

The Summit for Civil Rights Project

**A project to rebuild, reinvigorate and reignite
a powerful multiracial civil rights movement in America.**

"Segregation is a cancer in the body politic, which must be removed before our democratic health can be realized. Segregation is wrong because it is nothing but a new form of slavery covered up with certain niceties of complexity. Segregation is wrong because it is a system of adultery perpetuated by an illicit intercourse between injustice and immorality." Martin Luther King, Walk to Freedom March, Detroit, 1963.

"...But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check- a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice." Martin Luther King, March on Washington, 1963.

INTRODUCTION

On November 9 and 10, 2017, a [Summit for Civil Rights](#) was held at the University of Minnesota Law School. Organized by the Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity (IMO) and Building One America (BOA), the Summit was a powerful call to action from the people and institutions representing the forces of racial justice, social equity, inclusion, and economic opportunity.

Some of America's most prominent leaders, thinkers and advocates joined hundreds of delegates from across the country representing labor, civil rights, law, academia, the faith community, local government and national politics. Speakers included Vice President Walter Mondale, Congressman James Clyburn, NAACP President, Derrick Johnson, and U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Chair, Catherine E. Lhamon.

The Summit demonstrated how enduring racial disparities and growing economic inequality are interconnected and mutually reinforcing problems in American society, ***inextricably tied to our racially segregated structures of opportunity and power.***

The Summit revealed the ways in which many of those structures and institutions, including in housing, finance, education, employment, and law, sustain and even profit from segregation and continuing racial and economic inequality.

Drawing lessons from our Civil Rights past, the Summit helped shed light on the challenges we face today and the strategies for building the power needed to achieve real breakthroughs against modern American Apartheid, economic inequality and political polarization. Moreover, it showed how the fight for racial justice and economic opportunity, deeply intertwined during the Civil Rights era, must again be a combined struggle if we are to build toward and sustain ***a multiracial political majority in America.***

The Summit delegates, leaders and allies agreed to launch a multi-year, multi-state project to coordinate organizers, lawyers, activists, and leaders from labor, civil rights, local government and the faith community.

The goal of this project is to build and expand on Building One America's network of multiracial coalitions in key states and regions to address issues of racial justice and economic opportunity. We will especially challenge policies that drive or reinforce racial divisions and economic disparities across regions including segregation, concentrated poverty, sprawl, and urban abandonment. And we will work to advance policy such as fair housing, equitable school funding, school integration, equitable fiscal reform, and infrastructure investment.

We will do this through a combination of leadership training and organizing, legal support, research and analysis, education and communication. And we will do it in places where there are salient legislative and legal opportunities and where there is a critical need.

This document will:

- 1) Make an argument for a *spatial approach* to multiracial organizing and policy
- 2) Outline the key elements we think are essential for success in this endeavor. Those elements include:
 - a. Grassroots organizing of multiracial constituencies across metropolitan regions - with an emphasis on diverse and changing communities and institutions and the historic civil rights constituencies of labor, faith and civil rights organizations.
 - b. The recruitment and training of emerging leaders in diverse communities - especially where leadership (elected and non elected) does not reflect changing demographics.
 - c. Coordination of this work with civil rights litigation and related efforts to leverage legislative breakthroughs.
 - d. Ongoing support and engagement with leaders from the historic civil rights constituencies as well as in academia and public policy for strategic support, analysis and policy development.
 - e. Organizational infrastructure – fundraising, database development, organizing recruitment, training, and communication.
- 3) And it will describe the work being planned and being done in the coming year.

BACKGROUND

Metro America's Promise of Opportunity Rooted in Inequality

“Negroes may wind up not only as unskilled and unemployed, if not unemployable, but as the forgotten slum proletariat in the black ghettos of the great metropolitan centers of the country, existing within the grey shadows of a hopeless hope.” A. Philip Randolph on the perils of automation, segregation and the continued exclusion of black workers from skilled sectors of the workforce, Detroit, 1960

Since the end the Civil War and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, American cities and metropolitan areas have been dynamic engines of economic growth, innovation, and middle class opportunity. But embedded in those engines, for the past hundred years, were deep and systemic flaws that turned many of those same regions into structures of class inequality, racial segregation and

environmental degradation, driving wide disparities in education, wealth accumulation, economic mobility, health and even mortality.

This history is well-documented, and described in Richard Rothstein's recent book, [The Color of Law - A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America](#). It chronicles a myriad of state and national policies, legal decisions, and private practices that have together divided our metropolitan regions into what the *Kerner commission*, 50 years ago, warned were "two societies, one black, one white — separate and unequal."

Racial and spatial divisions have done more than thwart opportunity and drive inequality. They revealed a soft underbelly of the New Deal and Civil Rights coalitions, which have been effectively exploited and split in the post civil rights era by reactionary opportunists. That electoral alignment of working class whites, immigrants and African Americans will need to be rebuilt if we are ever to move our nation forward again and solve our country's most pressing problems from climate change to health care, from the educational achievement gap to income and wealth inequality.

