

NETWORK CONNECTION

SECOND QUARTER 2019

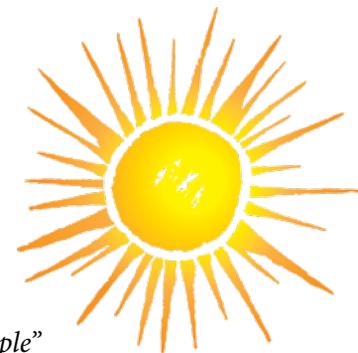
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TO THE
POLLS



ABLE
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RESPONSIBLE
PROGRAMS

DEMOCRACY:
OUR **RIGHT** AND **RESPONSIBILITY**



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ON THE COVER

Residents of Virginia’s 10th Congressional district join the Nuns on the Bus Rally for Tax Justice outside of former-Representative Barbara Comstock’s office in October 2018. Photo by: Colleen Ross

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Protecting the Right to Participate

Renewing the Promise of “By the People, For the People”

BY SISTER SIMONE CAMPBELL

During our Nuns on the Bus trip in the fall of 2018, just before the Midterm elections, we heard many stories about efforts to limit access to our democracy:

- For every Republican office that we lobbied (or attempted to lobby) we heard constituents’ stories about their representative’s refusal to meet with them. One Republican member’s district chief of staff even went so far to say that the problem was that her boss “was incredibly shy...he was an introvert.” As if that justified it when he met regularly with donors.
- We heard of some state legislation that would require a street address in order to vote. However, on the Native American reservations there were no street addresses so Native American people would be “purged” from the voter rolls.
- Gerrymandering was mentioned at many stops where the Congressional district maps were drawn to benefit the majority party. In fact, it was so bad in Pennsylvania that the court had stepped in and redrawn the state’s map for Congressional representation. This was the first election under the very new map, but even that was confusing to some of the voters we met, as their districts and their representatives were now different.

I ended the bus trip worried about our democracy and how it is being undermined. The political “game” of winning has taken precedence over the commitment to let every voice be heard.

This isn’t just a “Republican thing.” In Maryland, where Democrats are in the majority, districts were drawn to benefit Democrats and reduce the number of Republicans in Congress and the state legislature.

This bipartisan desire to win at the expense of democracy underscored for us why we need to heal our democracy if we are going to mend the gaps in our nation. For this reason, access to democracy is one of the key provisions in our policy agenda.

But this work is multilayered. We initially started by thinking that it was only about the Voting Rights Act that the Supreme Court undermined a few years ago in the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision. But as we went deeper, we realized that if the census is flawed then the data from which districts are determined is also flawed. Article I Section 2 of the Constitution mandates that there be an “enumeration...every subsequent term of ten years.” This is a mandate to count everyone without regard for citizenship or even immigration status. The Constitution requires the census to count everyone in the country.

Therefore, we are engaged in making sure that there is adequate funding for the 2020 Census count and that it is carried out in a way that encourages participation. We have been fighting against including a “citizenship question” to the census questionnaire or any other actions that would push people away from responding to the census.

Whether our work is about the census, efforts to restore the Voting Rights Act, or ending gerrymandering, we do this work because every voice matters in our democracy. This is the difference between the economy and government. In the capitalist economy there are those who are “winners” and those who are left out. But in a functioning democracy everyone needs to be afforded equal dignity and opportunity to be heard. It is this dignity of the individual that is at the heart of our work...and the heart of our faith.

Pope Francis says in his encyclical *Laudato Si’*: “Love for society and commitment to the common good are outstanding expressions of a charity which affects not only relationships between individuals but also ‘macro-relationships, social, economic and political ones.’ That is why the Church set before the world the ideal of a ‘civilization of love.’” (Paragraph 231)

Let us labor in love in our society to ensure that everyone in our nation can fully participate in our democracy. This is the doorway to realizing the common good. ☀️



Notable Quotables

What justice-seekers have been saying this quarter

"I believe in the power of stories to change hearts and minds. I also believe that these stories bring us together, for we have more in common than not."

Elena Hung, President and Co-Founder of Little Lobbyists, quoted in a NETWORK blog

"My hunch is that with women allowed to flourish, there'd be much less worry about boundaries and way more concern about inclusion, shared benefits, the common good, how all families can flourish, and I think we'd be a lot further ahead."

Sister Simone Campbell, quoted by Broadly answering the question "What's the Future of the Feminist Movement?"

"It's really important not to let the outside world define you, and to be strong in standing up for what you believe in, but also be strategic."

Rep. Pramila Jayapal (WA-07) quoted in Politico, about mentoring new members of Congress

"I paid \$10 billion [in taxes] but I should have had to pay more on my capital gains."

Bill Gates responding to a participant's question during a Reddit AMA (Ask Me Anything)

"TPS holders and DACA recipients have always been here, and they've always been a part of American society."

José Arnulfo Cabrera, NETWORK Government Relations Associate, writing in a NETWORK blog

"Even if a worker qualifies for FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) coverage, in many cases, they can't afford to take it."

Siena Ruggieri, NETWORK Government Relations Associate, writing in a NETWORK blog

"We don't have an immigration problem in this country we have a racism and poverty problem."

Monsignor Arturo Bañuelas, chair of the Hope Border Institute, speaking at the Catholic Immigrant Integration Initiative Conference

"The #Census2020 doesn't just matter for constitutional scholars, it matters for each of us who cares about our families' health and our kids' education, for our Veterans' wellbeing and our nation's strength."

Tweet from Senator Tammy Duckworth (@SenDuckworth) following a community briefing

"I am so proud of my 100% score from @NETWORKLobby. Thank you @sr_simone, #NunsOnTheBus & all the wonderful Catholic Sisters & activists of NETWORK Lobby."

Tweet by Rep. Jim McGovern (@RepMcGovern) following the publication of NETWORK's 2018 Congressional Voting Record

"Lent is a time for repentance and renewal. As we journey through Lent, we know that we are always walking in God's love; we know that we are always walking towards the Resurrection."

Meg Olson, NETWORK Grassroots Mobilization Manager, writing in NETWORK's Lenten guide "Recommit to Racial Justice"

Valuing and Promoting Participation in Every Aspect of Our Democracy

The right and responsibility to participate in our government motivates NETWORK's mission to educate, organize, and lobby for justice. We believe that every person is called to work to promote the common good through our political system. This sacred right must not be violated.

The influence of money in politics, gerrymandering, varied methods of voter suppression, felon disenfranchisement, and other anti-democracy tactics limit the impact of individuals' participation on our policies. The variety of ways that voting rights and fair representation are undermined at the local, state, and federal levels makes it difficult to see the total effect on our democracy. As a result, our political reality moves further from a system of fair representation and elected officials who are accountable to their constituents.

