There are more than 417,787 poor and low-income voters in Maine and 85 million across the nation. Together, we account for one-third of the electorate. Together, we can ensure that the days of poverty and low-wages - and the unnecessary cruelty of abandonment amidst abundance - are numbered. Together, we can revive the heart and soul of this democracy to ensure dignity and justice for all. Forward together, not one step back!

Key Resources

Poverty and Low Wages
- Living Wage Calculator: https://livingwage.mit.edu/
- Hours of Work to Afford Housing: https://ilr.tc/MoW
- Household and student debt: https://www.renewnc.org/research/mode/find.html

Rolling Back on Basic Needs
- Impact of the EITC and CTC: https://www.povertycenter.columbia.edu/publications/monthly-poverty-march-2023
- SNAP Cuts: https://frac.org/research/resource-library/poverty-ese-state-fact-sheets
- Tracking Evictions: https://tracker.votingrightslab.org/pending/search

Health Care and the Pandemic
- Medicaid Coverage Gap: https://www.healthinsurance.org/medicaid

Militarism
- Warfare State: https://soc.sag.edu/poverty-warfare-state-how-funding-militarism-compromises-welfare/
- Gun Violence Archive: https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/
- Mapping Police Violence: https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/
- Prison Police Initiative: https://www.policepolice.org/about/44.html
- Immigration Detentions: https://trac.ucr.edu/immigration/quickfacts/

Democracy
- Voter Restrictions: https://tracker.national宪iitlab.org/overview/registration
- Anti-Trans Legislation: https://translegalization.com/

Poor People’s Campaign Resources
- The Souls of Poor Folk: Auditing America: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/resource/the-souls-of-poor-folk-audit/
- Poor People’s Moral Agenda and Demand: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/about/us-demand/
- Poor People’s Moral Policy and Jubilee Platform: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/about/jubilee-platform/
- A Poor People’s Moral Budget: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/resource/a-poor-people’s-moral-budget/
- A Poor People’s Pandemic Report: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/pandemic-report/
- Compilation of Fact Sheets: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/resource/factsheets/

For more information and resources, visit poorpeoplescampaign.org.
IN MAINE:

Poverty and Low-Wages: Poverty is a policy choice, reflecting both low wages and high costs of living. These two conditions make it hard to meet basic needs and easy to fall into debt. In Maine:

- Between 2018-2020, there were 436,000 poor and low-income people, accounting for 32.5% of the population.**
- To meet their basic needs, a household with two adults and two children needs to earn over $24/hour. However, the current minimum wage is just $13.80/hour. At this wage, an individual must work 72 hours/week to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment.
- There are 238,422 people, or 35.2% of the workforce, earning less than $15/hour. This includes 210,067 adults and 37.6% of Asian and Native workers, 54.3% of Black workers, 50.3% of Hispanic workers, 34.6% of white workers, 43.3% of working women and 55.5% of working women of color.

Average household debt rose 6% in 2022 to an average of $49,740.

Average student loan debt held by households was $5,530 at the end of 2022.

Health Care and the Pandemic: Across the country, approximately 1,000 people are still dying from Covid every week and millions of people lack access to health care. In Maine:

- In 2021, 229,000 children in 142,000 households received the expanded Child Tax Credit and 93,000 low-wage workers without children received the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit. The expansions contributed to a dramatic decline in poverty in 2021.
- In 2022, 161,800 people relied on expanded SNAP (food stamps) benefits to feed themselves and their families. However, in 2023, SNAP benefits were reduced by $90-$250/month, cutting them down to $6/day. At least 91,508 people will be impacted by these cuts.

Poverty and low-income communities of greatest risk. In Maine:

- Over the past century, the state of Maine has only spent $240 million of the $997 million it was allocated under the American Rescue Plan, which could provide health insurance for 24,351 children. Taxpayer dollars going to the border control could instead subsidize more than 10,041 public housing units. Taxpayer dollars going to the biggest weapons contractor, Lockheed Martin, could hire more than 1,576 elementary school teachers.

Democracy: Across the nation, a surge of attacks on voting rights and on the rights of women and LGBTQ+ people are denying basic rights to millions of people and constraining our ability to participate in democracy. Poor and low-income people can change this direction. In Maine:

- There were 12 voter restrictive bills introduced between 2020 and 2023, and 2 anti-LGBTQ+ laws introduced in 2023. None of these were enacted.
- In Maine, there are 417,787 poor and low-income eligible voters, including 411,160 white voters, 160 Latino voters, 378 Asian voters, 1,003 Black voters and 387 Indigenous voters. Together, they account for 32% of the electorate.

There is an abundance of wealth and resources to meet our basic needs and ensure we all survive and thrive.

- A proposed federal tax on the annual increase in billionaires’ wealth would generate an estimated $557 billion over 10 years. The 6 publicly held corporations headquartered in Louisiana have average CEO pay of $5 million, while average worker pay is $53,230.

- In Maine, state taxpayer dollars are being siphoned towards militarism: state taxpayer dollars for deportations and border control could instead subsidize more than 10,041 public housing units. Taxpayer dollars going to nuclear weapons could provide health insurance for 24,351 children. Taxpayer dollars going to the biggest weapons contractor, Lockheed Martin, could hire more than 1,576 elementary school teachers.

- More than $25.47 million from Maine taxpayers that is going to federal prisons could instead power more than 113,670 households with solar energy.

- Maine has only spent $240 million of the $997 million it was allocated under the American Rescue Plan, which could be used for housing, health care and other pressing needs. If the state and local governments do not allocate these resources by December 2024, the remaining funds will be lost.

Moving these resources, and investing more, to fully meet all of our needs will save lives and revive our national economy.

- During the pandemic, eviction moratoria and moratoria on utility disconnections saved lives. If enacted earlier, they could have reduced Covid deaths by 40% and 75%, respectively, across the nation. Universal health care could have saved 330,000 lives.

- Enacting Medicare for All would save $450 billion in health care costs and 68,000 lives every year.

- Ending mass incarceration could raise average US life expectancy by five years.

- Providing permanent safe housing delivers lifelong benefits to children and families at a national average cost of $12,800 per person per year, far less than the cost of crisis services for those suffering chronic homelessness.

- Paid Family and Medical Leave improves employment, especially among women, increases child well-being and protects against poverty when health challenges arise.

- Increasing resources for the poor刺激s the economy much more than making the rich even richer, because the poor need to spend nearly everything they earn. Every dollar going to a low-wage worker adds $1.20 to the economy overall. Every dollar spent on food stamps generates $1.50-$1.80 in economic activity.

- Expanded unemployment insurance during the pandemic protected 5.1 million jobs by boosting economic activity.

- The expanded Child Tax Credit was estimated to have a greater impact on the economy than military spending, without negative impacts on employment.

- Overdue moratoria on utility disconnections saved lives. If enacted earlier, they could instead power more than 10,041 public housing units.

- Expanding Medicaid could provide health insurance for 24,351 children. Taxpayer dollars going to the biggest weapons contractor, Lockheed Martin, could hire more than 1,576 elementary school teachers.

- More than $25.47 million from Maine taxpayers that is going to federal prisons could instead power more than 113,670 households with solar energy.

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