

# DEMOCRACY IS A 365-DAY ENDEAVOR.

*Building a multiracial,  
people-powered Ohio.  
For all of us*

**2021  
End-Of-Year  
Report**



# HISTORY AND MISSION

Formed in 2007, the Ohio Organizing Collaborative (OOC) is a grassroots organization uniting community groups, student associations, and faith organizations with policy institutes and labor unions across Ohio. It is our mission to organize membership bases of everyday Ohioans for racial, social, and economic justice in our state.

**ALL IN FOR OHIO**  
AN OHIO FOR ALL OF US.



# OUR VISION



Our vision is to build a multiracial governing coalition in Ohio for racial, social, and economic justice in our communities.





# IN THE MEDIA

## Ohio Supreme Court Strikes Down Republican Gerrymander of Map

The congressional map would have given Republicans an advantage of 12 seats to three in elections for the House of Representatives.



"Whether we're from Toledo or Chillicothe, Lima or Cincinnati, most of us believe that voters should pick their leaders, not the other way around," said Jeniece Brock, vice chair of the Ohio Citizens' Redistricting Commission. "When Ohioans draw the maps, we choose what hospitals, schools and resources are funded in our neighborhoods."

### OHIO IS ALL IN FOR FAIR MAPS

The third group suing in Ohio is a coalition made up of the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, a liberal political organizing group; the Ohio Environmental Council, which advocates for environmental causes and the Ohio chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations, which advocates for civil rights groups for American Muslims. Representing the coalition is the Brennan Center for Justice, a left-leaning electronic law advocacy group based at New York University's law school.

### CityBeat

#### Hamilton County Sheriff's Office to Reduce Collaboration with Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in New Policy

In a change from current policy, HCSO will not comply with ICE detainer requests when there's not a signed judicial warrant.

BY ALLISON BARBER — JUL 25, 2021 4 PM

In Cleveland, Fambro's organizing primarily centered around the **passage of Issue 24**, a measure that will create a new pathway for transparency and police oversight. Stand Up For Ohio was a partner in the Citizens For A Safer Cleveland coalition that pushed for passage of Issue 24.

"My primary goal was to make sure that we knew the end was to win, but also to change people's lives in Cleveland," Fambro said. "But this is a beginning and a right step for Cleveland and a direction for all Black and brown people to get home safely."

Issue 24 passed with an overwhelming majority in the Cleveland election earlier this month. Local news reported that the **provision did the best in the home ward** of the outgoing mayor, who opposed the issue.

Without increased voter engagement, Issue 24 likely would not have passed. It can be tricky turning out voters outside of presidential election years, but Fambro suggests voter turnout requires helping people understand why sustained engagement is necessary.

Cleveland City Hall

#### Cleveland police reform measure to appear as Issue 24 on November ballot

Updated Sep 08, 2021, 5:34 p.m. | Published Sep 05, 2021, 5:34 a.m.

More Than A Vote partnering with Citizens for a Safer Cleveland on coalition's ballot initiative

Updated 12:27 PM, Today 12:21 PM

# CITIZENS FOR A SAFER CLEVELAND

## NEWSONE

POLITICS

Home > Politics

### Ohio Organizer Offers Lessons From Municipal Elections Ahead Of 2022 Midterms

Winning Issue 24 was also a fantastic victory for families left without any recourse after Cleveland police killed their loved ones.

Written By Anoa Changha  
Posted 14 hours ago

# OUR WINS



## 2021: CHANGE FROM THE GROUND UP

In 2020, we won a hard-fought presidency by building grassroots power amid an unprecedented pandemic, global uprisings for racial justice, and economic turmoil. In 2021, we harnessed this collective energy to advocate for real progressive change at the state and local levels here in Ohio.



Faced with the 2021-2022 state budget season, the decennial redistricting cycle, and the aftermath of the George Floyd uprisings, the OOC had ample opportunity this year to secure powerful wins that would directly improve Ohioans' lives. As organizers, we know Ohio is won at the local level - every person, every family, and every community joining together across race and place to build a better future for all of us.



We pushed our legislators to pass a People's Budget. We went all in for Ohio's kids and passed a bipartisan Fair School Funding Plan, after more than 20 years of an unconstitutional funding formula that harmed our students' chances to succeed. We also worked hard to promote the idea of real community safety in Ohio and successfully thwarted the construction of a large new jail in Montgomery County. And we are now so much closer towards achieving real police accountability and justice in Cleveland through our groundbreaking work passing Issue 24, which will ensure the most powerful civilian oversight board in the country.



In the meantime, we are helping lead one of the country's strongest fights for our democracy by pushing for fair maps in Ohio. We are on the verge of winning a pioneering anti-gerrymandering lawsuit at the state Supreme Court to push for fair, representative, and constitutional maps that reflect Ohio's diverse communities, particularly its most vulnerable and disenfranchised. In 2021, we won the public narrative around what a fair map means in Ohio, including successfully lobbying certain legislators to hold the line on our definition of fair maps, despite intense political pressure from across the aisle. Much work remains, but we are confident that the Ohio Redistricting Commission will draw fair maps that reflect and include all of us.



