersect electoral and legislative arenas, which are fundamental for policy wins.

While we stress the importance of other arenas—partly to lift up the importance of often overlooked arenas like administration, for example—we concur that the *electoral and legislative arenas* are fundamental for building progressive power at the state level. What we emphasize is the *interplay*: To help move strategically between the electoral and legislative arenas, several state-level alliances are employing *integrated voter engagement (IVE)*, which involves blending election-driven voter registration, education, and turnout with on-going community organizing and leadership development to carry out policy campaigns *in between* election cycles. We stress IVE as a key strategy for change.

5. Focus on judicial and administrative arenas for implementing and protecting wins.

As policies are won through the electoral and legislative processes, administrative capacity and judicial decisions (such as the Supreme Court ruling on aspects of the Affordable Care Act) greatly influence whether or not policy wins get implemented—and protected. On the judicial side, while public interest lawyers and advocates work on legal matters, we need more attention to electing and appointing judges. And on the administrative side, we need to cultivate allies in bureaucracies; bringing together government staff with outside advocates can help build toward common understandings and shared efforts.

6. Experiment and innovate in the communications and corporate arenas.

Progressives need to more forthrightly interact in the corporate arena, recognizing that the traditional union foil to corporate power has diminished as labor has weakened *and* acknowledging that we can swing to our side those business leaders who recognize that current levels of disparity are bad for the economy (or who need progressive support to develop “green” economic opportunities). As for communications, controlling the narrative requires an approach that goes beyond public relations firms and is instead rooted in what resonates with grassroots leaders and local communities. Most fundamentally, we need a more highly developed story about the economy that fuels change and resonates with diverse populations.

7. Build an independent power base among emerging communities.

Progressives eagerly point to the changing demographics as evidence of power shifts ahead—but for such change to be realized, we need concrete ways to engage, motivate, and activate new actors, not just for elections but also for public policy shifts. This means a power base that is both engaged year-round *and* independent of the traditional political institutions so that it can push and challenge policymakers. This will require political education, skills building, and leadership development—and it will require an explicit racial justice analysis that informs and underpins strategies and so builds constituencies.

8. Create ladders and lattices to institutional positions of power.

It is not just a power base that needs to be developed; we also need ladders and lattices to institutional power and governance. This includes identifying and supporting grassroots leaders so that they are grounded in a theory of change, think beyond single issues, and are able to build relationships to sustain coalitions for the long term. But it also means that progressive organizations need to recognize that they are often, in one interviewee’s colorful expression, “snowcapped.” To better reflect the bases we are trying to organize, progressives must be intentional about identifying, recruiting, and training young leaders of color as part of succession planning.

9. Forge structures and attitudes for effective inside-outside strategies.

Even when progressives elect one of their own, the new “insider” can feel without support and often isolated. As one interviewee described, “We [have not] figured out how to build our outside institutions to support inside organizing.” This involves two shifts. First, the “movement elected” officials need to develop a base independent of traditional party politics, likely by building alliances with other progressives on the “inside.” And second, community organizers need to understand that holding their insider allies accountable also means supporting them and understanding the pressures and trade-offs inherent in any such position.

10. Leverage moments for movements.

This report rightly stresses the need for a fifty-state strategy, for a commitment to governance, and for a patient emphasis on the long march to justice. But this does not mean that there are not key dates ahead—after all, the Right was able to create a decade of resistance by successfully leveraging the 2010 elections with a Tea Party uprising that set the terms for redistricting. For progressives, key national opportunities include the 2016 elections (which will not only determine the legislative but the judicial landscape), the 2020 Census count (which will provide the raw material for redistricting), and the 2020 local elections (which will set the politics for how that redistricting takes places).

While one main product of this project is this report, we offer additional in-depth research briefs on each arena of change and each of the five states we visited. We also provide resources that will allow others to carry out this sort of analysis on their own—and also to use that experimentation to provide feedback to us on how to improve the approach. We are, in short, not trying to lay out a secretive strategy to be discussed by progressive powers that be (or purport to be) but rather an open-source set of tools that can be used by grassroots organizers and state-based movement builders.

We do hope that the field will find this report and its resources of utility. We also realize that we are simply repeating back—and hopefully more elegantly organizing—what movement builders themselves have told us. Indeed, they have stressed that broad national change is possible but only if strategists look beyond campaigns and toward lasting infrastructure and capacities, if funders invest beyond the issues and work to move the needle on power, and if the organizers themselves think beyond urgent demands and protests and instead plan toward governing for a more inclusive and just society.

For while the times are nothing if not dangerous, it is also likely that we will win. It is, of course, not inevitable—organizing, elections, and leadership will make the difference. But the demographic tailwinds are at our back, the costs of economic inequality are increasingly clear, and the American story, despite its hiccups, is fundamentally about the struggle to expand the family of those included in our definition of human rights. And when we do win power, the quality of what we do with that power—that is, the nature of *progressive governance*—will determine whether justice is actually served and opportunity actually expanded.

We are betting that it will—and we are hoping that the Changing States framework spurs conversations about new collaborations to forge pathways toward sustained social change and transformation.



See Appendix A of this report for additional research briefs and tools!

Introduction

In less than three decades, by 2043, the United States will be a “majority-minority” nation, a trend suggesting that there will be even more constituencies seeking increased racial equity. Simultaneously, with income inequality reaching new highs, there has emerged a new level of attention to, and understanding of, the ways that inequality undermines economic growth and social health. Finally, with increasing frustration about the current political polarization and dysfunction in our nation’s capital has come a growing desire for effective governance.

All this means that it should be the best of times for those seeking progressive change: the demographic, economic, and political winds are at our back. But even with these trends seemingly in our favor, progressive change is not an automatic outcome. Demography is not destiny; inequality has deep roots in the U.S.; and government institutions have been weakened by years of budget cuts and political attacks. Indeed, in many ways, we are facing the worst of times, with an odious rise in xenophobia and racism tainting our political process.

The challenge is striking—and frustrating. After the 2008 elections, many thought that there had been a fundamental turn in America. The results seemed to announce the possibilities of a new demographic and social coalition premised on the notion of “social and economic justice for all people.” But it quickly became clear that the possibilities of the new *winning* coalition depended on the ability to pivot to a new *governing* coalition.

Such governing requires both stronger organizing to maintain pressure and better implementation to make the benefits of change crystal clear. But instead of a tidal wave of progressive support in the wake of Obama’s accession to the Presidency, we saw a Tea Party Tsunami—and instead of a convincing roll-out of new health care coverage, we saw a balky website that left a public relations sinkhole that obscured the huge improvements in community well-being that have resulted.

With the Right in full reaction, progressives held on to the White House but lost the states—which gave newly-established conservative state legislatures the power to redistrict in a way that has made the last half decade exceedingly difficult. Beyond the simple geography of federal representation, lesser power in states is problematic for other reasons: States serve as strategic battlegrounds for testing policy ideas, framing, and new organizing strategies; states hold great responsibility in strengthening, or weakening, democracy through the use of electoral rules, legislation, and courts; and state-level efforts can help catapult local efforts to the national stage.

Thus the paradoxical times we live in: While President Obama granted administrative relief for undocumented youth, state legislatures are rolling back voting rights for people of color. While the Administration successfully pushed through health care reform, some states are constricting women’s reproductive rights. And while some cities have raised the minimum wage for workers and some movements for social equity have achieved amazing prominence (think marriage equality, Black Lives Matter, and the Fight for 15), our nation’s income inequality has never been higher. We are seeing unprecedented wins for progressives at the same time as conditions are getting worse for many of the constituencies we purport to represent.



Of course, it is not all gloom and doom. In some places, the progressive civic infrastructure is gaining sufficient maturity, sophistication, and power to demand and win change. The electoral campaign of Bernie Sanders has shown that issues of income inequality actually have great salience, particularly with millennials. But in many places, progressive infrastructure to harness that energy hardly exists or is very far from the tipping point at which long-term change can be sustained or scaled up for greater gains. Meanwhile, the reactionary forces fueling a grassroots backlash rooted in conservative values and rhetoric has effectively shifted much of the national debate to the right, and all but ensured inaction on important issues of the times.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND METHODS

This project was supported by a two-year grant aimed at developing an analytical framework to help facilitate new thinking and discussion about *progressive governance* among funders, strategists, advocates, and organizers thinking about power and change in the *U.S. states*. In this report, we present the results of that research, offering tools and recommendations that can help those working toward equity and justice to step up to—and to navigate—the challenges we face today. While our analysis builds on our previous strands of work on movement building and social equity in the U.S., we pose a new question: What needs to be in place not just to win but to wield power for social change? In other words, what does it take to not just fight but to govern for justice?

Our path to answering this question (which we detail in Appendix B): We started with guideposts culled from the literature, both academic and popular; conducted empirical analysis of all 50 states (using both quantitative and qualitative data); visited five states and interviewed over 100 leaders in the field; and vetted methods and findings at key points in the process with a set of strategic advisors who represented the key audiences for this project, including funders, organizers, policy experts, academics, and strategists. Much of our analysis changed and was refined along the way by our experiences in the field and our interactions with the advisors; while it is our names that are on the cover, it is no exaggeration to say that this report really just reflects our attempt to channel the wisdom of those with whom we interacted.

While we have also produced and will make available a series of more in-depth research briefs and tools (listed in Appendix A), the main product is this report, which presents an analytical framework for investors in the field. And by investors, we mean not just funders but the movement builders seeking to shift the terrain for economic and social justice. Our aim was to produce a framework that can serve as a guide for a wide range of progressive constituencies in understanding the relevant structures that allow for justice and equity goals to be more easily achieved. We were, in short, nothing if not ambitious—and it is because the times are nothing if not dangerous.

REPORT ROADMAP

This report is organized as follows. We first explain what we mean by “progressive governance”—and how such a vision of governance can be a useful frame for progressives. We also clarify our dual meanings in the use of “changing states.” That is, we are referring to the U.S. states themselves but also to the conditions, arenas, and capacities—the three main components of our framework—necessary for achieving progressive governance. We also highlight the main findings.

We then walk through the three parts of the Changing States framework:

- **Conditions for change** that set the context for social change efforts in the state, in which we include demography, economy, politics, and geography;
- **Arenas of change** that define the playing field for pushing, passing, and protecting progressive policies and systemic change; we specify six arenas of contestation: electoral, legislative, judicial, administrative, communications, and corporate; and
- **Capacities for change** that must be in place to build enough political power in the six decision-making arenas; here we describe where intentional and strategic investments can be directed in order to support and build power toward progressive governance.

Within each piece of the framework, we explain what it is, why it matters for progressive governance, and provide sets of potential questions (or factors) that users of our framework—funders, strategists, advocates, and organizers—can apply to better understand where particular states are at on the pathway to progressive governance.

While we ground the Changing States framework with state-level examples throughout the report, we turn next to applying the framework more concretely to the five states we visited as part of this project: Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Washington. We explain why we chose these varying states and in each case we attempt to show how our framework helps us gain a better understanding of the contexts, rules, structures, systems, and existing capacities that can help shape progressive priorities and strategies.

We then turn to the key recommendations that emerge from all this information for helping map out pathways to progressive governance in states, and beyond. We highlight three key imperatives that emerged from our research—one about geography, one about the arenas, and one about power—and offer specific recommendations within each.

On geography, we note the need to scale, developing a local-to-state-to-national roadmap. On the arenas, we remind readers that there is a broad terrain where ideas, policies, and power are contested. And on power, we make a key but often under-recognized point: Demography is not destiny and change will require grassroots community organizing that elevates voices from the ground up and the development of the ladders and lattices for identifying, lifting, and supporting progressive leaders, particularly those of color, into a variety of positions of power.

A key caveat: The framework we offer is meant to help assess the lay of the land but is not intended to lead to specific tactics around particular issues; that would require not a broad framework but a more in-depth power analysis tailored to that issue. Rather, we designed the Changing States framework to help inform conversations around assessing progressive power in states and, hopefully, informing broader strategies of what is needed for progressive governance in particular states—and how this strategy differs greatly across states, or even within a single state.

Finally, while we insist that we need to look past short-term electioneering, we note how we can leverage interest in key moments—including the immediate elections and then subsequent interest in the 2020 Census and the subsequent redistricting—to use the framework to spur dialogue about the longer-term path to progressive governance. Another world is possible—but we will only get there through a strong analysis, a developed organizational infrastructure, and a patient vision of what is needed, what is possible, and what is desirable to realize the nation’s promise of justice for all.

Pathways to Progressive Governance

In the introduction, we stressed the need for progressive governance and the need to consider states in two ways: geography and conditions. So what is behind that—and how did that structure our main findings?

DEFINING PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE

We define “progressive governance” as the ability to implement and sustain long-term change that can further social justice. “Progressive” refers to a commitment to equity and justice and is rooted in the values of economic inclusion and democratic participation. In using the term “progressive,” we are not referring to any particular political party; rather, our analysis is directed at understanding what changes in the broader policy and institutional contexts would allow social justice goals to be more easily achieved. In using the term “governance,” our analysis is much broader than government; rather, we are referring to the political and power structures and processes that shape decision making and include institutions that are both outside of and a part of government.¹

The scant literature on progressive governance that exists is often as much about how change happens as *what kind* of change is created.² In other words, it is as much about democratic processes as it is about the outcomes, such as the distribution of wealth and access to economic opportunity. In highlighting both international and domestic examples, sociologist Xavier de Souza Briggs stresses local decision making that facilitates continual input, accountability, and “collective problem solving.”³ Progressive governance is about moving from “power over” to the “power to” enact and sustain policies and practices that better respond to all communities.⁴ Therefore, progressive governance requires both open and transparent avenues for democratic processes as well as the civic capacity to take part in such processes.

This sort of definition was echoed by interviewees in the field. Progressives are as much focused on *how* they are waging change as *what kind* of change they are demanding. Organizers, in particular, are focused on engaging the most disenfranchised and the fast-growing segments of their communities—African Americans, Latinos, Asians, and immigrant populations. Policy campaigns are primarily a vehicle

for motivating, activating, and providing concrete ways for under-mobilized constituencies to get civically involved. For example, Youth Rise Texas cultivates leadership of youth directly impacted by immigrant detention and mass incarceration to be at the forefront of campaigns aimed at putting an end to separating families. While demographic shifts are favorable to progressives, it will require concerted effort, dedication to the long haul, and strategic coordination to actualize the potential influence of new constituencies.

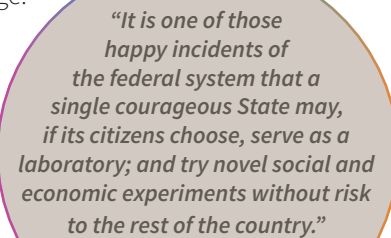
One key takeaway from field research: Progressives are talking about progressive change—but not as often about progressive *governance*. Even in cities and states where movement-building leaders had been successfully elected into political office, there is not necessarily an explicit vision or strategy to build toward governance. Some progressive electeds expressed feeling “abandoned” by the grassroots movements that helped to get them elected. Their desires to go back to the grassroots base were often hampered by demands of the partisan party structure (e.g., fundraising and caucuses). And, even if there is a desire to have an inside-outside strategy, there is often no structure for operationalizing it.

STATES VERSUS STATES

As noted, our use of “states” is consciously twofold. Of course, the traditional meaning has to do with geography: As captured in the quote by Justice Louis Brandeis, states are key battlegrounds for experimentation and change.

They serve as strategic locales for testing policies, framing, and new organizing strategies. States also play a critical role in strengthening, or weakening, democracy through the use of electoral rules, legislation, and courts.

Finally, states have been the places for many progressive victories from gay marriage to environmental protections to in-state tuition and drivers’ licenses for undocumented immigrants—victories that start at the local level then scale up through the states to shape the national conversation and open up possibilities for federal action.



“It is one of those happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous State may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country.”

—JUSTICE
LOUIS BRANDEIS



All that is well and good, but the focus on scaling often means that state-based strategies approach the states as merely stepping stones to federal action—it is about devising where you can best win next in order to tip national power and policy. An advantage of this approach is that it allows groups to strategically focus on moving the needle on a particular issue or condition in states where progressive change is possible. But a limitation of such an approach is that it tends to point toward investments in “swing” states, which can be a narrow frame for deploying resources as it is often accompanied by a temporary rush of resources that do not necessarily build lasting capacity—either resources are parachuted in from outside or investors do not stick around after the state is “tipped.” Moreover, this can discourage investment in states where movement on progressive issues is a far-off prospect—but where shifts in backward policies can significantly improve people’s lives—and also discourage investments in “anchor” states where the challenge is strengthening infrastructure and implementing policy.

The Changing States framework is premised on a notion that states are fundamental building blocks to national change. It is not about selecting states but about recognizing that we need power in all fifty states in order to move the nation toward an equitable and inclusive future. Thus the framework is designed to guide a conversation about the pathways to building progressive power in any or all states—and to assess the strategic terrain across local, regional, and other sub-state contexts.

That local geography matters should be no surprise. As Peter Dreier, Thomas Frank, and many others have written, it was conservatives who adopted a local grassroots organizing strategy in the 1970s and 1980s that consciously sought to create a counterforce to urban progressive momentum.⁵ And it was that strategy—

along with large-scale investments in key institutions around key capacities for change (organizing, research, policy, communications, and political leadership)—that eventually came to fruition at state and national levels.

Such a nuanced geographic strategy is increasingly part of progressive organizers’ handbooks as well. In fact, our interviewees were most optimistic about achieving change at the local level—much less so at the state level—and there was frequently a discussion of using metropolitan-level organizing as an effective first set of steps to broadly target the state. We honor those insights and strategies by incorporating them into our discussion below.

A CHALLENGE TO PROGRESSIVES

Given this discussion and the research, we find three necessary shifts in thinking that can help guide future investments in progressive capacities:

1. the need to shift from progressive change to progressive governance, including an emphasis on implementation and on what structures, policies, and regulations are critical barriers or enablers;
2. the need to move beyond issues to strategic imperatives, especially the long-term investments in developing leaders and institutions; and
3. the need to shift from a focus on possibilities—looking for which states might “tip”—to pathways to power that work in multiple states and at multiple geographic levels.

From Winning to Governing

Our first main finding is a challenge: We suggest that progressives expand the emphasis on *winning* power to include a focus on *wielding* power. Social justice-minded actors tend to approach change as outsiders—particularly in challenging political and economic times. And it is for good reason: They are usually the outsiders.

Often the fight is just making the case for an issue as a valid public policy concern—education, housing, safety net programs, and so on. While governance—and actually being in control of or being an active participant in decision-making processes—may seem like a far-off horizon for most, progressives in some cities and counties have been facing this for years, and others are starting to face this challenge now. As our demographics shift and historically-excluded populations gain more political power, we expect this issue of progressive governance to gain increasing importance across the country.

Such a shift has two main implications. First, a frame of governance pushes against the short-term thinking that is so pervasive within the field—particularly within the philanthropic and donor community. When the goal is defined as a policy win, the attention and resources required to enforce and build upon the policy are often neglected, leaving the victory vulnerable to rollbacks and referenda. By focusing on governance, the organizing strategy is necessarily extended beyond campaigns and policy victories.