Together with faith and secular partners, NETWORK is working to restore the influence of individuals in our representative democracy. Recently, the For the People Act (H.R. 1) passed in the House of Representatives, signifying a groundbreaking shift of power in favor of participation and. While H.R. 1 has little chance of a vote in the Senate, its strong passage in the House and the momentum building around the country are clear indications of pro-democracy support. It may ultimately fall to the next Congress to take action, but H.R. 1 is clearing a path to strengthen and protect our democracy.

Until then, NETWORK, along with our partners, will continue to oppose threats to participation and promote the right to vote, advocate, and have fair representation in our democracy.

Working for Fair Participation in the Public Sphere

By Patrick Carolan, Executive Director of Franciscan Action Network

The Gospel of Matthew tells us we cannot not serve God and money. After hearing God's call to "rebuild My Church," a young St. Francis famously renounced his wealthy merchant father and all his worldly possessions. And, as Pope Francis calls us to "meddle in politics," we are reminded that that means everyone must have an equal say in the public square.

Following the Gospel example of Jesus and taking our cues from both St. Francis and Pope Francis, the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) leads an interfaith coalition, "Faithful Democracy" working on the issue of money in politics. The coalition looks at this issue from both a faith and legislative perspective. It is imperative that we institute reforms in the areas of campaign finance, voting rights, and good governance for a fully functioning and representative government. FAN has called for those reforms since the *Citizens United* decision nearly a decade ago.

Now, there is a newfound energy on Capitol Hill for these good governance reforms. Join us as we bring about the Kingdom of God here on Earth and implement vital reforms that are necessary to have a fully functioning and healthy democracy.

Patrick Carolan has been the Executive Director of the Franciscan Action Network (FAN) since 2010. FAN is an advocacy voice for the entire Franciscan family in the United States representing over 50 different institutions nationwide. FAN is inspired by both the Gospel of Jesus, and by the example of Saints Francis and Clare, to transform U.S. public policy related to our core issues: peace making, care for creation, poverty, and human rights.

State-Level Barriers to Voting

By Colleen Ross, NETWORK Communications Coordinator

The ideal of "one person, one vote" is central to our conception of democracy in the United States, but the reality in our country falls short. While the legal discrimination that prevented people of color from voting for hundreds of years is no longer in place, today a new combination of restrictive standards and require-

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ments keep voters from exercising their right to vote. Whether implementing voter ID requirements, purging voter rolls, restricting early voting, or closing polling locations, state-level election laws are making it harder, if not impossible for many eligible citizens to vote. Furthermore, these requirements have a disproportionate impact, often by design, on voters of color and low-income voters who are less likely to have flexible schedules, access to transportation, or a government photo ID.

Many of these tactics were implemented after 2013, when the *Shelby County v. Holder* Supreme Court decision opened the door for states to pass more restrictive voting standards. Up until this decision, Sections 4 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) used a formula set by the VRA in 1965 to identify jurisdictions with histories of racial discrimination and subject them to federal preclearance requirements for any changes in voter registration or casting of ballots that they wanted to implement. In *Shelby County v. Holder*, Chief Justice Roberts wrote that the formula was no longer accurate, dissolving the preclearance requirement for areas it had previously applied to: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia, as well as parts of California, Florida, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, and South Dakota. Since then, states have been able to freely implement restrictive voting requirements and 23 states have chosen to do so. Now, these discriminatory laws must be challenged after the fact—essentially setting up an unjust competition to reinstate fair elections through expensive litigation. Meanwhile, the resulting election outcomes and disenfranchisement cannot be undone. Cases of voter discrimination have quadrupled in the five years since the *Shelby* decision. While excessive money in politics and gerrymandering distort the results of elections across the country, it is important not to lose sight of the ways states prevent eligible citizens from even casting their vote.

Incarceration Does Not Negate Citizenship Rights

By Joan Neal, NETWORK Senior Fellow Government Relations and Strategy

In the United States, there is both an expectation and an assumption that every citizen has the right to vote. The Constitution fails to explicitly state that all citizens have the right to vote, but future amendments have made it very clear when the vote cannot be denied: on the basis of race, color, previous condition of servitude, sex, failure to pay poll tax or any other taxes, and age (for anyone at least 18 years old). Yet, at the federal and state level, formerly incarcerated citizens are routinely denied their right to vote despite the fact that they have served their time and paid their debt to society. In fact, the U.S. is one of the only countries in the world that strips returning citizens of their right to vote.

As of 2016, The Sentencing Project found that more than 6 million formerly incarcerated people have been denied their right to vote due to felony disenfranchisement. This number has grown exponentially since the 1970s, largely due to the War on Drugs and the resulting increase in incarceration. Currently, approximately 2.5% of the total U.S. voting population—one of every 40 people—is disenfranchised due to a felony conviction. Communities of color are disproportionately impacted by this policy of disenfranchisement; as of 2016, one in every 13 Black adults could not vote as the result of a felony conviction.

Clearly, the denial of the right to vote for so many citizens produces unequal representation in the political system. It effectively silences the voices of people who have not lost their citizenship but who are prevented from exercising their full range of rights. Research shows that the results of several close national and state elections would have been decidedly different if formerly incarcerated citizens had been allowed to vote. Voting restoration will not only give returning citizens a say in their own governance, but will help them to feel a connection to society again. For the millions of formerly incarcerated people living, working, and paying taxes in their communities, it will be a deterrent to recidivism, will restore their dignity as human beings, and, most importantly, will make our democracy more truly representative.

Resisting the Influence of Money in Politics to Restore Our Power

By Karen Hobert Flynn, President of Common Cause

Our democracy faces a crisis not seen since the 1970s. Some elected officials and states continue to suppress the votes and

voices of Americans; self-interested politicians cherry-pick their voters; the Trump administration continues to undermine our Constitution and the rule of law; and special interests, big-money lobbyists, and multi-national corporations have a megaphone in deciding policies that our government makes while our children and our communities often suffer the consequences of those rigged policies.

H.R. 1, the For the People Act, is the biggest, boldest democracy reform package introduced since the Watergate era. It would restore the rule of law, stop hyperpartisan gerrymandering, strengthen the right to vote for all citizens and empower the voices of all our nation's people. It contains many bold reforms, such as: small-donor citizen-funded elections, disclosure of secret money in politics, and closing loopholes to prevent foreign money from being spent in U.S. elections.

Citizen-funded elections are an especially important part of H.R. 1 because they allow individuals from traditionally underrepresented communities, who may not always be connected to sources of money, to run for and win elected office. In my home state of Connecticut where I helped lead the successful fight for the Citizens' Election Program, the program is making a difference in the types of policies that are debated and passed in the state legislature, and it is shifting power from lobbyists and big-money corporations back to the people.