# OUR WORK

## **CLEVELAND: WINNING POWERFUL POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY**

Earlier this year, we helped launch a groundbreaking ballot initiative called Yes on Issue 24: Citizens for a Safer Cleveland to push for real police accountability in Cleveland, in partnership with Black Lives Matter Cleveland, NAACP Cleveland, ACLU of Ohio, and SURJ-Northeast Ohio. Issue 24 will set up a powerful, permanent, and diverse civilian oversight board to handle police misconduct, giving subpoena and final implementation power to Clevelanders.

Despite massive opposition from local police unions and the political establishment throughout our campaign, Clevelanders voted overwhelmingly in favor of Issue 24, proving that police reform is long overdue in the city. Cleveland's Mayor-Elect

Justin Bibb also supported our initiative as a key priority of his campaign, ushering in a new era of change and public safety in Cleveland.

The runaway success of Issue 24 was favorably covered in numerous local and national outlets, including the local flagship paper Cleveland.com (which followed our ballot initiative process from start to finish and published an editorial supporting the initiative), Cleveland Scene, Ideastream, Washington Post, POLITICO, and TheGrio. Our team is proud of the scrappy, nimble, and strategic campaign that we ran with the leadership of the families directly impacted by police violence in Cleveland.



## **COLUMBUS: FIGHTING FOR STRONGER POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY**

In the wake of Ma'Khia Bryant's murder, we organized a powerful, first-of-a-kind coalition in the state capital among local Black leaders, clergy, and community organizations. The Columbus Police Accountability Project is urging the Department of Justice to launch a formal investigation into the Columbus Police Department and its long history of police violence and misconduct. The DOJ has since stated that it will review the CPD's policies, but we are continuing to push for greater oversight and accountability by demanding a full federal investigation into Columbus Police.

# OUR WORK

## STATEWIDE: PROTECTING OHIO'S COMMUNITIES

Last fall, we filed suit against Ohio's new and unconstitutional "Stand Your Ground" law, with the help of Everytown for Gun Safety, the Ohio State Conference of the NAACP, and Democratic legislators. We argued that Ohio Republicans passed the law in a last-minute amendment that failed to give Ohioans a proper chance to testify regarding the need for the law. We are also continuing to fight for comprehensive bail reform in Ohio, with our efforts most recently resulting in the introduction of two bipartisan companion bills seeking to overhaul and reform our unfair pre-trial system.



Our local police accountability work, our formerly incarcerated staff and members were also pushing to abolish the death penalty (HB 183) in the state legislature. Our member-leaders of Building Freedom Ohio, the formerly incarcerated organizing project inside the OOC, held a successful statewide lobby day this fall. Our members shared powerful stories about people they know currently on death row in Ohio and what abolishing the death penalty would mean to their communities with our legislators. We are proud to keep building upon the momentum around our community safety work in Ohio.



In Dayton, we successfully prevented the construction of a large jail in Montgomery County by promoting the idea of real community safety. Our organizers held multiple town halls to advocate for bail reform and alternatives to incarceration. Thanks to months of tireless organizing, we are now poised to work with our public officials to create a bold, collective vision for community safety that does not rely on punitive mass incarceration.



Photo courtesy Dayton Daily News

### Justice Department to review police force in Columbus, Ohio

The mayor of Columbus, Ohio, says the U.S. Justice Department will review some practices of the city's police department after a series of police killings of Black people

By ANDREW WELSH-HUGGINS and FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press





# WINNING A FAIR SCHOOL FUNDING PLAN FOR OHIO

## *FIXING A BROKEN SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA*



In the spring, we joined forces with the state's two largest teachers unions, Ohio Education Association and Ohio Federation of Teachers, and economic think tank Policy Matters Ohio to pass the Fair School Funding Plan as part of the 2021-2022 Ohio budget. We formed the All In For Ohio Kids (A-OK!) Coalition, which would ensure that our lawmakers fairly and fully fund schools and deliver a world-class education for Ohio students. Through a series

of well-attended town halls in strategic school districts, powerful public education and narrative components, and a robust media strategy, our coalition won fair school funding for Ohio's kids, fixing a decades-long, broken formula and providing more than a billion dollars in much-needed aid for public schools in Ohio. The A-OK coalition is now poised to ensure that our lawmakers fulfill their promise and fully fund the formula in the coming years.



# SECURING FAIR MAPS FOR OHIOANS



We are helping lead one of the country's strongest fights for our democracy by pushing for fair maps in Ohio. The OOC is on the verge of winning a pioneering anti-gerrymandering lawsuit at the state Supreme Court to push for fair, representative, and constitutional maps that reflect Ohio's diverse communities, particularly its most vulnerable and disenfranchised. Thanks to our work, the Ohio Supreme Court recently struck down the rigged congressional and legislative maps that our legislators passed last year in favor of the people.

Last year, in the face of the decennial census, we built a strong coalition with key progressive partners in the state called Equal Districts to fight for fair maps at the state legislative and congressional levels. A key part of our strategy hinged on our leaders convening the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission (OCRC), a volunteer-led group composed of academics, community leaders, former officials, and everyday Ohioans joining together to model the process for the state's official redistricting commission.



