

Thu, Mar 7, 2024

CALIFORNIA



Last weekend, Sacramento heard our demands loud and clear—and our work to make sure those demands are heard on Election Day goes on. Read on for a jam-packed recap of the Mass Assembly and a glance at our upcoming GOTV efforts, plus info on some important meetings and a fundraiser for Palestinian children and families.

Announcement

This International Women's Day, we stand with Palestinian women, children, & families against the Israel/US genocide including bombing & starvation.

**FUNDRAISER TO SUPPORT
PALESTINIAN CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

All proceeds to **Middle Eastern Children's Alliance** who are organizing food & direct support on the ground in Gaza.

MARCH 10 1PM PST / 4PM EST

Fundraiser to support Palestinian children and families

Sunday Mar 10, 1pm PT | [RSVP](#)

This International Women's Day, Global Women's Strike, a national PPC partner, is holding an online event in solidarity with Palestinian women, children and families against the Israel/US genocide, which includes bombing and starvation. All proceeds go to Middle Eastern Children's Alliance, which is organizing food and other direct support in Gaza. If you can't attend, you can donate [here](#).

Upcoming meetings

Los Angeles regional meeting

Saturday Mar 9, 11am | [RSVP](#)

Please note the change in date and time!

Come and hear first-hand reports on our Mass Assembly in Sacramento. We'll also start planning for upcoming actions, including commemorating Dr. King's assassination. All are welcome; please invite your family, friends and communities.

Statewide Mass Assembly report-back

A special organizing meeting

Wednesday Mar 13, 6:30pm | [RSVP](#)

Join us for a report-back of our powerful Mass Assembly and march. You can also help us organize upcoming 2024 efforts, including events for April 4, the anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. At our Wednesday meetings, 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.

Recap



Mass Assembly: The clouds part in Sacramento

Under stormy skies, more than 350 people gathered in Sacramento and took to the streets to demand that our elected officials address the crisis of death by poverty. Folks in Southern California left before dawn in cars, vans and a bus and were joined by others from the Bay Area, Fresno, Modesto, Madera, San Jose, Nevada County and nearer Sacramento neighborhoods. Our demand: that elected officials end the policy murder where 800 people die every day from poverty in the richest nation in the world.

The day started at Westminster Presbyterian Church, where our wonderful theomusicologist Arnaé Batson led us in song as we prepared ourselves for the day ahead. Then, as we gathered outside, the sun came out and we marched through the streets of Sacramento to the State Capitol. Marchers were greeted by the voices of Arnaé and Pauline Pisano from the Kairos Center to open our rally.

Powerful testifiers spoke to why we need change now!



Genie Sullivan from Wood Street Commons in Oakland spoke about growing up poor and queer in a society that accepts neither: “The narrative in the news, movies, popular culture and perpetuated by many political figures is that poverty is a personal problem, that homelessness is a personal problem, that my parents needed to work harder, that I now as an adult need to just learn how to hustle better. I am here to tell you today that poverty and homelessness is not a personal problem; it is a systemic issue.”



Irene Green, vice president of bargaining for SEIU 1000, one of the state's largest unions, challenged us with these words: "Let us confront an uncomfortable truth. In California, the world's fourth largest economy in the world, 18 million people live in poverty. How is that possible? How can we allow that? We can't! Poverty is not just a condition; it's a death sentence. But there is hope. Together we have the power to challenge this. We can uproot systemic poverty and racism."



Eduardo Najera, a father and low-wage worker from the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles, explained the realities of living in poverty: "People like me who are low-wage workers, we have to work two or three jobs to pay for rent, food and basic necessities. And the essential workers who got us through the pandemic, they were never paid well or respected—and in fact it's not been acknowledged that many of them died. Now as a community we have the opportunity to unite as one voice and make change!"



As clouds once again gathered and the wind picked up, Melany Escobar, age 9 (and daughter of quad chair Rose Gudiel Escobar) led us in our traditional chant: *Forward together, not one step back!*

Similar events were held in 32 states as part of a national day of action to launch a 40week effort to mobilize poor and low-wage voters. You can see some of them on the [national PPC Facebook page](#). And you can watch the [video](#) of the Sacramento rally if you missed it, or if you want to relive it!



Rev Liz Theoharis shared the collage above on social media, adding, “We won’t stop until the concerns of poor and low-wage voters are fully addressed.”

And Bishop Barber posted this: “In Selma this past weekend, the White House used our mantra ‘Forward Together!’—while our #PoorPeoplesCampaign held simultaneous assemblies in 32 states. Only living wages, healthcare, voting rights and ending the death of 250k ppl/yr will get us there. Let’s do it!”

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

News

PPC activists “descend on state capitals, demanding end to deprivation”

National coverage of the Mass Assemblies included [Common Dreams](#) and [People's World](#) as well as many regional news outlets. Powerful statements from PPC activists from across the country were featured.

“We know the power that state houses have in impacting policy, which is why we are here demanding that we abolish poverty and have full, free, and expanded voting rights,” said PPC Tri-Chair Savina Martin of Boston, quoted in The Somerville Times. “We gathered here today—a fusion movement of poor and low-wealth people, faith leaders, advocates and allies from across the state—to say we do not accept poverty as the fourth leading cause of death in America.... We are making history today with our collective efforts across the country, and we will make our power felt from the State House to the White House, we will wake the sleeping giant, and we will be a resurrection, not an insurrection.”

Bishop Barber is also quoted. “Poor and low-wage voters have the power to change electoral outcomes up and down the ballot in November,” he said. “We are putting politicians in every state on notice: If you want our votes, you must legislate to end the crisis of death by poverty in America.”

State news coverage included [Alabama](#), [Delaware](#), [Florida](#), [Georgia](#), [Illinois](#), [Maine](#), [Maryland](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Michigan](#), [Missouri](#), [Nebraska](#), [North Carolina](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [Rhode Island](#), [South Carolina](#), [Tennessee](#) and [Texas](#), among others.

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