

**OUR HOMES**

**OUR VOTES**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



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**Voter Registration Messaging, Events,  
and Door-to-Door Canvassing**

# Agenda

OUR HOMES

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- **Voter Registration Policy and Advocacy**
  - Laura Williamson, associate director of policy and research for democracy reform, Demos
- **Strategies for Grassroots Voter Registration Campaigns**
  - Emma Steelman, president, Vote Huntsville
  - Tia Turner, president, Love Huntsville
- ***Our Homes, Our Votes* Announcements & Opportunities**
  - Courtney Cooperman, housing advocacy organizer, NLIHC

# Welcome

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***Courtney Cooperman***

Housing Advocacy Organizer

National Low Income Housing Coalition

[ccooperman@nlihc.org](mailto:ccooperman@nlihc.org)

# Voter Registration Policy and Advocacy

OUR HOMES

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***Laura Williamson***

Associate Director of Policy and Research for  
Democracy Reform

Demos

[lwilliamson@demos.org](mailto:lwilliamson@demos.org)



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# Voter Registration Opportunities

**Demos**

May 31, 2022

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# Roadmap

- Intro
- The Problem
- Paradigm Shift
- HUD & Voter Registration
- Opportunities

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# Intros

## Laura Williamson

*Associate Director, Policy & Research*  
(she/her)

- North Carolinian & Washingtonian
- Daughter, sister, aunt
- Organizer
- Rock climber
- Experimental baker
- Voter!



# Intros



We are a dynamic “think-and-do” tank that powers the movement for a just, inclusive, multiracial democracy & economy.

- Democracy
- Economic Justice
- Racial Equity

Via policy & research, advocacy, litigation, and partnerships.

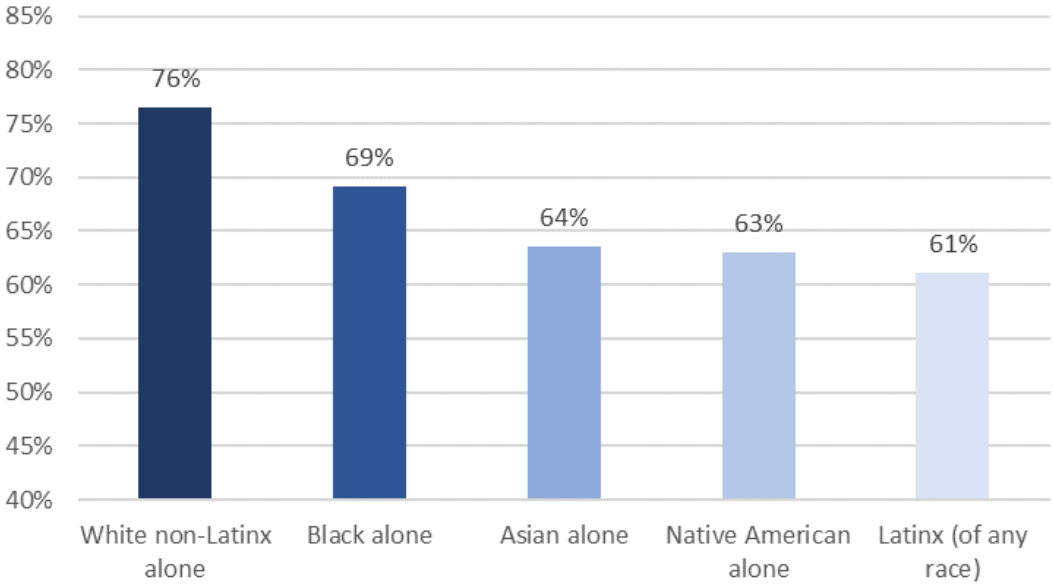
What kinds of voter engagement are you doing or planning to do this year?

