



# FAIRNESS PROJECT

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## 2022 in Review



# Our mission: Winning ballot measures & changing lives.

## Who We Are

The Fairness Project is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advancing social and economic justice through citizen-initiated ballot measures.

Born out of the labor movement, our organization puts political power directly into the hands of voters where traditional legislative paths have failed due to gridlock and polarization.

Since 2016, no organization has a better track record of winning progressive issues at the ballot box, including:

- Raising the minimum wage
- Guaranteeing paid leave
- Expanding Medicaid
- Ending predatory debt collection
- Enacting meaningful police accountability
- Defending reproductive rights
- Protecting direct democracy

## 31 victories

We've helped to lead dozens of campaigns to victory in 17 different states since 2016, providing support and strategic guidance from incubation to GOTV and beyond.

## 9 million workers

While Congress hasn't passed a minimum wage increase in 13 years, our work to increase the minimum wage in eight states has led to more than 9 million low-wage workers getting a raise.

## 1 million patients

Through our seven successful Medicaid expansion campaigns, primarily in red states, we've helped to expand health care access for more than 1 million low-income Americans.

# Our Process



## Incubate Campaigns Early

We help local partners build a solid foundation through a rigorous incubation process that includes polling, legal and policy vetting, coalition building, and realistic budgeting. When we greenlight a campaign, we know it has a path to victory.



## Build “Odd Bedfellows” Coalitions

Winning progressive change in red and purple states requires that we bring together grassroots advocates, business leaders, faith groups, and other allies to serve as messengers to moderate or conservative voters.



## Win with High-Caliber Campaigns

We not only invest in campaigns, we offer hands-on support from start to finish on everything from messaging to modeling to vendor selection – making sure our campaigns have all the tools they need to win.





# 2022 VICTORIES

The Fairness Project led **six issue-focused ballot measure campaigns** to victory in 2022. By working closely with local partners, we built diverse coalitions, provided hands-on strategic and financial support, and secured earned and paid media to help get out the vote. As a result of these wins, **millions of people** will have more access to health care, higher wages, protection from debt collectors, and their reproductive freedom protected.



## Healthcare Rising Arizona

In a blow to for-profit lenders and predatory debt collectors, voters in Arizona overwhelmingly passed a ballot measure backed by the Fairness Project that will substantially rein in debt collection practices and protect working families burdened with medical debt. Prop 209, the Arizona Protection from Predatory Debt Collection Act, will cap the interest rate on medical debt at 3%, limit wage garnishment to a maximum of 10% of earnings, and increase the value of Arizonans' assets, such as cars and homes, that are protected from repossession.



## Yes on A Los Angeles

The Yes on A campaign, a coalition supported by the Fairness Project, passed a measure that will allow the L.A. County Board of Supervisors to impeach a sitting sheriff for cause. This marks a major step towards accountability for the L.A. Sheriff's Department, which has repeatedly demonstrated corruption, abuses of power, and violence against marginalized communities.



## Michigan Reproductive Freedom for All

The Fairness Project worked with the Reproductive Freedom for All campaign in Michigan to pass a citizen-initiated ballot measure, Proposal 3, that will enshrine reproductive rights into Michigan's state constitution – including the right to have an abortion. Volunteers collected a record-setting number of signatures in order to qualify the measure, and despite a well-funded disinformation campaign from anti-choice extremists, the measure won by more than 56%.

# 2022 VICTORIES



## **Raise the Wage Nebraska**

In a major win for working families, voters in Nebraska approved a Fairness Project-backed proposal to raise Nebraska's minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2026, affecting approximately 150,000 workers. Nebraska now joins nearly a dozen states that have passed a \$15 minimum wage and will reach the milestone in the next few years, and it is the eighth state where the Fairness Project has run a successful minimum wage campaign.