Nearly all the reforms contained in H.R. 1 have been tested and proven at the state and/or local level, often with Common Cause state chapters leading those efforts. Last November, Common Cause supported more than two-dozen pro-democracy reform ballot initiatives, more than 90% of which passed in red, blue, and purple states and localities, often with strong bipartisan support. We detail those initiatives, including six successful state initiatives to reduce the influence of money in politics, in our "Democracy on the Ballot" report. Additionally, with the beginning of many states' legislative sessions this year, we have already secured several key voting reform victories in 2019.

We, and all the incredible allies in the faith community and other organizations, must continue fighting to "hold power accountable" to make sure that the voices of all people, regardless of the size of their wallets, can be heard in our democracy.

Karen Hobert Flynn is the president of Common Cause, which since 1970, has been working to hold power accountable through lobbying, litigation, and grassroots organizing. Their non-partisan, pro-democracy work has helped pass hundreds of reforms at the federal, state, and local levels. They have 30 state chapters and more than 1.2 million members around the country who are working to strengthen our democracy. Read the "Democracy on the Ballot" report at www.commoncause.org/resource/democracy-on-the-ballot

The Impact of Gerrymandering on Voters, Elections, and Lawmakers

By Celina Stewart, Director of Advocacy and Litigation at League of Women Voters

Gerrymandering comes in two forms—racial or partisan—and has been happening since before the Constitutional Convention of 1787; no party is innocent in using their political power to influence what they want. But what is gerrymandering? Where did it even come from?

In 1812, Massachusetts Gov. Elbridge Gerry signed a redistricting bill, creating a new voting district designed to favor his party. In the end, the district was curvy and long—much like a salamander. So foreign was this shape that a *Boston Gazette* cartoonist added claws, wings, and fangs, naming it "The Gerry-Mander". Just like that, the term "gerrymander" was born.

Since then, very little has changed. Legislators have simply found new and innovative ways to accomplish the task. Some of this "innovation" stems from the evolution of technology. For example, as the United States entered the Digital Age, the development of computers and their ability to store, sort, and hold an enormous amount of information allowed political parties to

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Census: The Foundation for Fair Representation

By Sister Quincy Howard, OP, NETWORK Government Relations Specialist

For the more than a year, the NETWORK community has advocated and lobbied Congress for adequate funding to support an accurate 2020 Census count. The Census's potential future impact on billions of dollars of federal funds allocated to local communities for infrastructure, schools, and other vital services is deeply concerning to us. The census is a crucial tool for maintaining our safety net programs and providing for the needs of communities. The decennial census count also lays the foundation for our democratic systems. Census data is used to apportion Congressional representatives; determine the votes of each state in the Electoral College; and draw state, local, and congressional districts. Therefore, failing to accurately count all persons in the United States would be enormously damaging for, and potentially undermine, our democracy.

The federal government is constitutionally obligated to count all persons in the United States, both citizens and non-citizens alike, in the decennial census. After the 13th Amendment ended slavery, the 14th Amendment to the Constitution established a democracy premised on the idea that all persons—no matter where they are from, regardless of whether they can vote—deserve to be represented in our government. This precept aligns with our own Catholic Social Justice principles which promote the dignity of every person and the right and responsibility to participate in politics and society. Ensuring a proper count of the nation's population to apportion representatives requires an "actual enumeration" of the people. This "actual enumeration" specified by the Constitution imposes a clear duty on the federal government: to count all people living in the United States, whether they are citizens or not and whether they were born in the U.S. or elsewhere.

The Trump administration, however, is once again threatening to undermine the fairness and accuracy of the 2020 Census count by including a citizenship question. Under the current climate of fear, mandating such a question would have a chilling effect on response rates in immigrant communities. The ill-conceived addition of the question circumvents the Constitution's requirement to obtain an accurate count of all persons living in the United States, regardless of immigration status.

The Census occurs only once every ten years, and there are no do-overs. These numbers could lock our nation into an unfair count and inaccurate representation for at least a decade and possibly longer. The repercussions are immense, so we must do whatever we can to ensure that every person counts in the 2020 Census. ☀️

gerrymander faster and methodically. So, why does this matter? Because voting data can now be exploited, in a way like never before, to distort our democracy; and politicians can pick their voters instead of voters electing their politicians. It's a game politicians win before it even starts, and voters are the pawns.

Many of the gerrymandered maps created in 2011 during the last redistricting cycle ensured that no matter who voted, the outcome was already determined. This was achieved, with mathematical precision, by either "packing" or "cracking" minority voters into various districts. Gerrymandering tactics employed in battleground states like Pennsylvania, Michigan, Georgia, and North Carolina, coupled with the gutting of Sections 4 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013), created the perfect storm for rampant voter suppression across the country.

Fast forward to 2019: we now have 20/20 vision of the impact rampant gerrymandering and the *Shelby* decision have made. Lawmakers choose their electorate without any checks in place to stop, discourage, or limit the practice without court intervention. For more than two decades, voters have existed in a system that favors the powerful and well-connected, enabling self-serving politicians to game the political system in ways that undermine the very essence of the U.S. Constitution. In a system like this, voters simply are disempowered.

Principles of fair governance are not hard to understand or articulate. If we want our government to truly represent all the people, then all our votes must count, and that's what makes gerrymandering so dangerous. It's why we must all be determined to fight for redistricting reform and relentlessly defend our democracy's promise of "one person, one vote."

Celina Stewart joined the League of Women Voters as Director of Advocacy and Litigation in April 2018. The League of Women Voters of the United States encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. League members in all 50 states and in more than 700 communities register new voters, host community forums and debates, and provide voters with election information they need.

NETWORK Annual Report 2018

NETWORK educates, organizes, and lobbies for social and economic transformation. We are rooted in Catholic Social Justice and open to all who share our passion. We value women's leadership, welcome secular and religious backgrounds, affirm LGBTQ+ identities, and engage in ongoing racial justice work.



Dear NETWORK Supporters,

One year ago, I felt defeated by the December 2017 tax fight that we lost, and I started 2018 a little low on hope.

But it was your fierce commitment, and that of our staff, that changed the direction of 2018! We re-grouped. NETWORK activists across the country engaged in small teams to heighten their impact. We had lobby visits that made palpable differences both in districts and here in D.C. We were lifted up by our shared commitment to the common good.

All of this educating, organizing, and lobbying paved the way for our pre-election tour: *Nuns on the Bus on the Road to Mar-a-Lago!* I will never forget the joy of the bus as we educated about the impact of the flawed tax legislation that passed on a party-line vote. Together, we lobbied representatives to change their position and fix this law. The glorious bus trip ended with a Fiesta for the Common Good near Mar-a-Lago complete with a mariachi band! What joy and mischief making!