# Roadmap

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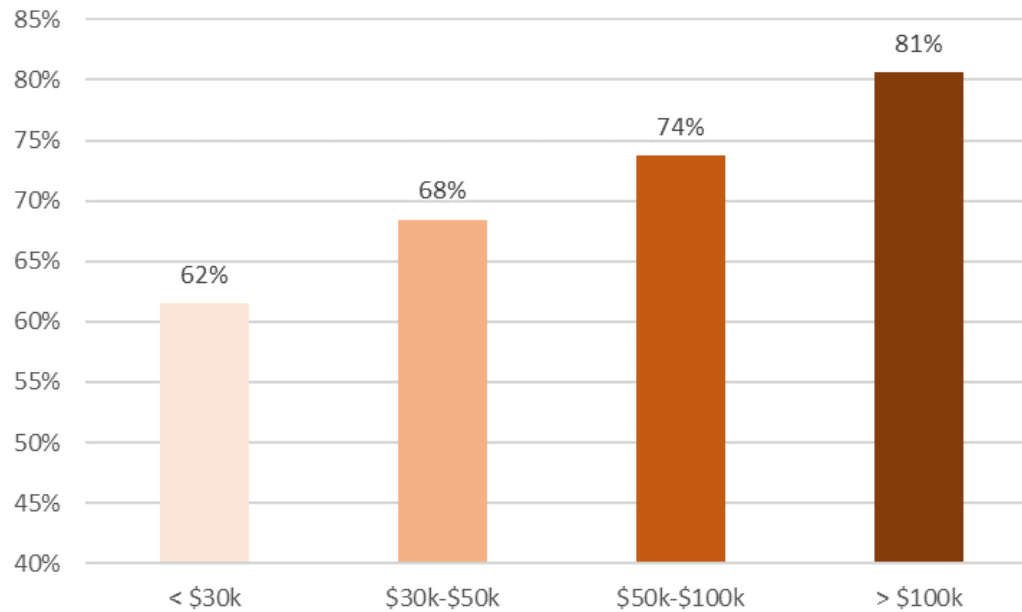
# Registration Rates by Race & Ethnicity



U.S. Census Bureau 2020

[Census Bureau, Nov 2020](#)

# Registration Rates by Income



[Census Bureau, Nov 2020](#)

**Why do we see such  
persistent gaps,  
election to election?**

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# Why do we see such persistent gaps, election to election?

It's hard to get (and stay) registered to vote!

- ID reqs
- Geographic mobility
- Time off work
- Voter purges
- Etc.

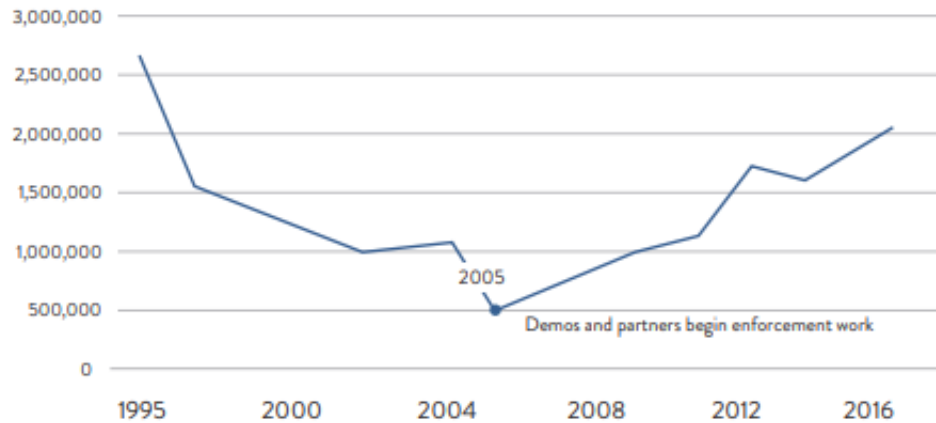
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What if the government  
were responsible for  
ensuring all eligible  
voters are registered?

# The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) & Agency-Based Registration

TOTAL VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS RECEIVED  
FROM PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AGENCIES, 1995 - 2016



*EAVS, 2007 - 2016*



# 3.4 Million

Additional voter registration applications generated between 2006-2022 thanks to a return to effective, NVRA-compliant voter registration services at state public assistance agencies ([Demos](#))

**Tens of millions more** register to vote every year at state departments of motor vehicles (DMVs), another site of effective agency registration ([EAVS, 2018](#))

**+ Millions more**

With effective voter registration at  
federal agencies & partners

## Executive Order

14019

### Promoting Access to Voting

“Sec. 3. Expanding Access to Voter Registration and Election Information. Agencies shall consider ways to expand citizens’ opportunities to register to vote and to obtain information about, and participate in, the electoral process.

...”

Directs each agency to evaluate what it can do within its existing authorities to promote non-partisan information about voter registration and the election process and to facilitate access to the electoral process.

