

**OUR HOMES, OUR VOTES**

**2020**

BECAUSE HOUSING IS BUILT WITH BALLOTS



NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION

**Please standby.  
We will begin momentarily.**

**OUR HOMES, OUR VOTES**

**2020**

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NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION

# **Election Engagement for Nonprofits**

*September 19, 2019*

# General Logistics



- We will allow for time at the end of today's webinar for questions. If you have a question, please use the Q&A box in your webinar browser.
- We will provide access to both a video recording and a copy of today's slides to all participants following the webinar.
- If you are experiencing any technical difficulties, please send an email to Brooke Schipporeit at [bschipporeit@nlihc.org](mailto:bschipporeit@nlihc.org).

# Presenters



**Tim Mooney**  
Senior Counsel  
Alliance for Justice  
Twitter: @AFJTim



**Joey Lindstrom**  
Manager for Field Organizing  
National Low Income Housing Coalition  
Twitter: @JosephLindstrom



# Agenda



1. Brief review of *Our Homes, Our Votes: 2020*
2. Legal considerations for 501(c)(3) organizations
  - A. Issue advocacy
  - B. Voter education
  - C. Voter engagement
3. Question and Answer
4. Upcoming topics for webinars and podcasts



# INTRODUCTION



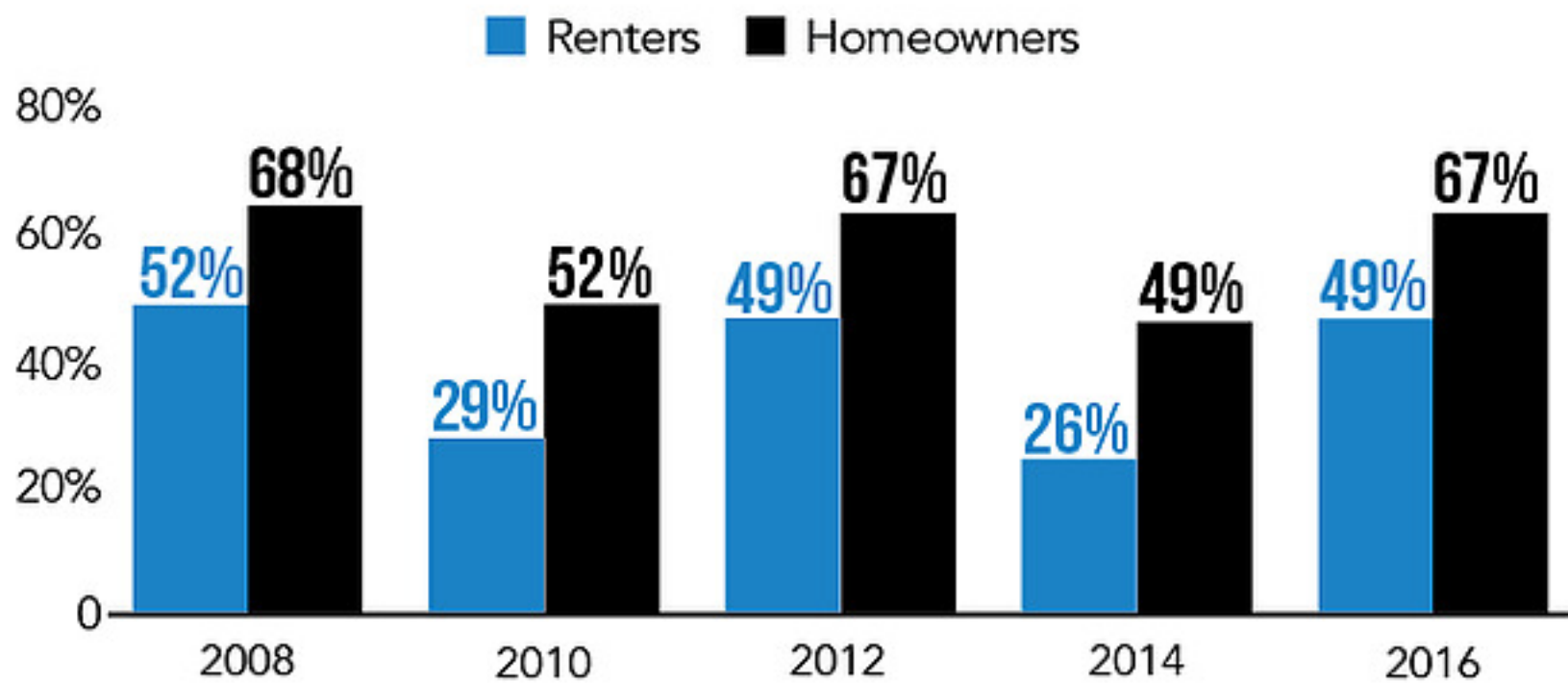
# Engaging Voters and Candidates



*Our Homes, Our Votes* is NLIHC's voter engagement effort focusing on increasing voter registration and turnout amongst low income housing renters and advocates.



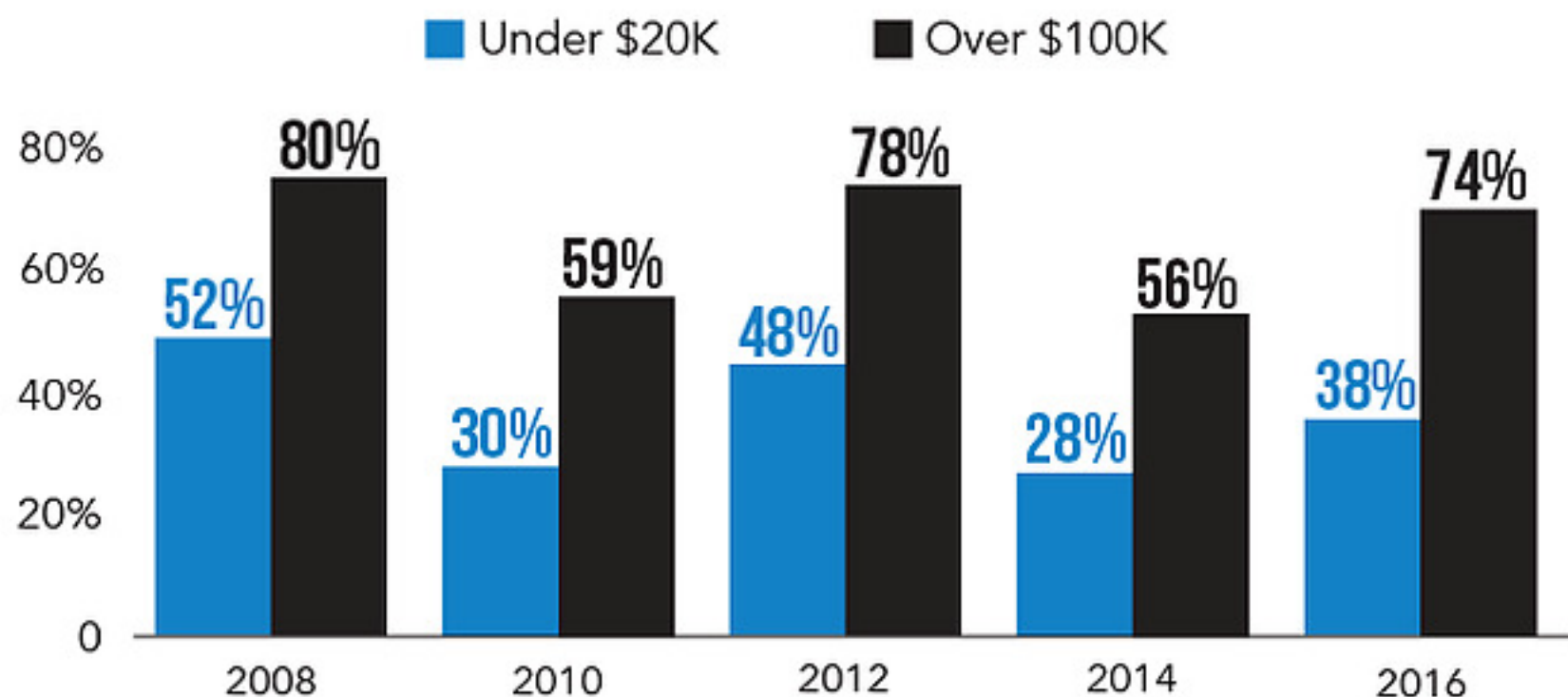
## U.S. CITIZENS WHO REPORTED VOTING IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS BY HOUSING TENURE (2008 TO 2016)