This leads to the second implication: the need to focus on implementation and replication of policy victories. Obamacare provides an important example here: Getting the votes to pass the legislation was only the first step. Ineffective websites and enrollment systems during the launch highlighted the problems of poor administration and actually facilitated the portrayal of the program as a failure, something that has persisted in the public imagination despite evidence of its startling impact on insurance coverage for more Americans. Implementation counts—and it is time to think beyond winning to governing.

From Issues to Imperatives

Our second finding involves the need to spur cross-sector conversations about identifying strategic *imperatives* rather than strategic *issues*. A critique of today's progressive movements is that we are fragmented, parochial, and short sighted. As civil rights activist and author Van Jones says, "Martin Luther King famously proclaimed 'I have a dream,' not 'I have an issue.'" Progressives all too often concentrate on short-term victories (to win the battles) while conservatives focus on changing the rules of the game (to win the war). We suggest that the imperatives for progressives today are: a vision of power, a geographic theory of change, and

an assessment of the full terrain where ideas, policies, and power are contested. A vision of power is about manifesting demographic changes to tilt power relations and dynamics such that racial equity, economic inclusion, and participatory democracy are more achievable. Part of that happens through the kind of community organizing that lifts up the voices and concerns of the most marginalized. But it also includes building the ladders and lattices for progressive leadership in the full constellation of civic organizations and in elected positions of power—and it involves considering the rules in all arenas, including the all-important judiciary and even corporate governance. As for geography, defining the full terrain for change—and what to consider in assessing that terrain and what sort of geographic scaling is necessary and possible—is at the heart of the Changing States framework.

From Possibilities to Pathways

Our third finding is that considerations should be about *pathways* to progressive governance rather than *possibilities* for progressive governance. Analysis about possibilities is likely to lead to conclusions that some places are riper for strategic investment than others, or that some places are so far from progressive governance that they are not worth investing in. But focusing on short-term possibilities for change can undermine the long-term future which will require participation from all parts of our nation.

Indeed, when we decided to test the framework in five states, we deliberately chose places that were not all "ripe" or "tipping" but that rather were experiencing very different "states of change." We did this because we believe that we need an approach that does not seek to solely sway an election but rather to change a nation. That means not assessing which states are ready but rather developing a flexible analysis that can inform us where states are on a pathway, what building blocks are in place, and what investments are needed. To sustain change, we need to tackle the fundamental building blocks—that is, as long-time movement builder Anthony Thigpenn reminds us, there are "no short cuts, only detours" in our quest for progressive governance.

CHANGING STATES FRAMEWORK:
Conditions, Capacities, Arenas

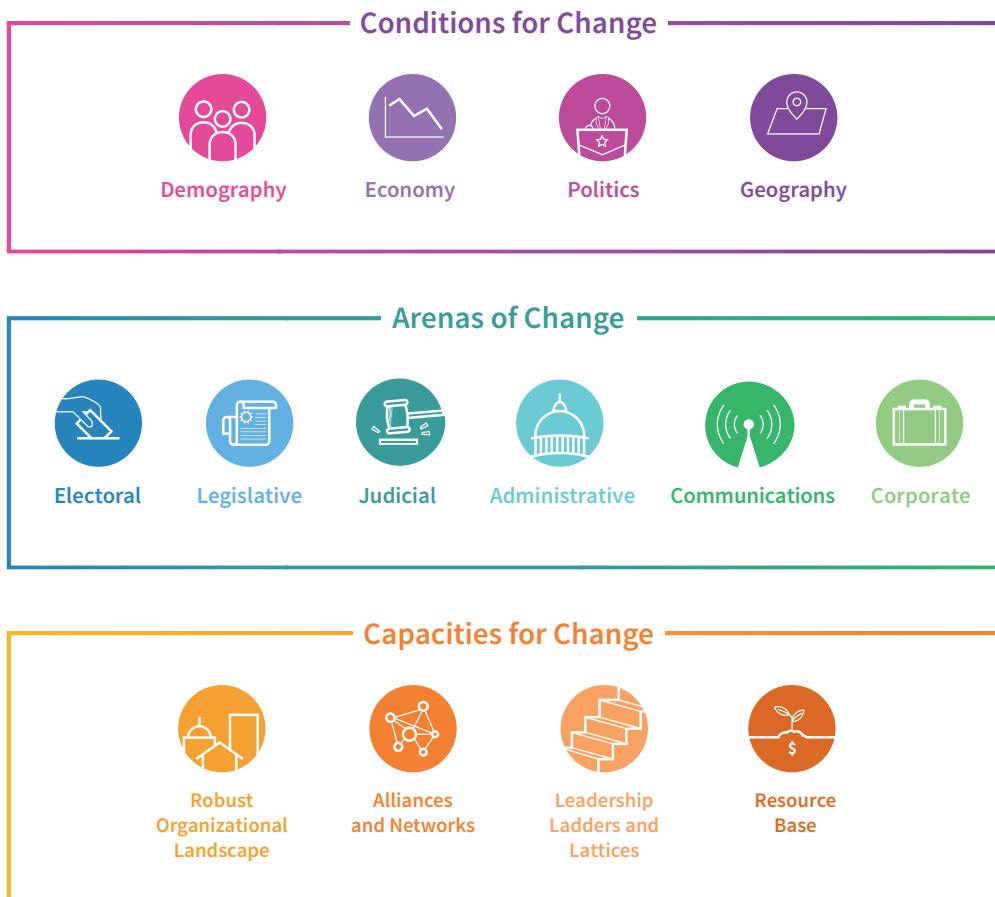
With an eye toward easy use, the Changing States framework that we assembled to analyze these pathways to power is actually quite straightforward (see Figure 1). It starts with a set of three questions: What are the *conditions* (i.e., demographic, economic, political, and geographic) that create the context for social change efforts? What are the *arenas* (i.e., electoral, legislative, judicial, administrative, corporate, and communications) in which progressive changes are being waged, won, implemented, and protected? And finally, what are the *capacities* (i.e., organizational breadth and depth, networks and alliances, leadership ladders and lattices, and resource bases) for building power toward governance?

The three parts of the framework are interrelated. The conditions set the context for the work. The arenas are where the work occurs, and thus are where we look to understand the rules of the game. The capacities are about our ability to affect these rules and to govern.

Determining the pathways to progressive governance should consider the three parts of the framework together: We can navigate by understanding drivers for change in the current context, what assets we need to develop, and what arenas—and structures therein—are most critical to expand or change to achieve progressive governance.

But while all three are important, they do not all get equal attention below. “Conditions” is the part of the framework that is most likely to be determined by the institutional priorities, geographic focus, and issue areas of the user; therefore, we keep this section relatively brief. We also keep the “capacities” discussion brief, drawing from existing research (including our own) on movement building. We believe that the “arenas of change” is the most unique part of this framework; therefore, we dedicate the most discussion to that dimension of the analysis.

Figure 1 – Changing States Framework



CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE



An understanding of current conditions—as well as past and future trends—is helpful in identifying critical constituencies and the issues that might animate them. It is also useful to look at not only where the state is (or has been) but also the direction in which the state is headed. A forward-looking analysis may examine the state’s projected demographic composition in 2040, for example, or compare the skills required for projected job openings against the skill levels of the growing segments of a state’s population; the former consideration might indicate how politics will be scrambled in the future while the latter might indicate how possible it might be to bring business (interested in the productivity of future workers) into broad discussions about improving education and job training.

The “Conditions for Change” section is organized as follows: It starts with a brief discussion of four conditions — demographic, economic, political, and geographic— and provides some examples from the five states we visited (Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Washington). For each condition, there is a list of sample factors and a sample graph. Again, we keep this discussion rather brief and illustrative as the specific conditions considered will be up to the different users of the framework—and we hope our examples demonstrate how this might be done.⁶ As noted earlier, we also have a series of ancillary products that go into this and other aspects of the analysis, including state profiles, in much more detail.



Wondering what the Conditions of Change look like in your state?

To access more detailed state-by-state data on the conditions than we present in this brief write up, check out our **Mapping Progressive Governance** tools, available online and also in Appendix A.



DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

Demography is important for considering who the primary constituencies for progressive change are and who they may be in the future. In general, the constituencies who would benefit the most under a progressive policy agenda are people of color, poor and working poor, immigrants, and young people, to name a few groups.

Key demographic conditions include population growth or decline, racial/ethnic composition, nativity, age distribution, and other population characteristics of a state. In addition to a current snapshot, such as the percentage of a state’s foreign-born population, it is also useful to look at the pace of change. A rapid influx of large numbers of immigrants, for example, can lead to racially-charged backlashes—as seen in California in the early 1990s and in Arizona in the last few years.

Across all five states we visited, interviewees viewed population growth, changing demography, and increased diversity as a positive, yet complicated, trend for progressive governance. For example, in Nevada, the state’s population more than doubled between 1980 and 2010—a majority of which was driven by people of color and immigrants. In contrast, Ohio has had stagnating population growth: The state experienced only a 6 percent population increase between 1980 and 2010—and, unlike

most states, very little of the growth came from people of color or immigrants.

As Figure 2 shows, Nevada is slated to both continue its above-average population growth and growth in people of color between 2010 and 2040, whereas Ohio will continue to have well below average growth in population and people of color.

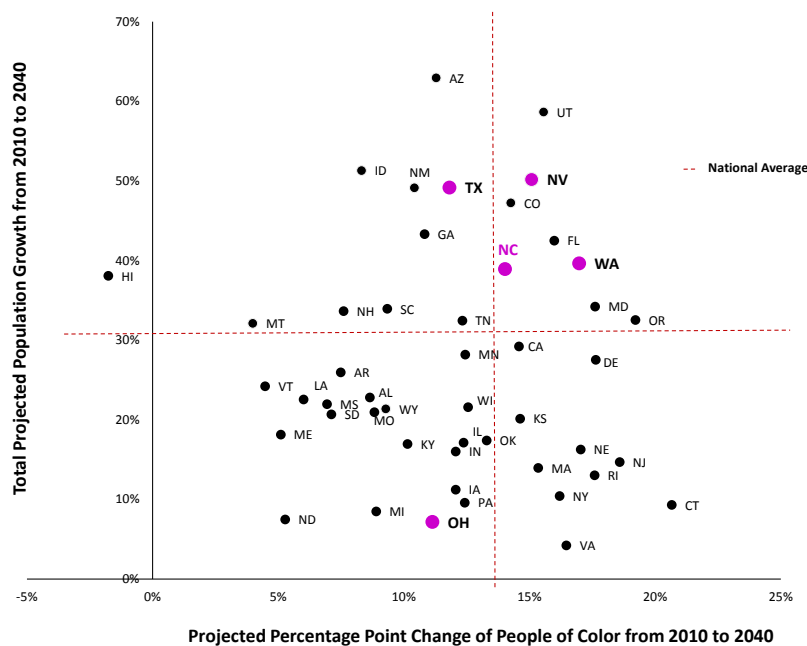
Interviewees in Nevada view the rapid and projected increase in population—especially of people of color—as an opportunity to expand a progressive electorate, while interviewees in Ohio viewed their stagnating growth as a challenge for progressive organizing, particularly with regard to aligning the needs of a distressed white working class population with African Americans and others. In either case, it is critical to understand local demographic shifts to understand the context for progressive organizing.

Possible demographic factors to consider:

- Current population growth
- Population growth projections
- Populations of color growth
- Foreign-born growth
- Youth of color growth

Figure 2 – Population Projections, 2010-2040

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; site visit states highlighted in purple





ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Economic structures shape a state’s labor force, policy priorities, and power relations. Like demography, an examination of changes in economic factors can suggest trajectories for the future. The economic foundations of a state, and how these transform over time, illustrate the stability (or instability) of not just business, but also of the populations who live and work in the state—and this examination could look at factors such as job and wage growth, jobs to population ratio, working poverty, inequality, and industrial composition, to name a few. For instance, changes in total jobs and wages may present new opportunities in the labor market for equitable growth or, on the other hand, exacerbate inequality in an already-bifurcated economy.

Returning to Nevada, for example, the number of jobs nearly doubled between 1990 and 2010—which partly explains the ballooning population during the same period. Although this job growth was larger than the national average, wages grew by only 10 percent—much less than the national average of over 17 percent. Moreover, between 2000 and 2010, wages in Nevada actually *fell* by nearly 3 percent (while nationally wages grew by 3 percent, in spite of the Great Recession).⁷

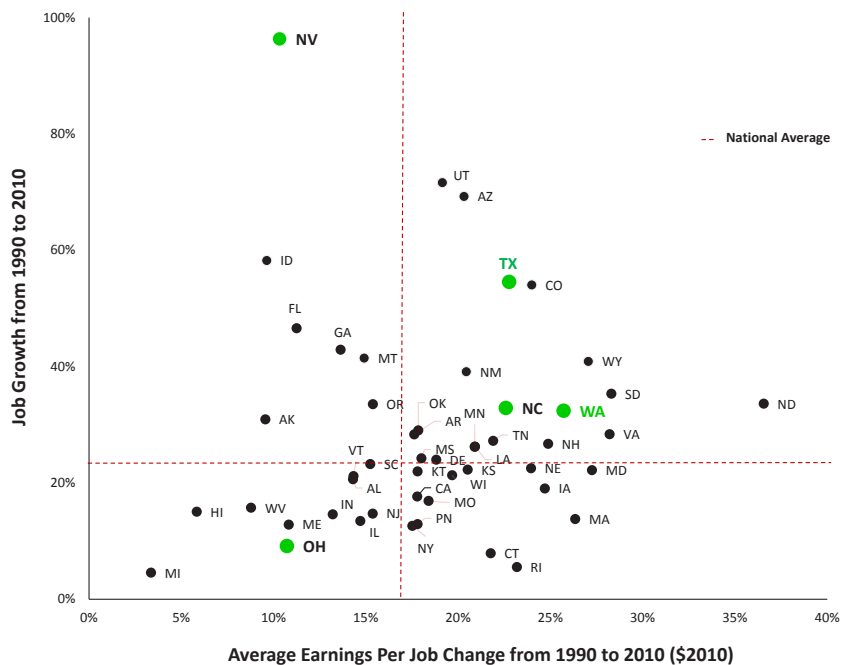
One implication of this is that it makes the state ripe for union organizing—and indeed Nevada’s labor movement has recently grown to become the largest in a right-to-work state. In fact, by 2014, Nevada ranked 3rd highest for private union membership at nearly 12 percent, driven by recent and robust organizing of culinary workers at casinos and hotels. Incredibly, this represents a nearly two percentage point *increase* since 2010⁸—certainly an important development to consider when determining the pathways toward progressive governance in the state.

Possible economic factors to consider:

- Job and wage growth
- Jobs to population ratio
- Working poverty
- Inequality
- Industrial composition
- GDP

Figure 3 – Jobs and Wage Growth, 1990-2010 (in 2010 dollars)

Data Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW); Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; site visit states highlighted in green





POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Existing political preferences reveal the influence of historical and current ideologies as well as the distribution of power. And while in using the term “progressive,” we do not mean just Democratic, partisan composition and changes in party affiliation over time can have long-term effects on the political infrastructure of a state and may signal which groups are gaining political capital. Just as relevant for progressive governance is the rate at which residents register to vote and the rate at which they turn out to the polls.

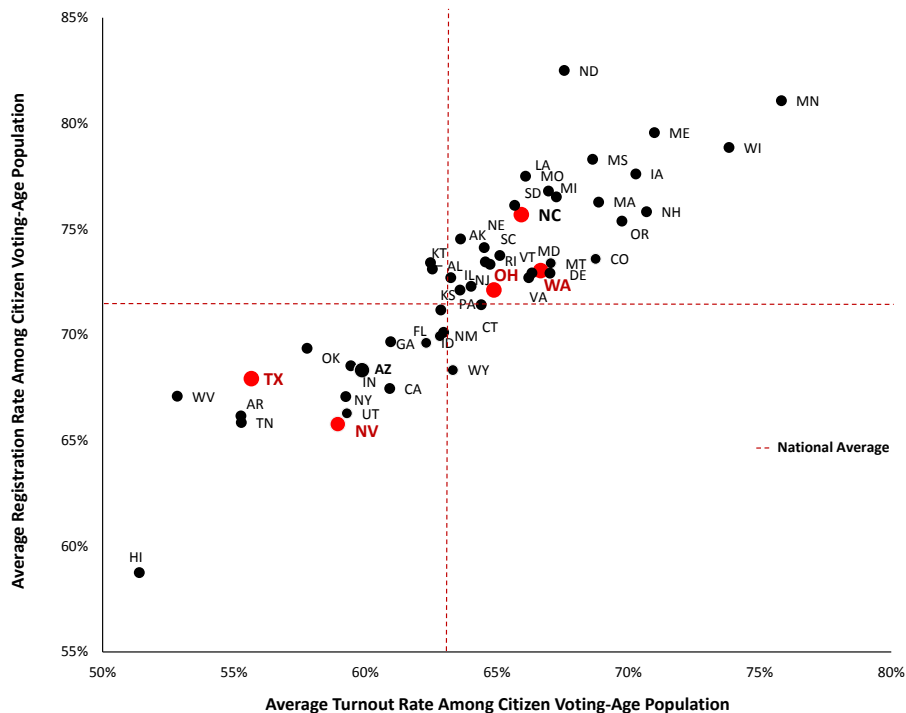
Putting partisanship to one side, Figure 4 simply charts registration against turnout. Notice that both measures of engagement are highly correlated: Where registration is high, so too is turnout. But it also shows a range of possibilities for the states we consider: Strong registration and get-out-the-vote activities in both Texas and Nevada could dramatically sway elections whereas these activities might have less room for improvement in, say, North Carolina, which is above the national average on both counts; there, another form of investment in power-building might be even more critical.

Possible political factors to consider:

- Voting registration
- Voter turnout
- Partisan composition

Figure 4 – Turnout Rate by Registered in Presidential Elections (2004, 2008, 2012)

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau Voting and Registration Population Characteristic (P20) tables; site visit states highlighted in red





GEOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

Geographic dynamics also shape structures of power and influence in state governance. Factors at play include: relative autonomy and fiscal capacity of local versus state governments; relative influence of urban, suburban, or rural areas on state politics; and effectiveness and strength of cross-metro collaboration and/or competition; and inter-state relations, both of neighboring states and national influence.

For example, in “Dillon’s rule” states like Texas, Washington, and Nevada, the structure and fiscal activities of local governments must be approved by state government, limiting the power of localities and yielding a need to be creative to get things done at the local level. On the other hand, Ohio, along with 10 other states, is a “Home Rule” state so the state government confers some level of autonomy to localities.⁹ In Ohio, interviewees described the state as a collection of eight major “city states” with very independent and distinct governance activities and progressive possibilities. Understanding this local versus state dynamic, and how it plays out in different states, for example, is certainly essentially to devising state-level strategies for pursuing progressive governance.

