

Thu, Feb 8, 2024

CALIFORNIA



If you've been wondering what the PPC will be up to in 2024—and how you can have an impact on the election beyond your own vote—wonder no more: This Monday saw the announcement of a major 42-week voter mobilization campaign. Watch and read about the press conference, check out some high-level media coverage and find out how to join in below.

Announcement



National press conference launches PPC voter mobilization drive

Poor and low-wage people joined PPC co-chairs Bishop Barber and Rev. Theoharis, plus tri-chairs from all over the country and leading pollster Celinda Lake, at a [press conference](#) on Monday. There, they announced details of the PPC's major 2024 voter mobilization campaign.

Bishop Barber spoke about the need to protect and expand voting rights and to pass a living minimum wage. He called out the eight moderate senators who, together with Republicans, voted against raising the minimum wage to 15 dollars per hour. "We are 60 years behind," he said. "People are being treated as if they are expendable. That's why we are launching this voter mobilization campaign."

He continued: "We must talk to the poor and low-income voters like we never have before. We must wake the sleeping giant. It is political suicide not to care about this bloc of voters, who represent 30 to 40 percent of the electorate in many of the swing states. We have power and we must build it now!"

"It doesn't have to be this way"

Rev. Theoharis spoke to the breadth and depth of voter suppression efforts: More than 1,000 voter suppression bills have been introduced since the last election; pandemic-era protections have been allowed to expire, and other predatory policies have targeted poor and low-wage Americans.

"Economic justice and saving this democracy are deeply connected," she said. "We are mobilizing and organizing and registering and educating people for a movement that votes.... People are dying, and it doesn't have to be this way. We are calling on everyone to join this Poor People's Campaign and voter mobilization effort!"

Asked about the chosen locations for next month's Mass Assemblies, Bishop Barber replied that "so much insurrection is going on at our state capitols." And he added that our work won't stop there. "We are very serious about this mobilization. It's not just a one-day, screaming outside and it's over. This is a mobilization. This is a Third Reconstruction."

Testimony

But perhaps the most forceful words came from people directly impacted. Here are two of the event's standout speakers.

"For three years I worked the assembly line at Amazon in Bessemer, Alabama. The work was grueling. We were expected to work like robots, moving like 1,000 pieces per hour. Amazon let me go because I was helping organize the union. Forty-seven percent of the voters are poor or low-wage. Getting that vote in is very important. We cannot settle for less. We've got to stand up for our rights."

—Linda Burns, Alabama

"I take care of people with disabilities and who are sick and who need help with their daily activities—but I do not have health insurance myself. I have been called an essential worker. I am living paycheck to paycheck. And I have to make decisions every day: Do I put gas in my car, or do I pay my bills, or do I put food on my table? We have got to get our power as people. We are taking back the mic, raising our voices and registering our voters."

—Jenise Guzman, Massachusetts

Here's where you come in!

You can join the launch in California! Sign up to let us know you're coming to Sacramento on March 2.

Count Me In

Watch the [promo video](#) and the replay of the [press conference](#) to learn more. Read and see more coverage below!

Upcoming meetings

Statewide organizing meetings

Wednesdays, 6:30pm | [RSVP](#)

Help us organize for the March 2 rally in Sacramento and other 2024 efforts. You'll meet activists from around the state and take part in mobilizing our communities for these historic actions. It's a place to lend a hand and to learn from one another. Drop in any Wednesday.

Laney PPC chapter teach-in: Real public safety requires political power, justice and democracy

Thursday Feb 15, 9:30am–12:00pm | [RSVP](#)

Umoja Village, Laney College Campus, EV-3 at 10th and Fallon, Oakland

Join the Laney CA PPC chapter as they continue their powerful series of teach-ins in this first session of 2024, focusing on what is required for true public safety, and informing and educating ahead of March 2. Join in person or via [Zoom](#).



Highlights: Press coverage of the voter mobilization announcement

“Waking the Sleeping Giant of the Low-Income Voting Bloc”

[Inequality.org](https://inequality.org) has the most comprehensive coverage of the press conference. It shared the issues of importance to low-wealth voters, along with links to state fact sheets. It also quotes PPC policy director Shailly Gupta-Barnes. “The conventional wisdom—which isn’t very wise—is that the poor don’t care about voting,” she said. “But that’s just not true.”

“Poor People’s Campaign vows to ‘Wake the Sleeping Giant’ of low-income voters”

[Common Dreams](https://commondreams.org) has an extensive recap, links to the press conference replay and a quote from PPC activist Crow Roberts: “Our government finds it necessary to ban abortion to say that they are saving our children, but more children die as a result of poverty in this country.”

“NC reverend announces voter drive for Poor People’s Campaign”

Coverage on [CBS News](https://www.cbsnews.com) included segments of the press conference when Bishop Barber, Rev. Theoharis and low-wealth voter Linda Burns spoke about lifting from the bottom up. “If we are going to be serious about addressing the problems of low wages, the lack of healthcare, inadequate housing, attacks on education and more in this impoverished democracy, we as a nation must listen to the demands of the poor,” said Rev. Theoharis.

“Poor People’s Campaign launches effort to mobilize 15 million voters”

Bishop Barber, Rev. Al Sharpton and pollster Celinda Lake spoke on MSNBC’s [Morning Joe](https://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe) about the power of poor and low-wealth voters, as well as the mobilization and the plan to go to state houses March 2 and the White House on June 15. Speaking about her analysis of the data, and states where the margin of votes has come down to just a few thousand votes, Celinda made it clear: “This is game-changing. This is the biggest block of un-mobilized voters out there.”

“Poor People’s Campaign unveils nationwide voting push focusing on low-income Americans”

Coverage in [Democracy Now](https://www.democracynow.org) quoted Bishop Barber: “Poor and low-wage brothers and sisters have the power to determine and decide the 2024 elections and elections beyond.”

Support the California PPC!

When over 140 million Americans are poor or living with low-wages, it's time for systemic change. We are building a movement led by poor and impacted folks, building across all lines of division, in order to topple the interlocking pillars of racism, poverty, militarism, environmental destruction and this country's distorted moral narrative. Please help us achieve this goal by clicking below and chipping in whatever you can.

DONATE



Sofitel reaches agreement to pay living wage, bringing total to 30 hotels

In another positive update on the Unite Here Local 11 [Facebook page](#), victory is declared at the Sofitel hotel, where an agreement has been reached to pay workers a living wage, bringing the total to 30 hotels and counting. As the [Los Angeles Times](#) reported in December, more than 15,000 hotel workers from 60 hotels have been on strike since last summer.

Thanks for reading. If you have any questions, you are welcome to reply to this newsletter or email california@poorpeoplescampaign.org.