Source: November 2006-2016 Current Population Survey data



## U.S. CITIZENS WHO REPORTED VOTING IN NOVEMBER ELECTIONS BY FAMILY INCOME (2008 TO 2016)



Source: November 2006-2016 Current Population Survey data

# 83%

of the public agrees that elected officials are not paying enough attention to the cost of housing and the need for more affordable housing.



NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION

Source: Public Opinion Poll Feb 25-Mar 4, 2019 Hart Research Associates

# 76%

say they are more likely to vote for a candidate that has a detailed plan for making housing more affordable.





**8 in 10**  
**People in the U.S.**

Say the President  
& Congress

**"take  
major  
action"**

to make housing

**MORE  
AFFORDABLE**  
for low-income  
households.



Source: Public Opinion Poll Feb 25-Mar 4, 2019 Hart Research Associates





# Election Season Advocacy

Keeping it legal as a 501(c)(3)

Tim Mooney  
Senior Counsel





For free technical assistance on laws impacting nonprofit advocacy:  
[advocacy@afj.org](mailto:advocacy@afj.org)  
866.675.6229

For free tools, fact sheets, and publications  
[bolderadvocacy.org](http://bolderadvocacy.org)

 [@AFJBeBold](https://twitter.com/AFJBeBold)

 [BolderAdvocacy](https://www.facebook.com/BolderAdvocacy)

501(c)(3)s should  
advocate for policy change.  
It's legal with a few rules to follow.



<b>CITY OFFICES</b>
<b>MAYOR</b> <b>CITY OF EDINA</b> <b>VOTE FOR ONE</b>
<input type="radio"/> JIM HOVLAND
<input type="radio"/> LINDA MASICA
<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any
<b>COUNCIL MEMBER</b> <b>CITY OF EDINA</b> <b>VOTE FOR UP TO TWO</b>
<input type="radio"/> CHAD BELL
<input type="radio"/> MARY BRINDLE
<input type="radio"/> WAYNE DVORAK
<input type="radio"/> ANN SWENSON
<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any
<input type="radio"/> write-in, if any

- There's a lot of advocacy 501(c)(3)s can do during election season, but...
- 501(c)(3)s cannot support or oppose candidates running for public office.
- 501(c)(3) cannot attempt to influence the outcome of a candidate election.

### Issue Advocacy

Advocating for organization's  
public policy issues  
during election year

### Voter Education

Educating voters in a nonpartisan  
way about candidates

### Voter Engagement

Registering voters, getting out  
the vote

What can 501(c)(3)s do during  
election season?



The same rules apply to  
all three areas

“Hey Tim, can my (c)(3)  
do this? ”

“It depends...”