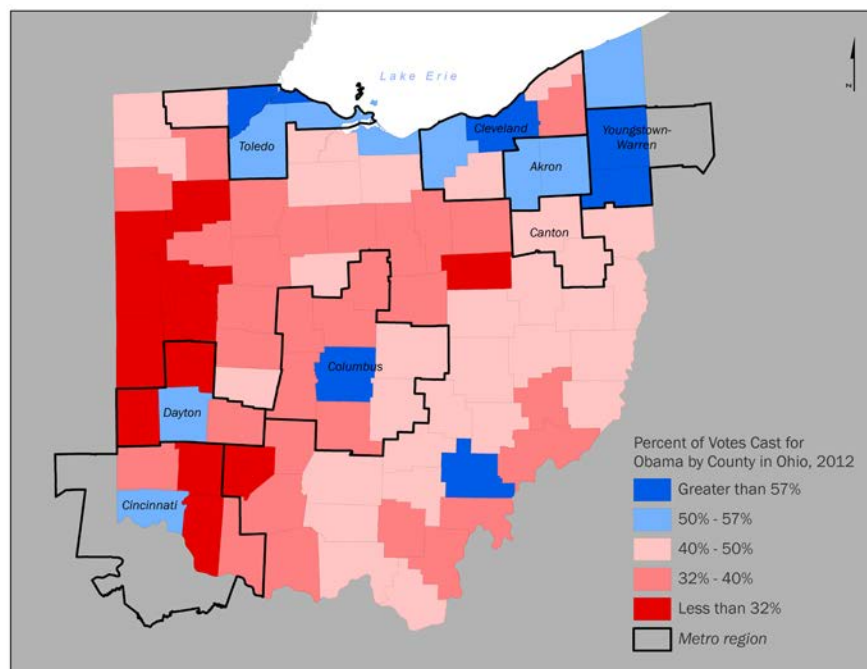
Possible geographic factors to consider—relationships between:

- Localities and the state
- Urban, suburban, and rural communities
- Different metropolitan regions

Another example is the geographic spread of political preferences within a state. For instance, Figure 5 shows how Ohioans in different counties voted in the 2012 presidential election (by percent of votes cast for President Obama). Here, we see significant differences between urban and rural (the former leaning toward Obama and the latter toward Romney). Understanding these types of geographic conditions have led Ohio’s progressive movement builders to pursue a strategy of building and strengthening anchor organizations in eight metros—and then connecting them to break down the traditional siloes between the “big eight” and scale to the state. Interviewees in Texas told us that this approach is gaining salience there, too, where we certainly see Blue cities in a Red state.

Figure 5 - Voting Preferences in 2012 Presidential Election by County in Ohio

Data Source: *The Guardian U.S. Elections Data*



ARENAS OF CHANGE



Where does the struggle for progressive change—and ultimately, progressive governance—actually occur? In this section, we describe six decision-making arenas—the target areas for organizing efforts to push, pass, and protect progressive policies and systemic change. These include the electoral, legislative, judicial, administrative, communications, and corporate arenas. Together these define the broad terrain where ideas, policies, and power are contested—and this tool is designed to help facilitate a systematic understanding of where the roadblocks and opportunities lie.

While we did not find academic literature that identifies or discusses these six arenas as a whole (considering all at the same time is perhaps one of our contributions), we certainly found a wealth of literature on each of the arenas (see Select References). And our field interviews affirmed that the six arenas were comprehensive—and resonated with those doing work on the ground. Indeed, it is a framework rooted in an analysis of power relationships and dynamics that is increasingly used in the community organizing field. For examples, see *Power Tools: A Manual for Organizations Fighting for Justice*¹⁰ produced by Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education and Alliance for Justice’s Bolder Advocacy’s *PowerCheck: Community Organizing Capacity Assessment Tool*, which identifies five of the six “change avenues” (omitting the communications arena).¹¹

In this report, we summarize the highlights from the literature review and the field research. Three principles thread throughout the arenas of change: *accessibility* to decision makers and decision-making; *accountability* to grassroots communities and the values of economic inclusion and democratic participation; and *transparency* of governing structures and processes.

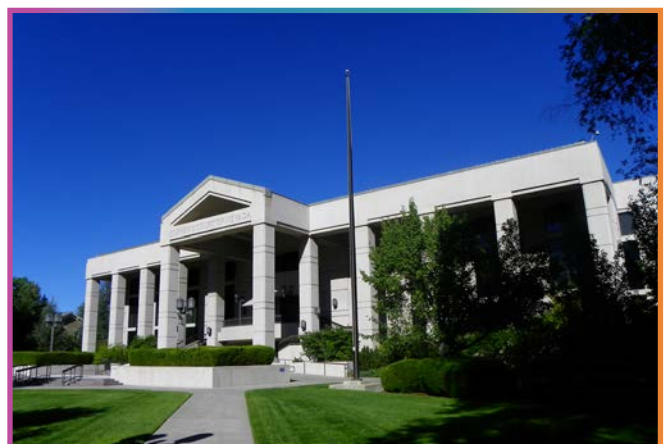
It is important to note that in describing the structures and systems in these decision-making arenas, in most cases, we are not making normative judgments about which are more or less conducive to progressive governance. Of course, some structures clearly hinder progressive activity, such as strict voter ID rules that target marginalized

communities in the electoral arena. But, for example, is it better to have elected or appointed judges in the judicial arena? Arguments can be (and have been) made on both sides of this question, but more pressing than resolving this debate is understanding how this difference shapes strategies for ensuring fairness in sentencing or enforcement of ethics in appointments and rulings.

This section is structured as follows: We start with a definition of the arena—including who the decision makers (i.e., the organizing targets) are—and we briefly describe what progressive governance looks like in the arena. We then briefly describe some key rules, structures, and systems that influence decision making in the arena, which can help us “measure” or at least understand opportunities for progressive change and where a state is at on the pathway to progressive governance. We also highlight some state-level examples—including evidence from some states that we did not have a chance to visit on this round but where we have worked elsewhere along the way—to illustrate how we can apply this piece of the framework to states.

Want to know more about each of the Arenas of Change?

See our **Pathways Toward Progressive Governance briefs**, available online and also in Appendix A.





The electoral arena is where voters are the final decision makers: They shape policy indirectly through electing representatives or directly through ballot initiatives.

This is the most widely-recognized and commonly-used avenue through which “everyday” people participate in our democracy and effect change. A state’s electorate determines *who* holds decision-making positions in executive office and the legislature—and in 23 states, the courts. The electoral arena is also used for passing laws in the form of propositions, referenda, or state constitutional amendments on the ballot. Indeed, many significant issues—marijuana legalization, sentencing reform, environmental protections, and much more—are being decided through ballot measures.

There are many barriers and systemic issues that complicate decision making in the electoral arena and make it so it is not a fair playing field. Economic inequality and racialized voter suppression, for example, undercut the potential power of low-income voters, voters of color, young people, and many others. So advancing progressive change in the electoral arena would be facilitated by rules and structures that maximize the ability of people to cast their votes—particularly those who have been historically marginalized. For progressive organizations, this means both aligning and mobilizing voters and working to reform electoral rules to reduce the influence of political and economic elites.

The following are factors and related sets of questions that lift up the key rules, structures, and systems in the electoral arena to consider in assessing pathways toward progressive governance:

- **Fairness of electoral laws:** To what degree does the state enfranchise voters, particularly immigrants (through integration efforts) and formerly incarcerated (through state law)?
- **Ease of voter registration and voting:** How accessible is registration in the state? What is the availability of early voting, online voting, and vote-by-mail? Does the state have voter ID laws, and how strict are they? How long do voters have to wait at the polls before they can cast their ballots, and how does this vary by region and neighborhood within the state?
- **Existence and use of ballot initiatives:** Does the state allow ballot initiatives? If so, how easy (or not) is it to get an initiative on the ballot? What form do they take (i.e., constitutional amendments, statutes, or referenda)?
- **Fairness of re-districting:** Who draws legislative district boundaries (e.g., elected representatives or committees of non-elected, non-partisan experts)? How gerrymandered is the state?
- **Availability of public campaign financing:** Does the state provide public campaign financing to level the playing field for candidates?
- **Transparency of political spending:** To what degree does the state track campaign spending? Does the state require disclosure of donors and expenditures? Does it ban certain types of political contributions (e.g., from political parties, individuals, unions, corporations)?



Expanding the Electorate in Oregon

Since 2010, many states have implemented oppressive voting restrictions to keep people—including people of color, low-income people, students, and seniors—away from the polls. In 2013, North Carolina’s newly conservative legislature passed a barrage of voting restrictions, including a strict voter ID law that also shortened the early voting period from 17 to 10 days.

However, some states are bucking these trends: In March 2015, Oregon passed the nation’s first “automatic voter registration,” which allows Oregonians to register to vote when they obtain their drivers’ licenses. Initial estimates anticipate more than 300,000 eligible voters could be added to the rolls, making Oregon’s registration rate the highest in the country. And later that year, California followed suit. This suggests that, in Oregon and California, progressives can shift resources from voter registration (although it is still needed) to voter engagement.

Sources:

Jonathan Brater, “How Oregon’s New Law Can Change Voter Registration,” Brennan Center for Justice, March 11, 2015, <https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/how-oregons-new-law-can-change-voter-registration>.

Steven Yaccino and Lizette Alvarez, “New G.O.P. Bid to Limit Voting in Swing States,” *The New York Times*, March 29, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/30/us/new-gop-bid-to-limit-voting-in-swing-states.html>





The legislative arena is where elected officials and policy makers are the decision makers as they propose, craft, and approve (or disapprove) laws.

It, along with the electoral arena, is one of the most critical decision-making processes for debating and determining policy priorities. For example, this is the arena in which tax laws are shaped that determine amounts and sources of public revenue that affect the level and quality of services and programs that are essential to low-income communities.

Gaining influence and power in this arena often means organizing constituencies powerful enough to influence legislators, and so legislative outcomes, beyond the traditional—and often symbolic—avenues for political participation, such as public fora and public testimony. Structures and processes that uplift the voice and concerns of constituents in the legislative process include: improving communication between elected officials and the public, moving toward direct democracy, and increasing authentic public participation.

The following are factors and related sets of questions that lift up the key rules, structures, and systems in the legislative arena to consider in assessing pathways toward progressive governance:

- **Structure of legislature:** Is the state legislature full-time, part-time, or a hybrid structure?
- **Capacity and professionalism of legislators:** How does the structure of the legislature (part-time vs. full-time) dictate the capacity of legislators to get things done? Do legislators have term limits? How are legislative offices staffed? What are state legislators' compensation? How does all this affect the types of candidates who run for office (e.g., career politicians, corporate representatives, independently wealthy people, or “everyday” people)?
- **Strictness in lobbying rules:** Does the state regulate lobbyists in terms of transparency and ethics? For instance, are state legislators required to disclose gifts from lobbyists? To what extent do lobbyists and legislators follow state regulations?
- **Level and authenticity of community engagement:** Does the state mandate public participation in legislative decision-making processes? How authentic are these processes and to what extent to legislators' decisions reflect their constituents' opinions? Does the state have mechanisms for direct democracy like participatory budgeting?



How Nevada's Part-Time Legislature Shapes the Terrain

Only nine states have full-time legislatures, meaning the rest have some form of part-time legislatures. The part-time structure means legislators are paid a low salary, so candidates must essentially be independently wealthy or bankrolled by outside entities to be in office. This exacerbates the absence of people of color, women, and low-income people in office. In Nevada, being a legislator is even less professionalized since the state legislature meets rather infrequently: every two years for four months (as opposed to every year in the state of Washington). Nevada legislators also are not budgeted for their own staffers for research so they must draw from a small pool of shared, nonpartisan staff. According to interviewees, this structure gives lobbyists an exorbitant amount of power in Nevada, as they are full time, and end up advising legislators and even writing policy in between sessions. However, one interviewee suggested a possible upside, that having time in between sessions gives progressive groups more time to organize. Organizers in Nevada have also sought to utilize the inter-session committee meetings to place legislators face-to-face with constituents. These realities provide a good reminder that we must not be quick to make normative judgments but rather use these factors to understand the terrain.

Source:
National Conference of State Legislatures, "Full- and Part-Time Legislatures," June 1, 2014, <http://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/full-and-part-time-legislatures.aspx>.





The judicial arena is where decision makers are state-level courts and judges as they determine the legality of policies and practices.

Judicial decisions can safeguard democratic processes from bias and special interests, but they can also preserve privilege and order, particularly the power of elite private property. While there are fewer pathways for public participation in the judicial arena (compared to the electoral and legislative arenas), communities still participate via juries and, in a little less than half the states (22), judicial elections (versus appointments or “merit selection” by officials).¹² Moreover, the judiciary has the potential to provide pathways for “everyday” people to raise concerns against their employers and corporations in their communities, to seek justice for specific grievances, to retain their housing, to maintain their freedom, and to take up many other questions of empowerment and justice.

The judiciary is a critical yet often overlooked arena by progressives: Not only is it the place where policies can be challenged or protected, but even more importantly for the long-term, it is where decisions can set precedents that impact future decision-making in the other five arenas in our Changing States framework. And while federal courts are central to governance in that they take on cases involving the U.S. Constitution, federal law, and inter-state conflicts, state courts vastly outnumber federal courts and hold a key role in checking state-level legislative, executive, and administrative power.¹³ But how do we achieve progressive governance in this arena? Given the role of money in appointments and elections and in swaying rulings in favor of corporate and wealthy interests, we suggest one way to advance progressive governance in the judicial arena means ensuring “decisional independence” of judges—or, a judge’s ability to make decisions free of political influence and popular opinion.

The following are factors and related sets of questions that lift up the key rules, structures, and systems in the judicial arena to consider in assessing pathways toward progressive governance:

- **Method of judicial selection:** Are state-level judges appointed or elected across high, appellate, and trial courts? Are there term limits?
- **Enforcement of ethics and monitoring money:** Does the state have campaign spending limits in judicial elections? On what grounds do states require judges recuse themselves from cases, if at all? Do these recusal rules apply to campaign contributions?
- **Fairness of sentencing laws:** To what extent do people of color—particularly, Blacks and Latinos—disproportionately end up in court and get harsher punishments than Whites? To what extent do people of color disproportionately make up the state’s incarcerated population?
- **Accessibility of courts to consumers and workers:** What are the rules and resources around self-representation? What legal resources exist for low-income people, people with disabilities, and people who do not speak English?



Monitoring the Money in North Carolina's Judicial Elections

North Carolina has become ground zero for the rapid rise of campaign contributions to judicial elections from the political right, especially with the elimination of the state's public finance program for judicial races in 2012. In 2014, \$1 million was poured into just one primary race for a Democratically-held North Carolina Supreme Court seat, most of which came from the Republican State Leadership Committee (RSLC) and the state's Chamber of Commerce, with money from companies like Koch Industries, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and tobacco giant Reynolds American. While the Democrat incumbent managed to hold on to her seat in that particular race—with a narrow 4 percentage point margin—the North Carolina Supreme Court now has five Republicans and two Democrats on its bench. And in North Carolina, campaign cash is not a basis for recusal, so, it is likely campaign contributors like Duke Energy, which had billions of dollars in lawsuits pending over major coal ash spills and water contamination, face judges in the state's courts whom they helped elect. Judicial contributions, in this case massive funds from the RSLC, reverberate in the electoral arena as well: After first attempting to reject the case in 2016, the state Supreme Court ruled 4-3 against plaintiffs who charged gerrymandering in the Republican legislature's new electoral maps, despite the judgement contradicting the U.S. Supreme Court's recent ruling on the topic. As political money is increasingly funneled into judicial elections like these, recusal rules and judicial campaign finance regulation become that much more important to consider.

Sources:

Billy Corriher, "North Carolina Supreme Court Disregards U.S. Supreme Court in Redistricting Case," *Center for American Progress*, January 20, 2016, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/civil-liberties/news/2016/01/20/129372/north-carolina-supreme-court-disregards-u-s-supreme-court-in-redistricting-case/>.

Billy Corriher and Jake Paiva, "State Judicial Ethics Rules Fail to Address Flood of Campaign Cash from Lawyers and Litigants" (Washington D. C.: *Center for American Progress*, May 7, 2014), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/civil-liberties/report/2014/05/07/89068/state-judicial-ethics-rules-fail-to-address-flood-of-campaign-cash-from-lawyers-and-litigants-2/>.

Erik Eckholm, "Outside Spending Enters Arena of Judicial Races," *The New York Times*, May 5, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/06/us/politics/outside-spending-transforms-supreme-court-election-in-north-carolina.html>.





The administrative arena is where executive officials and government staff are the decision makers as they oversee and implement laws and rules, coordinate agencies and regulatory bodies, and administer public participation processes.

The administrative arena is primarily the bureaucratic arm of the state—but we also include the executive branch of power which has considerable authority and weight in many states. It is in this arena where policy is put into practice. The avenues for public participation within this arena are in the rules-making process and, in some places, groups have pushed for participatory budgeting that allows the public to engage in the process of determining budgetary priorities, spending, and monitoring implementation.

Like the judicial arena, we find the administrative arena is often overlooked by progressives, yet it is critical as it is where progressive wins actually roll out and affect peoples' lives. Similar to the legislative arena, advancing progressive governance within the administrative arena means holding state-level executive branch actors, bureaucrats, and staff—the latter of whom are often appointed by elected officials—accountable to implementing policies and to making decisions that best serve the communities for whom they work.

The following are factors and related sets of questions that lift up the key rules, structures, and systems in the administrative arena to consider in assessing pathways toward progressive governance:

- **Capacity and resources of agencies:** Do agencies have adequate capacity and resources to achieve implementation of policies passed by the state legislature? What indicators and measures do government agencies utilize to guide decision making? To what extent do government departments and agencies collaborate? What structures exist to engage the public in decision-making processes?
- **Enforcement of ethics:** What types of ethics enforcement rules exist to hinder corruption within government agencies? Are there bodies that audit and provide oversight of agencies? What structures exist to ensure public transparency in administrative decision-making processes?
- **Rule-making and resource allocation:** To what extent does the governor have decision-making power over the state budget, legislative enactment, department and committee appointments, and other oversight measures? Under what circumstances can the governor use veto power, if at all? What more informal power and political weight does the governor hold?



Collaborating across Agencies in Utah

In 2005, Utah set a seemingly impossible goal: end chronic homelessness in 10 years by using the “Housing First” model (just as it sounds, it’s about providing housing first, services later). And to almost everyone’s surprise, the approach worked: The state reduced the number of chronically homeless from about 2,000 in 2005 to 200 in 2015. How did Utah do it? Many credit its relatively small size (as NPR reported, while there were 2,000 chronically homeless in Utah, there were 29,000 in California), so it made the goal seem much more achievable. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which wields great influence in the state’s civic culture, is also a big supporter of the Housing First philosophy. But another factor came into play: Convened by the Salt Lake County Homeless Services Department, over 31 public and non-profit agencies sit on the Collective Impact Steering Committee, which works to bridge department siloes and create a “system-oriented rather than agency-oriented” approach to ending chronic homelessness. Facilitated by this formal structure, Utah’s homelessness advocates have personal relationships with government staff and they meet on a regular basis to match available housing resources with the individuals who need it the most.

Sources:

Kelly McEvers, “Utah Reduced Chronic Homelessness By 91 Percent; Here’s How,” National Public Radio, December 10, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/2015/12/10/459100751/utah-reduced-chronic-homelessness-by-91-percent-heres-how>.

Kiersten Nunez, “Salt Lake County Agencies Join Forces to Combat Homelessness,” Fox 13 News, October 28, 2015, <http://fox13now.com/2015/10/27/salt-lake-county-agencies-join-forces-to-combat-homelessness/>.

Salt Lake County, “Collective Impact Steering Committee | Salt Lake County,” Homeless Services | Salt Lake County, 2015, <http://slco.org/homeless-services/collective-impact-steering-committee/>.