## **South Dakotans Decide Healthcare**

Working with the South Dakotans Decide Healthcare campaign, the Fairness Project this year won its seventh campaign to expand Medicaid to more low-income families and individuals, this time in deep red South Dakota. One of only 12 states that had not expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, South Dakota will now ensure Medicaid eligibility for an estimated 42,000 additional residents, and it will also keep \$328 million in tax dollars in-state every year. The Fairness Project worked with coalition partners for more than two years to make this victory possible.

**“Since day one, our partners at the Fairness Project have been deeply invested in the effort to finally expand Medicaid for South Dakotans, and this win would not have been possible without them.”**

**—Zach Marcus, South Dakotans Decide Healthcare**



## **Vermont for Reproductive Liberty**

The Fairness Project partnered with the Vermont for Reproductive Liberty campaign to pass a legislatively referred ballot measure, Proposition 5, that formally codified reproductive freedom into the state constitution. This will ensure that Vermonters have the right to seek an abortion, use contraception, and access other forms of reproductive care without interference for generations to come.



# BALLOT MEASURE RESCUE CAMPAIGN

Ballot measures have been an incredibly successful tool for voters to make progress despite gridlocked state legislatures. **But as a result, direct democracy itself is now under attack.** In addition to our proactive campaigns to secure wins for working people, the Fairness Project is fighting to **defend the ballot measure process** to ensure citizens can use this critical tool for years to come. We've already **organized \$5.6 million to fight back.**