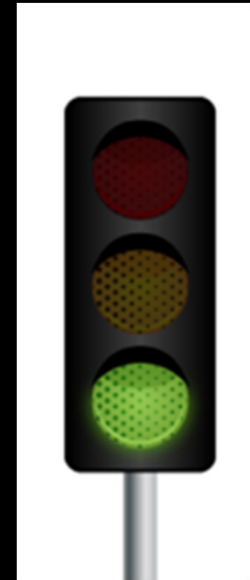


1. National housing organization
2. Sends postcards out to a tiny city in North Dakota
3. In October before an election
4. Emphasizing residential zoning law changes  
- a wedge issue in the election for town council
5. Has never weighed in on zoning in this ND town before

**FACTS and CIRCUMSTANCES**



1. County-wide housing organization
2. Focuses on funding low income housing
3. County Commission vote to increase County spending to rehab vacant properties and turn them into low income housing
4. In March
5. Not currently a wedge issue for campaign
6. Every time there is a public policy vote on housing, this organization has communicated a similar message



**FACTS and CIRCUMSTANCES**

## GOOD FACTS

- ✓ No reference to candidate or elections
- ✓ External factor driving timing
- ✓ Targets sector of community for reason unrelated to candidate election
- ✓ Info about org's core issues only, like a leg. vote
- ✓ History of similar advocacy on the issue

## BAD FACTS

- ✓ Refers to candidate as a candidate
- ✓ Timing motivated by election
- ✓ Targets specific sector of community to influence candidate election
- ✓ Compares candidate to preferred position
- ✓ Emphasize wedge issue dividing candidates, esp. for 1<sup>st</sup> time

**FACTS and CIRCUMSTANCES**





What is your organization's risk tolerance?

What if my  
policymaking  
subject is also a  
candidate?

Continue to Focus  
on Your Policy  
Issues, Not the  
Candidate

Don't Comment to  
Influence the  
Elections

Don't Comment on  
Personal  
Characteristics



SPLC @splcenter · 33s

Under Trump, "we'll see an all-out attack on every federal program that helps low-income people" says @peterbedelman [talkpoverty.org/2016/12/14/oba...](http://talkpoverty.org/2016/12/14/oba...)



### Issue Advocacy

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way about candidates

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the vote

What can 501(c)(3)s do during  
election season?

## QUESTIONS

Unbiased questions

Broad range of  
issues

## FORMAT

Invite all Viable  
Candidates

Fair Rules

Impartial  
Moderator


Unbiased Audience

Equal Opportunity

No Contextual  
Favoritism



**DISTRICT 2**  
**2017 LAUSD Candidate Forum Series**



**February 10**  
Cal State LA | 6 - 7:30 p.m.  
Student Union Theatre

Students can receive  
volunteer hours  
to graduate!

Free Food for the First 150 people  
Resources for Undocumented Students and Families  
4 - 6 p.m. College Readiness Fair  
Giveaways and Scholarships  
Voter Registration  
Translation Provided

**ROCK THE VOTE**  
**ADVANCING JUSTICE**  
**PIQE**  
**Center for POWERFUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**INNERCITY STRUGGLE**  
**Educators Excellence**  
**LWV**  
**TEACH + PLUS**  
**Alliance for a Better Community**  
**Great Public Schools**  
**CLASS**  
**WAVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

For more information, contact Katherine Trejo, [ktrejo@unitedwayla.org](mailto:ktrejo@unitedwayla.org) or (213) 808-6353.