1. Work and Labor

Segregation has hurt workers and the labor movement enormously. Segregated locals and the exclusion of black workers in trades, services, and industrial unions through the first half of the early 20th century rendered the labor movement weak and divided, hindering the progress of civil rights. After World War II, African American labor leaders such as A. Philip Randolph worked to unify organized labor bringing money and power behind Dr. King. Cooperation between labor and civil rights ushered in a period of unprecedented growth for labor and unparalleled progress for racial justice.

But despite this grand alliance and the relative parity won on many shop floors, a foundation of inequality was already in place that would cause the trajectory of black and white gains to diverge sharply. Wealth accumulation for whites soared as the federal government subsidized new suburban housing. At the same time, the explicit exclusion and segregation of black workers denied African American families those gains, and over time, destroyed the hard-fought advances made through wartime expansion, rising wages and unionization.

The stark divide between the experiences of black and white workers in the postwar period not only harmed generations of African American families, but the entire labor movement suffered, including for white and recent immigrant workers. Racial segregation, white flight, and deindustrialization were accompanied by a diaspora of jobs scattered throughout ever-sprawling regions into increasingly hostile political terrain and harder to organize low-wage labor markets.

2. Scapegoating the Public Sector

Middle and working class black workers, disproportionately represented in unionized public sector jobs, have been targeted in recent decades both as scapegoats and obstacles to the privatization of government services, from the post office to transit workers to public schools. Political rhetoric targeting public sector unions has drawn heavily on racial stereotypes of government workers, often stoking resentment toward segregated black communities and the perceived cost to taxpayers for services and for public sector workers' wages and benefits. The string of "right to work" and "open shop" assaults at the state level and the Supreme Court ruling on the *Janus* case are all part of a racialized narrative that has been eroding labor's influence and power.

3. Technological Change

New and emerging labor saving technologies have failed, so far, to benefit most workers. If current trends continue, our regional divisions will only make things worse. Our sprawling, fragmented and segregated

urban landscape threatens to deepen the class and race inequalities that already exist. As more and more retail and service industries move online, and as labor and transportation become increasingly automated and decentralized, communities segregated by race and poverty will become further isolated and reviled.

Unless we change the way we organize across race and regions, the decline of the labor movement and the spatial and racial atomization of the working class will likely defer major reforms to better distribute the enormous gains and profits of the digital age into a distant and elusive future.

4. Economic Inequality

Economists cite many reasons for our new gilded age of inequality. Most agree it is a circular and self-perpetuating system where concentrated power and money advance policies that further benefit and enrich those with power, money, and class privilege. Those policies have included deregulation, regressive tax policy, the weakening of organized labor and the toleration of massive fraud by financial institutions. But much of this class war gets played out over a metropolitan theatre as regional disparities compound and perpetuate economic inequality.¹

The segregated housing market has created a bifurcated opportunity structure in America. Historically, it punished blacks and rewarded whites during the country's biggest period of economic expansion. Today, it exacerbates the process by which white workers and middle class blacks, latinos and many recent immigrants find their limited fortunes threatened by the concentration of income, wealth and power - not among white workers in middle class suburbs, but in the hands of the most well-off Americans in the nation's wealthiest zip codes.

Impoverished cities and neighborhoods have become places of tax giveaway and exploitative gentrification schemes. They are sources of cheap surplus labor, for-profit schools, subsidized housing, and a profitable prison industry. The middle and working class suburbs have become lucrative and reliable sources for Wall Street investors with mounting municipal debt and compounding interest payments pegged to property taxes and mandatory municipal fees. The three trillion dollar municipal bond industry to pay for schools, roads, and water and sewer infrastructure (along with mortgages, automobile, college and consumer debt) has played a substantial role in the transference of wealth from the middle class to the super rich in America.

As the rich and powerful are able to stack the deck for their own benefit, poor and working class interests are conversely disadvantaged by racial divisions that cut through class. The fragmentation of our regions, coupled with the decline of unions and other working class institutions and associations, is a reason the middle class in America is shrinking.

5. Environment and Climate Change

Sprawl in America has not ended. While the mortgage crisis, the economic downturn and rising oil prices have been factors in slowing suburban migration in the last decade, middle and working class flight from urban neighborhoods into suburbs has continued. Despite gentrification and some recent trends of increased migration into American cities and exaggerated claims by *New Urbanists*, most of our metro areas, especially in the Northeast and Midwest, continue to experience white flight, suburban and exurban sprawl, and urban abandonment at an alarming rate.

¹ "The segregation of the rich—which is growing rapidly in U.S. metropolitan areas," write UCLA economists Michael Lens and Paavo Monkkonen, "results in the hoarding of resources, amenities, and disproportionate political power."

The links between racial segregation, regional fragmentation, and unrestrained sprawl are well documented. The sprawl-driven destruction of forest, farmland, and the increase in automobile use has not been reversed or even stopped. As long as we ignore the role of race in driving these destructive trends, we risk a continuation of an environmental and health disaster. By framing this crisis as part of a larger civil rights struggle tied to racial justice and economic opportunity for all, we can better enlist broad, multiracial, and middle class support for the fight that will be needed to reverse it.

6. Education and Opportunity

Schools are a significant part of the opportunity structure in America. Considering educational outcomes are almost entirely a function of geographic location, this opportunity structure is highly imbalanced. Class and racial segregation by school district only intensify this inequality. In many regions and states today, schools are more segregated than they were under Jim Crow in the South with deeply harmful consequences for children and for the future of our democracy.