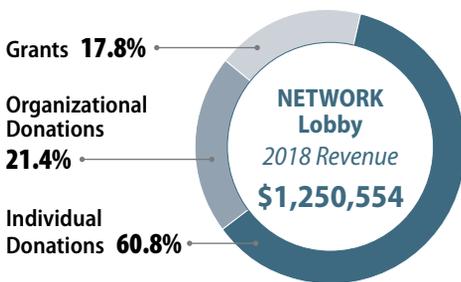
November brought change to Congress—including a lot more women! It increased my hope that we can “Mend the Gaps” in our nation.

We know that change only happens in community. You are the community that helped make this new year possible! You are the community that gives us joy and draws us to holiness—living the Gospel fully alive! You all make that possible!

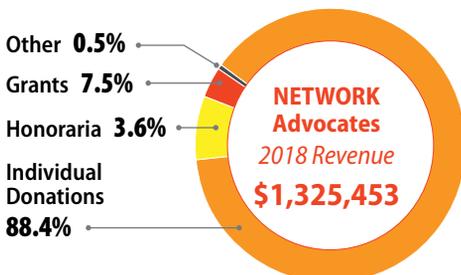
Thank you!

S. Simone Campbell, SSS

Where Our Financial Support Comes From

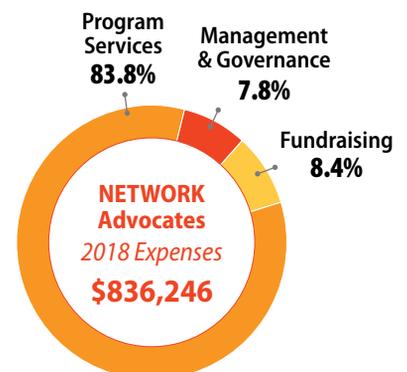
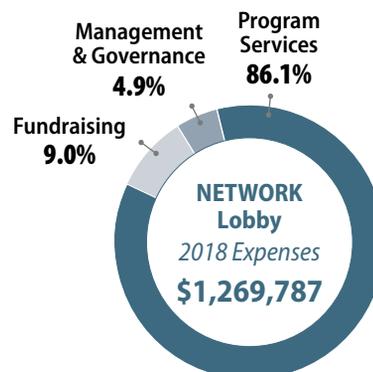


In 2018, NETWORK Lobby investments had \$72,517 in unrealized loss, not included in this chart.



In 2018, NETWORK Advocates investments had \$210,303 in unrealized loss, not included in this chart.

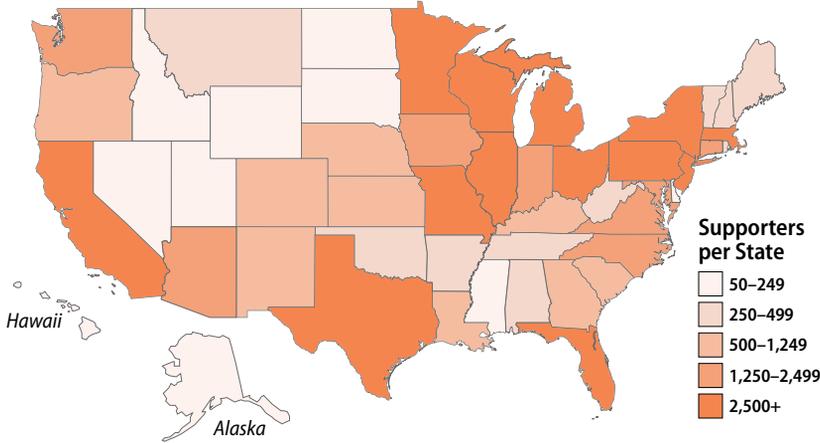
How Your Financial Support Impacts Our Mission



NETWORK is two organizations with one mission: NETWORK Advocates is a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible organization and NETWORK Lobby is a 501(c)(4) organization. The two sister organizations work closely together to further our movement for justice and peace.

OUR NETWORK Community

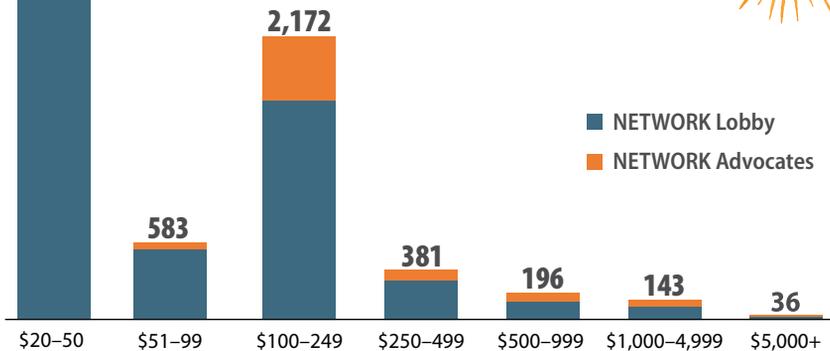
We are honored to have more than 80,000 supporters across the country who engaged with us in 2018.



4,698

Thank you to the 7,974 members who donated last year!

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE WHO GAVE ADDITIONAL GIFTS ABOVE THEIR MEMBERSHIP DUES



1,956 first-time donors

A Sister-Spirit welcome to our newest members!

534 GEMs

People who participated in the Giving Every Month program

2,082 Loyalty Society

People who have given consecutively for five years or more

Our Work by the Numbers

3.25 million emails sent to NETWORK supporters in **194** email blasts

583,606 visits to the NETWORK websites by **133,956** visitors

32,972 minutes NETWORK activists spent on the phone with Congress to support our Mend the Gaps agenda

32,621 NETWORK text messages sent to advocates

30,252 Connection issues mailed to NETWORK members

5,726 new followers to NETWORK, Nuns on the Bus, and Sister Simone social media platforms

1,219 new subscribers to NETWORK text message alerts

118 blogs published on NETWORK's website

44 in-district lobby visits made by NETWORK advocates

26 press releases — plus **44** advisories for Nuns on the Bus — disseminated to the media

2018 NETWORK **NUNS** on the bus

21 states, **44** cities, and more than **5,600** miles traveled

More than **50** events, including **16** Town Halls for Justice, **13** Lobby Visits, **13** Site Visits, **6** Rallies, **2** Roundtable Discussions, **2** Receptions, **1** Canvass, and **1** Podcast Recording Session

11 Members of Congress joined us at our events and along the road

30 Sisters on the bus, who all received media and policy training

420 press hits over the course of the tour

110,983,931 impressions on Facebook and Twitter of "Nuns on the Bus" or "#NunsOnTheBus" throughout the tour!