Communications as an arena of change is about the power to influence the values, worldviews, and understandings of the public at-large.

If the broader public held the values of inclusion, justice, and dignity for all, then the terrain would be much more favorable for progressives; by contrast, change is harder when the values of exclusion, elitism, and dignity for some dominate. The struggle toward progressive governance requires navigating the contested ideas and beliefs about the role of government, for example—which undergirds how people understand, engage with, and reshape the process and outcomes of governance.

Key players in this arena are the media, ranging from traditional news outlets to new media on a variety of web-based platforms. Media not only educates people and reinforces popular values,¹⁴ but it can shape what gets on the table for public debate in the first place, directing public interest and opinion one way or another.¹⁵ It is also a vehicle for storytelling and connecting with the public.

Communications infrastructures must be shifted to help the public understand and engage in decision-making processes, as well as to serve as a vital platform for new progressive ideas to emerge and to gain acceptance. Organizations like Netroots focus on creating the kind of communication and dialogue that links and amplifies progressive voices (bloggers, newsmakers, social justice advocates, labor and organizational leaders, grassroots organizers, and online activists). These groups emphasize breaking down the “isolation” of women or people of color “from the global pool of information and knowledge” that can have a substantial political and economic impact, and allow these groups more influence on social policy.¹⁶

The following are factors and related sets of questions that lift up the key rules, structures, and systems in the communications arena to consider in assessing pathways toward progressive governance:

- **Competing narratives and frames:** What frames or narratives dominate the political, economic, and social debates? How are these replicated or challenged in the media?
- **Diversity in media content and ownership:** Who owns the major media outlets in the state? What alternative (non-profit, non-corporate) media outlets exist? How much airtime do progressive organizations get in these outlets?
- **Public accessibility to information:** How many reporters cover statehouses and local politics? Do residents have affordable, broadband, and high-speed internet access? How does the state fare in terms of computer, internet, and social media literacy/use?
- **Existence of media watchdogs:** How many progressive media watchdog organizations operate in the state? How are these organizations (or other independent bodies) monitoring both media content and ownership?



Taking on the “Texas Miracle”

One cannot discuss the economy in Texas without hearing about the “Texas miracle.” Economic boosters and conservative politicians tout the fact the state’s GDP grew by 96 percent between 1990 and 2010, outperforming national growth of 52 percent, or pointing to the large numbers of Fortune 500 companies moving to Texas. For them, the “why” is simple: generous corporate tax breaks, dismantled regulation, and tort reform. In other words, Texas is “business-friendly.” Of course, as research points out, labeling this a “miracle” may mask some complex realities, including an over-reliance on oil and gas, the creation of low-wage jobs, and growing racialized income disparities.

Part of why the myth has gone so far is because it is a cohesive story. It is a concise framing that manages to draw to some degree from data but to a large degree benefits from repetition. As numerous interviewees pointed out, any long-term change in Texas requires tackling the communications arena. One advocate notes that many are converging on a theory of change of “inform-engage-vote,” and the “inform” requires robust communications and open media. Some organizations are focusing on online news sources and social media towards this end. Progress Texas’ “Crazy Uncle” series, for example, featured short blogs and memes that discussed how to talk to an imagined “crazy uncle” about immigration reform, marriage equality, or other progressive changes. Such approaches allow people to spread these messages among each other, without simply passing talking points out to the public. And ultimately, progressives suggest that developing an alternative vision and narrative—not just a series of snarky cracks at conservative inanities—is key to shifting power and policy. Indeed, messaging and communications itself has become a battleground in Texas.

Sources:

“Crazy Uncle Series,” *Progress Texas*, November 2015, <http://progresstexas.org/tags/crazy-uncle>.

Bloomberg Editorial Board, “Closer Look Proves the Texas Path to Job Growth Isn’t Best View” *BloombergView*, July 8, 2011, <http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2011-07-08/closer-look-proves-texas-path-to-u-s-employment-growth-isn-t-best-view>.

Phillip Longman, “Oops: The Texas Miracle That Isn’t,” *The Washington Monthly*, May 2014, http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/march_april_may_2014/features/oops_the_texas_miracle_that_is049289.php?page=all.





The corporate arena is where business management and corporate stakeholders make decisions that directly affect workers and families.

This is the realm in which labor unions have been traditionally focused—negotiating directly with corporate leadership for better wages, benefits, and other worker protections. Gaining power in this arena means the ability to hold corporations accountable to mitigating harm toward communities (e.g., pollution or worker exploitation) or to implementing socially-responsible measures that benefit communities (e.g., funding social change or social service organizations).¹⁷ Though often villainized by progressives, corporations can help move the needle toward positive social change—as in Washington where technology corporations were squarely in favor of same-sex marriage.

A significant barrier is the ways in which private actors have actively disempowered the organizations and government actors meant to hold corporate power in check. A key shift in the political calculus over the last half century is the overall decline in union density. Unions used to keep corporations accountable to the interests of the workers who keep their doors open—but now there is an organizing void in this arena in many states. Not only have conditions worsened for workers, but corporations hold an exorbitant amount of political power due the class bias in the electoral, legislative, and judicial arenas discussed above. Many large companies use their influence to subvert existing government regulations or lobby to defang the agencies meant to monitor corporate activity. The overall lack of corporate accountability and social responsibility stands in the way of progressive change.

The following are factors and related sets of questions that lift up the key rules, structures, and systems in the corporate arena to consider in assessing the pathway toward progressive governance:

- **Presence and influence of unions and unionized employers:** What is the state’s private sector union density? What sectors are unions the strongest in, and what weight do these sectors have in the state’s economy? What democratic practices exist in these unions? How are these unions tied to broader social and community movements?
- **Responsible and accountable corporate practices:** How are corporations both negatively and positively contributing in terms of community involvement, corporate governance, diversity, employee relations, environment, human rights, and products? How transparent are the activities of major corporations in the state? How much do major corporations in the state spend in state elections and on lobbying?
- **Level of regulation:** What individual rules govern different sectors and industries? How are these regulations monitored and executed? How are these regulatory agencies funded? How does the public participate in shaping regulations? How do these align with or differ from national and regional/local regulations?



Unionizing Nevada's Private Sector

In Nevada, private sector unionization remains relatively high—and it is one of the few states where this rate is growing. Importantly, these unions have been particularly active in the restaurant and hotel service sector, which are key industries in the state. Unions established the Culinary Academy of Las Vegas, which has become a prime example of a labor-management partnership that is centered on improving the lives of workers through skills training and development. With over 20 years of commitment, the partnership has not only succeeded in training over 35,000 workers, but also offers citizenship courses, classes for English language learners, and daily meals to disadvantaged youth, seniors, and veterans. They have also leveraged their power to pressure the casino industry to support major education legislation, which increased business taxes in order to fund a massive buildout.

Sources:

Culinary Academy of Las Vegas website, <http://www.theculinaryacademy.org/>.

Barry T. Hirsch and David A. Macpherson, "Union Membership, Coverage, Density and Employment by State, 1983-2014," 2014, <http://www.unionstats.com/>.



Wondering what the Arenas of Change look like in in your state?

To access state-by-state data on the arenas detailed in this report, check out our **Mapping Progressive Governance** tools, available online and also in Appendix A.

CAPACITIES FOR CHANGE



An understanding of the rules, structures, and processes of decision making must be coupled with strategies for building power to *influence* decision making.

For example, reforming the rules to expand voting access will not automatically enfranchise low-income, minority, or marginalized communities; these reforms must be accompanied by outreach or other grassroots action to empower and mobilize voters within the new structures.¹⁸ In other words, rules matter, but capacity building to take advantage of the rules is essential.

So, what are the capacities to ensure *accessibility* to decision makers and decision-making, *accountability* to grassroots communities and the values of economic inclusion and democratic participation, and *transparency* of governing structures and processes? Are there actors and relationships on the ground ready to shift the tide toward progressive governance across the public and private sectors—and confront the barriers to these transformations? More simply put, what is needed to make change happen?

You might notice that this section is much shorter than the previous “Arenas of Change” section. This is intentional and for two reasons: First, these capacities summarize a rather robust body of research on social justice movement building that is rooted in the invaluable experiences of on-the-ground organizers; we list many of these resources in the Selected References. Second, we discuss these capacities as part of the recommendations portion of this report, as building and bolstering each of the following capacities is the crux of building power and making lasting progressive change.



ROBUST ORGANIZATIONAL LANDSCAPE

Progressive governance cannot happen without a robust set of organizations and players inside and outside of government structures. But it is not just about numbers: Groups must have visions and capacities to organize and to “scale up” from the grassroots, as well as data, research capacities, and communications/messaging strategies to design and push sustainable, viable policies. When determining the robustness of the organizational landscape, factors to consider include:

- Existence of groups working toward equity and justice for disenfranchised communities;
- Existence of local and regional organizations with base-building and scaling capacities;
- Institutions with technical capacity to effectively research and message policy solutions.



ALLIANCES AND NETWORKS

Alliances are critical for building power to scale up and influence decision makers. But it is not just about alliance building among common interests: It is about bringing in a wide array of players and building relationships based on data and common language. When determining the depth of alliance building, factors to consider include:

- Key instances of sustained dialogue and relationships among diverse interests;
- Intermediary institutions that serve as network hubs;
- Common language and shared data among allies.



LEADERSHIP LADDERS AND LATTICES

Leaders are at the heart of progressive governance and drive alliances and organizations. We must not only define successful leadership development programs, but also ensure that leadership development practices directly inform progressive governance and are constantly producing a new generation of youth who can take the reins. When determining the sustainability of leadership ladders and lattices, factors to consider include:

- Leadership development programs with visioning and experiential learning;
- Integration of leadership development into participatory governance mechanisms;
- Strength of youth-led organizing capacity that concurrently builds long-term leadership pipelines.



RESOURCE BASE

Of course, resources are vital to progressive action. But it is not just about money—philanthropic institutions, local elites, and “everyday” people should be actively engaged in more democratic funding processes. This expands the ranks of those with a stake in progressive governance, but also ensures that movements can sustain their work. Factors to consider in determining the strength of a resource base include:

- Philanthropic institutions integrated with active social movements;
- Local elites supportive of progressive governance;
- Diverse “everyday people” mobilized through grassroots fundraising;
- Alternative business models to sustain action.

FROM THEORY TO APPLICATION:
Lessons from Five States

In this section, we share key lessons and takeaways from applying the **Changing States** framework in five states, **Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Washington**. In each state, we conducted a series of interviews with key organizers, strategists, and thinkers to test the resonance and application of our framework in the field. The final five states were selected using the following criteria:

- Each of the five states represents conditions that are either below or above the national average in interesting and illustrative ways. Nevada, for example, has had rapid population growth and demographics shifts, placing it on the leading edge of change; Ohio, on the other hand, has had quite stagnant demographic change, offering a different context to consider.
- The various states offer different structures or “rules” in terms of the arenas of change. We include, for example, states that have a full-time legislature and those with a part-time legislature as well as states that have strict voter identification laws and those that do not.
- The states offer variance in terms of their capacities but each was chosen because there was some evidence of one of the capacities we think is central to progressive governance: the existence of grassroots organizing and movement-building organizations.
- The states also offer some degree of geographic variation but they all have some level of national significance; many have attracted attention at the national level, particularly from progressive and other forces seeking to swing national elections.

This discussion and the selection makes clear that we were not choosing “tipping states”; otherwise, we would have selected just on those states experiencing rapid change or were well-known battlegrounds in presidential elections. Instead, we were seeking a mix that could illustrate how the approach might play in different settings.

And different they are. Nevada is a western state where demography is shifting, politics is surprising, and the economy offers a context ripe for organizing. North Carolina is a place where electoral analysts confidently predicted a post-Obama turn to the Blue only to have a Tea Party uprising instead (so we thought that looking there could inform us of what is wrong with a purely electoral focus). Texas is a state where sanguine predictions that “this is finally the year that things turn around” continually get dashed by under-mobilized voters and creative rules designed to exclude—all topped off with an economic narrative that suggests progressive policy makers should give up even before they begin.

Meanwhile, Ohio is the sort of white working-class state that is central to presidential elections but will require new efforts to bridge across difference even as demographic tailwinds fall flat. Finally, Washington is a state where progressives have captured the narrative and often the halls of power but now need to focus on both implementation and fighting a rearguard battle against rural conservatives who can impeded state-level action. In short, there are lessons from these states that might be useful in multiple locations in America.¹⁹

Want a deeper dive into how we applied the Changing States framework to Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Washington?

For detailed analyses of the conditions, arenas, and capacities of change in each of these states, check out our **Putting Progressive Governance in Place** briefs, available online and also in Appendix A.

NEVADA

In 2015, Nevada passed a \$1.4 billion plan to fund education—including funds for early education and English language acquisition funds—via the largest increase in corporate taxes in the state’s history.²⁰ During the same period, it passed one of the nation’s more forward-looking laws with protections for transgender people in the workplace and housing market. Read through the lens of partisan politics, these two policies would seem to be impossible in a state where the two state legislative houses and the governor are firmly Republican. But applying the Changing States framework allows us to tease out a different story—one that allows us to look beyond the constantly shifting realm of partisan politics and understand the possibility for progressive governance in this state for the long term.

Between 1990 and 2010, Nevada’s population doubled in size, with most of this growth among people of color and immigrants. Looking ahead, people of color are expected to account for all net population growth, which is predicted to continue at a rapid pace. The economy of Nevada is also diversifying, with growth in more advanced manufacturing and technology-linked jobs in the Reno metro area leading to a reduction in the overwhelming economic influence of the mining and gaming industries.²¹ Ensuring the continued growth in these new economy sectors will require improvements in education of the state’s rapidly growing youth population. But the clear logic of education reform certainly does not guarantee its passage, nor does it tell us how, say, transgender

rights came into play. To see how conditions translate to political realities, we look to the arenas of governance.

Nevada’s part-time “citizen” legislature meets only 120 days every other year.²² With such few work days and relatively low pay, most legislators are independently wealthy, financially supported by outside (i.e., corporate) interests, or have a position that allows them significant time off from work.²³ The legislature is supported by a small, shared pool of nonpartisan staff researchers. This part-time legislative structure gives full-time lobbyists outsized power, which is part of what allowed mining and gaming industries to dominate politics for so long.

Nevada’s geography is strongly bifurcated, with Las Vegas in the south, home to a majority of Nevadans, separated by hundreds of miles from the state capital of Carson City, near Reno in the northern half of the state. This separates southern residents—many of whom are communities of color—from state politics, which is especially problematic given the strong executive powers granted the governor and his administrative bodies in a state with a part-time legislature.

But organized constituents have, at times, turned the part-time legislative situation to their advantage by directly reaching representatives during the in-between legislative fora and commissions where much of the deliberation happens. And because the legislature is part-time, elected representatives are not likely to be career politicians which makes them more amenable to responding to affected populations in such sessions and more susceptible to public pressure.



Furthermore, given the state’s small population, some interviewees believe that mobilizing communities is more manageable and has a greater impact.

In the electoral arena, voter suppression is not an issue in Nevada like it is in states like North Carolina and Florida because the state has not instituted significant barriers to voting or registration.²⁴ Nonetheless, Nevada’s voter turnout and registration are among the lowest in the country. Many attribute this to the state’s “transient” population and lack of rootedness in place. Moreover, the state’s large immigrant population means many are not part of the electorate. However, immigrants have asserted their voice through the state’s strong labor movement. Bucking national trends, Nevada’s unionization rate has increased to 12 percent in the private sector (and 17 percent in the Las Vegas region).²⁵ This is due to increased organizing in the state’s hotel and restaurant sector as well as in the dominant gaming industry. Labor groups have backed bills protecting transgender persons, as well as education reform—issues that are not traditionally considered part of labor’s agenda.

Yet advocacy and organizing efforts around the state were not sufficient to pass the educational tax measure that was on the November ballot. Still, six months later, a tax bill was passed by the Republican majority legislature and signed by the Republican governor. This was because, after the initial ballot measure defeat, advocacy and organizing groups leveraged their strength (and corporate self-interest) to create a wedge among powerful interests.

They influenced casinos to come out in support of raising taxes on other industries to fund education—using the fact that casinos are uniquely taxed and do not want to be solely responsible for funding public infrastructure.

Our lessons from Nevada: The framework is not about a checklist of factors that can add up to progressive governance. What it points us to are the key factors, the critical points where politics, economics, and demography are translated into power and policy. Importantly, many of the organizations we spoke to recognize that the state’s future requires not simply maneuvering through what exists in these arenas, but also trying to change the rules.

For example, the Institute for a Progressive Nevada and Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN) recently convened a cross-cutting alliance focused on judicial reform to increase diversity on the bench and to counter the effects of money in judicial elections. Likewise, Nevada’s social movements are underfunded and have proven they can “make it work,” but we can only imagine what new pathways they would forge if equipped with the resources, key leadership pipelines, and alliance infrastructure they need to fully thrive.



NORTH CAROLINA

In the 2008 elections, North Carolina helped elect President Barack Obama and replaced Republican Elizabeth Dole with Democrat Kay Hagan as U.S. Senator. But Democrats were taken aback when only two years later Republicans swept both houses of the state legislature for the first time in over 100 years. Then, in 2013, Pat McCrory became the first Republican governor in nearly 30 years.²⁶ North Carolina is a case study in a state taken over by the opposition and what happens when any governing regime becomes too comfortable.

The state also shows the ways key arenas shift and hold power in a state—in particular through the current regime’s work to reshape electoral, legislative, and judicial rules. Conservative state legislators have swiftly instituted new voter restrictions, ended public financing of judicial elections, and vigilantly enforced state control over local (and often more progressive) municipalities over even the smallest matters, and more. Republican power players (namely, Art Pope) are pouring money into judicial elections, as many important gerrymandering and corporate regulatory cases loom. By taking hold of key arenas Republicans can now move the levers of power in ways that did and will affect the future of elections and governance in the state. North Carolina’s prior regime was not truly progressive—better described as centrist Democrat.

A longtime “right-to-work” state (since 1947), North Carolina has among the lowest unionization rates in the country.²⁷ The lack of labor regulations drew Northern textile and furniture manufacturers in the late 20th century, but these industries and agriculture have left the state for even-less-regulated places. The absence of union organizing meant little support for any organizing, and so the state lacks that historic infrastructure. Corporate influences held a comfortable alliance with the prior Democratic regime and under the cover of Southern politeness, racialized outcomes were not brought into public discourse let alone addressed.

The shifting economy is being matched by shifting demographics—churning that gave



the new regime a place to establish its foothold. The Right has used shifting demographics to build divisions and the traditional Left is now considering organizing as a way to engage the changing population of the state. North Carolina added over three million residents from 1990 to 2010. Many were foreign-born Latino migrants but also migrants from New England (both young professionals and retirees). And while the population of color is younger, there is also a much older white population that tends to vote in accordance with its own priorities, versus ensuring the future well-being of the state, and tends to fear losing political power. It only took billionaire Art Pope and his colleague to add the financing to their fears to start the takeover of the state.

Democrats did use their time in power to build some important institutions and mechanisms. A bipartisan endeavor over the last several decades, the state has been among the best in the U.S. in funding higher education and K-12 education. This is in part due to corporate-community-government alliances that have helped create the Raleigh-Durham Research Triangle.²⁸ These alliances are under concerted threat—the current regime is trying to erode consensus on the issue to split apart the Democratic base. For many “everyday” North



Carolínians, even Republicans, some of these rapid changes at the state level are going too far and the more radical Republican elected officials are getting heat from their more moderately conservative base.