During much of the postwar period, suburbanization has meant white flight and the abandonment of increasingly segregated urban schools. But that has changed in recent decades as explicit discrimination barriers have been lowered and housing options have been narrowed for middle class buyers of all colors and backgrounds. Today, public schools are experiencing both a deepening of debilitating poverty and racial isolation in urban (and some suburban) districts while a significant and growing number of middle class suburbs are seeing a rapid rise in school diversity.

While the segregation has been a disaster for millions children whose life opportunities have been truncated or destroyed, it has been a boon to the privatization movement. Myron Orfield has written that “racial segregation is the business model” of the charter school industry. Without it they would have no argument or justification for the vilification of teachers and the attacks on public education.

7. Race and Social Justice

“The underlying purpose of segregation was to oppress and exploit the segregated, not simply to keep them apart.” Dr. Martin Luther King, in 1956 writing on the fierceness of white resistance to the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

“[The]ghetto's invisible walls have been erected by the white society, by those who have power, both to confine those who have no power and to perpetuate their powerlessness”. Kenneth Clark, 1965. *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*

Segregation was the strategy of post Civil War southern elites to deny political power to African Americans. It was later extended to the north, largely through federal housing and work programs of the New Deal. Segregation not only denied blacks the opportunity to have power over their own lives, but it also meant black economic and political power would never extend beyond the confines of racially segregated communities and constituencies - denying *all* of America a powerful, progressive political majority. Multiracial political power that *did* emerge was crushed following *Reconstruction* as black leadership was largely driven out of elected government in state and national offices.

The containment of black political and economic power through racial segregation was repeatedly subjected to repression, domination and even destruction. State takeovers of cities and school districts, neighborhood displacement and unaccountable and brutal law enforcement are all a part of the “perpetuation of powerless”. Reforming police, prisons and criminal justice alone will not change the balance of power between segregated communities and the dominant white society.

The relative decline of segregation and rise of diversity within many jurisdictions creates the opportunity for a much needed multiracial movement in this country, in which shared interests in economic and racial justice serve to expand, rather than dilute or isolate, the political influence of both racial minorities and the diverse working class. The experiences of Harold Washington, Deval Patrick and Barack Obama show us that a multiracial majority led by multiracial leadership, including black leadership at the highest levels of power, is entirely within our grasp.

7. Politics and Demographics

“For every blue-collar Democrat we lose in western Pennsylvania, we will pick up two moderate Republicans in the suburbs in Philadelphia, and you can repeat that in Ohio and Illinois and Wisconsin.” Senator Chuck Schumer predicting a Democrat victory in the 2016 elections. Blue Collar Democrat C-SPAN.org Jul 28, 2016

Senator Schumer could not have been more wrong about the Democratic Party's prospects in 2016. But he is not alone in making disastrous miscalculations about America's suburbs. The small towns, older industrial cities, and the diverse built-out suburban communities surrounding our big cities continue to be misunderstood and poorly analyzed by political pundits and electoral prognosticators.

Suburbs are not monolithic. They are not as white as most people think, not as racist, and not as rich. Even as urban segregation is deepening and spreading, the number of diverse suburbs and school districts in America's hundred largest metropolitan areas has more than doubled in the past two decades. The number of predominantly white communities has shrunk dramatically. In most metropolitan areas, black Americans are now more likely to live in the suburbs than in central cities.

The most racially exclusive communities today are more likely to be socially liberal and fiscally conservative suburban enclaves of affluence and whiteness. The most racially diverse communities are not filled with upper middle class professionals and liberals such as Montclair, New Jersey, Oak Park, Illinois, or Shaker Heights, Ohio. They are more typically working and middle class communities in places like Hamilton and Lake County in Ohio, MaComb County in Michigan or Jefferson County in Colorado. Not coincidentally, these communities are more likely to be politically diverse with a mix of Democrats, Republicans and Independent voters, making them competitive and pivotal in state and national elections. These are the communities that elect legislatures, governors, senators, and presidents.

REBUILDING A MULTIRACIAL MIDDLE CLASS COALITION

There is reason to hope. One outcome of the past half century of post-Jim Crow segregation has been the relative integration of a large number of the older, built-out suburbs and small towns in many of our states and metropolitan regions. These are places where a politically significant and growing number of multiracial voters, taxpayers and workers now live together or in close proximity. They are places of emerging multiracial leadership and immense, untapped political power.

It is this critical multiracial constituency of middle class, politically pivotal communities, combined with the traditional allies of civil rights - especially labor and the faith community, that makes for a new level of expanded power and potential.

The Summit for Civil Rights Coalition

Members of the Summit for Civil Rights Coalition have been organizing in these communities and with these leaders for over a decade. Through the work of Building One America we have created a large

network of leaders from local government, the faith community, civil rights, labor and legislatures. This network is in over a dozen states, primarily in the Northeast, Midwest, and Southwest.

We are currently seeking to deepen and expand this work with a three-pronged approach that focuses on the coordination of *organizing, litigation and legislation* in a number of key states where we see a critical need and salient policy opportunities.

Our purpose is twofold and mutually reinforcing. It is, first, to help rebuild a multiracial alliance of communities and constituencies, and second, to dismantle structures of segregation and economic inequality that keep people both exploited and divided.