## South Dakotans for Fair Elections

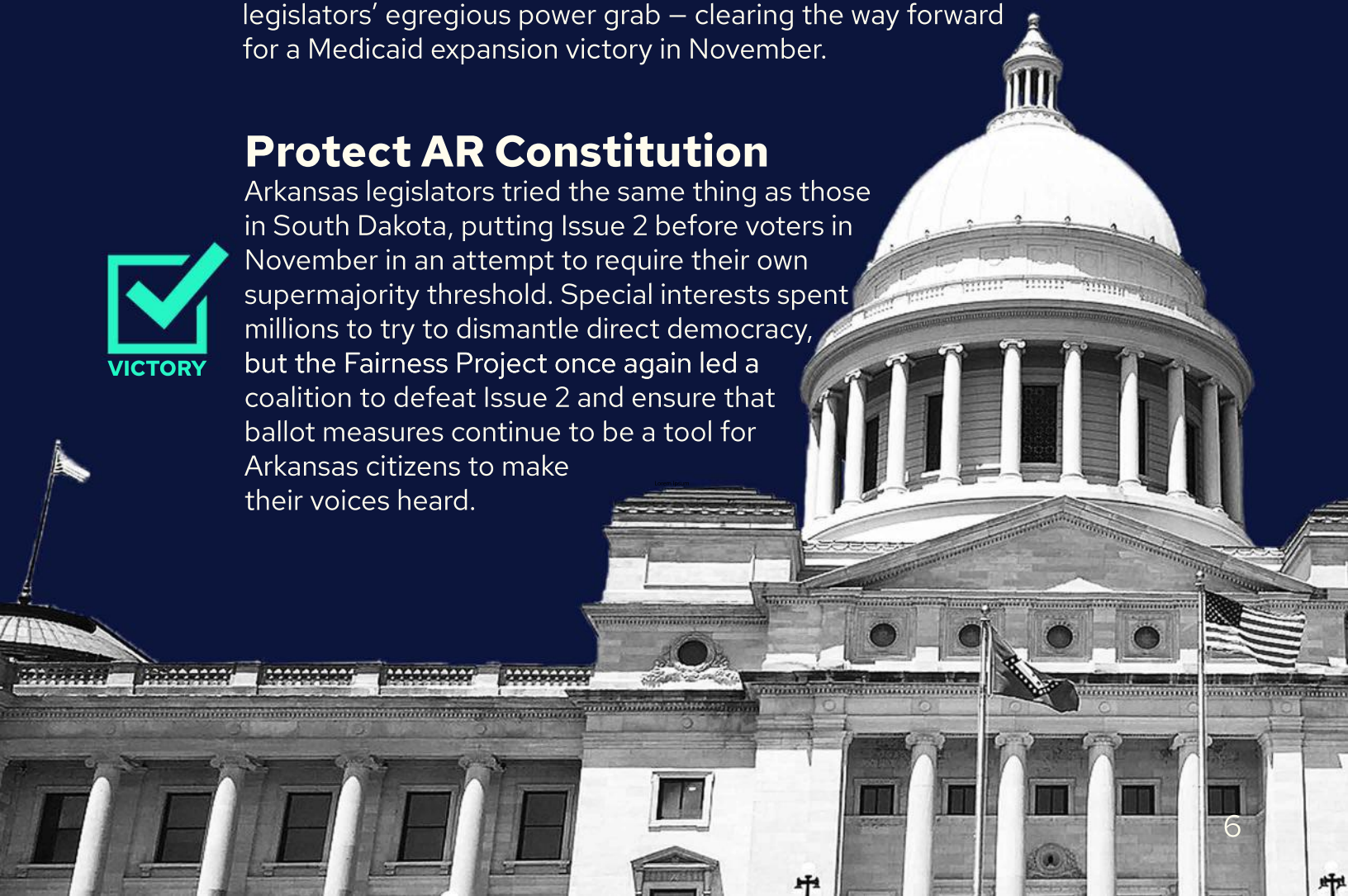


Knowing that Medicaid expansion would be on the ballot for voters in November 2022, extremist South Dakota legislators wanted to do everything they could to block it from passing – even changing the rules of the game. They proposed Amendment C, which would have required state constitutional amendments to be approved by a supermajority of voters, a transparent attempt to entrench minority rule and block the will of the people. The Fairness Project, working with local partners, led the campaign to defeat Amendment C in June and stop state legislators' egregious power grab – clearing the way forward for a Medicaid expansion victory in November.

## Protect AR Constitution



Arkansas legislators tried the same thing as those in South Dakota, putting Issue 2 before voters in November in an attempt to require their own supermajority threshold. Special interests spent millions to try to dismantle direct democracy, but the Fairness Project once again led a coalition to defeat Issue 2 and ensure that ballot measures continue to be a tool for Arkansas citizens to make their voices heard.







# DRIVING THE NEWS

*The Fairness Project has been quietly racking up victories and making progress at the state and local level since 2016. This year, **the national media took notice** of our efforts, covering more of our work to secure victories for working families across the country during the 2022 cycle – **even in deep red and purple states**.*

## Voters Have Expanded Medicaid in 6 States. Is South Dakota Next?

**Opinion: \$15 minimum wage is a home run policy. Why must voters pass it themselves?**

**“THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF A VERY LONG ARC”: THE MIDTERMS PROVE ABORTION CAN GALVANIZE VOTERS**

**'So much relief': South Dakota voters pass Medicaid expansion**

Nonprofit scores with progressive health ballot measures in red states

**Ballot measures helped get progressive policies passed this year—but they could come under attack**

**Midterm Voters Sent a Clear Message on Support for Abortion Rights**

**Get in touch:** ballot measure experts at the Fairness Project are available to speak on and off the record, in print, audio, and video formats, about ballot measure campaigns. We are also open to providing commentary and analysis on political news and developments relating to ballot measures and direct democracy.

**Members of the media can reach out to us at [press@thefairnessproject.org](mailto:press@thefairnessproject.org).**



# OUR IMPACT

Through our **31 campaign victories** across 17 states, the Fairness Project has impacted **tens of millions of people** since 2016 – and we're just getting started.