Those voices, of residents who do not identify with or have been affected by the conservative “revolution,” are precisely those with whom progressives are now seeking to work. The loss of government funding to environmental, rural, and other non-profits that once housed progressives has exposed the how fragile the Left had become and its failure to empower the grassroots—that is, to build outsider (i.e., civic) capacity alongside its insider advocacy infrastructure. The traditional Left is now well aware of its weaknesses and is developing more sophisticated funding streams, a communications strategy, and—perhaps most importantly—a ground game that connects with people of color.

Organizations are establishing field offices and working to re-align themselves with and grow a diverse base. These efforts came to the national stage in the state’s Moral Monday protest, where faith, community, and labor progressive groups stood together week after week at the halls of the state’s legislature. While alliance and leadership infrastructures are still nascent, Moral Mondays also showed that North Carolina has untapped reserves of grassroots energy—and with deeper engagements with wider cross-sections of the state, progressives can once again take the reins to steer the state onto more sustainable progressive pathways.



OHIO



Unlike most states, Ohio's population growth has stagnated in recent decades. While the U.S. population grew by 24 percent between 1990 and 2010, Ohio's population grew by only 6 percent. This trend is predicted to continue: Between 2010 and 2040, Ohio's population will grow by only 7

percent, while the country will grow by 31 percent. Also unlike other states, Ohio's growth between 1990 and 2010 was not been particularly diverse: While the nation experienced a 25 percentage point growth in people of color, Ohio only experienced a 6 point increase.

To explain the state's stagnating growth, many point to Ohio's economic turmoil: While the U.S. experienced a 25 percent growth in jobs between 1990 and 2010, Ohio experienced a mere 9 percent growth—the fifth lowest rate of all states. And while wages increased by 17 percent nationwide, working Ohioans experienced a smaller increase of 11 percent.²⁹ Indeed, a lack of economic opportunities has led to what some call an “exodus” of Ohio's young people to other states, leaving behind an aging population and perpetuating the cycle of growth stagnation and a shrinking economic pie.

Much of this distress is from the decline of manufacturing—a national phenomenon that hit Ohio particularly hard considering it was once the heart of industrial America. The legacy of manufacturing can be seen in the geography of the state: Ohio's eight major metro regions—the “Big Eight”—each started as company towns formed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (save the capital of Columbus).³⁰ Now, the companies and the local resources they provided—jobs but also local philanthropy and coordinated civic leadership—have mostly gone. What is left is a state made up of a collection of what one interviewee called

“city states,” which largely operate independently with their own demographic and political nuances.

So in the context of these conditions, how do the arenas of governance play out in Ohio? While Ohio practically defines “a purple state” in terms of voter preferences, Republicans currently hold the majority in the state legislature because of gerrymandering that favors the GOP.³¹ Because of Republican control, Ohio's progressives have mostly abandoned pursuing change at the state level and largely focus on local matters. That said, Ohio's ballot measure system is one path progressives can pursue to impact state-level decision making—and in November 2015, 71 percent of Ohioan voters backed a measure that amended the state constitution so as to ban partisan redistricting and establish a bipartisan (but not a non-partisan) redistricting commission.³²

While redistricting might not be as much of a roadblock to progressive governance moving forward, another major challenge in Ohio's electoral arena is the resurgent attack on voter rights. Since 2010, Ohio was one of the 16 states that passed new voting restrictions. Specifically, the state's legislators cut early voting by eliminating “Golden Week,” in which voters could register and vote in one go, and changed absentee voting rules to make it more difficult.³³ These decisions increase the barriers to voting and disproportionately impact low-income people, people of color, students, and seniors.





Out of political gridlock at the state level, the dismal economic conditions, and the challenges within the electoral arena, a burgeoning progressive movement comprised of lower-income and people of color communities and their corresponding organizations is growing and fighting for change. Communities are reckoning with the reality that manufacturing is truly gone, unions do not have the power they once had, and new solutions are needed to create a viable and vibrant future for Ohio. Part of this new approach is building grassroots power outside of the workplace, but it is also about bridging across regions, rather than staying within siloed “city states.”

One of the efforts taking up this charge is the Ohio Organizing Collaborative (OOC). The OOC is a statewide organization uniting community organizations, faith-based groups, labor unions, and policy advocates in and across the “Big Eight” in the pursuit of social, racial, and economic justice.³⁴ Understanding the immense challenges, particularly in Ohio’s electoral arena, the OOC is spearheading an integrated voter engagement (IVE) program in which it “focuses on both short-term transactional goals of the current electoral cycle and

long-term transformational goals related to leadership development of staff, volunteers, and voters.” Despite the right-wing attacks on voter rights, the OOC and its partners are mobilizing Black and Latino voters—who can have the most barriers to voting—and just last year, using an IVE approach, they registered over 29,000 new voters.³⁵

In Ohio, the state of the legislative arena, the electoral arena, and the economy loom large. But there are seeds of innovation in other arenas—particularly the judicial and communications arenas—that may help, while the administrative and corporate arenas are receiving little attention. Part of shoring up the arenas will mean developing progressive leaders who can thread between these arenas, as well as between party Democrats, progressive policy advocates, and progressive community organizers. Ohio is a state caught in the economic and political cross wires of our nation and building toward progressive governance will require a long-term strategy that makes space for its especially unique, and sometimes bleak, circumstances.

TEXAS

In Texas, demography has been far from destiny, and politics are mired in paradox. As one of the first “majority-minority” states, Texas experienced 105 percent growth in the population of people of color and 157 percent growth in the immigrant population between 1990 and 2010. But this population shift has failed to translate into changes in politics. In fact, in the last decade, Texas has become a stepping stone for federal-level conservative leadership, from former President George W. Bush to former Governor Rick Perry to U.S. Senator Ted Cruz. State legislators have also passed significant regressive legislation, from abortion and HIV education restrictions to laws permitting concealed handguns on college campuses, as well as attempts to end in-state tuition for undocumented students.

Why this dominance of conservative politics? Part of the reason is the failure of Democratic and progressive groups to more effectively mobilize new populations, particularly Latino voters. But progressive disadvantage has also been embedded into the rules of the arenas specified in the Changing States framework. The Texas legislature has become the paradigmatic case for the dangers of gerrymandering, with conservative groups utilizing their considerable power (and the lack of any independent commission) to isolate voters of color into singular districts that at times span two or more cities.³⁶ The state also installed what remains the most restrictive voter ID and registration laws in the country, which (rather unbelievably) allows concealed weapons cards but not college IDs to be used as proper identification.³⁷ There are few alternatives for grassroots groups or individual citizens to intervene in such politics, with no ballot measure or referendum process and a part-time legislature that only meets 140 days *every other year*.³⁸

The constraints within the electoral and legislative arenas appear to limit progressive possibilities throughout the governance landscape. Special interest contributions to judge and district attorney races and gerrymandered voting maps have



also polarized the judicial sphere, while conservative fear-mongering contributed to a skyrocketing mass incarceration rate. The legislative structure not only gives tremendous authority to the governor and his administration, but also to major corporate interests like those in the oil, gas, and (somewhat surprisingly) real estate industries, whose lobbyists become *de facto* legislative staffers and face no legal restrictions on pouring cash into campaigns and elections.³⁹

Corporations have translated this power into what some call “The Texas Miracle,” which hinges upon one of the most unequal tax codes in the U.S., dismantled labor

regulations (including no requirements for worker’s compensation), and a polarized wage structure.⁴⁰ The Texas Miracle is also a communications strategy, betraying a sort

of nationalistic pride

(yup, Texans think they are a nation)

in an unregulated economy that

creates an ideological anchor to which

there can be no challenge (see

text box within the

“Communications Arena”

for more).



Yet Texas remains a tantalizing prize—all those electoral votes! All those Latinos!—and so national groups parachute in with the hope of swinging particular elections. But the terrain is complex and outsiders are looked at with bemused (well, sometimes frustrated) tolerance. Meanwhile, organizations like the Workers Defense Project are focusing on base building around key issues of equity in targeting specific industries for organizing. Cross-cutting bodies like the Texas Organizing Project are forging permanent, dynamic relationships between community-based groups and unions. Various coalitions and networks, including the well-known Industrial Areas Foundation, have also understood that just as conservative groups rewrote Texas' map, so social justice groups must rework the political geography. There is increasing discussion of a metro strategy in which grassroots alliances focus on cities but start to better incorporate suburban and quasi-rural areas and empower often-ignored parts of the Latino and immigrant populations.

In general, organizations are helping create more unified initiatives that bridge community and electoral organizing toward long-term voter registration and mobilization, but also short-term gains in local and regional policy.

One big issue is resources: A common complaint is that funders often send their electoral dollars out of the state, a practice that may be understandable in light of the conservative grip on state power but also one that impedes building a more effective base for change.

Progressive organizers in Texas do not have the luxury of such an outward-looking strategy and there is an intriguing return of Texans to work in a state they love. Some blissfully recall the hopeful days of Ann Richards and Jim Hightower, but many note that circumstances have changed and so must strategies. As they also train a new generation of youth and immigrant leaders, Texas' progressive leaders are proving that when you do not see a straightforward path to power (or if it has been degraded by years of conservative privatization and tax cuts, as is the actual case for Texas' highways), you make a road by walking.



WASHINGTON

In November 2013, Seattle passed the nation's first \$15 minimum wage. Beyond voting in a minimum wage increase (as well as a socialist city councilwoman), the Seattle-Tacoma region has become a kind of model for pushing progressive change and sustaining economic growth while answering to questions of economic and racial inequity.⁴¹ But, much like other urban progressive hubs, the problem is that, often, "What happens in Seattle stays in Seattle"—meaning the progressive change there does not necessarily spread to other regions or scale up to the state.

In fact, the opposite is happening: Thanks to the growing electoral success of the Tea Party in other areas of the state, an increasing number of conservative lawmakers have assumed elected office. Democrats are only one seat away from losing a majority in the legislature in what was previously perceived as one of the most solidly Blue states in the nation.

These political conditions make it difficult to move progressive issues at the state level—including the state's main source of revenue: taxes. Currently, Washington's tax system is the most regressive in the country as it has no income tax and corporations (including those in the highly-lucrative technology, aerospace, agriculture, and mining industries) pay next-to-nothing. Lower-wage consumers bear a greater tax burden through sales taxes. As a result, the poorest 20 percent pay nearly 17 percent of their income in taxes, while the top 1 percent pays only 2.4 percent.⁴² Furthermore, this system is bringing

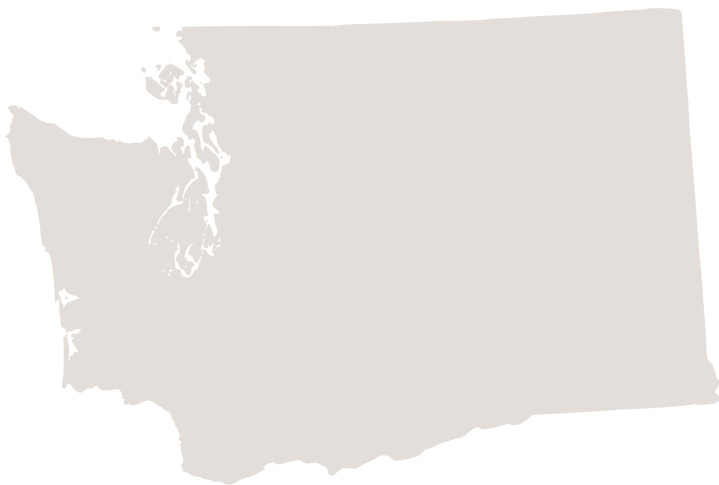
in insufficient funds for public schools, infrastructure, and social services—and has been the focal point of both progressive and conservative agendas (the former pushing reform, the latter pushing the status quo).

Progressive organizers have not taken the state's recent rightward shift passively and are working to elect progressive state legislators, such as Senator Pramila Jayapal—a leader who came directly out of progressive grassroots organizing as the founder of One America, an organization building power in immigrant



communities. Working with fellow progressive legislators, Senator Jayapal has pushed bills like the Washington State Voting Rights Act (WVRA), which would help localities shift from at-large to district-based elections in order to stop the dilution of votes from communities of color. Nonetheless, due to the current right-wing backlash, the WVRA, tax reform, and other progressive bills have stalled.

But Washington has some structures in place to protect equality, democracy, and justice. For example, Washington has one of the nation's only all-mail voting systems. While this system is not perfect, it can dramatically increase voter turnout, and some progressive state lawmakers are working to pass automatic voter registration to further increase voting access. Progressive movement and advocacy organizations are also sharpening their voter engagement, to keep low-income and underrepresented communities engaged beyond the election cycle and in local and even judicial elections. Indeed, prior efforts to elect judges who would best represent all Washington's residents (not merely those who paid for campaigns) were critical to sustaining progressive possibilities today. Indeed, the state's Supreme Court recently ruled



unconstitutional several ballot initiatives bought and paid for by the Seattle region's (and so the nation's) wealthiest—most notably, in January 2016, the Court ruled unconstitutional an attempt by anti-tax millionaire Tim Eyman—who has singlehandedly paid for no less than 20 unsuccessful ballot initiatives—to force a two-thirds majority to approve any tax increases or new spending.⁴³ The Court also struck down a charter school initiative, sponsored by a group of Amazon.com and Microsoft tech executives and outside elites like Eli Broad and Wal-Mart's Alice Walton, as illegally rerouting funds meant for “common schools” into private interests.⁴⁴

But what is proving harder is not just protecting particular arenas (like the electoral) or institutions (like public schools), but building power in regions that have normally been underserved by progressives. According to interviewees, the “parachute” model of sending representatives of progressive organizations into rural areas of Eastern Washington—which are increasingly communities of color—has fallen short. This model is particularly problematic in light of a more subtle issue in the state's (rather Seattle-centric) social justice circles: While there are active movements representing progressive people of color and immigrants in Seattle, these are often distanced from the more well-known environmental and often-white progressive movements. It is that much more important, therefore, that Washington's pathway to progressivism is not from the urban progressives to the rural, but from the grassroots up. And as suburban and rural Washington have experienced some of the state's greatest demographic change in recent years, they are rife with potential.

The trick thus seems to be finding a way to bridge both the racialized divides within Seattle's own progressive movements and those that geographically cleave this region from others in the state. And both can only be resolved through long-term strategies that build the power of constituencies of color throughout urban and rural areas, fostering home-grown leadership, and strengthening political pipelines.

Fate, or the propensity of Pacific Coast residents to progressivism, did not help Seattle revolutionize urban equity. Years of patient grassroots organizing, alliance building, data-sharing, philanthropic coordination, and above all dialogue (especially with unlikely allies) all were part and parcel of providing a model where growth and equity can go hand-in-hand.⁴⁵ Neither is there some natural conservative-libertarian politics destined to keep the rest of Washington state red, especially with continued demographic and economic shifts sweeping the rural regions. Progressive organizers and policymakers throughout the state are coming to see that what will make the difference now for the state is a shared vision (born of some hard dialogues) that can respond more carefully to questions of racial inequality, but also an expansion of the progressive infrastructure into new areas to empower and equip those communities left out of the conversation.



LOOKING FORWARD:
Recommendations

In this section, we offer a set of strategic imperatives, based on our analysis, for facilitating pathways toward progressive governance in the U.S. states.

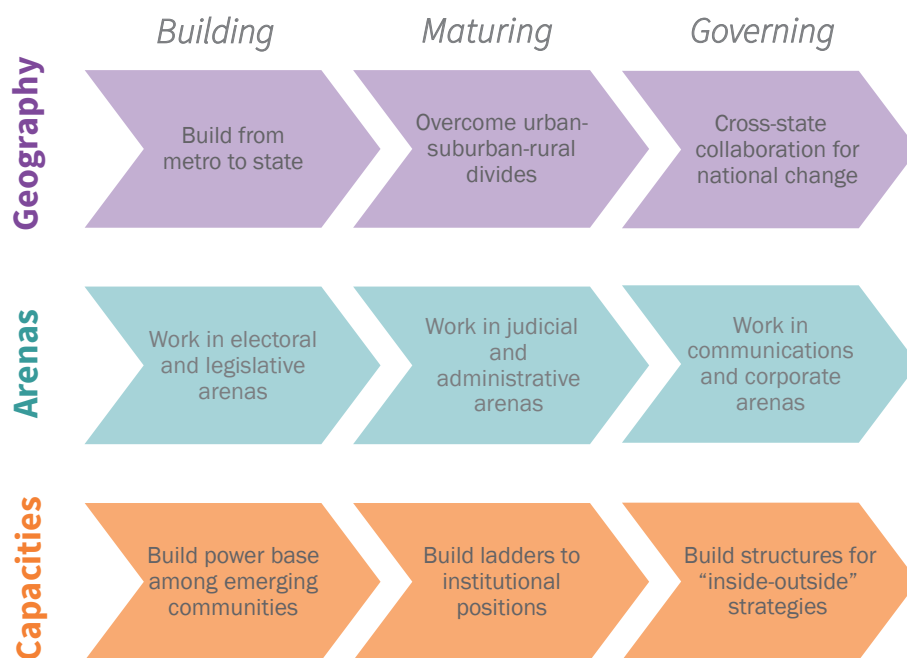
This framework is not about finding strategic *issues*—though interviewees did identify some, such as public education in North Carolina and tax reform in Washington, as the next big strategic fights for progressives in those states, and certainly making progress on issues makes a real difference in people’s lives and can yield momentum-building wins. Still, a sole focus on issues can lead to shorter-term, temporary interventions, like a tactical policy campaign laser-focused on key decisions and targeted decision makers or “parachute politics” which gathers partners for the duration of a fight who then disband when it is over.

This framework is instead about understanding the long-term building blocks toward progressive governance in any and all states—and under any “state of change.” We think that a focus on imperatives rather than issues broadens the strategy so that the need for longer-term alliances becomes clearer. When an organization realizes that it cannot do it all on its own, it begins to see itself and others as part of the same ecosystem—and that it is only as strong as its weakest ally.

From our interviews and analysis, three cross-cutting imperatives emerged. The first is about recognizing that geography matters and that having a local-to-state-to-national roadmap is critical for governance. The second imperative is based on a strategic assessment of the broad terrain where ideas, policies, and power are contested—and understanding where the roadblocks and opportunities lie. The third imperative is about the work necessary to ensure that demographic changes are captured in a way that tilts power relations and dynamics. Part of that happens through the kind of community organizing that lifts up the voices and concerns of the most marginalized. But it also includes building the ladders and lattices for progressive leadership in the full constellation of civic organizations and in elected positions of power.

We offer three recommendations within each of these broad imperatives, and then add one final recommendation for how to put the Changing States framework into action (for a grand and convenient total of 10).

Figure 6 - Pathways to Progressive Governance



GEOGRAPHY OF CHANGE

A geographic theory of change is about the local-to-state-to-national connection. Of course, the particular contours of any geographic strategy will be tailored to each state. It will depend on where the bases for progressive power are strongest. It will depend on whether a state is a Dillon's rule or a home-rule state. It will depend on the capacities at the local and state levels. Here, we offer three recommendations that we hope rise above specifics and can help inform geographic strategies for all states.