# DEBATES & FORUMS



## QUESTIONS

Unbiased Questions

Open-Ended Questions

Distribute to all candidates

Broad Range of Issues








No Pledges

## FORMATTING

No Editing

Present Responses Equally

Disclaimers

 <b>2016 US SENATE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE— DEMOCRAT</b> 			
 <b>Dackworth</b>	<p><b>Immigration</b> – The majority of Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) immigrate to the U.S. through family, with AAPIs sponsoring over 30% of all family-based visas each year. However, AAPIs are more likely than other groups to be delayed by visa backlog, with family often waiting 10-20 years. AAPIs also are the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest undocumented population (1.3 million), according to the Department of Homeland Security. In 2013, the Senate passed S.744, which would create a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, help clear visa backlogs, and increase H1-B visas for skilled immigrants. S.744 would also shift immigration away from a family-based system by eliminating siblings and adult children visa categories. S.744 has not yet passed the U.S. House. Do you support immigration reform as proposed in S.744, and what if any, changes would you make? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>	<p><b>Deferred Action</b> – Asian Americans make up 10 percent of all undocumented immigrants in the United States. It is estimated that 168,670 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) relief and 462,376 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Actions for Parental Accountability (DAPA). However, currently President Obama's executive order on November 20, 2014 is being reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court due to challenges by several states. Do you support comprehensive immigration reform that will grant lawful status to individuals eligible for DACA and DAPA? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>	<p><b>Healthcare</b> – The 2008-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) reports AAPIs are more likely than white Americans to be without health insurance, with one in 4 Pakistani Americans and one in 5 Korean Americans in Illinois being uninsured. The Center for Disease Control reports about 13% of AAPIs could not see a doctor in 2010 because of cost. Congress passed the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010, which expanded Medicaid coverage to low-income individuals by standardizing eligibility levels. Currently, the ACA doesn't require states to extend health coverage to undocumented adults. House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell both propose a full repeal of the ACA. Do you support the ACA, and what if any, changes would you make? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>
 <b>Harris</b>	<p><b>Immigration</b> – The majority of Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) immigrate to the U.S. through family, with AAPIs sponsoring over 30% of all family-based visas each year. However, AAPIs are more likely than other groups to be delayed by visa backlog, with family often waiting 10-20 years. AAPIs also are the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest undocumented population (1.3 million), according to the Department of Homeland Security. In 2013, the Senate passed S.744, which would create a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, help clear visa backlogs, and increase H1-B visas for skilled immigrants. S.744 would also shift immigration away from a family-based system by eliminating siblings and adult children visa categories. S.744 has not yet passed the U.S. House. Do you support immigration reform as proposed in S.744, and what if any, changes would you make? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>	<p><b>Deferred Action</b> – Asian Americans make up 10 percent of all undocumented immigrants in the United States. It is estimated that 168,670 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) relief and 462,376 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Actions for Parental Accountability (DAPA). However, currently President Obama's executive order on November 20, 2014 is being reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court due to challenges by several states. Do you support comprehensive immigration reform that will grant lawful status to individuals eligible for DACA and DAPA? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>	<p><b>Healthcare</b> – The 2008-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) reports AAPIs are more likely than white Americans to be without health insurance, with one in 4 Pakistani Americans and one in 5 Korean Americans in Illinois being uninsured. The Center for Disease Control reports about 13% of AAPIs could not see a doctor in 2010 because of cost. Congress passed the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010, which expanded Medicaid coverage to low-income individuals by standardizing eligibility levels. Currently, the ACA doesn't require states to extend health coverage to undocumented adults. House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell both propose a full repeal of the ACA. Do you support the ACA, and what if any, changes would you make? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>