## Arizona



Minimum Wage and Paid Leave, 2016



Ending Predatory Medical Debt Collection, 2022

## Arkansas



Minimum Wage, 2018



Ballot Measure Rescue Campaign, 2022

## California



Minimum Wage, 2016

## Colorado



Minimum Wage, 2016



Ending Predatory Payday Lending, 2018



Paid Family and Medical Leave, 2020

## Idaho



Medicaid Expansion, 2018

## Massachusetts



Minimum Wage, 2018

## Maine



Minimum Wage, 2016



Medicaid Expansion, 2017

## Michigan



Paid Sick Leave, 2018



Reproductive Freedom, 2022

## Missouri



Medicaid Expansion, 2020



Minimum Wage, 2018

## Nebraska



Medicaid Expansion, 2018



Ending Predatory Payday Lending, 2020



Minimum Wage, 2022

## Oklahoma



Medicaid Expansion, 2020

## South Dakota



Ballot Measure Rescue Campaign, 2022



Medicaid Expansion, 2022

## Utah



Medicaid Expansion, 2018

## Vermont



Reproductive Freedom, 2022

## Washington



Minimum Wage and Paid Leave, 2016

## Municipalities



San Antonio, TX  
Paid Sick Leave, 2018



Austin, TX  
Police Reform, 2021



Tucson, AZ  
Minimum Wage, 2021



Cleveland, OH  
Police Reform, 2021



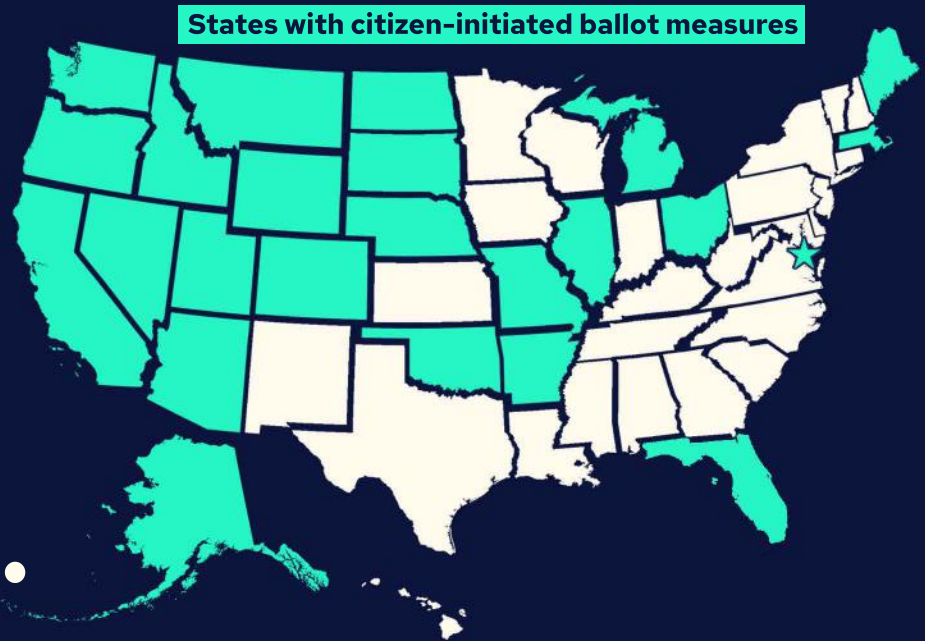
Los Angeles County,  
Police Reform, 2022





# OUR NEXT FIGHTS

No state  
is too  
“red”  
to make  
progress.



## **Reproductive Rights**

Ten states where abortion is currently banned or threatened have citizen-initiated ballot measure processes that can amend state constitutions and restore reproductive freedom.

## **Raising Wages**

Citizens have the power to vote themselves a raise in the eight states where the minimum wage is still below \$10/hour.

## **Paid Family & Medical Leave**

Twelve states with citizen-initiated ballot measures have absolutely no requirement for paid sick days. Even more ballot measure states lack paid family leave.

## **Ending Predatory Lending and Debt Collection**

More than 1 in 4 Americans has debt in collections. Voters have the power to cap interest rates on short-term “payday” loans and on medical debt, as well as limit how debt collectors can come after families who get a little behind.

## **Defending Direct Democracy**

Extremist state legislatures are attacking ballot measure processes themselves – changing the rules of the game to make it harder for voters to put issues on the ballot and win on Election Day. These accelerating efforts must be defeated.



**See you next year!**  
**[thefairnessproject.org](https://thefairnessproject.org)**