# Roadmap

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# HUD & Voter Registration

- Public Housing Agencies (PHAs)
  - Multifamily owners/agents of HUD-assisted properties
  - U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Guides
-



**PIH**

OFFICE OF PUBLIC & INDIAN HOUSING

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

February 9, 2022

Dear Executive Director:

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has received inquiries from PHAs about what role PHAs may play in ensuring that public housing residents have access to voter registration activities and participation in the electoral process. Congress has found that the right of citizens to vote is a fundamental right and that it is the duty of the Federal, State, and local governments to promote the exercise of that right.[\[1\]](#)

Accordingly, the Department is sharing information on activities PHAs may engage in to ensure that public housing residents and Section 8 participants have access to this fundamental right.

Many rules about voting are set by states, so PHAs should check with their counsel to ensure that all activities are compliant with local and state law.

Permissible PHA activities include:

1. Providing documentation of residence (e.g., address verification, leases, etc.) to public housing residents when requested to ensure residents are able to register to vote and vote. Your PHA and PHA residents can visit [Vote.gov](http://Vote.gov) to determine what documentation of residence will be most helpful to persons trying to register to vote in your state.
2. Applying to States to operate as a voter registration agency under the National Voter Registration Act. States are allowed to designate state, federal and non-governmental offices as voter registration agencies.<sup>[2]</sup>
  - o If your PHA would like to be considered to be a voter registration agency, you can reach out to state election officials for more information about the rules and laws for your state.<sup>[3]</sup> HUD does not make determinations about what offices can be designated as voter registration agencies – only your state election officials can make that determination.
  - o For more information on what it means to be a voter registration agency, see this FAQ by the Department of Justice: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/national-voter-registration-act-1993-nvra><sup>[4]</sup>
3. Making voter registration resources available to residents. If you are not designated by the state as a voter registration agency, you can still facilitate residents' access to voter registration. Such permissible actions include:
  - o Making voter registration forms available to residents.
  - o If the laws of your state allow, accepting completed voter registration application forms and transmitting these forms to the appropriate State election official.
  - o If the voter registration laws of your state allow, running a PHA-initiated voter registration drive. However, you would need to consult with your counsel and your state election director to identify the rules and laws around voter registration drives for your state.
4. Permitting the use of PHA community space on an incidental basis to hold meetings, candidate forums, or voter registration, provided that all parties and organizations have access to the facility on an equal basis and are assessed equal rent or use charges.
5. Collaborating with local election administrators to permit the use of PHA space for voter drop boxes and voting sites, including for early voting.



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2. Applying to States to operate as a voter registration agency under the National

1. Provide **documentation of residence** so residents can register to vote
2. Request to operate as **voter registration sites** under NVRA
3. Make voter **registration resources available** (including voter reg drives if state law allows)
4. Permit use of PHA community space for **voter registration & education activities**
5. Work with election officials to use PHA community space for **voting sites, drop boxes, etc.**

voter registration drives for your state.

4. Permitting the use of PHA community space on an incidental basis to hold meetings, candidate forums, or voter registration, provided that all parties and organizations have access to the facility on an equal basis and are assessed equal rent or use charges.
5. Collaborating with local election administrators to permit the use of PHA space for voter drop boxes and voting sites, including for early voting.

## MULTIFAMILY HOUSING NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT



# Voting Rights and Access for Residents at HUD-Assisted Properties

The Office of Multifamily Housing Programs is making multifamily owners/agents of HUD-assisted properties aware that residents have the right to access voter registration activities and to participate in the electoral process.

Under the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, Congress has found that the right of citizens to vote is a fundamental right and that it is the duty of the Federal, State, and local governments to promote the exercise of that right.

HUD is asking owners to share voter and election resources with residents, including encouraging residents to visit [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov). This website provides helpful information, including how to register to vote, voter registration deadlines, and specific information about state and local elections.

## MULTIFAMILY HOUSING NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT



### Permissible activities at Multifamily-assisted properties include:

- Permitting the use of community space on an incidental basis to hold meetings, candidate forums, or voter registration, provided that all parties and organizations have access to the facility on an equal basis and are assessed equal rent or use charges.
- Collaborating with local election administrators to permit the use of space for voter drop boxes and voting sites, including for early voting.

HUD is asking owners to share voter and election resources with residents, including encouraging residents to visit [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov). This website provides helpful information, including how to register to vote, voter registration deadlines, and specific information about state and local elections.