Advocating for Justice



Senior Government Relations Advocate Laura Peralta-Schulte spoke out against President Trump's Muslim Ban at a press conference with partners in April — one of many times NETWORK promoted Catholic Social Justice on Capitol Hill.

Glamour @glamourmag Follow

This Nun Has Some Questions for Trump's Supreme Court Pick, and They Aren't About Abortion: glmr.co/Hc7OyuT

Glamour and The Washington Post featured stories on a NETWORK-organized letter signed by 1,550 Catholic Faith Leaders from across the country calling into question the nomination of Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court based on his positions on Catholic Social Justice issues.



Throughout 2018, we worked with the interfaith community to promote a Farm Bill that would protect food assistance for our nation's most vulnerable people. Seen here: a Detroit rally of faith leaders — and NETWORK staff with coalition partners making sure our message was heard in the halls of Congress.



Immigration was a major issue in 2018. In February, NETWORK joined in the "Catholic Day of Action for Dreamers" public witness. And after news of the families separated at the border broke out across the country in early summer, Sister Simone traveled down to Tornillo, Texas to deliver toys and books to detained children who had been separated from their families.

COLORADO TIMES RECORDER

Nuns Get Off The Bus In Colorado To Tell Us About The Tax Law

Jason Salzman October 15, 2018

BND BELLEVILLE NEWS-DEMOCRAT

Nuns on the bus visit Illinois congressman's office

Las Vegas, NV

TAX JUSTICE TRUTH TOUR

Home Sentinel

Nuns on Bus Tour Stops at Tenney office

DAVID HILL Published Oct 23, 2018 at 12:08pm

CBS Los Angeles

Nancy Pelosi Joins Catholic 'Nuns On The Bus' For 'Tax Justice Truth Tour En Route To Trump's Mar-a-Lago

October 8, 2018 at 6:40 pm

nj.com

Nuns on cross-country trip to Mar-a-Lago stops in Kearny

By Terrence T. McDonald Posted Oct 26

West Chicago, IL

I am WOMAN Hear me ROAR Watch me VOTE

NUNS WHO WE ELECT MATTERS

The Palm Beach Post

Nuns' bus drives past Mar-a-Lago in tax cut protest

By Christine Stapleton Posted Nov 2, 2018 at 3:39 PM



Bread & Roses

~ SOCIETY ~

Members of NETWORK's Bread and Roses Society play a vital role in building the justice movement for many years to come. By planning to remember NETWORK in their will or estate plans, members will make substantial, enduring commitments to our community's long-term work to create a society that promotes justice and the dignity of all in the shared abundance of God's creation.

Alice and Robert Beezat
 Kim and Stephen Benoit
 Margaret Betz
 James Biechler
 Dr. Lee Breyer
 Susan Doherty
 Kathryn Donahoe
 Albert Eisch
 Jean Hamann
 Patricia Harrity

Jane Houtman
 Mary and Calbert Hubbard
 Alice Kitchen
 Dr. Norma LaSalle
 Anne Laurance
 Rita Middendorf
 Elizabeth Morancy
 Ann Neale and Phil Gallagher
 Rosemarie Pace

Suzanne Polen
 Bernadette Powell
 Linda Rich
 Barbara and Brian Roos
 Jean Sammon
 Imelda Smith
 Bernadette Tourtual
 Carol Watchler
 Francine Wickes
 Dr. Jerome Zurek

IN MEMORIAM

We honor the memory of those who included NETWORK in their estate plans who made a bequest in 2018. We are honored to be entrusted with their legacy, which sustains this work for many years to come.

Barbara Enagonio
Rev. Daniel J. Flaherty
Margaret Keyes
Kalista S. Lehrer



Building the Grassroots

2018 saw the growth of our Advocates Teams and Councils around the country. We are excited to be building our network in:

- ☀️ Illinois
- ☀️ New York
- ☀️ Indiana
- ☀️ Ohio
- ☀️ Kentucky
- ☀️ Pennsylvania
- ☀️ Michigan
- ☀️ Texas
- ☀️ Missouri
- ☀️ Virginia
- ☀️ New Jersey

Advocates Teams and Councils connect Spirit-filled justice-seekers within a geographical region and equip them to act effectively for social change. The groups work with NETWORK staff to build relationships with their Members of Congress.

To assist them in their work, groups receive considerable support from NETWORK staff, including policy briefs, legislative updates, trainings, educational materials, and opportunities for reflection and contemplation.

If you live in these states, please let us know if you are interested in joining us!



A New Home for NETWORK

One highlight of 2018 was moving to new office space in December. We are still walking distance to Capitol Hill and convenient for you to visit us! Please update your records with NETWORK's new mailing address.



NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
 NETWORK Advocates for Catholic Social Justice

820 First Street NE, Suite 350
 Washington, DC 20002-4243

202-347-9797 (main) • 202-347-9864 (fax)

info@networklobby.org

Facebook: NETWORK LOBBY • Twitter: @NETWORKLobby

www.networklobby.org • www.networkadvocates.org

To Repair Our Democracy

Demanding a Fair Fight in All Elections

BY STACEY ABRAMS

Within the corridors of government—from the highest levels of federal and state leadership to county and city municipal bodies—public servants and community advocates, carrying deeply-held motivations like faith, family, and service, fight relentlessly. Their mission: to ensure that decision-makers enact policies to enrich and protect the lives of those they govern. In my home state of Georgia, advocates continue to wage an impassioned battle for Medicaid expansion, which will cover more than 500,000 Georgians who need healthcare access. They demand a world-class public education from cradle to career to empower Georgia's children regardless of zip code. Refusing to accept economic insecurity as a given, they push for economic opportunity to reach every corner of our state's 159 counties.

But dreams of expanded economic and social prosperity, of policy outcomes that truly lift up people, are built on a foundation of hearing every voice *from* the people, through free and fair elections in a thriving democracy. Yet, as the 2018 midterm elections proved, particularly in Georgia, from voter registration to ballot access to full confidence that votes cast are counted, our elections are in dire need of repair.

Fixing our broken democracy stands as a foundational prerequisite to progress. Our work to achieve healthcare access, education parity, social and economic justice, and more, they each depend the fundamental obligation that undergirds them all—eradicating voter suppression and ensuring that our elections are fair fights.

After acknowledging the result of widespread election irregularities following my race for governor last year, I redoubled my commitment to voting rights and founded Fair Fight Action, calling on my fellow Georgians of all stripes to join me in pursuing a fair and equitable elections system that operates effectively, efficiently, and equally.