Regions Matter

We tend to think of our most pressing issues as either local or global. But an argument can be made that some of our most important social, political, and economic challenges today are really spatial in nature. Our toxic politics and racial polarization, the educational achievement gap and growing wealth inequality are all playing out over segregated and unequal regional landscapes.

At the level of neighborhoods, schools, and cities, America is segregated, marked with pockets of poverty, struggling middle class communities, and sometimes handful of trendy gentrified neighborhoods. These places are often at odds with each other within state and national politics. But viewed at the level of entire metropolitan regions, America is diverse, prosperous, and often more progressive. A regional lens and a regional organizing strategy, dedicated to finding common ground between similar communities across a broad metropolitan area, helps us harness that diversity and prosperity for the benefit of a more progressive majority

THE SUMMIT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM

The Power of Place

In America, place can determine a person's economic opportunities, educational trajectory, even their health outcomes. But the centrality of place also opens up new possibilities for policy interventions and powerful political coalitions.

America's metropolitan regions have been and continue to be places of both opportunity and inequality. Many structures of segregation are still with us along with generational patterns of poverty and isolation that will be hard to reverse. But there are changes we can make today that can dramatically reduce inequality while promoting social and racial inclusion and expanded economic opportunity over the coming years.

Some of the most meaningful approaches are place-based policies that are decided at the state and federal levels involving housing, schools, taxes, municipal finance, and infrastructure investment. Sheryll Cashin in her book [*Place not Race - A New Vision of Opportunity in America*](#) shows how community demographics and economics can be used to better determine both opportunity and disadvantage in a way that can get at both race and class.

Segregation and the Intersection of Place, Race and Class

“Black workers have been, for the working class as a whole, the canary in the mine... What befalls the Black worker inevitably confronts the bulk of the working class. But the Achilles’ heel of organized labor has been its failure to respond to attacks on black workers and its inability to recognize that the Black working class is, indeed, a component of the larger working

class and not some marginal category. "A Future for Workers: A Contribution from Black Labor, 2105

Too often, race and economic inequality are treated as rival agendas. They are not.

The "color line" that Dubois called America's problem of the 20th Century has bled into the 21st. But economic inequality has reemerged in this century as one of society's' greatest destabilizing threats - just as it was in the last Gilded Age. Dubois, like many black leaders, and some progressive whites at the time, understood that race and class cannot be easily untangled and that any movement to transform America must include a combined approach to both - backed by multiracial power and led by multiracial leadership.

We know, and research has shown, that racial segregation combined with poverty destroys lives. But it also divides our democracy and undermines our economy. It poisons our politics, weakens the labor movement, invites exploitation and worsens economic inequality for *all* Americans.

The Summit for Civil Rights Coalition is attempting to do its part in rebuilding that coalition by organizing around a set of *place-based* initiatives. We have found that such an agenda can build multiracial solidarity – and leadership - while addressing both economic inequality and racial justice.

The Growing Importance of America's Diverse Suburbs

For building a progressive multi racial political coalition in America

America's increasingly diverse middle and working class communities - the suburbs, small towns, older industrial hubs outside of our big cities in our metropolitan areas - are keys to building multiracial solidarity and power around an agenda for racial justice, smart growth and economic opportunity.

In most regions, the diverse suburbs hold the political balance between the highly urbanized central cities and the affluent; predominantly white outer suburbs and exurbs. They are places where tens of millions of people of all races live in a relatively inclusive environment. But they are threatened, by rising segregation in their schools and neighborhoods, increasing poverty, the loss of strong unionized jobs, and economic and fiscal decline.

These communities - which represent a plurality of suburban populations and a third of overall metropolitan populations - can be a powerful political engine for social justice and economic and racial inclusion. There is growing support in many of these communities among voters, taxpayers and emerging cadre of multiracial political and civic leadership, for regional solutions to local problems that expand opportunity and reduce disparities in housing, schools and work.

A Domestic Policy Agenda that Rewards Diversity and Expands Opportunity

"We are here because we are the victims of the problem of the color line; the color line in labor unions, industry, government, schools, housing, the professions, the arts and sports." A. Philip Randolph addressing the Founding Convention of the Negro American Labor Council, 1960

In [Living Apart: How the Government Betrayed a Landmark Civil Rights Law](#), award winning journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones documents how George Romney, as Republican Governor of Michigan and later as head of the United State Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under Richard Nixon,

directed federal investments in housing, schools, sewers and roads to reward inclusive and open communities and punish those who excluded and discriminated based on race.²

Such policies today could powerfully incentivize expanded opportunity for the poor in housing, education, and employment. At the time, Governor's Romney's plan ran up against Nixon's political strategy of dividing America through racial fear. If framed and carried out right, Romney's approach today would appeal to the self-interest of a much larger swath of American communities, taxpayers and workers and could help solidify a broad multiracial middle and working class majority to support a progressive program for inclusion and opportunity.

There are many opportunities today at the regional, state and federal levels to move in this direction.