The OCRC's work resulted in the creation of four "unity maps," based on over 2,000 community maps that the OCRC collected and the collective input of Ohioans invested in the political process. Our unity maps served as a strong, foundational basis for the Equal Districts coalition to define what fair maps mean for Ohio, and to lead with a proactive narrative that dominated the public discourse and that our supporters echoed from the Statehouse to the streets. Our sustained advocacy also meant that our supporters in the legislature could hold the line, resulting in the passage of 4-year maps instead of the usual ten.



In addition to our legal and advocacy wins, we also won the public narrative around what a fair map means in Ohio, including successfully lobbying certain legislators to hold the line on our definition of fair maps, despite intense political pressure. With these wins, we are confident that the Ohio Redistricting Commission will draw fair maps that reflect and include all of us.





# CHANGING OHIO'S NARRATIVE

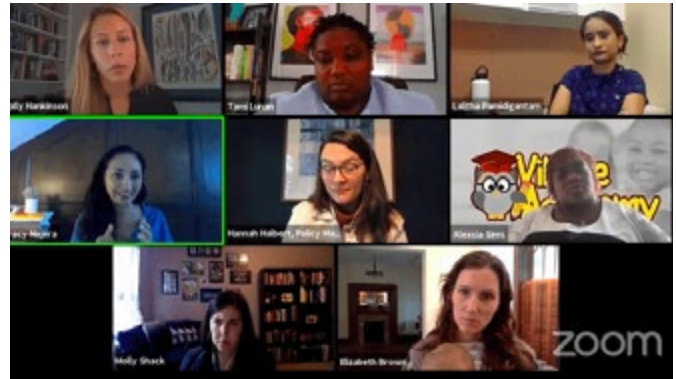
This year, our communications team set a new standard for political messaging and narrative work in Ohio by leading with a proactive, values-forward vision in the areas of economic justice, community safety, voting rights, and racial justice. We harnessed the power of Anat Shenker-Osorio and Ian Haney Lopez's pioneering Race Class Narrative by adapting this messaging framework for use in our 2021 campaigns, namely The People's Budget, All In For Ohio Kids, Yes on 24: Citizens for a Safer Cleveland, Equal Districts, and the Ohio Citizens' Redistricting Commission. We also convened a group of Ohio progressive communicators to create an All In For Ohio messaging guide on Honesty in Education to combat anti-CRT attacks and misinformation.



In developing an effective communications strategy for each of our campaigns, our team focused on a forward-thinking, accessible, and action-oriented narrative that could mobilize Ohioans across race, place, and background. Our team prioritized getting ahead of public opinion and proactively defining the narrative to ensure we could build support early on for our work and prepare for any public opposition. We will capitalize on our narrative successes from this year by continuing to be proactive, values-forward, and future-oriented in our messaging and storytelling to mobilize and unite Ohioans no matter their race or income.



# ADVANCING ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR OHIO



As the COVID-19 crisis has raged on, we've advanced economic justice for all Ohioans. This year, the campaign made huge strides in our state budget to support childcare providers and parents:

- We expanded eligibility for childcare subsidies to 6,000 more Ohio families.
- We won a year of guaranteed postpartum care for those who've given birth, to help bring down Black mother and infant mortality rates.
- We won guaranteed Medicaid treatment for breast cancer and cervical cancer.

To get there, we grew our base of providers, parents, and supporters. We've hosted monthly State of Black Childcare calls, bringing 25 providers into our coalition. As we grow our geographic reach, we hope to expand to 300

providers over the next year. We're also preparing to launch our first parent-focused organizing committee, drawing from the more than 300 parents who've joined the coalition.

In our work to address unemployment, we've used innovative online-to-offline methods to identify and mobilize more than 1,100 unemployed workers. From this base, we've grown a core leadership team of 15. Our leaders have consistently shown up in Columbus to speak at state hearings and lobby our elected officials. Early this year, Governor DeWine canceled \$300 per capita in special federal benefits that Ohioans could receive; a group of our leaders is now party to a lawsuit against DeWine that the state Supreme Court will take up in early 2022.

# DECRIMINALIZING DRUG USE IN OHIO

In the city of Lima, we've launched a local pilot for "Get Lifted," our new, statewide effort to decriminalize drug use and build power among those impacted by punitive drug laws. Lima doesn't currently have any legislation that decriminalizes drugs, including cannabis.

Get Lifted builds on the cultural organizing strategy that we've innovated with the Ohio Student Association, Midwest Culture Lab, and Deliver Black Dreams. The program provides

mini-grants, workshops, and hands-on support to a cohort of local, directly impacted artists. In our first round, our grantees' work includes a poetry book focused on addiction issues; an intergenerational art show; a mutual aid program; poetry slams; public art; and more. Through this work, we hope to raise up the humanity of those who've been impacted and build a foundation for local and statewide policy change.





## HOW YOU CAN REACH US

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**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER, & INSTAGRAM**  
[@OHorganizing](#).

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE:**  
[www.ohorganizing.org](http://www.ohorganizing.org)

*Thanks for your support!  
We look forward to building more power with you.*