 <b>Zopp</b>	<p>Andrea Zopp is an undocumented immigrant who has been in the U.S. for 3 years. She can prevent Andrea from being deported and support 7 percent to immigration.</p>	<p><b>Deferred Action</b> – Asian Americans make up 10 percent of all undocumented immigrants in the United States. It is estimated that 168,670 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) relief and 462,376 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Actions for Parental Accountability (DAPA). However, currently President Obama's executive order on November 20, 2014 is being reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court due to challenges by several states. Do you support comprehensive immigration reform that will grant lawful status to individuals eligible for DACA and DAPA? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>	<p><b>Healthcare</b> – The 2008-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) reports AAPIs are more likely than white Americans to be without health insurance, with one in 4 Pakistani Americans and one in 5 Korean Americans in Illinois being uninsured. The Center for Disease Control reports about 13% of AAPIs could not see a doctor in 2010 because of cost. Congress passed the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010, which expanded Medicaid coverage to low-income individuals by standardizing eligibility levels. Currently, the ACA doesn't require states to extend health coverage to undocumented adults. House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell both propose a full repeal of the ACA. Do you support the ACA, and what if any, changes would you make? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>
 <b>Kirk</b>	<p>Yes. In 2013, I was one of 14 Republicans in the Senate to support the bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform legislation that would secure the border and create a path to citizenship. My provision was included in S. 744, to allow recipients of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), or DREAMers, to serve in the military. Those who serve in combat would have their naturalization process expedited because if you risk your life for America, you are an American.</p>	<p>I fully support legislation to prevent DREAMer deportations and put them on a path toward citizenship. Comprehensive immigration reform is imperative to bring 525,000 people in Illinois out of the shadows, put down permanent roots and invest in Illinois. But their rights and privileges should be locked down in an actual statute that respects them as future Americans and allows them to keep families together permanently.</p>	<p>The ACA has made healthcare more expensive and less accessible for Illinois families. Since enactment, Congress has already amended Obamacare 18 times, starting with the onerous 1099 form and three percent withholding tax. In December 2015, the omnibus appropriations bill included a strong first step in repealing the most impactful components of Obamacare by delaying the "Cadillac tax," which increases the cost of working families' health insurance by as much as 40 percent. We also delayed the tax on medical device manufacturers, a tax that could cost more than 11,000 jobs in Illinois if implemented, and eliminated funding for the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), a group of unelected bureaucrats. I support permanently repealing the medical device tax and Cadillac tax, and oppose bailing out insurance companies that cannot afford to cover new enrollees, a provision known as the "risk corridors" program.</p>
 <b>Marler</b>	<p><b>Immigration</b> – The majority of Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) immigrate to the U.S. through family, with AAPIs sponsoring over 30% of all family-based visas each year. However, AAPIs are more likely than other groups to be delayed by visa backlog, with family often waiting 10-20 years. AAPIs also are the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest undocumented population (1.3 million), according to the Department of Homeland Security. In 2013, the Senate passed S.744, which would create a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, help clear visa backlogs, and increase H1-B visas for skilled immigrants. S.744 would also shift immigration away from a family-based system by eliminating siblings and adult children visa categories. S.744 has not yet passed the U.S. House. Do you support immigration reform as proposed in S.744, and what if any, changes would you make? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>	<p><b>Deferred Action</b> – Asian Americans make up 10 percent of all undocumented immigrants in the United States. It is estimated that 168,670 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) relief and 462,376 undocumented AAPIs are potentially eligible for the Deferred Actions for Parental Accountability (DAPA). However, currently President Obama's executive order on November 20, 2014 is being reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court due to challenges by several states. Do you support comprehensive immigration reform that will grant lawful status to individuals eligible for DACA and DAPA? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>	<p><b>Healthcare</b> – The 2008-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) reports AAPIs are more likely than white Americans to be without health insurance, with one in 4 Pakistani Americans and one in 5 Korean Americans in Illinois being uninsured. The Center for Disease Control reports about 13% of AAPIs could not see a doctor in 2010 because of cost. Congress passed the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010, which expanded Medicaid coverage to low-income individuals by standardizing eligibility levels. Currently, the ACA doesn't require states to extend health coverage to undocumented adults. House Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell both propose a full repeal of the ACA. Do you support the ACA, and what if any, changes would you make? (Yes/No) Please explain.</p>
	<p>FAILED TO RESPOND</p>	<p>FAILED TO RESPOND</p>	<p>FAILED TO RESPOND</p>