1. Build from local to state.

The traditional bases of power for progressives have been in the nation's urban metropolitan areas. In Texas and North Carolina, for instance, a primary battleground for state power is at the municipal level. Given the inability to move a policy agenda through the state legislature, progressives are focused on efforts in cities like Austin, San Antonio, and even the home of the George W. Bush Library, Houston. Even when the demographics seem favorable to progressives, the political structures, representation, and participation will lag behind unless explicit strategies are undertaken to challenge at-large local elections, for example, or unless locally-appropriate ways of engaging residents are employed.

The municipal level may be where the solutions can be the boldest. Think of the Fight for \$15. The movement, initiated in 2012, gained traction in 2015 with the cities of Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles approving raises in minimum wages much higher than most observers would have thought possible a few years prior. The lead taken by a handful of cities paved the way for debates around the statewide minimum wage in those places—and has even influenced the minimum wage debate at the federal level. At the same time, local change can be cut off by the power of state governments: Recent state legislation in Alabama has blocked the minimum wage in local cities and municipalities, with other states threatening to follow suit, reminding us of the need to build toward the state level to protect local progress.⁴⁶

What it takes is a dynamic infrastructure of independent civic organizations that can fight for equity and justice. It requires building locally-rooted institutions—community, labor, and faith-based organizations that connect with a constituency base that can be organized and activated. Core capacities needed at the regional level include organizing, leadership development, research, policy analysis and development, communications, coalition building, direct services, and resource development.

Indeed, these capacities are the essential elements of moving to the state level: A recently-published accounting of the 20-plus year history of Virginia Organizing points to the fact that there are few shortcuts to state-level change, noting that the organization's engagement at the state scale has above all been rooted in local relationships and needs, encompassing demographic and social diversity, building from local campaigns (not always about policy) toward state-wide strategy.⁴⁷ When Virginia Organizing found that they were facing tremendous challenges breaking through the entrenched right-wing state leadership in 2014, they turned again to what they saw were most important elements: solidifying strategy and research, and raising up diverse local leadership and expanding their base again to scale up.⁴⁸

2. Bridge urban-suburban-rural divides.

While building metropolitan power is essential, it is not sufficient. Given rising prices and cost of living, many people are being pushed out to the suburbs where there is less progressive infrastructure and the social networks are more dispersed—requiring new *suburban strategies* for civic engagement. A *rural strategy* is also critical to long-term shifts in power that are necessary to create the conditions for progressive governance at the state level. In Ohio and Texas, for instance, rural (and more conservative) communities are overrepresented in the state legislature due to gerrymandered districts, thus rural issues are given more attention. And while Washington may be considered a progressive state, conservative state legislators, from primarily rural districts, are gaining ground, contributing to the shrinking margin by which progressives hold the majority there.

Of course, one solution to all this is shifting redistricting to be more representative. But it is also the case that we need to change the politics—and so regional strategies are needed to *bridge the urban bases with suburban and rural constituencies*. One interviewee in Ohio shared that it requires non-profit and political leadership to sustain dialogue at the regional level so that problems of concentrated poverty are not just being pushed from one place to another. After all, as jobs leave the city, the tax base dwindles, and poverty and isolation get shifted to the suburbs—but it's still poverty and isolation (think of Ferguson). But because suburbs are different, traditional urban politics may not be as effective even as campaigns like Fight for \$15 are not as easily transportable to the rural areas. Effective strategies—and capacities—have to be homegrown and bubble up from the culture and conditions, including in suburban and rural locales.



To have a more geographically appropriate approach, we need investments in nurturing and sustaining local institutions in suburban and rural locales; supporting anchor organizations closer to the ground that can help seed and build other organizations within the ecosystem; focusing on alliance building and finding alignment with longer-term partners. At this stage, it is necessary to straddle the institution building with a movement-building approach.

3. Cultivate cross-state collaborations.

While we argue for an approach that sees states as building blocks and not stepping stones to national change, we nonetheless believe that national change is a key outcome. So *cross-state collaboration* will be required to shape national policy and governance. There are limits to what can be achieved within a single state—and what impact that state alone can have, particularly as corporations are playing at a global scale and as states do not have decision-making authority over certain policies like immigration reform or inter-state commerce. Ultimately, the federal level is where the resources, policy decisions, and influence over the public narrative affect large-scale change.

What cross-state collaborations could look like: Multi-state alliances where shared learning and joint strategizing can occur and begin to scale up to national possibilities or to seed efforts in other states. The State Priorities Partnership (SPP) has already provided a model of such collaborations; since the 1990s, SPP has linked over 40 states that shed light on the effects of state budget and fiscal policies on low-income communities.⁴⁹ The network has brought together organizations like the Colorado Fiscal Institute and the Louisiana Budget Project to share data, resources, and strategies in order to analyze, bring public attention to and transform the often-opaque landscape of state fiscal policy. Through this cross-state network, advocates have successfully promoted and passed model legislation across states like the Earned Income Tax Credit.

But beyond responding to the effects of federal policy at the state level, as SPP has done, cross-state coordination may also spur national change: Victories and movement in multiple states can reach a tipping point at which victories can be consolidated for national impact, along the lines of what we witnessed with the issue of same-sex marriage in 2015.

STRATEGIC ARENAS OF CHANGE

One key takeaway from our research: Not all arenas of change are equal. Navigating the arenas, the interplay between them, and the capacities to contest for power in each of them require some sort of prioritizing and strategic targeting so as not to spread resources, focus, and energy too thinly. So while all one's children are equally treasured in God's (and your) eyes, some arenas in some circumstances are, yes, more important than others—and understanding the interplay between them is critical. For example, being able to leverage power in the electoral arena requires electing or appointing judges in the judicial arena whose legal decisions can help to protect advances in policy.

4. Intersect electoral and legislative arenas, which are fundamental for policy wins.

Fundamental is the ability to influence decisions in *the legislative and electoral arenas*—by far, the most critical arenas for building progressive power at the state level because they are where policies are fought and won. It is not only essential to build power and influence within each of these individual arenas, but understanding the *interplay* between the two arenas as well.

In Washington, progressives have turned to the state ballot initiative within the electoral arena to push for climate change and minimum wage policy because Tea Party politics have stymied the possibility of moving these issues through the legislative arena. To help move strategically between the electoral and legislative arenas, several state-level alliances are employing integrated voter engagement, which involves blending election-driven voter registration, education, and turnout with the on-going community organizing and leadership development to carry out policy campaigns *in between* elections.

Both arenas are becoming increasingly important for labor organizing strategies as well. We note this because labor is such an important player, yet its power has been challenged in recent decades as union membership

has declined and as globalization has led to industrial restructuring. As unions struggle to maintain the type of power necessary to target corporations, labor is starting to shift strategies from challenging business practices (low wages, wage theft, environmental degradation, and so forth) in the corporate arena to now waging policy fights in the electoral and legislative arenas.

5. Focus on the judicial and administrative arenas for implementing and protecting wins.

As policies are won through the electoral and legislative processes, judicial decisions greatly influence whether or not policy wins get implemented—and protected. For example, the President's Executive Order on DAPA (Deferred Action for Parental Accountability) is being held up in the courts—an order that has the potential to affect 3.5 million parents of U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents.⁵⁰ And at the state level, for instance, North Carolina's Supreme Court just ruled against the charges of gerrymandering in the Republican legislature's new electoral maps.

In our view, the use of the courts to launch and develop right-wing challenges to progressive wins is likely to become the new norm, partly because conservatives have developed the thinking and infrastructure to sustain such an approach. This makes progressive work in the judicial arena that much more important. While public interest lawyers and legal advocates work



on legal matters, there seems to be a lack of attention on electing or appointing judges. In states where local justices are elected, efforts in this arena could mean adding judicial seats in overall voter education work on candidates and issues.

Administrative capacity is also important. For example, in November 2014, California voters passed Prop 47, a ballot initiative redirecting public spending away from prisons and toward prevention and treatment strategies by reducing nonviolent offenses from felonies to misdemeanors, rendering about 4,800 state prisoners who are eligible for resentencing. This was certainly an electoral victory for the state’s criminal justice reform movement, and it was, not surprisingly, backed by a sophisticated and coordinated integrated voter engagement strategy in communities statewide. Yet, community-based organizations are now calling for the resources for implementation. Specifically, counties are supposed to use savings from not incarcerating people for low-level offenses to fund services for former inmates—yet advocates in counties like Los Angeles have yet to see such public services and in the meantime, problems are brewing that may cause at least some voters to question whether Prop 47 is “working.”⁵¹

So making policy victories stick is not just a matter of political will—although that counts mightily. As we have noted, the unfortunate website failure that accompanied the roll-out of ObamaCare tainted the public image such that baseless characterizations that the program is a failure have lacked facts but not adherents. Building administrative capacity and relationships are key for proper implementation. Moreover, bringing together government staff with outside advocates can help build toward common understandings and shared efforts—and this is a very new sort of “inside” strategy.

6. Experiment and innovate in the communications and corporate arenas.

While building power in the legislative and electoral arenas remains the most critical, in many ways, the communications and corporate arenas are the “next frontiers” for progressives. The loss of union power in the private sector is shifting worker struggles into the legislative and electoral arenas—and while this void in the corporate arena contextualizes the need for strategy elsewhere, we give up a strategy in the corporate arena at our peril.

As for communications, developing skills here may seem “soft”, but they are critical; for example, over and over again in the Lone Star state, activists complained how the tale of the “Texas Miracle” dominated media and precluded more activist interventions before they even got discussed. Unfortunately, there was no succinct counter-narrative, but experiments are under way to craft one. Indeed, it is possible: In Washington, a set of progressive organizations underwent a collaborative process of developing a “Heroes Narrative,” a story-based narrative intended to unite multiple issues and campaigns while underscoring a common set of progressive values—and a narrative that is underscoring much of the collaborative work happening there today.



POWER BUILDING

America's demographics are rapidly shifting: In the last decade, almost all of the nation's net population growth (92 percent) came from people of color, and, not surprisingly, the country is slated to become majority people of color in less than three decades.⁵² These shifting demographics favor progressives. Yet there are barriers—both explicit, such as voter disenfranchisement rules, and implicit, such as systematic racism and discrimination—that keep demographics from translating into a greater power over decision making in the strategic arenas of change. And many of these barriers can be traced to an imbalance of resources: Conservatives, with corporate and deep-pocketed supporters, have such a large wealth advantage that progressives usually cannot match it.

Therefore, progressives need to seek other ways of building power and influence, especially in the electoral and legislative arenas, that are about organizing a progressive base starting at the grassroots and branching into institutional positions of power. While the following recommendations are not all-encompassing—there are of course volumes that have been and will be written about each—they provide a kind of capacity-building roadmap with critical benchmarks that are essential for building power, and so for achieving progressive governance.

7. Build an independent power base among emerging communities.

When power is imbalanced and people have been left behind, you need the sort of organizing that lifts up those voices that have not been heard. It requires concrete ways to engage, motivate, and activate people—not only for voting but also to be involved between and beyond elections around public policy concerns. As we have said before, integrated voter engagement is an effective way to do this—and the power of this approach is being demonstrated in states like California, Florida, and Ohio.⁵³

Not only does the power base need to be engaged year-round, in between election cycles, but it also needs to be independent of the traditional political institutions. This way, the base can push and challenge policymakers

to address the conditions in politically-marginalized communities without being beholden to the agenda of a specific political party. We see this in states like Nevada, for instance, where much of the funding for organizing is national and election oriented—since it is a critical swing state that both political parties covet—and the parachuted resources get funneled through the Democratic Party, and this means that the party ends up shaping the policy agenda.

To understand how this plays out, we can look to North Carolina: In the (until recently) Blue state in the Red South, funding for progressive organizations was so tied to the Democratic Party that when the party lost its majority in 2010 (as part of the right-wing backlash), much of the progressive infrastructure lost power and influence—a blow from which the state's progressives are still very much trying to recover. Part of this is figuring out financial and structural independence from the Democratic Party—a lesson that all states, particularly those like Nevada with burgeoning progressive base building, should heed.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, capacities to seize upon the opportunities of changing demographics into a power base—such as political education, skills building, and leadership development—will require an explicit racial justice analysis that informs and underpins strategies. Not only do people of color make up the future of this nation, but, of course, racial disparities persist—and for some metrics, are getting worse.



For instance, full-time workers of color earn 23 percent less than their white counterparts, even when controlling for education; this gap is wider than it was in 1979.⁵⁴ So, clearly, disparities like these will not close on their own and progressive base building efforts must have explicit analyses and strategies to address this.

A caution: There is a tendency, right now, to focus solely on the Latino vote; indeed, Latinos make up nearly 17 percent of our population and will reach a quarter by 2040.⁵⁵ But grassroots and electoral organizations cannot then take for granted African-American communities, who have always been the most consistent progressive base, in terms of voting preferences, and of course face grave and deeply-embedded inequalities.⁵⁶ A successful effort will take an inclusive approach, working through historic (and often painful) tensions to bridge communities, act to address diverse concerns, and build a solid progressive base for the future.

8. Create ladders and lattices to institutional positions of power.

Sustaining change means sustaining leadership—and this requires attention to the ladders and lattices that can fill, support, and replenish the leadership—both inside and outside of government—that is necessary for governance. This includes identifying and building up the type of grassroots leaders necessary to motivate and activate bases to win change as well as the elected and government officials responsible for implementing and protecting that change. For both the outside and inside, it is about identifying and training leaders accountable to the independent, progressive base who are: grounded in a theory of change; think beyond single issues and interests to values and visions; have an analysis of power that informs their strategies; and are able to build relationships to sustain coalitions for the long term.

On the organizing side, there has been much recent discussion about refreshing organizational leadership to reflect both demographic changes and generational shifts. As one interviewee described, many of the progressive organizations are “snowcapped” and so do not reflect the bases they are trying to organize. Progressives must be intentional about identifying, recruiting, and training young leaders of color as part



of succession planning (which implies that one needs to be open to succession planning in the first place!). Not only will this necessarily diversify organizational leadership, but it will help sustain organizations and so movements beyond particular individuals.

As for “insiders” in government, we need leaders accountable to independent progressive bases and also who have the skills, know-how, and relationships to effectively navigate the mazes that are our legislative, judicial, and administrative processes. The good news is that programs are bubbling up to train just these type of progressive “inside” leaders. For example, in California, power analyses led organizers to realize that the often-invisible commissions and committees—made up of folks appointed by elected officials—actually hold much decision-making power that affects the passage and implementation of policies. Starting in Oakland then spreading to Los Angeles, local organizations and foundations put together rigorous trainings for grassroots leaders who normally operate on the outside of decision-making structures to become advocates within local government, specifically preparing them to serve on boards and commissions. The Liberty Hill Foundation in Los Angeles, for instance, has trained over 250 leaders and helped seat 23 appointed commissioners.⁵⁷

9. Forge structures and attitudes for effective inside-outside strategies.

While identifying and lifting up inside and outside leadership is essential, it does not stop there. Progressives may elect one of their own but once inside, the electeds often find themselves without support and feeling isolated, making it extremely difficult to move the needle on key issues that matter to the base who elected them in the first place. Progressives generally lack structures or institutions to support who many are calling “movement electeds”—those leaders who came up through a progressive movement and are deeply connected to and accountable to a base. But after they step inside, they can no longer rally that base. As one interviewee described, “We [have not figured] out how to build our outside institutions so that they support the inside organizing.”



Another challenge: Given the nature of partisan politics, progressive electeds are tied to the Democratic Party structure and commitments, such as committee meetings and fundraising requirements, which benefits the Democratic Party but not necessarily the broader progressive movement. This speaks to the grave need for independent political structures that can support progressive electeds once they are on the inside. And these independent structures do not just support individual electeds, but also help build alliances among groups of progressive “inside” leaders—critical to building inside power.

Finally, and this comes as no surprise: Outside alliance building is also key to supporting an effective inside-outside strategy. Particularly important are alliances that span issues and approach policymakers as a unified, powerful progressive bloc—rather than individual organizations sending disconnected single-issue lobbyists who are unaware of (and may even undercut) the other progressive issues being brought before legislators. In order for movement electeds to move an independent progressive agenda on the inside, they need a coordinated outside strategy pushing for a collective set of progressive priorities.

In sum, as several interviewees point out, for progressive lawmakers to succeed, they need the ability to continue to draw from their base, they need support from progressive groups on the “outside,” and they need a team of like-minded lawmakers on the “inside.”

PUTTING THE IMPERATIVES TO WORK

10. Leverage moments for movements.

This report rightly stresses the need for a fifty-state strategy, for a commitment to governance, and for a patient emphasis on the long march to justice. But there are still key dates ahead—after all, the Right was able to create a decade of resistance by successfully leveraging the 2010 elections with a Tea Party uprising that set the terms for redistricting. For progressives, key national opportunities include the 2016 elections (which will determine the judicial and policy landscape), the 2020 Census count (which will provide the raw material for redistricting), and the 2020 presidential elections (which will set the politics in the accompanying local and state elections for how that redistricting takes places).

The 2016 electoral season is incredibly important. What we have seen on the Right is the emergence of a bloc of voters angry about the economy, anxious about demographic change, and willing to support candidates who will drag the nation backward. What we have seen on the Left is a set of voters unafraid to embrace dramatic economic change and more than willing to have the nation address its racist legacy. In this brave new world of U.S. politics, setting a tone for civil debate going forward may be elusive, but it is critical—and the policy stakes, including the very nature of the Supreme Court, are equally high.

And beyond all this looms 2020, a year in which the population will be counted, and a president will be elected (or perhaps re-elected). Further demographic change will have occurred, tilting the nation and its states toward our “majority-minority” future—and it is these sorts of elections in which less regular voters—people of color, youth, and others—will turn out. This is our 2010—the year progressives could potentially set the terrain for redistricting—and mobilizing with that in mind will be essential for sustaining health care reform, reworking the immigration system, addressing our over-incarceration crisis, and leveling the economic playing field. It is, in short, a long game—and what we do now sets the stage for what is to come.



Conclusion: Beyond 2016

At a time when the vitriol of national politics is trickling down to state politics and the frustration about current political polarization and dysfunction is growing, the thought of progressive governance may seem a distant dream. But look beyond the current moment, and you begin to see that the demographics are tilting, that the recognition of the corrosive effects of inequality are growing, and that the willingness of younger voters to consider new ideas is on the upswing. And look beneath the national level, and you see a series of experiments—from Seattle to San Antonio to New Haven—where regional coalitions are considering what it means not just to build power to demand change but, in fact, to wield power for effective governance.

We hope our Changing States framework and the discussion in this report helps provoke new dialogue among funders, strategists, advocates, and organizers to wade through these confusing times. We trust that our focus on governance will complicate strategy and deepen inside-outside ties, that the distinction between conditions, capacities, and arenas will clarify the battle and make clear where power is contested, and that the emphasis on understanding the geography of change will both resonate and provide support for emerging metro-to-state efforts. And while we hope that coalitions will use this for not only winning but implementing and protecting victories, we also hope that donors and funders will find this helpful for identifying investments and aligning with others for greater and lasting impact.

