There are more than 1,721,886 poor and low-income voters in South Carolina 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!

Poverty and Low Wages

- Living Wage Calculator: https://wageone.org/
- Hours of Work to Afford Housing: https://hroc.org
- Households and student debt: https://www.newyorkfed.org/res-research/ctc/find.html

Rolling Back on Basic Needs

- Impact of the EITC and CTC: https://www.povertycenter.columbia.edu/publication/monthly-poverty-march-2023
- SNAP Cuts: https://frac.org/research/resource-library/snap-state-fact-sheets
- Tracking Evictions: https://evictionlab.org/eviction-tracking/

Health Care and the Pandemic

- Medicaid Eligibility Rollback: https://frac.org/research/resource-library/snap-ea-state-fact-sheets
- Medicaid Coverage Gap: https://www.healthinsurance.org/medicaid

Militarism

- Warfare State: https://ips-dc.org/report-warfare-state-how-funding-militarism-compromises-welfare/
- Veteran Suicide toll: https://www.mericahealth.va.gov/nonuniversity/prevent/indexdata.asp
- Gun Violence Archive: https://gunviolencearchive.org/
- Mapping Police Violence: https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/
- Prison Policy Initiative: https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/US.html
- Military Equipment Transfers: https://translegislation.com/
- Gun Violence Archive: https://gunviolencearchive.org/
- Mapping Police Violence: https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/
- Prison Policy Initiative: https://www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/US.html
- Immigration Detention: https://trac.uw.edu/immigration/quickfacts/

Democracy

- Anti-Trans Legislation: https://translegislation.com/

Poorest People’s Campaign Resources

- *The PPC:NCMR created this fact sheet using the most comprehensive and current publicly available data through May 2023. Where possible, data is disaggregated to reflect the complex reality of the intersected injustices contained in this document. Unfortunately, there are significant gaps in racial, ethnic and other demographic data, reflecting gaps in data collection and statistical methodologies, which the PPC:NCMR cannot control. We continue to push for improvements to fill those gaps.*
- The Souls of Poor Folks: Auditing America: https://www.pooreoplescampaign.org/resource/the-souls-of-poor-folk-audit/
- Poor People’s Moral Agenda and Demand: https://www.pooreoplescampaign.org/about/jubilee-platform/
- Poor People’s Moral Policy and Jubilee Platform: https://www.pooreoplescampaign.org/about/pooreoples-moral-building/
- A Poor People’s Moral Budget: https://www.pooreoplescampaign.org/resource/poor-people’s-moral-budget/
- Compilation of Fact Sheets: https://www.pooreoplescampaign.org/resource/factsheets/

For more information and resources, visit poorpeoplescampaign.org.

In 2019, before the pandemic hit, 140 million Americans were living in poverty or just one emergency away from economic ruin: 60% of Black people (24 million), 64% of Hispanic/Latino people (38 million), 40% of Asian people (8 million), 60% of Indigenous and Native people (2 million) and 33% of white people (66 million).* These tens of millions of people live in every region, state and county in the country. Poverty was the fourth leading cause of death, claiming more lives than homicide, gun violence, diabetes or obesity. Long-term poverty was responsible for 295,000 deaths a year - or over 800 deaths a day.

The pandemic festered in these fissures, taking root in systemic racism, poverty, the denial of health care, ecological devastation, wealth inequality and rampant military spending. During the first two years, governments at all levels responded to the crisis by expanding access to health care, housing, water, food and utilities. These overdue changes proved that in the world’s richest country, we can ensure a dignified life for all. But these pandemic programs were temporary. When they ended abruptly, poverty and relatedinterlocking injustices began to rise once again.

While millions of people remain without work, living wages, housing, clean water, food or health care, corporations and the wealthy are doing exceedingly well. Between 2020-2022, billionaire wealth grew by $1.5 trillion - more than $2 billion a day.

Religious and moral texts are clear that making policy that does not protect the rights of the poor and puts the cause of the wealthiest first is evil and wrong. Isaiah 10 says, "Woe to those who legislate evil, who make unjust laws to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed." Jeremiah 22 reminds us, "Thus says the Lord: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor those who have been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the immigrant, the orphan, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place." Matthew 25 tells us, ""Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me."

Indeed, the first governing principle of the US Constitution is to establish justice.

If we do not want to enable this wrongdoing, we must speak out and stand up against it. This is why the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival is organizing across the nation: to reveal these injustices, change the narrative, and build our power.

Fight Poverty, not the Poor!
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 South Carolina:

- Between 2018-2020, there were 1,964,000 poor and low-income people, accounting for 38.3% of the population.**

- To meet their basic needs, a household with two adults and two children needs to earn over $21/hour. However, the current minimum wage is just $7.25/hour. At this wage, an individual must work 106 hours/week to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment.

- There are 1,029,032 people, or 42.8% of the workforce, earning less than $15/hour. This includes 931,579 adults and 36.4% of Asian and Native workers, 62.2% of Black workers, 61.2% of Hispanic workers, 33.1% of white workers, 51.9% of working women and 68.1% of working women of color.

- Average household debt rose 8% in 2022 to an average of $53,410.

- Average student loan debt held by households was $6,150 at the end of 2022.

Rolling Back on Basic Needs: Pandemic relief policies temporarily lifted the load of poverty, but ended too soon, resulting in higher rates of economic, food and housing insecurity. In South Carolina:

- In 2021, 1,029,000 children in 627,000 households received the expanded Child Tax Credit and 315,000 low-wage workers without children received the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit. The expansions contributed to a dramatic decline in poverty, but ended in 2022.

- In 2022, 619,000 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 300,853 households will be impacted by these cuts.

- At the beginning of 2023, more than one year after eviction protections were ended, 187,023 people reported being behind on their rent or housing payments.

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 South Carolina:

- During the most intense period of the pandemic, 504,700 people were uninsured.

- With the ending of continuous eligibility for Medicaid, 214,300 people are estimated to lose access to health care.

- Approximately 1.9 million workers, or 78% of the workforce in the state, do not have access to paid family and medical leave.

- Between 2019 and 2020, South Carolina experienced a 2 year decline in average life expectancy.

Climate Crisis and Ecological Devastation: Extreme heat, storms and drought are becoming more common, with poor and low-income communities at greater risk. In South Carolina:

- Over the past century, the state warmed 0.6 degrees Celsius. As this trend continues, food production, spread of diseases, and health will all be adversely impacted.

- Precipitation patterns have also changed, with increased risks of flooding, drought and water scarcity.

- The percentage of poor and low-income household income that goes towards energy costs is 6 times greater than what an average income household spends on energy.

Militaryism: Government spending that prioritizes war, mass incarceration, excessive policing, and anti-immigrant forces is leading to greater violence, fear, and criminalization of the poor. In South Carolina:

- In 2023, taxpayers will contribute $869.81 million to Pentagon spending, $247.34 million to immigration enforcement, and $298.12 million to nuclear weapons.

- Over the past 30 years, $869.81 million in military equipment (tanks, drones, combat rifles and ammunition) has been warmed and local law enforcement.

- Between 2001-2020, 2,277 veterans committed suicide.

- In 2021, 1,136 people were killed by gun violence.

- There are 27,045 people incarcerated in South Carolina.

- From Oct 2002-June 2022, over 178 people were deported from South Carolina.