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**From:** Hopwa <[Hopwa@hud.gov](mailto:Hopwa@hud.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 9, 2022 1:15 PM

**To:** [HOPWA-L@HUDLIST.HUD.GOV](mailto:HOPWA-L@HUDLIST.HUD.GOV)

**Subject:** Partner Resource: USICH Releases Voting Guides for Homeless Providers and People Experiencing Homelessness

**Partner Resource: USICH Releases Voting Guides for Homeless Providers and People Experiencing Homelessness**

Congress has found that the right of citizens to vote is fundamental and that it is the duty of the Federal, State, and local governments to promote the exercise of that right.[i] Accordingly, HUD is sharing information to support the public, specifically people experiencing homelessness, in understanding how to access this fundamental right.

People can vote without a permanent address, and homeless services providers can help through nonpartisan registration and get-out-the-vote efforts. It is important to be aware of local registration deadlines, some of which occur in February, to ensure the ability to vote. Many rules about voting are set by states, so check with counsel to ensure that all activities are compliant with local and state law.

To help more Americans exercise their right to vote, our partners at the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) created the following step-by-step voting guides for homeless providers and for people experiencing homelessness. Both are available in five languages:

- [Election checklist for homeless service providers](#)
- [Voting checklist for people experiencing homelessness](#)

[i] NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT OF 1993.



# Step-by-Step Voting Guide for People Experiencing Homelessness

December 31, 2021

A Checklist for How to Vote Without a Permanent Address

View in: [Arabic](#) / [Chinese](#) / [Spanish](#) / [Tagalog](#)

- [Election checklist for homeless service providers](#)
- [Voting checklist for people experiencing homelessness](#)

[1] NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT OF 1993.

s and People Experiencing Homelessness

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# So What?

Expanded Opportunities  
for Voter Registration in  
2022 (?)

- Greater partnership for voter registration and education activities
  - Advocacy opportunities
  - What else?
-



# Questions?

**Laura Williamson**

Associate Director of Policy & Research

[lwilliamson@demos.org](mailto:lwilliamson@demos.org)

# Strategies for Grassroots Voter Registration Campaigns

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## *Emma Steelman*

President

Vote Huntsville

[emma@votehuntsville.org](mailto:emma@votehuntsville.org)

## *Tia Turner*

President

Love Huntsville

[tia@lovehsv.org](mailto:tia@lovehsv.org)



# Our Home, Our Votes 2022 Webinar





# Who we are

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## Emma Steelman

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- Founder & President of Vote Huntsville
- Executive Director of Love Huntsville
- Local Organizer



## Tia Turner

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- Founder & President of Love Huntsville
- Local Organizer
- Alabama Voting Rights Advocate



# Our Beginning

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- Formed in spring of 2020 in response to police brutality protests, in order to register protestors.
- Began registering voters and answering questions about the democratic process.
- Assisting protestors revealed challenges associated with voting in Alabama.
- Seeing these difficulties led us to our singular mission: empowering and protecting voters by making voting accessible and painless through our one-stop-shop model.



# Our Mission

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"We strive to make voting simple and painless by being your one-stop-shop for anything and everything related to voting. We are committed to battling voter suppression and empowering every voter in our city"

Engage Community

Empower Voters

Accessibility

Protect Rights

Unconditional Help



# How We Work

## – Look for Gaps

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- Huntsville does not focus on lower income, rental, young, or diverse communities
- Many HSV voting organizations do not mobilize for marginalized
- Listen to the community
- Voter education deficiency





# How We Work – Local Focus

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- Local elections are most impactful on day-to-day basis
- Community unaware of municipal elections and impact
- Huntsville has low election participation
- Candidate and position information is difficult to find

GOOD MORNING HUNTSVILLE!  
IT'S VOTING DAY!





