A PERFECT STORM

LESSONS FROM THE DEFEAT OF PROPOSITION 23

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Prepared by
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for FNTG

Photo courtesy of Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Prop
http://communitiesagainstprop23.com

WHITE PAPER

Funders Network on Transforming the Global Economy (FNTG)

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FNTG
FUNDERS NETWORK ON TRANSFORMING THE GLOBAL ECONOMY
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Introductory Note

Increasing investment in fossil-fuel infrastructure resistance struggles through grassroots organizing and movement building has been an important element in FNTG's work, part of a broader effort by others within philanthropy to ensure that equity and social justice ("differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities" in UNFCCC terms) remains central to the climate debate.

In 2006, California's Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) was signed into law. Four years later a measure to suspend implementation of AB 32, Proposition 23, was put on the state ballot. As most funders concerned with climate know, Prop 23 was soundly defeated. In the end over 61% of California voters rejected this pernicious effort to repeal AB 32.

This case study, developed with great insight and understanding of the issues and political dynamics by Catherine Lerza, examines a less well-known part of the Prop 23 story: The role in its defeat played by the grassroots organizing sector made up of community based organizations, their networks and their NGO allies, rooted in communities of color and experienced in voter mobilization and electoral campaigns.

In documenting the work done by the grassroots sector in helping bring about a crucial win among a series of larger defeats on the national and international climate front, this paper can provide important insights into the changing nature of climate politics in the US. It can also serve as a guide for rethinking what climate funding must encompass to be successful in the years and decades to come.

As Cathy notes in the course of her report, the role of mainstream environmental groups will be different than in the past, and funding for organizations led by and rooted in communities of color will need to become much more central to the strategy and mission of foundations concerned about climate change. This funding, she points out, will have to be ongoing rather than episodic, support core infrastructure (including coordination, research, communications and leadership development), and help deepen and build on the already strong commitment of people of color to an environmental agenda.

This case study is part of a series of initiatives FNTG is undertaking, which include the production of a short video, *Rising Tide* highlighting the work of community organizers behind the Prop 23 effort. A link to the film and other materials can be found on our website. Along with learning calls, briefings and other activities we hope this study helps contribute to the process of "rethinking" what climate funding needs to look like in the face of a rapidly changing world.

We greatly appreciate support from Jessica Bailey and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund in helping provide resources making this case study possible. We look forward to ongoing dialogue around these issues with philanthropic colleagues, and with activists doing the hard work day to day.

~ Mark Randazzo, FNTG Coordinator

INTRODUCTION

"It's hard to believe
They make it hard to breathe
They're tryin to make a profit
Offa you and offa me"

No on 23 hip hop anthem
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCR4QF7w7Aw)

2010 was not a good year for climate protection. Federal climate legislation died the death of a thousand cuts in the Senate; the Obama Administration, with the exception of EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, failed to fight for the strong programs it had promised; and, in November, scores of climate champions in the Congress, Governors' mansions, and state legislatures lost their seats to climate deniers.

Amidst all of this shone one bright light: the resounding defeat of California's Proposition 23, an oil company-funded attempt to gut the nation's toughest climate protection law. By a nearly two-to-one margin, Californians said no to Prop 23, despite high unemployment rates and a sluggish economy. And bucking the national trends, they elected a stable of climate champions to top-of-the-ticket state offices and the US Congress.

The Prop 23 victory has been called a perfect storm. But the storm was not a naturally occurring one. It was the result of some important rainmakers, cloud seeders and visionaries who seized the moment and recognized that the time had come for environmental politics in California to change. For the first time, people of color led a statewide environmental campaign on their own terms, and as partners with, not subordinates to, mainstream environmental organizations. To mix metaphors: everyone who needed to be at the table was there. The seating arrangements were not always easy to work out, but everyone stayed for the whole meal –and it was delicious.

So what happened in California? Why were Californians able to buck the national trends and reaffirm the state's hard-won climate leadership? What can we learn from this victory and how can we build on it, not only in California, but around the nation and the world? This White Paper will provide background about Prop 23; describe the no on Prop 23 campaign; and identify key lessons learned and paths forward. Its focus is the role communities of color and people of color–led organizations played in this historic win.