In this pursuit, our strategy recognizes that the path to progress is both political and legal. Therefore, we filed a voting rights lawsuit in federal court that details how the seamless integration of incompetence and malfeasance through arcane or manipulated laws deprive citizens of their constitutional right to vote. Likewise, we have engaged in local efforts to thwart legislation that would deepen disenfranchisement, and we have participat-



Stacey Abrams speaks to Fair Fight Action supporters in Savannah, GA about the fight ahead to secure free and fair elections for all. Photo by: Kevin Lowery

ed in a national conversation about the restoration of the Voting Right Act. Our motives are simple: we cannot allow an immoral and unacceptable system of voter suppression to tarnish our elections, as we have unfortunately witnessed in full force after the Voting Rights Act was effectively neutered in 2013.

Voter suppression has ravaged voter registration, ballot access, and ballot counting processes alike. Attacks on third-party registration submissions and databases rife with errors and security concerns, the discriminatory 'exact match' policy blocking many registrations from voters of color, and wildly reckless voter roll purges (which once circumscribed the right to vote for a woman who had lived in the same house and voted at the same precinct continuously for over thirty years), serve as infamous examples of suppression executed by top elections officials in Georgia.

Ballot access has fared no better, with our most recent cycle producing myriad instances of absentee ballots that never arrived, regular voters forced to cast provisional ballots, unacceptably long lines, precinct closures, vulnerable or inadequate equipment, disparate treatment based on county lines, and ill-equipped elections staff. And ballot counting processes include absentee ballots never found, provisional ballots never accounted for, and insecure voting machines producing inaccurate, unverifiable tallies, all within districts surgically gerrymandered to drown out the voices of marginalized voters.

continued on page 10

Make no mistake, while our fight has taken root in Georgia’s tarnished elections, our nation’s democracy is imperiled. While Georgia has uniquely linked together a dizzying array of voter suppression tactics, examples of voices silenced can be found across the country. Luckily, we can also hear the clarion call of faith from groups like Nuns on the Bus. From the movement

to demand full, unfettered voting rights for citizens in Georgia, the cradle of the civil rights movement, I call on NETWORK and its members to join us in our call for the end to voter suppression wherever it may be found. Whether through supporting the Voting Rights Advancement Act in Congress, or advocating for ballot security on the local level, or holding every presidential candidate accountable for putting forward a plan to end this abominable practice, together we can finally establish an electoral system that operates under the consent of the governed, where policies of, by, and for the people, truly flourish. And, in the process, repair democracy itself.

Fixing our broken democracy stands as a foundational prerequisite to progress.

in the 1960s that produced the Voting Rights Act, led by faith leaders like the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to the Georgia churches that have directly joined our ongoing lawsuit as co-plaintiffs, voices of faith are indispensable to framing the moral imperative of free and fair elections that affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and every voice in our democracy.

Faith undergirds my every step in this work. My parents, retired ministers and civil rights workers, instilled in me and my siblings a deep respect for the right to vote. As we continue

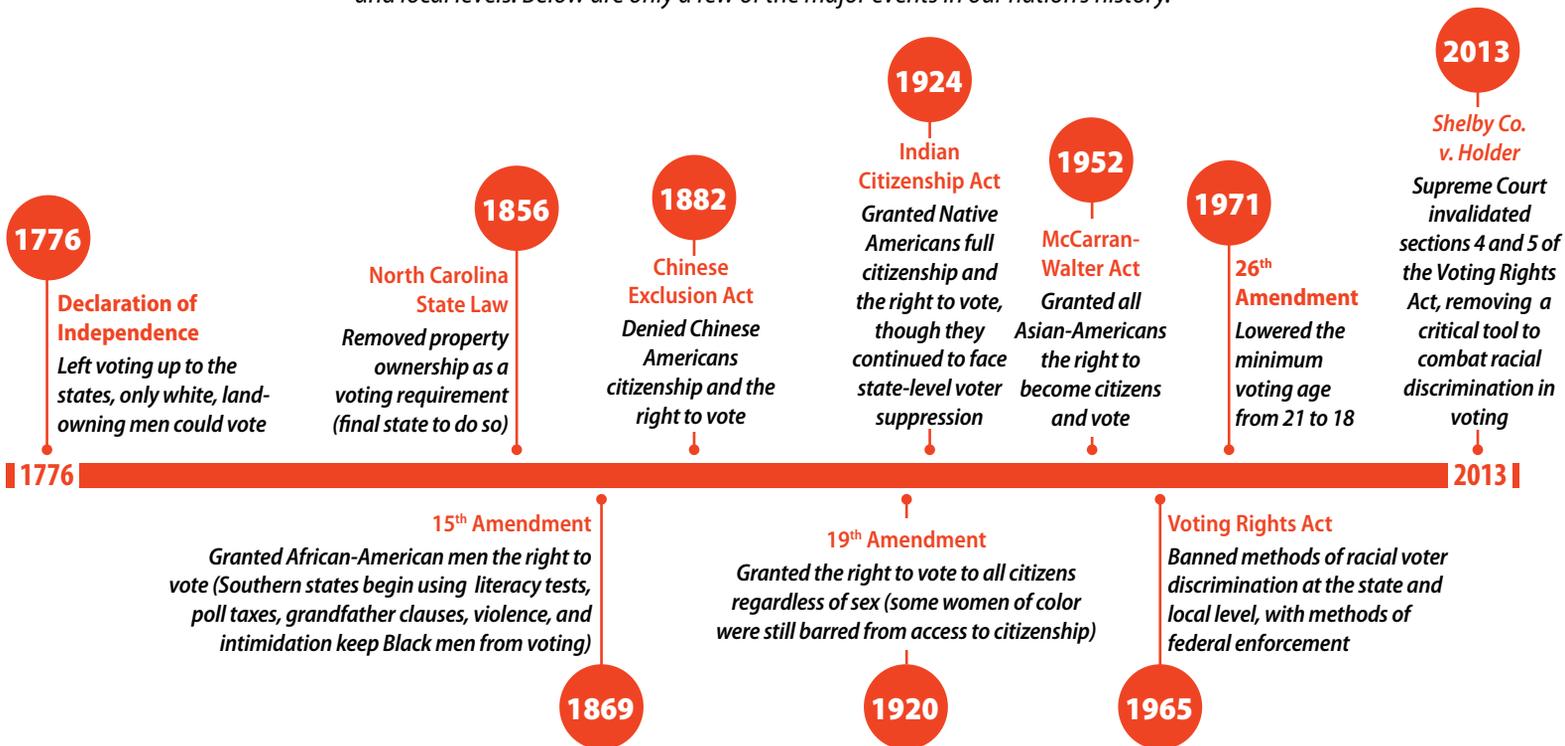


After running for governor of Georgia, Stacey Abrams joined Fair Fight Action in 2018. Fair Fight’s mission is to advocate for election reform and engage in voter education and turnout to secure the voting rights of Georgians. Fair Fight brings awareness to the public on election reform, lobbies the state legislature for election reform, and engages in targeted voter registration and other voter outreach programs and communications.