Housing

Federal and state supported affordable housing can and should promote economic mobility, access to opportunity, neighborhood stability, and integration. This can be done through the use of low income housing choice vouchers (HCV) and the citing of affordable housing units in communities with good schools, jobs, low poverty and ample tax base. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, the nation's largest low income housing development program, should be implemented in accordance with preexisting fair housing rules and other civil rights guidelines to open up opportunities for family housing in high opportunity communities. State tax credit plans (adopted by state housing finance agencies with little or no guidance from the Treasury Department) could do much more to incentivize development in high-opportunity communities, and to use the LIHTC program to support already-diverse first-ring suburbs.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure investment can help state and federal agencies create good unionized jobs, curb sprawl and expand opportunity. By tying funding for water, sewer, roads, transit and schools to goals for social inclusion, regional cooperation, and planning, federal, state, and regional authorities can incentivize both inclusion *and* sustainability. With such a policy, winners will be cities and a large number of diverse and diversifying middle-class suburbs and small towns. Such investments targeted around inclusionary criteria can create thousands of badly needed building trade jobs, while fixing bridges, roads and water systems in desperate need of repair. They can also save thousands of public sector jobs in fiscally stressed communities that often have to choose between vital municipal services and critical maintenance and repair. Moreover, states can expand these investments through matching dollars, infrastructure banks and public policies that leverage private financing to support the principles of regional cooperation, smart growth planning and inclusion.

Schools

In her book [Reign of Error](#), Diane Ravitch, argues that far more progress would have been made in closing the racial achievement gap had the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) law required "goals to reduce poverty and racial segregation" instead of federal "performance goals,". Such a policy would have also been a big win for many middle and working class suburbs whose school districts are rapidly diversifying.

² This policy reflected *Demand Number 2* from the list of *The 10 Demands* made at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1964 as read by A. Philip Randolph "Withholding of federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists" *Demand Number 1* was: civil rights legislation that guarantees all Americans access to all public accommodations, decent housing, adequate and integrated education and the right to vote.

Programs and funding formulas that encourage inclusion in public schools do not replace the need for residential integration, but research has consistently shown school segregation is part of what drives white flight, discriminatory housing policies and neighborhood decline.

As a matter of policy, states can establish inclusionary goals for the integration of schools at the district, school and classroom level. Regional and statewide goals can be met through a variety of approaches including statewide school funding formulas, intra-district enrollment, intentionally integrated magnet schools and the coordination of zoning and affordable housing policies with school integration objectives. Integration goals would also provide enormous benefits for individual students, and could be adopted in addition to or in place of certain existing educational standards.

Taxes and Financing

Perhaps one the simplest ways to promote integration and more stability in schools and neighborhoods is to reverse the incentive structures that currently reward exclusion and encourage white flight. Reducing the reliance of education funding on local property taxes and redirecting state aid to districts with increasing diversity and limited fiscal capacity would be a strong start. Forms of regional tax-base revenue sharing can also significantly reduce wasteful “race to the bottom” competition between jurisdictions for tax base while removing the fiscal incentive to exclude low-income families while offering costly tax breaks to developers and employers. Moreover, reforms that reduce the reliance on local taxes to fund services, workers, infrastructure repairs and investments can help reverse the disparities that make some towns winners and others losers when it comes to municipal bond ratings, pensions, credit and financing.

SUMMIT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS STRUCTURE AND STRATEGY

A Bolder Approach

Many progressives are discouraged or cautious about advancing an ambitious reform agenda at the federal level today. And many states still controlled by reactionary legislatures seem bleak. Even with the recent changes in the make up of the U.S. Congress, there are calls for moderation so as not to provoke controversy and division among the electorate. However, there are arguments for a bolder and broader approach to advancing an ambitious placed-based economic and racial justice agenda. We often think good social reforms have to be piecemeal or incremental, or aimed at one problem or constituency at a time. We hear that policies to address racial justice, like fair housing and school integration are too controversial to be talked about directly or promoted publicly. We use watered-down language and vague and uninspiring words. We avoid mentioning “race” when everyone knows it’s about race.

Our experience and our American civil rights history refute this thinking. There are few more powerful, inspiring, or successful movements for social and economic reform in American than those aimed at advancing the cause of racial justice. And those social movements, from abolition to the civil rights movement always advanced greater freedom, economic opportunity, *and* political power for *all* working Americans.

To be certain, there are ways to act on a racial justice agenda that is divisive and unnecessarily invites stiff resistance and failure. Some progressives, unfortunately, are very adept at this. But that does not mean there aren’t ways to frame and advance an agenda that speaks to both the moral dimensions *and* the self-interest of large numbers of Americans from all races and ethnic backgrounds. Building One America is good at this.

Building One America and the Summit for Civil Rights Coalition

BOA and the Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity have been working together with their partners to launch a 10-year campaign to organize and build multiracial constituencies and coalitions across regions and states, with an emphasis on politically pivotal communities and legislative districts. Our work is in states where we have a significant network and a power base of leaders and institutions.

Structure and Organization

BOA and the IMO are in the process of consolidating their structures and assets to better coordinate our relationships, networks, and capabilities.

The Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity (IMO) has significant research and analytical capacity. It is situated within one of the nation's top institutions of legal education and within a professional network of some of the nation's most experienced civil rights lawyers and experts. Building One America (BOA) provides a deep grassroots base, and decades of organizing and leadership training, bringing political influence and on-the-ground insight and experience. It maintains a large and active network of leaders and institutions from the labor movement, civil rights organizations, faith community, and local and state government, particularly in the Midwest, Northeast and Southwest. BOA and IMO have a long and interwoven history. BOA was originally formed out of Metropolitan Areas Research Corporation (MARC) based at the university of Minnesota led by Myron Orfield, a long time board member of BOA. IMO was formed from the Institute on Race and Poverty founded by John A. Powell when he was a professor at the University of Minnesota Law School. Professor Powell is also a founding BOA board member. Together, we believe IMO and BOA can be a powerful operation that strategically coordinates research, litigation, communication, and organizing.

BOA is a 501c3 and has a board of directors. IMO is a part of the University of Minnesota and is currently directed by Myron Orfield. The *Summit for Civil Rights Joint Coordinating Committee* (SFCRJCC) will act as the joint leadership team for both organizations.

Staff will be assigned to either BOA or IMO until a consolidated structure is fully developed and finalized. Organizers will be employees of BOA. Researchers, development director, lawyers and support staff can be employees of either depending on finances or fundraising. Initially, BOA/IMO will seek to have a full-time lead organizer/trainer, a full-time development/communications director, an executive director and a support staff. This staff structure can be built upon and expanded with field organizers assigned to states as additional funds are generated.

ONGOING ACTIVITY

Regions and States Ripe for Reform

The viability of the Summit for Civil Rights organizing approach within a region depends on a number of factors, including its preexisting political balance, state law, and the demographic and economic composition of the metropolitan area. The Summit is currently in the process of selecting and prioritizing target areas for future action.

States like New Jersey, California, Colorado, New York and Connecticut appear optimal for this kind of organizing and may seem like ideal laboratories with more progressive legislatures and courts. But states like Ohio, Pennsylvania and Michigan, it could be said, have a deeper self-interest in such a program because of their racially and ethnically diverse working class populations, their devastated industrial landscapes, and their deep sprawling ghettos. Moreover, we would argue, these Midwestern states and their regions are too important to national politics for us to forget. They may not be as ready to advance a legislative program, but they are more than ready for a new approach to base building and mobilization.

NEW JERSEY AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

New Jersey in particular is a state where there are opportunities today for meaningful policy breakthroughs involving the courts and legislative action backed and informed by grassroots mobilization.

In 1947 Oliver Randolph, the sole African-American delegate to the New Jersey Constitutional Convention put forth and secured the votes for the adoption of Article I, paragraph 5, barring segregation in public education in New Jersey. This year, seventy one years later, plaintiffs a filed a lawsuit alleging New Jersey's racially segregated schools are in violation the state's constitution.

The legal and constitutional case against segregated schools in New Jersey is strong. Despite its progressive history and diverse population, New Jersey today holds the shameful distinction of being one of the most segregated states in the nation, both residential and by school district. The enormous problems associated with this reality are well known and well documented. But, New Jersey leaders, like most national leaders, have largely failed to recognize, let alone address, any aspect of this crisis.

But courts can make policy makers act. And in New Jersey there is precedent for strong response from the courts. New Jersey has a unique history of addressing systemic segregation in the courts, most notably in its Supreme Court's *Mount Laurel* decision, which required all New Jersey communities to create a fair share of affordable housing. Moreover, as Democrats control both houses of the state legislature and the governor's mansion, there is an especially high likelihood that the school segregation lawsuit will result in some sort of remedy.

However, a court ruling does not guarantee a meaningful and remedy. Nor does it ensure that it can achieve support in the legislature, avoid endless legal foot dragging and divisive political and racial demagoguery. The effort to bring about inclusive and integrated schools in New Jersey requires a political component. One that educates the public, informs the remedy and mobilizes a multiracial constituency in support of a meaningful solution.

Building One New Jersey, BOA's New Jersey state affiliate, has already begun mounting a community and legislative organizing drive to support and inform an eventual school segregation remedy that is both transformative and achievable.

We believe that this is doable for a number of reasons:

1. Demographic shifts have created a new constituency for integration as a growing number of suburban school districts become increasingly diverse;
2. BONJ has positioned itself to drive this campaign by having built a network of elected, nonelected, and grassroots leaders in diverse suburbs in key legislative districts across the state; and
3. Recent campaigns around housing and school funding, including by Building One America, have "softened the ground" and heightened awareness and support for integration.

Furthermore, New Jersey has a political alignment today with both chambers of the legislature, the governor, and the courts. Furthermore, it has a number of tools and legal structures already in place that can be built upon to achieve a meaningful remedy. Those structures include:

1. A progressive school funding formula;
2. An intra-district sharing program; and
3. The structures created to enforce and measure progress toward fair housing resulting from the *Mount Laurel* decision.

The campaign builds on a series of statewide convenings beginning two years ago. Participants included, now Governor, Phil Murphy, the state's teachers unions, local and state NAACP chapters, clergy, and local elected leaders and school board members from diverse districts.

At present, BONJ has initiated a four-stage timeline to organize local constituencies around the lawsuit.

Since the desegregation lawsuit was filed, BONJ has formed a statewide organizing committee to expand its reach in six local sub regions of the state, covering most key legislative districts.