HISTORY

What was Proposition 23 and why did it matter?
Prop 23 would have suspended the comprehensive greenhouse gas emissions reduction program put in place in 2007 by AB 32, California's Global Warming Solutions Act, until the state's official unemployment rate fell to 5.5 percent or less for four quarters in a row. (Note: Unemployment in CA was about 12 percent in 2010 and, since 1976, has fallen below six percent only during economic booms, and rarely for more than four quarters in a row.) While the measure's "official" goal was to protect jobs and the economy, its real objective was the defacto repeal of AB 32 – and the consequent derailing of climate policy across the nation.

Drafted in 2009 by two Right Wing activists from San Diego, the initiative's original all- volunteer signature gathering drive was spluttering when two Texas-based oil companies, Tesoro and Valero Energy Resources, got wind of the proposal. They essentially highjacked it and launched their own massive $2 million paid signature gathering campaign. In May 2010, the measure qualified for the November 2010 ballot as Proposition 23.

Calling it the California Jobs Initiative, the Prop 23 campaign hit economic issues hard, claiming that AB 32, and indeed the state's long history of incentives for clean energy and energy efficiency, had destroyed California's economy and cost thousands of jobs. Tesoro and Valero were the yes campaign's main bankrollers, but were joined by other interests including the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, the organization behind the infamous Proposition 13. At the time Prop 23 qualified, the yes campaign predicted it would raise $80 -100 million, the largest expenditure for a state ballot measure in the history of the U.S.

Forces align to fight Prop 23
While going head-to-head with a $100 million campaign was a daunting prospect, the environmental and environmental justice communities and their allies in business and labor took action quickly to do just that. **The no on 23 effort encompassed two major coalitions -- Stop Dirty Energy and Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Proposition –working in partnership. Together, they represented a long overdue coming together of environmental, economic justice and racial justice leadership in California and the emergence of a people of color environmental majority with political clout**.

With support from investment banker and progressive political donor Tom Steyer, the mainstream environmental community organized **Stop Dirty Energy**, which scored a coup when it signed up former U.S. Secretary of State and Bechtel Corp. CEO Republican George Schultz as its co-chair with Steyer. The coalition ultimately encompassed several hundred organizations. In addition to virtually every environmental and environmental justice and clean energy organization in the state, it included a huge array of businesses; organized labor; Kaiser Permanente and other health care providers; public health organizations, including the American Lung Association; faith communities; local governments; and a diverse array of elected officials. www.stopdirtyenergy.com

The California environmental justice community helped to create and shape AB 32, working with both then-Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to create the strongest greenhouse emissions standards possible. In addition, the EJ community sought to ensure that climate policies would not cause further harm to communities already burdened by the highest levels of pollution in the state and would instead create new benefits for those communities. To accomplish this, at the EJ community's recommendation, AB 32 mandated the creation of the Environmental Justice Advisory Community (EJAC), to ensure that implementation of the law advanced social and economic justice along with strong climate controls. EJ community advocacy also resulted in the elimination of a mandated cap and trade program with language that required those charged with implementing the law to explore an array of market-based programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

However, because the EJAC did not receive any state funding for administration, research, outreach and community organizing, virtually all of its funding came from a small number of foundations. It was able to operate for three years, during which time members produced hundreds of pages of recommendations for the AB 32 implementation/scoping plan. These recommendations proposed immediate, direct, and verifiable greenhouse gas reductions, but did not include cap and trade. Unfortunately, the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the agency charged with final development of the AB 32 scoping plan, ignored virtually all of them.