We also offer these ideas with more than a bit of humility—and not only because that is how researchers should generally approach a world in which power often matters more than evidence. It is also the case that the insights we report here are really repeating back—and hopefully

more elegantly organizing—what movement builders themselves have told us. Indeed, they have stressed that broad national change is possible but only if strategists look beyond campaigns and toward lasting infrastructure and capacities, if funders invest beyond the issues and work to move the needle on power, and if the organizers themselves think beyond urgent demands and protests and instead plan toward governing for a more inclusive and just society.

After all, while the times are nothing if not dangerous, it is also likely that we will win. It is, of course, not inevitable—organizing, elections, and leadership will make the difference. But the demographic tailwinds are at our back, the costs of economic inequality are increasingly clear, and the American story, despite its hiccups, is fundamentally about the struggle to expand the family of those included in our definition of human rights. And when we do win power, the quality of what we do with that power—that is, the nature of *progressive governance*—will determine whether justice is actually served and opportunity actually expanded.

We are betting that it will—and we are hoping that this framework spurs conversations about new collaborations to forge pathways toward sustained social change and transformation.

SELECTED REFERENCES

Progressive Governance

- Benner, Chris and Manuel Pastor. 2012. *Just Growth: Inclusion and Prosperity in America's Metropolitan Regions*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Benner, Chris and Manuel Pastor. 2015. *Equity, Growth, and Community: What the Nation Can Learn from America's Metro Areas*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Briggs, Xavier de Souza. 2008. *Democracy as Problem Solving: Civic Capacity in Communities across the Globe*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Clavel, Pierre. 1986. *The Progressive City: Planning and Participation, 1969-1984*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Sirianni, Carmen. 2009. *Investing in Democracy: Engaging Citizens in Collaborative Governance*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Arenas of Change

- Alliance for Justice. 2013. *Arbitration Activism: How the Corporate Court Helps Business Evade Our Civil Justice System*. Washington, D.C.: AFJ. (<http://www.afj.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Arbitration-Activism-Report-12162013.pdf>).
- Azavea. 2012. *Redrawing the Map on Redistricting: 2012 Addendum*. Philadelphia, PA: Azavea/Cicero.
- Barrilleaux, Charles and Michael Berkman. 2003. "Do Governors Matter? Budgeting Rules and the Politics of State Policymaking." *Political Research Quarterly* 56(4):409–17.
- Bentele, Keith G. and Erin E. O'Brien. 2013. "Jim Crow 2.0? Why States Consider and Adopt Restrictive Voter Access Policies." *Perspectives on Politics* 11(04):1088–1116.
- Brooks, Jennifer and Meghan Wils. 2015. *Delivering Results: Creating and Refining Results-Oriented Regulation*. Washington D.C.: National Governor's Association Center for Best Practice.
- Brennan Center for Justice. 2015. *Voting Laws Roundup 2015*. New York, NY: Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law. (<https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/voting-laws-roundup-2015>).
- Cabannes, Yves. 2004. "Participatory Budgeting: A Significant Contribution to Participatory Democracy." *Environment and Urbanization* 16(1):27–46.
- Center for Media and Democracy et al. 2016. *Our Voices, Our Democracy: Victories Since Citizens United and the Road Ahead Empowering Voters over Wealthy Special Interests*. Washington D.C.: Common Cause. (<http://www.demos.org/publication/our-voices-our-democracy>).
- Cha, J. Mijin and Liz Kennedy. 2014. *Millions to the Polls: Practical Policies to Fulfill the Freedom to Vote for All Americans*. Washington D.C.: Demos.
- Chung, Jean. 2014. *Felon Disenfranchisement: A Primer*. Washington D.C.: The Sentencing Project. Retrieved (<http://www.sentencingproject.org/>).
- Corriher, Billy and Jake Paiva. 2014. *State Judicial Ethics Rules Fail to Address Flood of Campaign Cash from Lawyers and Litigants*. Washington D.C.: Center for American Progress. (<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/civil-liberties/report/2014/05/07/89068/state-judicial-ethics-rules-fail-to-address-flood-of-campaign-cash-from-lawyers-and-litigants-2/>).
- Dometrius, Nelson C. 1987. "Changing Gubernatorial Power: The Measure vs. Reality." *The Western Political Quarterly* 40(2):319–28.
- Ellis, Christopher. 2012. "Understanding Economic Biases in Representation Income, Resources, and Policy Representation in the 110th House." *Political Research Quarterly* 65(4):938–51.
- Flavin, Patrick. 2014. "Lobbying Regulations and Political Equality in the American States." *American Politics Research (E-Journal)*. (<http://apr.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/08/13/1532673X14545210>).
- Happer, Catherine and Greg Philo. 2013. "The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change." *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 1(1):321–36.
- Kasdan, Alexa and Lindsay Cattell. 2013. *A People's Budget: A Research and Evaluation Report on the Pilot Year of Participatory Budgeting in New York City*. New York, NY: Urban Justice Center. (<https://cdp.urbanjustice.org/sites/default/files/pbreport.pdf>).
- Kings County Equity & Social Justice. 2012. *Using the Equity Impact Review Toolkit*. Seattle, WA: King County. (<http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/tools-resources.aspx>).

SELECTED REFERENCES (CONTINUED)

- Lioz, Adam. 2014. *Stacked Deck: How the Racial Bias in Our Big Money Political System Undermines Our Democracy and Our Economy*. Washington D.C.: Demos. (<http://www.demos.org/publication/stacked-deck-how-racial-bias-our-big-money-political-system-undermines-our-democracy-a-0>).
- Moore, Kristen A. and Brett Brown. 2003. *The Uses (and Misuses) of Social Indicators: Implications for Public Policy*. Washington D.C.: Child Trends.
- Ozmy, Joshua. 2013. "Keepin' on the Sunny Side: Scandals, Organized Interests, and the Passage of Legislative Lobbying Laws in the American States." *American Politics Research* 41(1):3–23.
- Rainie, Lee. 2012. "Social Media and Voting." *Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech*. (<http://www.pewinternet.org/2012/11/06/social-media-and-voting/>).
- Spohn, Cassia. 2009. *How Do Judges Decide? The Search for Fairness and Justice in Punishment*. New York, NY: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Squire, Peverill. 2007. "Measuring State Legislative Professionalism: The Squire Index Revisited." *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* 7(2):211–27.
- Stewart, Charles and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2012. *Waiting in Line to Vote*. Washington D.C.: The President's Commission on Election Administration. (<https://www.supportthevoter.gov/materials-research/>).
- Van Cuilenburg, Jan. 2007. "Media Diversity, Competition and Concentration: Concepts and Theories." in *Media Between Culture and Commerce*, edited by E. De Bens. Bristol, UK: Intellect.
- Vigoda, Eran. 2002. "From Responsiveness to Collaboration: Governance, Citizens, and the Next Generation of Public Administration." *Public Administration Review* 62(5):527–40.

Capacities of Change

- Beamish, Thomas D. and Amy J. Leubbers. 2009. "Alliance Building across Social Movements: Bridging Difference in a Peace and Justice Coalition." *Social Problems* 56(4):647–76.
- Dean, Amy B. and David Reynolds. 2009. *A New New Deal: How Regional Activism Will Reshape the American Labor Movement*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Dobbie, David. 2009. "From Coalitions to Movements: Realizing the Promise of Regional Power Building." *WorkingUSA* 12(1):57–71.
- Eikenberry, Angela M. 2006. "Giving Circles: Growing Grassroots Philanthropy." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 35(3):517–32.
- Frank, Larry and Kent Wong. 2004. "Dynamic Political Mobilization: The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor." *WorkingUSA* 8(2):155–81.
- Funders Collaborative for Youth Organizing and Movement Strategy Center. 2012. *The Power of Transformative Youth Leadership*. New York, NY: Funders Collaborative for Youth Organizing. (<http://movementbuilding.movementstrategy.org/resources>).
- Klein, Kim. 2011. *Fundraising for Social Change*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ostrander, Susan. 2010. *Money For Change: Social Movement Philanthropy at the Haymarket People's Fund*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Pastor, Manuel et al. 2010. *The Color of Change: Inter-Ethnic Youth Leadership for the 21st Century*. Los Angeles, CA: Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California. (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/color-of-change/>).
- Pastor, Manuel, Jennifer Ito, and Rhonda Ortiz. 2010. *Connecting at the Crossroads: Alliance-Building and Social Change in Tough Times*. Los Angeles, CA: Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California. (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/connectingcrossroads/>).
- Pastor, Manuel, Jennifer Ito, and Rachel Rosner. 2011. *Transactions - Transformations - Translations: Metrics That Matter for Building, Scaling, and Funding Social Movements*. Los Angeles, CA: Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California. (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/metrics/>).
- Pastor, Manuel and Rhonda Ortiz. 2009. *Making Change: How Social Movements Work and How to Support Them*. Los Angeles, CA: Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California. (<http://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/publications/index.cfm>).
- Pastor, Manuel, Gihan Perera, and Madeline Wander. 2013. *Moments, Movements, and Momentum: Engaging Voters, Scaling Power, Making Change*. Los Angeles, CA: Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California. (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/m3/>).
- Zemsky, Beth and David Mann. 2008. "Building Organizations in a Movement Moment." *Social Policy* 38(3):9–17.

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL CHANGING STATES PROJECT RESOURCES & TOOLS

While the main product of our research is this report—which presents the Changing States framework—we also offer in-depth research briefs on each arena of change and each of the five states we visited. We also provide resources that will allow anyone to carry out this sort of analysis on their own—and also provide feedback to us on how to improve the approach. We hope our open-source set of tools, listed and linked below, prove of use to grassroots organizers, state-based movement builders, researchers, and others working on the ground.

Also note that all these resources, including this full report, are available on the Changing States website: <http://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/changing-states/>.

Pathways Toward Progressive Governance: The Changing States Arenas

These Arena of Change briefs focus more on our findings from the literature rather than on state-specific findings, but we do incorporate feedback from interviewees about the arenas themselves.

These briefs generally follow this structure: 1) Why the arena matters for progressive governance; 2) Factors in the arena that can help make progressive governance possible and metrics for measuring these factors at the state level; 3) Barriers to progressive governance within the arena; and 4) Resources to learn more about the arena.

- Legislative
- Electoral
- Judicial
- Administrative
- Corporate
- Communications

Putting Progressive Governance in Place: The Changing States Framework in Action

Within the state-specific briefs, we apply our framework and describe the conditions, arenas, and capacities for progressive governance within each state. These briefs serve as examples of how funders, strategists, activists, and/or organizers can use the framework.

- Nevada
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Texas
- Washington

Mapping Progressive Governance: The Changing States Data & Tools

These matrices serve as examples of the type of analysis people can do to examine Conditions of Change and Arenas of Change in different states.

- Sample State-by-State Conditions Matrix
- Sample State-by-State Arena Indicators Matrix

APPENDIX A: (CONTINUED)

Interview Protocol

We offer the interview protocol that we developed and used when speaking with organizers, advocates, strategists, funders, and elected officials, and more in the five states we visited, as a good starting point for those interested in facilitating conversations about pathways toward progressive governance in states:

INTRO

1. Briefly, could you state your role at your organization, what your organization does, and what brought you to this work?
2. Overall, are you optimistic or pessimistic about the prospects of achieving progressive governance in the state? Why?

CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

3. In your opinion, how conducive are demographic conditions in your state to progressive governance, and why?
4. How do you think long-term economic changes in the state shape prospects for progressive governance?
5. What broad political conditions—such as voter registration, turnout, and union membership—shape prospects for progressive change in the state?

ARENAS FOR CHANGE

6. When you think about the electoral arena, what structures exist in your state that are conducive to progressive governance? What structures block progressive governance? Why?

a. *PROBE:* What are examples of times when progressives dramatically influence or were pushed out of this arena?

**** Repeat the above question for all the arenas. If someone has expertise in specific arenas, focus on those.**

7. How does the geography of the state, such as the relative influence of rural versus urban areas, or the relative influence of different metropolitan regions, affect possibilities for progressive state governance?

- a. How does the relative power of local, county/ regional, state government affect possibilities for progressive state governance?

CAPACITIES FOR CHANGE

8. Going back to the capacities for change: How do each of these four key capacities resonate with your experiences in this state?

a. How are community organizers, political figures, labor, and others collaborating in your state? How are they not?

b. Are there other key capacities that you think are missing from this framework?

9. Where do you think funders, strategists, and others need to make strategic investments for a more progressive future in your state?

a. Which institutions? By geography, issue area, and capacity?

b. What are the opportunities for investment now and in 5-10 years? What's the next big bet?

CONCLUSION

10. Do you think this framework is useful? If so, who do you think could use it and how might they use it?

11. Any other illustrations from your state with respect to progressive governance? What about that example is poignant to you?

12. Is there anyone else you recommend we speak with while we're here?

APPENDIX B: DETAILED EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This project builds on previous work we have conducted for various foundations and movement organizations, including a framework developed for Atlantic Philanthropies as it was planning a state-based strategy, regional analyses for The California Endowment as it was planning its place-based initiative, and an organizational-level analysis of transformative and sustainable models of leadership development and movement building in collaboration with the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

These previous projects have tended to be conducted under a compressed timeframe and under constraints and priorities of the funding institution or particular organizing partner. What we sought in this project was a more comprehensive, in-depth, and “open source” framework that would not be hampered by any particular institutional priorities but rather serve as a baseline guide for others to adapt to meet their own decision-making needs.

Because of this, we were definitively not trying to identify specific states in which funders and strategists should invest. While we profile five states in this project—and believe there are worthy investments to be made in all of them—we do so as a way to apply (and adapt) theoretical concepts to real-world experiences. In fact, our goal is to spur strategic conversations and investments that should be applicable in and valuable to all states.

While we discuss the need to consider the geography of change, our analysis of “states” is not solely (or even fundamentally) about the U.S. states. As we discuss in the body of the report, our analysis of “states” has dual connotations: One is about the U.S. states—and, indeed, we argue that state-level change may only be possible by taking a different geographic route through the metropolitan regions within the states. But our analysis is not just spatial as it is also about the “state” of change in any particular place: What are the conditions that shape opportunities for change? What are the decision-making arenas that shape the politics and policies for change? And what are the key capacities for building and wielding power in those arenas?

There were five main steps in our research methodology. We started with a multi-disciplinary review of existing literature—academic and popular, domestic and international—to determine the theoretical and practical bases for a working definition of progressive governance. We prepared an initial outline that was largely derived from the strategic power analysis—a framework for understanding power relationships within a particular community or around a specific issue—as developed by Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE)⁵⁸

We then drew key findings from the literature across the disciplines of political science, sociology, geography, public policy, and economics to further develop the initial outline of the framework. We went on to conduct key informant interviews to prepare a detailed, three-part framework to assess conditions, arenas, and capacities for change. It was this framework that determined the subsequent phases of the research and analysis.

The second step was to conduct a quantitative analysis both to refine the conditions section of the framework as well as to inform our selection of states to which we applied and tested our framework. For the three original sets of conditions—demographic, socio-economic, political—we assembled a dataset for all 50 states. We included indicators for diversity of change, complexity of change, change over time, and pace of change. We drew from the most recent and publically available data from the American Community Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Immigrant Statistics, and other sources.

As illustrated by the charts presented in the report, we generally used this data to conduct a quadrant analysis in which we plotted states in relation to the national average and along two variables. For example, we plotted states according to the current percentages of people of color (along the y-axis) against the percentage change of people of color from 1990-2010 (along the x-axis) then charted the U.S. average for both variables to define four quadrants. Such an analysis was done across a wide range of variables and relationships.

APPENDIX B: (CONTINUED)

We complemented this original quantitative assessment with a qualitative and quantitative analysis of existing resources on state rankings, indices, and specific measures related to the Arenas of Change section of the framework. Using all this data, we prepared a matrix with measures for the six arenas of change; we then mapped the data to deepen our assessment of the states. Note that that conditions and arenas metrics are offered as tools to accompany this report; links are provided in Appendix A.

The intent of this work was not to create a single index of progressive governance. That may have been the case if we were focusing on possibilities and ranking states. In that case, we would want to know what states are closest to achieving progressive governance, which are tipping, and which are long shots. Rather the purpose of this work was to understand the conditions and the rules of the game that influence efforts in the state—to better assess the terrain for advancing a progressive agenda.

The fourth step was to test the framework with a set of experts. We convened (via video-conferencing) a small set of advisors to share and get feedback on the draft framework, our analysis of the states (both quantitative and qualitative), and to help us identify additional resources. And because the advisors represented all the key sectors that we identified as target audiences for this project (strategists, funders, organizers, policy experts, and academics), we also used the opportunity to test the framework itself in its usefulness in facilitating a cross-issue, cross-geography, and cross-sector discussion about progressive governance.

Lastly, we conducted an extensive field investigation for the purposes of testing the framework and our tools in the field. We selected five states to use as case studies: Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Washington. These states were selected because they are leading trends demographically, economically, or politically; they are of national significance or interest politically or economically; they have different structures in key arenas of change; there is some grassroots organizing and movement building capacity; and they are geographically diverse.

In each state, we conducted about 15 interviews (almost double that number in Texas—after all, it is Texas!) with a mix of people including key thought leaders, movement builders, funders, political leaders, and policy advocates. For the interview questions, please see Appendix A. It was through these interviews that we discovered the importance of geographic conditions (which ended up in the final framework), as well as the importance of considering cultural norms and histories specific to states.

After the field research, we reconvened the advisors—and actually added more—to help us refine our analysis and findings as well as, again, to test the resonance, usefulness, and applicability of the framework itself (for a full list of advisors who attended one or both convenings, see Appendix D).

APPENDIX C: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

We list organizational affiliations at time of interviews and for identification purposes only.