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago (Advancing Justice-Chicago), is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan organization that neither supports nor opposes any political party or candidate. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT: Advancing Justice-Chicago attempted 3 contacts with each campaign office to request responses to this questionnaire and follow-up with its completion. Candidates who did not submit their responses by the deadline, after 3 contacts, will be indicated as FAILED TO RESPOND. Candidates were given a word-limit of 75 words for their responses. For more information, visit [www.advancingjustice-chicago.org](http://www.advancingjustice-chicago.org).

# CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRES

### Issue Advocacy

Advocating for organization's  
public policy issues  
during election year

### Voter Education

Educating voters in a nonpartisan  
way about candidates

### Voter Engagement

Registering voters, getting out  
the vote

What can 501(c)(3)s do during  
election season?

VOTER  
REGISTRATION/  
GOTV

Don't mention or  
suggest a favored  
or unfavored  
party/candidate

Make service  
available to  
everyone

Targeting for  
**nonpartisan**  
Reason



**501(c)(3)s** may target voters because they are:

- Your natural constituency
  - People who live in the region where your nonprofit operates
  - The people your organization serves (clients, community, etc.)
  - The people your organization hopes to serve
- Historically under-represented at the polls





File under, “should  
go without  
saying” but...

Rules that apply  
to print  
and verbal  
communications  
also apply online.





These rules apply to 501(c)(3) staff and volunteers who act on behalf of 501(c)(3).

They do *not* apply to people acting as individuals on their own time.



## When carrying out partisan activities in your personal time, be yourself!

1. Don't use your org's: resources (staff time, e-mail, copier, etc.) or reputation.



2. Do your best to help the community distinguish between you as an org representative and you as an individual, including on social media.

3. Use disclaimers as appropriate:

“Organization name for identification purposes only”

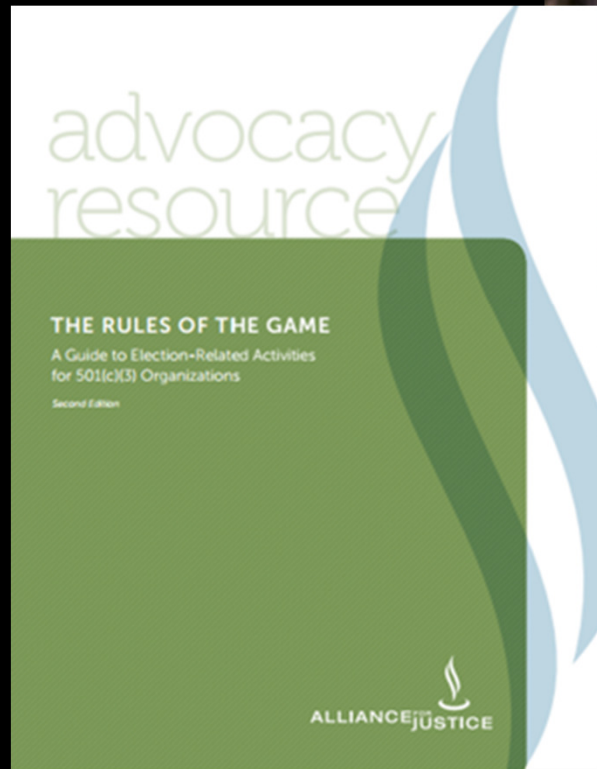
“I’m not representing my 501(c)(3) right now. I’m at this event as a private citizen.”