A Brief Timeline of Voting Rights in the United States

Many other pieces of legislation, court decisions, even amendments to the Constitution altered access to citizenship and voting rights in the United States, not to mention legislative and judicial action at the state and local levels. Below are only a few of the major events in our nation’s history.





Listening and Learning with Rural Roundtable Conversations

For over 45 years, NETWORK has worked to Mend the Gaps in our nation. One of the ways NETWORK plans to continue living this out is listening and learning from the experiences of people living in rural areas.

In many rural parts of the United States, healthcare is failing, educational and economic opportunities are limited, and there is both a loss of residents and an aging population. This reality, and the equally challenging problems in urban areas, make it essential to have engagement on the federal level if we are to bridge the divides and heal our nation. So far, we have met with communities in New Mexico, Minnesota, California, and Michigan, and look forward to future engagement around the country in the coming months.

Erin Sutherland, NETWORK Grassroots Mobilizations Associate



Do you live in a rural area that would be a good place for us to visit? Let us know at info@networklobby.org!

Insights from Rural Roundtables

Minnesota

"People think it is cheaper to live in rural areas and it isn't."

"Broadband [internet] is essential to attract people and companies into the community."

"The big healthcare system model does not work in rural communities. What makes a difference is having local people taking care of local people."

"The three biggest rural challenges are housing and childcare; finding affordable housing; and aging population and shrinking family size."



New Mexico

"Business friendly' policies only benefit corporations."

"Sometimes entire counties don't have a full-service grocery store."

"The predatory nature of business in the state (oil, uranium, nuclear) is sucking the life out of people and land."





Join NETWORK in Recommitting to Racial Justice

For Lent this year, thousands of members of the NETWORK community chose to recommit to racial justice. Engaging in the work of racial justice is difficult, but essential. In the United States, our society has been deliberately organized to advantage white people over people of color, and we must reckon with the effects of this reality in our lives.

NETWORK's Lenten guide, "Recommit to Racial Justice," examines and reflects on racism in our history, policies, and society, and how these factors created drastically different experiences for white people and people of color in the United States.

The guide includes resources compiled from NETWORK staff and members nationwide to reflect on our collective experiences, and to dive deeper into how we recommit to racial justice with curiosity, compassion, and openness. We begin with an introduction to why the work of racial justice is necessary for our faith and advocacy communities, and establish some common definitions. We then further explore how U.S. policies have contributed to systemic racism, and throughout the following weeks examine how various communities of color have been impacted by specific policies in U.S. history.

In each chapter, we include information and statistics, quotes, prayers, additional resources, and reflection questions to equip each reader with tools to reflect on their own experiences of race and racism in their lives and in their communities. This resource can be used by individuals or groups during Lent, or any time throughout the year. Visit www.networkadvocates.org/recommittoracialjustice for more information.

In 2016, more than fifty years after the Civil Rights movement won the passage of the Civil Rights Act, white families had 10 times the wealth of Black families.

This massive difference in wealth is no accident, and it will continue if we don't actively work to dismantle these policies.

Learn more:

networklobby.org/recommittoracialjustice



CONNECTING WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO ARE WORKING TO MEND THE GAPS

After releasing our 2018 Congressional Voting Record, NETWORK Government Relations staff, along with Sister Simone, visited several Members of Congress who scored 100% on last year's voting record. Together, they discussed strategy to Mend the Gaps in our nation. We look forward to working with these champions in the months and years ahead to implement policies that support the common good in our nation.

View NETWORK's 2018 Congressional voting record and see how your elected officials scored at www.networklobby.org/votingrecord2018.



Sister Quincy Howard, Laura Peralta-Schulte, Sister Simone Campbell, and Tralonne Shorter meet with Rep. Pramila Jayapal (WA-07) and present her with a 100% voter certificate.



NETWORK Government Relations staff meet with Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) in her office.



New Members Join NETWORK Boards

This year we welcome five new justice-seekers to the NETWORK Lobby and NETWORK Advocates Boards of Directors. Thank you to all who participated in our “name-raising” process and helped grow our Spirit-filled network.



Catalina Adorno
Union City, NJ

Catalina is an activist and grassroots community organizer, working in the immigrants rights movement. Catalina is an active volunteer with Movimiento Cosecha. She has also held several leadership positions at nonprofits, including serving as Executive Director at her most recent place of employment and as a grants manager at United Way. Catalina enjoys strengthening her relationships with other women, particularly women of color, and building support systems to all rely on each other. She is influenced by Jesuit ideals of social justice as a graduate of St. Peter’s University and carries these values with her in her work on immigration.



Bridget Flood
St. Louis, MO

Bridget has over 20 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, and has attended Nuns on the Bus events, and is also on NETWORK’s investment advisory committee. She has served on multiple boards in varying fields, including the White House Task Force to Reform the Neighborhood- and Faith-Based Office (under Obama), Carondelet Community Housing, Micro-Financing Partners in Africa, and several more. Bridget comes to NETWORK’s board with extensive experience in finance and fundraising, as well as Catholic Social Justice and Sister-Spirit, as she currently works for the Incarnate Word Foundation.



Sarah Marin
Thornton, CO

Sarah is the Business Manager for a charter high school in Denver, where she manages all finances, accounting, HR, grants, and communications. She is a Certified Public Accountant and holds an MBA in Finance and Corporate Strategy and a BS in Accounting. Sarah has worked with boards previously as a finance and accounting officer for a government agency, and works with her school’s board on all financial issues. Sarah uses her Catholic faith to guide her passions and work, including political campaigns advocating for women’s rights, healthcare access and reform, and gun control — and strives to exhibit these values in her daily work at a charter school for low-income teenagers.



John Noble
Fort Worth, TX

John is currently pursuing his Master in Divinity at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. John has been or is currently involved with several different progressive Catholic/secular organizations including Call to Action, Iowans for Community Improvement, Roman Catholic Womenpriests (as a board member), the ACLU of Iowa, Pastors for Texas Children, the Des Moines Catholic Worker, and more. John studied religion at Drake University and attended a Catholic high school in Nebraska. He has attended multiple Nuns on the Bus events and is very committed to Catholic Social Justice.



Robbie Pentecost, OSF
Stanford, KY

Robbie is a Sister of St. Francis who has been a NETWORK member for over 25 years, and has participated in three past Nuns on the Bus trips. She works and lives in Kentucky, and has served on multiple boards, including that of Mary’s Pence, New Opportunity School for Women, the Catholic Committee of Appalachia, and more. Robbie has earned her MBA and brings significant fundraising, board, and nonprofit leadership experience to NETWORK, as well as a deep understanding of Catholic Social Teaching.