# How We Work - Engagement



- Social Media Presence
- Vote Huntsville Hotline
- Events
- Be in the community





# How We Work

## – In and Part of Community

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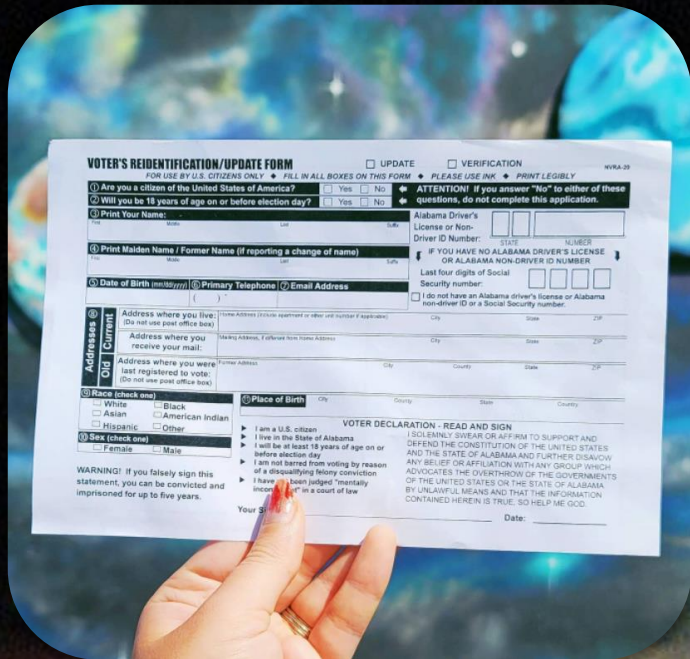


- Community Canvassing
  - Educational flyers
  - In-person service
  - Meeting the community where they are
  - Unconditional assistance
- Networking / Community partnerships
  - Universities
  - Local Elected Officials
  - Housing Authority
  - Nonprofits
  - Faith Organizations
  - Businesses





# How We Work – See and Confront Barriers



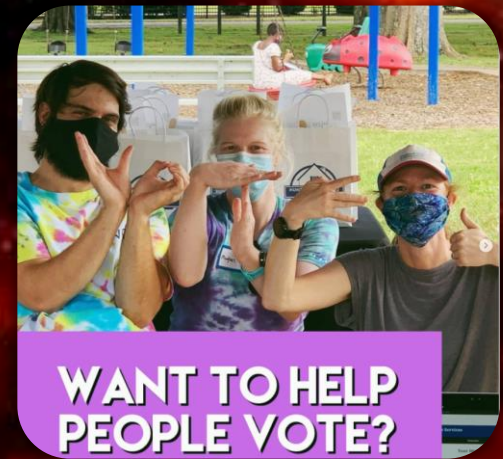
- Combatting local voter suppression
- State legislative efforts
- Voter Rights Restoration
- Informing voters of threats and their rights
- Do the work, drown out the noise



# Our 2020 Impact

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- 2020 Election Accomplishments
  - +20000 doors canvassed
  - +300 voters registered
  - +50 absentee ballot assists
  - +100 hotline service calls
  - Organized rides to the polls
  - Served 13 polling sites for general election



# Our Future Impact

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- Providing hope, despite adversity
- Pressure and Perseverance
- Amplifying and empowering disenfranchised voters
- Bettering our community



# Power in Grassroots Organizing

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- A focus on the community you live in
- Impact is direct and huge
- Important to empower others to organize
- Creates and sustains community

# Our Homes, Our Votes Announcements & Opportunities

OUR HOMES

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***Courtney Cooperman***

Housing Advocacy Organizer

National Low Income Housing Coalition

[ccooperman@nlihc.org](mailto:ccooperman@nlihc.org)

Be Inspired.  
Be Engaged.  
Go Vote!



## Become an Affiliate!

- Join a national network
- Get campaign swag
- Use logos and images
- Receive guidance from NLIHC staff
- Be featured in the newsletter
- And more!



# Join the Housing Providers Council!



- Collaborative network for affordable housing providers to develop and implement voter engagement strategy
- Email [ourhomes@nlihc.org](mailto:ourhomes@nlihc.org) for invitation to kickoff meeting

# Civic Holidays

**OUR HOMES**

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**National Voter  
Registration Day  
(September 20)**

**National Voter  
Education Week  
(October 3-7)**

**Vote Early Day  
(October 28)**

**Election Hero Day  
(November 7)**



# Follow the Campaign!

**OUR HOMES**

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**Twitter: @OurHomesVotes**

**Facebook @OHOV2022**

**Email: [ourhomes@nlihc.org](mailto:ourhomes@nlihc.org)**

**Website: [ourhomes-ourvotes.org](http://ourhomes-ourvotes.org)**

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**OURHOMES-OURVOTES.ORG**