Each sub region has a Local District Council (LDC) that will schedule and organize a regional gathering of local leaders and legislators. These regional gatherings called "Listening Sessions," will be designed to solicit input and seek a consensus on a set of principles to inform the remedy. These will take place in the fall and winter 2018.

In early 2019 a large statewide gathering will take place with Governor Murphy and, legislative leadership. At this gathering, a blueprint for a remedy will be presented based on the regional listening sessions and the input of local and national experts and leaders.

Beyond the statewide gathering in 2019, Building One New Jersey will go back to regional and local actions and meetings to build support in legislative districts and among community leaders and officials in those districts. During this time Building One New Jersey will be recruiting and training a growing multiracial cadre of leaders from diverse communities and regions across the state. It will also ramp up its fundraising capacity using the campaign to drive dues and a fundraiser later in 2019.

BONJ is also working to integrate these activities with the Summit for Civil Rights' national agenda, at the second national convening scheduled for early 2019.

National Convening

Because the Summit for Civil Rights Agenda is to be implemented in a number of metropolitan regions, it is essential that planning and organizing be informed by and conducted with an eye towards national political and strategic considerations. It is also critical that the Summit's national network be maintained and expanded, and members receive the opportunity to learn from the successes and problems encountered in ongoing state-level campaigns.

Towards these ends, The Summit for Civil Rights will be holding a national convening in central New Jersey in 2019. This convening will focus on the practical questions of coalition building, using recent developments in New Jersey as a prototype for tactics that could be deployed nationally. New Jersey's ongoing statewide school desegregation lawsuit, racially diverse mix of suburban communities, and progressive elected officials make it an ideal location for the next national step forward in the Summit's multiracial organizing agenda.

The January convening will serve as a bridge between two stages of the Summit's activities. First, it will act as a capstone for the Summit's 2017 event, which developed a three-pronged strategy for civil rights, in which legislative, legal, and organizing activities are coordinated. Second, it will shift the focus towards the implementation of each of these strategic prongs, looking for lessons in the experiences of New Jersey advocates, analyzing potential expansions to the New Jersey campaign, and considering any adjustments that would make tactics more viable nationally. The event will also look ahead to find new states primed for civil rights organizing or litigation.

Organizing and Litigation

This agenda will not advance itself. Instead, it needs a political coalition with common and interconnected interest - one that is deliberately multiracial, made up of middle class and working class constituencies

and leaders - and one that is powerful enough to overcome, or at least counterbalance, the politics of racial animus and backlash.

This constituency can be found in America's diverse communities: in its suburbs, small towns and small industrial cities, which are scattered throughout our metropolitan areas but are rarely seen as aligned. This constituency already exists but it needs to be organized into a powerful coalition. Such a coalition cannot be built overnight, but can be built over time, through coordination with preexisting organizations and leadership. Those include congregations, labor unions, local civil rights chapters, legislators and local elected leaders of towns and school districts. This process can be coordinated through a national infrastructure, some of which is already in place.

But organizing alone is not enough to overcome decades (sometimes centuries) old political barriers and cultural resistance to advancing a fully inclusive society in America. In nearly all states there are constitutional and legal opportunities that can be used to force courts and legislatures to act on deep-seated and long enduring problems of inequality and racial injustice around municipal finance, schools, housing, health and work.

Conversely, civil rights litigation can pry open an important breach in an otherwise well-fortified line of status quo resistance. But a multiracial grassroots political movement is needed to keep it open and to help move legislators and governors toward remedies and solutions that are both meaningful and politically sustainable.

Fundraising and Money

BOA and IMO are raising funds and securing multi-year commitments for annual payments or dues from members and allies. For the past several years, BOA has relied almost entirely on contributions from members and allies in the labor movement and from its constituency members and supporters through event fees, sponsorships, and leadership training.

IMO has been successful in the past at securing diverse sources of foundation funding. Together, BOA and IMO will combine and coordinate their fundraising efforts and networks to raise \$500,000 from a combination of foundations, labor unions, member organizations, individual donors, conference sponsors, and training fees. IMO/BOA seek to raise an initial \$250,000 to begin this effort in earnest.

Program and Staff

Staff will be assigned to both BOA and IMO until a consolidated structure is fully developed and finalized. Organizers will be employees of BOA. Researchers, development director, lawyers, and support staff can be employees of either depending on finances or fundraising. Initially, BOA/IMO will seek to have a full-time lead organizer/trainer, a full-time development/communications director, an executive director, and a support staff. This staff structure can be built upon and expanded with field organizers assigned to states as additional funds are generated.

Leadership Training - *From Diversity To Shared Power*

"Give light and people will find the way"

"Oppressed people, whatever their level of formal education, have the ability to understand and interpret the world around them, to see the world for what it is, and move to transform it."

Ella Baker

Demographic diversity has been increasing throughout American society. And while membership and even leadership in many organizations have reflected this change, power and decision-making have often

failed to keep up with the racial, ethnic, and generational and gender realities of our communities and institutions.

One reason for this persistent “power gap” is that we often confuse the superficial and visual trappings of diversity and policies of inclusion with genuine equality and political and economic integration. Generational layers of power and privilege and networks of formal and informal relationships are at play in any arena where leadership matters, power is wielded, and important decisions get made. These dynamics are taken for granted or not acknowledged by the powerful while too often not seen or not understood by the powerless. We often find ourselves with organizations, committees, boards and leadership structures that are diverse in name and appearance but otherwise still lopsided when it comes to a real equality of power.