House Approves Landmark Voting Rights Expansion, Movement on Drug Pricing in Both Chambers

An update from D.C. on key votes held during the past quarter and social justice issues on the horizon



Key Vote: Democracy **On the Horizon: Drug Pricing**

On March 8, 2019, the House of Representatives passed their first priority in the 116th Congress: a bold and comprehensive package of pro-democracy and anti-corruption reforms meant to return power to the people of the United States. The For the People Act (H.R. 1) addresses campaign finance, voting rights, election integrity and security, ethics reforms, and much more. Every Democrat in the House signed on as cosponsor of the bill and the legislation passed with a final vote of 234-193.

Just and equal representation for all is a necessary condition for making progress in our advocacy efforts. We know it takes full representation to pass policies that benefit the common good. H.R. 1 should have been a decidedly non-partisan piece of legislation—reducing corruption and protecting the right to vote are clear priorities for elected officials on both sides of the aisle. Unfortunately, it is being portrayed as a partisan power-grab and, in the end, passed the House along strictly party lines.

The push for consideration in the Senate will be an uphill battle based on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's opposition to the legislation. The bill has strong Democratic support in Senate, however, and we will continue building pressure to repair our democracy heading into 2020.

Access to healthcare is a human right, not a privilege for the wealthy, and a key component of this is access to medicine. In the United States, one in four people report they have trouble paying for their medication. People face an abhorrent choice: fill a prescription or go without other necessities, like food. Right now, there is a bipartisan desire to take steps to end the immoral practices of the pharmaceutical industry that put profits over people.

Senate Republicans, under the leadership of Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) have already held two hearings on drug pricing and Senator Grassley is committed to passing reforms this year. Unfortunately, Senate leadership still needs much convincing to put these bills on the floor for a vote. In the House, meanwhile, Democrats are preparing to unveil a set of proposals that would make incremental changes to the current system.

NETWORK advocates for changes that would allow for greater drug pricing transparency and limitations on drug companies' abusive delay tactics, which prevent affordable generic drugs from entering the market. These anti-competitive practices make lifesaving drugs unaffordable for patients who desperately need them. Most importantly, we are working to secure the ability for Medicare to negotiate drug prices. We cannot let this opportunity for change slip by: too many lives depend on it.



ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE, INSPIRED BY CATHOLIC SISTERS

NETWORK—a Catholic leader in the global movement for justice and peace—educates, organizes, and lobbies for economic and social transformation.

NETWORK LOBBY FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

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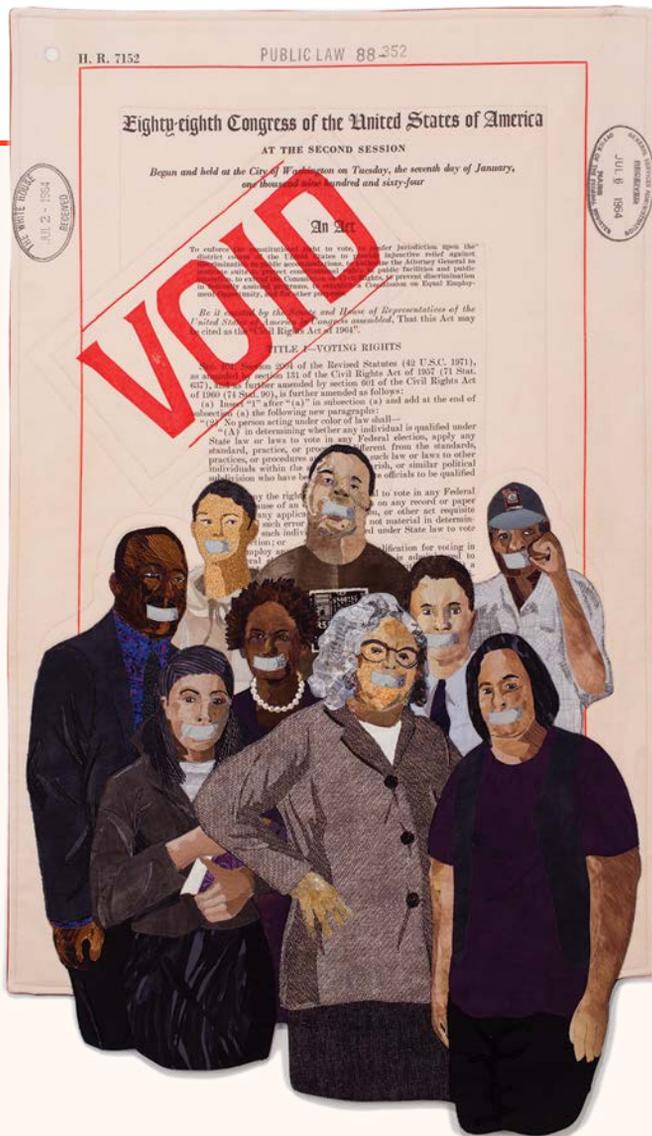
Make a Difference for Justice and Peace!

By joining the NETWORK GEM (Give Every Month) Program you'll make a difference all year round. A small gift each month adds up and makes a huge difference for justice and peace. Your faithful monthly giving provides a reliable, steady financial base that allows us to plan ahead more strategically and make room for new opportunities that increase our reach and impact.

Benefits of becoming a GEM:

- **Satisfaction:** You'll know that your support every month equips thousands of activists with the resources and tools they need to engage with elected officials and promote the common good.
- **Convenience:** You may use the enclosed envelope to enroll with a credit card or check, or you can go online to www.networklobby.org/GEM. Once set up, you'll make regular, automatic contributions each month, and your NETWORK membership will be automatically renewed every year you're in the program.
- **Reduced paperwork and administrative expenses:** Automatic monthly payments mean no more membership renewal reminders, and more of your donation goes to where it is needed most.
- **Flexibility:** If for any reason you wish to change or discontinue your gifts, or the credit card being charged, just contact us at development@networklobby.org or call Taylor Miller at (202) 347-9797 ext. 208 and we will gladly accommodate you. Become a NETWORK GEM Today!

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No Vote, No Voice

Fabric artist Alice Beasley created this quilt in response to the Supreme Court's *Shelby County v. Holder* decision. The artist writes: "A conservative majority in the Supreme Court eviscerated the Voting Rights thereby becoming complicit in the active suppression of the votes of minority citizens by state legislatures. Over the past four years—and for the first time since the Jim Crow era—nearly two dozen states have passed new laws making it harder to vote."

Photo by Sibila Savage Photography