4. Remember which hat you have on when.

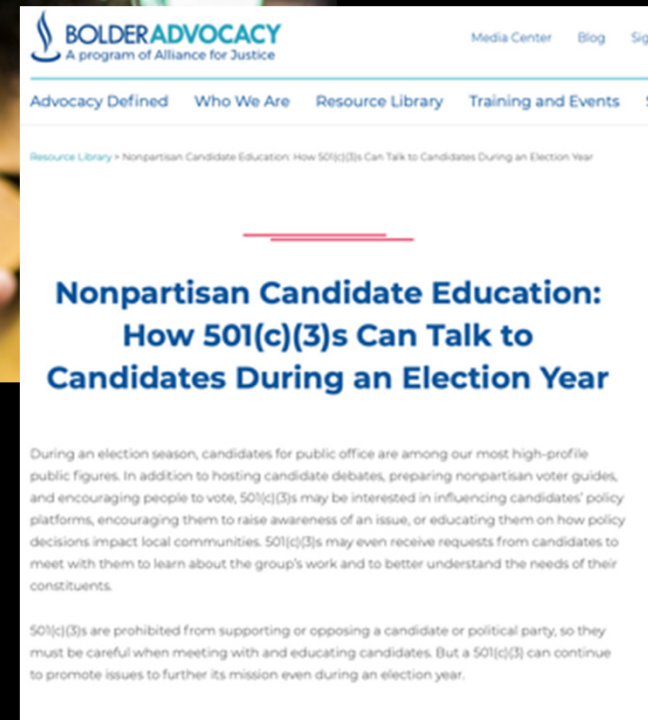
# Key Takeaways

- 501(c)(3)s can continue advocating for their issues into election season. Advocate on public policy reasons, not preference for any candidate.
- 501(c)(3)s can educate voters and get them to the polls, so long as they aren't supporting or opposing any candidate.
- If you work for a 501(c)(3) you can support candidates on your own time, but don't use organization resources and make it when you are representing your organization, and when you are not.
- Look to Alliance for Justice for help!

# For more information:



Enabling nonprofits  
to shape the public  
debate on important  
social issues.





For free technical assistance on laws impacting nonprofit advocacy:  
[advocacy@afj.org](mailto:advocacy@afj.org)  
866.675.6229

For free tools, fact sheets, and publications  
[bolderadvocacy.org](http://bolderadvocacy.org)

 [@AFJBeBold](https://twitter.com/AFJBeBold)

 [BolderAdvocacy](https://www.facebook.com/BolderAdvocacy)

# Legal Considerations for Federally Funded Organizations



## Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) CAN participate in voter registration activities!

- PHAs can provide registration materials as well as help residents fill out registration forms.
- PHA newsletters can and should contain information about registration and voting.
  - Public housing buildings can display registration information in common areas such as bulletin boards near elevators or in community rooms, etc.



# Legal Considerations for Federally Funded Organizations



## **Federal Funds Do Place Restrictions on Certain Organizations:**

- Staff who are paid through AmeriCorps or HeadStart funding cannot participate in voter registration activities.
- Legal Services groups cannot participate in any election activity, even if nonpartisan.
- Recipients of Community Services Block Grant funding can participate in voter registration and engagement, but CSBG funds cannot be used.
- More information on federal funds and voter registration restrictions can be found at: <http://bit.ly/1InQxh7>






# Questions?





# Third Thursdays at Three Webinar and Podcast Series



Automatic voting machine with privacy  
curtain invented in Iowa, 1928  
Gift of Rockwell Manufacturing Company

**VOTE  
HERE**

# Upcoming Training and Discussion Topics



1. Developing a voter engagement plan (October 17)
2. Helpful tools and partners (November 21, 2019)
3. Voter Registration Part 1 – Messaging, events, and canvassing (December 19)
4. Voter Registration Part 2 – Registering residents of subsidized housing (January 16, 2020)
5. The role of housing providers (February 20, 2020)
6. Getting candidates on the record – issue surveys, town halls, and forums (March 19, 2020)
7. Educating voters – voting logistics and candidate positions (April 16, 2020)
8. Housing issues and ballot initiatives (May 21, 2020)
9. Overcoming common obstacles to voting (June 18, 2020)
10. The challenge of voting while homeless (July 16, 2020)
11. Voter Mobilization Part 1 – Early voting and vote-by-mail (August 20, 2020)
12. Voter Mobilization Part 2 – Protecting against voter intimidation (September 17, 2020)
13. Election Day! Getting Out The Vote (October 15, 2020)
14. Holding candidates to their promises (November 19, 2020)



**It's never been easy.  
Our commitment is unwavering.  
Join us and amplify the voices of  
the poorest families in need.**

**OUR MEMBERS  
ARE OUR STRENGTH.**



**NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION**

**JOIN TODAY  
[WWW.NLIHC.ORG/MEMBERSHIP](http://WWW.NLIHC.ORG/MEMBERSHIP)**

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**ourhomes-ourvotes.org**