- Caroline Fredrickson, American Constitution Society for Law and Policy
- Jee Kim, Ford Foundation

Nevada

- Chris Askin, Community Foundation of Western Nevada
- Nancy Brune, Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities
- A.G. Burnett, Gaming Control Board
- Yvanna Cancela, UNITE HERE Culinary Workers Union Local 226
- Victoria Coolbaugh, Nevada Justice Association
- David Damore, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Patricia Fling, Acting in Community Together in Organizing Northern Nevada (ACTIONN)
- Former Assemblywoman Lucy Flores, Nevada Legislature
- Bob Fulkerson, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN)
- Robert Hoo, Nevadans for the Common Good
- Abby Johnson, Great Basin Water Network
- Annette Magnus, Battle Born Progress
- Senator Tick Segerblom, Nevada Legislature
- Brian Shepherd, SEIU Local 1107
- Astrid Silva, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN)
- Tod Story, American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada
- Yvette Williams, Clark County Black Caucus

North Carolina

- Anita Brown-Graham, Institute for Emerging Issues (IEI)
- Erin Dale Byrd, Blueprint NC
- Chris Fitzsimons, NC Policy Watch

- Owen Furuset, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- Eric Henry, TS Designs
- Jason Gray, North Carolina Rural Center
- Chris Kromm, The Institute for Southern Studies
- Pat McCoy, ActionNC
- Graig R. Meyer, North Carolina General Assembly
- Carol Morris, Foundation for the Carolinas
- Ben Nunnally, Latin American Coalition
- Jay Rieff, Committee on States Alliance
- Chilton Rogers, North Carolina Rural Center
- Barry Ryan, North Carolina Rural Center
- Alexandra Sirota, North Carolina Budget and Tax Center
- Whitney Smith, Latin America Coalition
- Hector Vaca, ActionNC
- Bill Wilson, North Carolina Justice Center
- Patrick Woodie, North Carolina Rural Center
- Allie Yee, The Institute for Southern Studies

Ohio

- Amy Hanauer, Policy Matters Ohio
- Ted Howard, Democracy Collaborative
- Troy Jackson, Ohio Prophetic Voices / The AMOS Project
- Stephen Johnsongrove, Ohio Justice & Policy Center
- Norman Krumholz, Cleveland State University
- Keary McCarthy, Innovation Ohio
- Stuart McIntyre, The Ohio Student Association
- Heather McMahon, Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative / Ohio Organizing Collaborative
- William Mullane, The Raymond John Wean Foundation
- Kirk Noden, Ohio Organizing Collaborative
- Roxanne Qualls, Former Mayor of Cincinnati

APPENDIX C: (CONTINUED)

- Joe Rettof, demCROWD
- Christy Rogers, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State University
- Cathy Shanklin, Dayton Dialogue on Race Relations
- Margy Waller, Topos Partnership

Texas

- Lydia Bean, PICO-Faith in Texas
- Ann Beeson, Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP)
- Angela Blanchard, Neighborhood Centers Inc.
- Brianna Brown, Texas Organizing Project (TOP)
- Jenn Brown, Battleground Texas
- Ernie Cortes, Jr., Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)
- David Cullen, Collin College
- Frances Deviney, Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP)
- Durrel Douglas, Houston Justice Coalition
- Veronica Escobar, El Paso County Judge
- Ed Espinoza, Progress Texas
- Fernando Garcia, Border Network for Human Rights
- Tory Gavito, Texas Futures Project
- Ginny Goldman, Texas Organizing Project (TOP)
- Rep. Mary Gonzalez, Texas Legislature
- Laura Guerra-Cardus, Children's Defense Fund
- Jim Hightower
- Stephen L. Klineburg, Rice Kinder Institute for Urban Research
- Tony Krause, North Texas Civil Rights Project (NTCRP)
- Jennifer Lee, Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP)
- Rick Levy, Texas AFL-CIO
- Michael Li, Brennan Center for Justice
- Bob Libal, Grassroots Leadership
- Melissa M. Lopez, Diocesan Migrant and Refugees Services

- Danny Lucio, Battleground Texas
- Phillip Martin, Progress Texas
- Sara Mokuria, The Institute for Urban Policy Research at the University of Texas at Dallas
- Annise Parker, Former Mayor of Houston
- Senator Jose Rodriguez, Texas Legislature
- Frank Sanchez, Needmor Foundation
- Christine Stephens, Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)
- Cristina Tzinzun, Workers Defense Project
- Kyle Wilkison, Collin College

Washington

- John Burbank, Economic Opportunity Institute
- Bryan Burke, Eastern Washington Voters
- Bill Daley, Washington Community Action Network
- Mozart Guerrier, 21 Progress
- LeeAnn Hall, Alliance for a Just Society
- Alissa Haslam, Win/Win Network
- Senator Pramila Jayapal, Washington Legislature
- Sarah Jaynes, Progress Alliance
- Jeff Johnson, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
- EJ Juarez, Progressive Majority Washington
- Kim Justice, Washington State Budget & Policy Center
- Fernando Mejia-Ledesma, OneAmerica

APPENDIX D: LIST OF STRATEGIC ADVISORS

- Nell Abernathy, Roosevelt Institute
- Chris Benner, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Paul Booth, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCM)
- Seth Borgos, Center for Community Change
- Linda Burnham, National Domestic Workers Alliance
- Steven Cole-Schwartz, The Partnership + Partnership Action Funds
- Damon L. Daniels, Demos
- Nate Ela, Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS)
- Michael Ettliger, University of New Hampshire Carsey School of Public Policy
- Wendy Fields, Common Cause
- Ethan Frey, Ford Foundation
- Caitlin Ginley, Wellspring Advisors
- Bryon Ramos Guidel, Communities for a Better Environment
- Richard Healey, Grassroots Policy Project
- Jee Kim, Ford Foundation
- Jeff Malachowsky, Wellspring Advisors
- Katherine McFate, Center for Effective Government
- Andrea Cristina Mercado, National Domestic Workers Alliance
- Ilona Prucha, Wellspring Advisors
- Rakesh Rajani, Ford Foundation
- Karthick Ramakrishnan, University of California, Riverside
- Miles Rapoport, Common Cause
- Robby Rodriguez, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- Jean Ross, Ford Foundation
- Steve Savner, Center for Community Change
- Anthony Thigpenn, California Calls

ENDNOTES

- 1 Alan DiGaetano and Elizabeth Strom, "Comparative Urban Governance: An Integrated Approach," *Urban Affairs Review* 38, no. 3 (2003): 356–95.
- 2 Xavier de Souza Briggs, *Democracy as Problem Solving: Civic Capacity in Communities across the Globe* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008); Pierre Clavel, *The Progressive City: Planning and Participation, 1969-1984* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986); Pierre Clavel and Wim Wiewel, *Harold Washington and the Neighborhoods: Progressive City Government in Chicago, 1983-1987* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991); David Dobbie, "From Coalitions to Movements: Realizing the Promise of Regional Power Building," *WorkingUSA* 12, no. 1 (2009): 57–71.
- 3 Briggs, *Democracy as Problem Solving*.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Peter Dreier, "Organizing in the Obama Era: A Progressive Movement or a New Progressive Era," *John Marshall Law Review* 42 (Spring 2009): 685.
- 6 Unless other specified, in this report, population, youth, and people of color growth rates are from the U.S. Census; immigrant growth rates and racial composition data are from the 2013 5-year American Community Survey; population projections are from the U.S. Census Bureau and Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; jobs and wage data are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) and Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; and voter turnout and registration rates are from the U.S. Census Bureau Voting and Registration Population Characteristic (P20) tables.
- 7 While *median* wages for workers actually fell between 2000 and 2010, the wage data reported here is calculated as *average (or mean)* earnings per job, which includes benefits.
- 8 Barry T. Hirsch and David A. Macpherson, "Union Membership, Coverage, Density and Employment by State, 1983-2014," 2014, <http://www.unionstats.com/>.
- 9 National League of Cities, "Local Government Authority," *National League of Cities: Cities 101*, n.d., <http://www.nlc.org/build-skills-and-networks/resources/cities-101/city-powers/local-government-authority>.
- 10 Deepak Pateriya and Patricia Castellanos, eds., *Power Tools: A Manual for Organizations Fighting for Justice* (Los Angeles, CA: Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education, 2003).
- 11 Bolder Advocacy, "PowerCheck: Community Organizing Capacity Tool" (Washington D.C.: Alliance for Justice, 2015), <http://bolder-advocacy.org/tools-for-effective-advocacy/overview-of-evaluating-community-organizing/powercheck>.
- 12 Justice at Stake, "Election vs. Appointment," *Justice At Stake*, 2016, http://www.justiceatstake.org/issues/state_court_issues/election-vs-appointment/.
- 13 Federal Judicial Center, "Inside the Federal Courts," *Federal Judicial Center*, n.d., <http://www.fjc.gov/federal/courts.nsf/autoframe!openform&nav=menu1&page=/federal/courts.nsf/page/152>.
- 14 Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, "Mass Communication, Popular Taste, and Organized Social Action," in *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication*, Revised Edition (Urbana, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 554–78.
- 15 Catherine Happer and Greg Philo, "The Role of the Media in the Construction of Public Belief and Social Change," *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 1, no. 1 (2013): 321–36.
- 16 Vikas Nath, "Empowerment and Governance through Information and Communication Technologies: Women's Perspective," *The International Information and Library Review* 33, no. 4 (2001): 317–39.
- 17 Min-Dong Paul Lee, "A Review of the Theories of Corporate Social Responsibility: Its Evolutionary Path and the Road Ahead," *International Journal of Management Reviews* 10, no. 1 (2008): 53–73.
- 18 Tova Andrea Wang, "Election Reforms and Voter Turnout Among Low Propensity Voting Groups" (Washington D.C.: The Democracy Initiative, April 8, 2015).

ENDNOTES (CONTINUED)

- 19 To remind the reader, refer to endnote 6 for data sources.
- 20 Jared Walczak, “Nevada Approves New Tax on Business Gross Receipts” (Washington D. C.: Tax Foundation, June 8, 2015), <http://taxfoundation.org/article/nevada-approves-new-tax-business-gross-receipts>.
- 21 Jim Carlton, “Reno Sees Future, and It Isn’t Casinos,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 23, 2015, sec. US, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/reno-sees-future-and-it-isnt-casinos-1445642382>.
- 22 ACLU, “FAQ: The Nevada Legislature,” n.d., <http://www.aclunv.org/legislature>.
- 23 Ballotpedia, “Comparison of State Legislative Salaries,” n.d., https://ballotpedia.org/Comparison_of_state_legislative_salaries.
- 24 Samantha Lachman, “Conservatives Are Upset With Nevada Republicans For Failing To Pass A Voter ID Bill,” *The Huffington Post*, June 17, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/17/nevada-voter-id_n_7604980.html.
- 25 Hirsch and Macpherson, “Union Membership, Coverage, Density and Employment by State, 1983-2014.”
- 26 Kim Severson, “G.O.P. to Take Control in Long-Moderate North Carolina,” *The New York Times*, December 11, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/12/us/politics/gop-to-take-control-in-long-moderate-north-carolina.html>.
- 27 Kim D. Steffan, “‘Right to Work’ And ‘Employment at Will,’” *Steffan & Associates P.C.*, August 28, 2012, <http://steffanlaw.com/%E2%80%9Cright-to-work%E2%80%9D-and-%E2%80%9CEmployment-at-will%E2%80%9D/>. Hirsch and Macpherson, “Union Membership, Coverage, Density and Employment by State, 1983-2014.”
- 28 Chris Benner and Manuel Pastor, *Equity, Growth, and Community: What the Nation Can Learn from America’s Metro Areas* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2015).
- 29 As in the “Conditions of Change” section, the wage data reported here is calculated as *average (or mean)* earnings per job, which includes benefits.
- 30 Alan Mallach and Lavea Brachman, “Ohio’s Cities at a Turning Point: Finding the Way Forward” (Washington D.C.: Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, May 2010), <http://www.greaterohio.org/files/quick-downloads/shrinking-cities-paper.pdf>.
- 31 For example: Rich Exner, “Gerrymandering Has Tilted Political Control in Ohio; Supreme Court Ruling Opens Door for Change,” *Cleveland.com*, June 29, 2015, http://www.cleveland.com/datacentral/index.ssf/2015/06/gerrymandering_has_tilted_poli.html.
- 32 John Nichols, “Reform Wins: Ohio Bans Gerrymandering While Maine and Seattle Bust Big Money,” *The Nation*, November 5, 2015, <http://www.thenation.com/article/reform-wins-ohio-bans-gerrymandering-while-maine-and-seattle-bust-big-money/>.
- 33 Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, “Voting Laws Roundup 2015,” *Brennan Center for Justice*, June 3, 2015, <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/voting-laws-roundup-2015>.
- 34 Ohio Organizing Collaborative website, <http://ohorganizing.org>.
- 35 Ohio Organizing Collaborative, “2015 Electoral Report” (Youngstown, OH: OOC, 2015), <http://ooc.jetcreative.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/2015-C3-Electoral-Report.pdf>.
- 36 Lois Beckett and Sharon Lee, “Five Ways Courts Say Texas Discriminated Against Black and Latino Voters,” *ProPublica*, February 27, 2013, <https://www.propublica.org/article/five-ways-courts-say-texas-discriminated-against-black-and-latino-voters>.
- 37 Jonathan Brater, “Texas Photo ID Law Blocks Legitimate Voters,” *Brennan Center for Justice*, April 16, 2015, <https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/texas-photo-id-law-blocks-legitimate-voters>.
- 38 National Conference of State Legislatures, “Legislative Session Length,” *National Conference of State Legislatures*, n.d., <http://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/legislative-session-length.aspx>.

ENDNOTES (CONTINUED)

- 39 Texans for Public Justice, “Austin’s Oldest Profession: Texas’ Top Lobby Clients & Those Who Service Them (2013-2014)” (Austin, TX: Texans for Public Justice, 2014).
- 40 Max Ehrenfreund, “The Facts about Rick Perry and the ‘Texas Miracle,’” *The Washington Post*, June 8, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/06/08/the-facts-about-rick-perry-and-the-texas-miracle/>.
- 41 Benner and Pastor, *Equity, Growth, and Community: What the Nation Can Learn from America’s Metro Areas*.
- 42 ITEP, “Who Pays?, A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States” (Washington D. C.: The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP), January 2015), <http://www.itep.org/whopays/>.
- 43 Gene Johnson, “Tim Eyman’s Anti-Tax Measure Unconstitutional, Judge Rules,” *The Seattle Times*, January 21, 2016, <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/politics/judge-rules-eymans-anti-tax-measure-unconstitutional/>.
- 44 Debbie Cafazzo, “State Supreme Court Says No — Again — to Washington Charter Schools,” *The News Tribune*, November 19, 2015, <http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/education/article45547353.html>.
- 45 Benner and Pastor, *Equity, Growth, and Community: What the Nation Can Learn from America’s Metro Areas*.
- 46 Kelsey Stein, “What They’re Saying Nationally about Alabama’s Minimum Wage Dispute,” *AL.com*, February 29, 2016, sec. s, http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2016/02/what_theyre_saying_nationally.html.
- 47 Amanda Leonard Pohl and Ruth Berta, *Building Power, Changing Lives: The Story of Virginia Organizing* (New Orleans, LA: Social Policy Press, 2015), <http://www.virginia-organizing.org/building-power-changing-lives-the-story-of-virginia-organizing-introduction/>.
- 48 Randy Stoecker, “If It Can Happen in Virginia...,” *Shelterforce*, March 4, 2016, http://rooflines.org/4407/if_it_can_happen_in_virginia/.
- 49 Michael Lipsky, “Statehouse Scrutiny,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review* 14, no. 2 (Spring 2016).
- 50 Manuel Pastor, Tom Jawetz, and Lizet Ocampo, “DAPA Matters: The Growing Electorate Directly Affected by Executive Action on Immigration” (Washington D. C.: Center for American Progress, November 2015), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/report/2015/11/19/125787/dapa-matters/>.
- 51 Community Coalition website, <http://cocosouthla.org/where-are-the-resources-for-prop-47-implementation/>.
- 52 National Equity Atlas, <http://nationalequityatlas.org/data-summaries>.
- 53 Manuel Pastor, Gihan Perera, and Madeline Wander, “Moments, Movements, and Momentum: Engaging Voters, Scaling Power, Making Change” (Los Angeles, CA: USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, March 2013), <https://dornsife.usc.edu/pere/m3/>.
- 54 These data refer to median hourly wage by race/ethnicity and come from the National Equity Atlas (<http://nationalequityatlas.org/data-summaries>).
- 55 2014 5-year American Community Survey and National Equity Atlas, <http://nationalequityatlas.org/data-summaries>.
- 56 Theodore R. Johnson, “Can the Democratic Party Retain Its Hold on Black Voters?,” *The Atlantic*, September 7, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/09/the-changing-outlook-for-black-voters/403975/>.
- 57 Liberty Hill Foundation website, <http://www.libertyhill.org/commissions-training-program>.
- 58 Pateriya and Castellanos, *Power Tools: A Manual for Organizations Fighting for Justice*.

IMAGE CREDITS

Unless otherwise noted, images used in this report belong to their respective owners and are used in according to Creative Commons (CC) or other public copyright licenses as listed.

Pg. 1

Flickr User: seluhealthcare775nw, <https://flic.kr/p/6iXYMG>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 3

Flickr User: Ted Eytan, <https://flic.kr/p/s5hPpK> (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Pg. 5

Flickr User: Michael Fleshman, <https://flic.kr/p/ijBj6Z>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 6

Flickr User: Susan Melkisetian, <https://flic.kr/p/jT6ujj>, (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Pg. 11

Flickr User: Joe Brusky, <https://flic.kr/p/s8wj4y>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 15

Flickr User: City Year, <https://flic.kr/p/nAvAW1>, (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Pg. 21

Flickr User: J. Stephen Conn, <https://flic.kr/p/dB9eiS>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 23

Flickr User: Chris Phan, <https://flic.kr/p/qsq2m>, (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Pg. 25

Flickr User: Scott Schrantz, <https://flic.kr/p/7UcQGN>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 27

Flickr User: Alexisrael, <http://bit.ly/1RrDPKu>, (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Pg. 29

Flickr User: countylemonade, <https://flic.kr/p/cK4Qcu>, (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Pg. 31

Flickr User: Paul Lowry, <https://flic.kr/p/5dMXSL>, (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Pg. 33

Flickr User: Barack Obama, <https://flic.kr/p/3Qz1Ha>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 34

Flickr User: SEIU, <https://flic.kr/p/dg7fRt>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 38

Flickr User: drain, <https://flic.kr/p/5AiFr3>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 39

Photo courtesy of the Progressive Alliance Leadership Network (PLAN) blog: <http://www.planevada.org/the-planista-keep-up-with-plan-with-our-newsletter/>

Pg. 40

Flickr User: James Willamor, <https://flic.kr/p/hpMHZm>, (CC BY 2.0)

Pg. 41

Flickr User: Stephen Melkisetian, <https://flic.kr/p/DxgZat>, (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Pg. 42

Flickr User: Joshua Rothhaas, <https://flic.kr/p/4yrwHY>, (CC BY 2.0)

Pg. 43

Photo courtesy of the Ohio Organizing Collaborative (via Facebook) <http://ohorganizing.org/>

Pg. 44

Flickr User: Patrick Gensel, <https://flic.kr/p/bt4Ns4>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 45

Flickr User: Carlos Lowry, <https://flic.kr/p/bbPNqa>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 46

Flickr User: Ronald Woan, <https://flic.kr/p/qXwsLU>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 47

Flickr User: Ryan Carver, <https://flic.kr/p/55mmpj>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 50

Flickr User: faungg's photos, <https://flic.kr/p/7dayiH>, (CC BY-ND 2.0)

Pg. 51

Flickr User: Mindy Georges, <https://flic.kr/p/6Cg5N6>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 52

Flickr User: Brent Moore, <https://flic.kr/p/9SCU3S>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 53

Flickr User: SEIU, <https://flic.kr/p/dQnQsH>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 54

Flickr User: niXerKG, <https://flic.kr/p/pu4ZfB>, (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Pg. 55

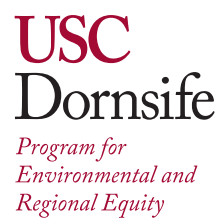
Flickr User: Barack Obama, <https://flic.kr/p/bmMpse>, (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Pg. 56

Flickr User: coloradosenategop, <https://flic.kr/p/9xSqcj>, Public domain, <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain>

Pg. 57

Flickr User: Maryland GovPics, <https://flic.kr/p/b7mwGX>, (CC BY 2.0)



PROGRAM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGIONAL EQUITY (PERE)
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
DORNSIFE COLLEGE OF LETTERS, ARTS AND SCIENCES

950 W. JEFFERSON BLVD., JEF 102
LOS ANGELES, CA 90089-1291
PHONE: (213) 740-3643
EMAIL: PERE@DORNSIFE.USC.EDU
WEB: [HTTP://DORNSIFE.USC.EDU/PERE](http://DORNSIFE.USC.EDU/PERE)