In the end, despite EJAC's extensive work, the CARB plan, released in 2009, was built around a cap and trade system. Believing CARB had failed to live up to its responsibilities, several EJAC members sued the state on the grounds that it had failed to properly consider greenhouse gas reduction alternatives as mandated in the law. On March 17, 2011, a San Francisco Superior Court judge ruled that CARB had violated CA's Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because its

Environmental justice and community groups coalesce to oppose Prop 23—on their own terms

As the mainstream environmental campaign organized with strong environmental justice support, **environmental and social justice leaders made an important decision to create a separate coalition -- not just to defeat Prop 23, but to build long-term a shared vision of prosperity and environmental quality and a progressive, environmental electorate that looks like California**. The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, later joined by the California Environmental Justice Alliance, the Greenlining Institute, Asian Pacific Environmental Network, and PowerPAC, formed **Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Proposition (**Communities United), a coalition of more than 120 environmental, social and economic justice organizations from across the state. Most of Communities United's members were also members of Stop Dirty Energy and the Ella Baker Center had a seat on Stop Dirty Energy's executive committee. While remaining independent, the two coalitions crafted a working relationship rooted in shared values and messages, but with an understanding that each would develop its own strategies and implement them.
http://communitiesagainstprop23.com/

The campaign unfolds

A July 2010 statewide Field Poll indicated that 48 percent of likely voters opposed Prop 23 and 36 percent supported it, with the remaining 14 percent undecided. The undecideds, who tend to be political independents, quickly became the focus of the campaign. In California, 35 percent of those independents are people of color, a fact which gave Communities United the indisputable political gravitas and leverage that underpinned its collaboration with Stop Dirty Energy. This polling data, combined with the scale and diversity of the forces and communities coming together, convinced leaders of both coalitions that the "no" campaign did not need to match the "yes" campaign dollar for dollar. They set $25- 30 million in c4 funding and $2-6 million in c3 dollars as their goal.

To insure that the California labor movement, many of whose members had supported AB 32 and the green jobs agenda, was not swayed by Prop 23's

exploration of alternatives to cap-and-trade was inadequate. For EJ leaders and community members, cap-and-trade allows the worst polluters – who are disproportionately located in low-income communities of color that already bear the largest burden of air toxins and other environmental problems -- to continue or increase their pollution by buying "reductions." The judge's ruling has effectively put AB 32 on hold, and required CARB to conduct a thorough analysis of alternatives to cap and trade. In the meantime, CARB director Mary Nichols announced that the Board would delay implementation of cap and trade until 2013. For EJ leaders, this is positive because it means cap and trade is not a done deal, but it also means that the state will be doing nothing to reduce industrial greenhouse gas emissions in the interim.

On August 24, 2011 CARB staff presented the Air Resources Board its required analysis of several greenhouse gas emission reduction options, including cap and trade, that concluded --no surprise here -- that cap and trade is the best of these alternatives. Despite a huge community presence from across the state and extensive testimony in opposition to cap and trade from community members reflecting California's full racial and geographic diversity, the Board voted to accept the staff's findings, meaning that cap and trade remains the centerpiece of California's global warming solutions. EJ leaders continue their fight, and immediately appealed the CARB decision. They are also organizing in communities across the state and demanding a meeting with Governor Jerry Brown.

The bottom line is that EJ communities are committed to finding a carbon reduction mechanism that will result in cleaner air and healthier communities for all Californians. Rejection of cap-and-trade is not a rejection of AB 32 and climate solutions, but a demand for climate solutions that work for people and the planet. The struggle in California will be a long one.

economic rationale, the University of California Labor Center, the Labor Network for Sustainability, the Apollo Alliance, the Blue Green Alliance and key labor leaders took action early. They helped produced educational materials for unions and initiated scores of conversations with local and state leaders and rank and file members across the state. By getting out in front early and developing materials that highlighted AB 32's role as an economic and green jobs catalyst, organized labor became a key element of the no on 23 efforts. The 2.1 million member CA Federation of Labor joined the Stop Dirty Energy coalition and provided voter education, mobilization and turn out support to the campaign.