Building One America’s training does not make people more powerful nor does it create diversity but it does better equip emerging leaders, from diverse backgrounds, to understand and navigate the dynamics of power and politics and to have the tools to more effectively compete and even further themselves in the public arena.

Building One America and the Summit for Civil Rights Project intends to expand its current training capacity infrastructure to enable it to train 100 leaders a year starting in 2019 and to increase that number 20% each year for the next four years. As part of this expansion, BOA will train an emerging faculty of women and people of color to further diversify its training staff.

Summit for Civil Rights Leadership

BOA and IMO have engaged some of the most powerful leaders and thinkers in the nation to help develop this program and to assist with its implementation. The following is a list of leaders from academia, law, local government, faith, and civil rights who have provided support for this project including board members, advisors, sponsors, and members of the Joint Coordinating Committee.

Summit for Civil Rights Leaders

The following is a list of leaders from academia, civil rights labor, government, and advocacy who have participated in the Summit for Civil Rights and/or Building One America as sponsors, board members or as part of the organizing and/or advisory committees.

Alexander Polikoff, Business, and Professional People for Public Interest, Chicago	Douglas S. Massey, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University, Princeton
Algernon Austin, Demos, Washington	Dr. Timothy Tee Boddie, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., (PNBC)
Amy Stuart Wells, Columbia University, New York	Elaine Gross, ERASE Racism, Syosset
Barbara Bolling-Williams, NAACP Indiana State Conference	Elaine Weiss, (formerly) Economic Policy Institute
Betsy Julian, Inclusive Communities Project, Dallas	Elizabeth Powell, American Postal Workers Union, Washington
Bishop Reginald T Jackson, AME Church Twentieth District	Fred Redmond, United Steelworkers, Pittsburgh A. Philip Randolph Institute
Bruce D. Haynes Ph.d, University of California, Davis	Gary Orfield, UCLA, Los Angeles
Camille Z. Charles Ph.d, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia	Genevieve Siegel-Hawley, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond
Clayola Brown, A. Philip Randolph Institute, Washington	Gregory Floyd, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, New York
Commissioner Deborah R Goettel, Hennepin County, Richfield	John Brittain, Acting Dean, University of the District of Columbia, Washington
Cornell William Brooks, (former CEO, NAACP), Harvard Kennedy School	john powell, Haas Institute for Fair and Inclusive Society UC Berkeley
David P Rusk, Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, Washington	John R. Logan, Brown University
Demetria McCain, Inclusive Communities Project, Dallas	
Derrick Johnson, NAACP National President, and CEO	
Diane Ravitch, New York University, New York	

Judy Beard, American Postal Workers Union, Washington
 Julian A Rogers, Cleveland State University, Cleveland
 Julian Vasquez Heilig, California State University Sacramento
 Keenya Robertson Esq., Housing Opportunities Project for Excellence (HOPE, Inc.), Miami
 Kenneth Rigmaiden, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades,
 Khalil Muhammad, Harvard Kennedy School
 Kimberly McGlenn Ph.d, Jenkintown Borough Council, Jenkintown
 Lawrence Levy, National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University, Hempstead
 Lisa Rice, National Fair Housing Alliance, Washington
 Marc Bayard, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington
 Melvin Coleman, United Automobile Workers, Detroit
 Mike Kruglik, Building One America, Chicago
 Myron Orfield, Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity
 Paul Jargowsky, Center for Urban Research and Education, Camden
 Paul L. Tractenberg, Rutgers School of Law, Newark
 Petee Talley, Ohio AFL-CIO, Columbus
 Philip Tegeler, Poverty & Race Research Action Council, Washington

Randi Weingarten, American Federation of Teachers, New York
 Regena Thomas, American Federation of Teachers, Washington
 Rev. Alan Traher, Affordable Housing Coalition, Baltimore
 Rev. Douglas Mork, Interfaith Worker Justice
 Rev. Susan Engh, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Minneapolis
 Robert Kleidman, Building One OH, Cleveland
 Robin Williams, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union
 Sen. Allen Kukovich Esq., Americans for Democratic Action, Harrisburg
 Sheryll Cashin, Georgetown Law, Washington
 Supervisor Tracey Schultz Kobylarz, Charter Township of Redford, Redford Twp
 Terrence L. Melvin, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), Washington
 Theodore M Shaw, Columbia University School of Law
 Vince Larkins, Fair Housing Center of Greater Lantana
 William E. Spriggs, Howard University and AFL-CIO, Washington
 William Lucy, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Washington
 William P. Jones, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

Building One America / Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity Current Locations

BOA and IMO have been working with teams of local elected leaders from labor, faith and civil rights in the following states and metropolitan regions

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| New Jersey (Statewide) | Pennsylvania (Statewide) |
| Maryland (Baltimore/DC) | Indiana (Gary Region) |
| Colorado (Denver Region) | Minnesota (Twin Cities Region) |
| Arizona (Phoenix Region) | Wisconsin (Milwaukee Region) |
| Michigan (Detroit Region) | New York (Long Island) |
| | Ohio (Statewide) |