Finally, thanks to actions brought by then-Attorney General (and gubernatorial candidate) Jerry Brown, Proposition 23 ("The California Jobs Initiative") was renamed, far more accurately, "An Initiative to Suspend Clean Energy and Air Pollution Standards." Despite fierce objections from Prop 23 backers, this language is what appeared on the ballot and in all official voter education materials. Candidates' stances on climate, as demonstrated by positions on Prop 23, became a litmus test and the ballot language helped to reinforce support for Prop 23 as a negative, backward and damaging vision for California's future. This enabled the no forces to get in front of messaging and framing immediately without playing defense.

Separate campaigns working in partnership

While working collaboratively, Stop Dirty Energy and Communities United remained separate entities. It's worth exploring why.

To be candid, the history between California's mainstream environmentalists and environmental justice organizations is not a happy one. In an effort to look ahead, this paper will not dwell on the past except to note that the memory of the stinging defeat of 2006's Proposition 87, which would have placed a tax on oil company profits to fund renewable energy research and development, was strong and painful in 2010. Well funded (to the tune of $40 million) by two progressive donors, the Prop 87 campaign did not engage communities of

color, labor or low income communities. As a result, the no campaign, funded by Chevron and other oil companies, was able to immediately and effectively tag the measure as a tax on the poor. Thanks to a relentless, well targeted "no on 87" paid media campaign and the lack of a "yes on 87" ground game or media in those same targeted communities, Prop 87 was defeated by a nine point margin. That defeat was very much on the minds of both mainstream environmentalists and environmental justice leaders as they jumped into action on Prop 23.

Videos from the No on Prop 23 Campaign:

http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=no+on+prop+23&aq=f

Determined not to let corporate interests target and manipulate low income and communities of color again, EJ organizations took the offensive in 2010 to oppose Prop 23 and did not wait to be invited or engaged by mainstream groups. They knew that communities of color and low income communities would be the targets for the yes campaign's paid media and that the campaign would paint AB 32 as a job and economy killer. They knew it was imperative that people of color and low income community organizations reach their communities first with different messages. They also knew that they, not the mainstream groups, understood the right messages, messengers and media vehicles for their communities. In creating Communities United, EJ groups and their allies were able to retain full control over resources, strategies and messaging and to assert leadership in a manner not be possible had they been subsumed as a component of the Stop Dirty Energy Campaign, a possibility that was discussed at length, but ultimately rejected.

In addition, the leaders of Communities United recognized that while voters of color in California consistently express more support for environmental protections (including greenhouse gas emissions reductions) than do white voters, the perception is that people of color do not "understand" or prioritize environmental issues and that the "real" environmental constituency is white. The creation of Communities United was a clear statement that people of color have --and will act on-- strong environmental values, and are more likely to do so when organizations and individuals from their communities are visible leaders and when messages and campaign strategies are crafted and implemented by those leaders.

As a result of regular and consistent communications, the two coalitions were able to cooperate and reinforce one another – and avoid duplication and contradictions. No where was this more important than in the identification of the three central "no on 23" messages:

- Californians don't want outside interests, especially dirty Texas oil companies, dictating what our future will look like. California's future is a green, sustainable one and we want to keep it that way.
- The clean energy economy is the biggest jobs and economy driver in California, and is made possible by AB 32 and related green policies and programs. Don't destroy what is working for all Californians.
- By rolling back AB 32, Prop 23 will result in more air pollution and pollution related illnesses and public health problems, and undo years of work to improve public health for all Californians.

Photo courtesy of Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Prop

While the first message was at the core of most of Stop Dirty Energy's materials (and echoed repeatedly by campaign co-chair George Schultz), the health and jobs messages led in communities of color and were central to Communities United's media and organizing campaigns.

What happened on the ground

The Democratic Party and almost all Democratic candidates officially opposed prop 23. Jerry Brown and Barbara Boxer made their strong opposition to the measure a centerpiece of their campaigns. (Republican Senate candidate Carly Fiorina strongly supported Prop 23, but gubernatorial candidate Meg Whitman ultimately backpedaled away from the measure.) Many national environmental organizations, including the League of Conservation Voters and its CA affiliate, invested money and other resources into the no campaign as well. As already noted, the California Federation of Labor officially opposed Prop 23, and some of its member unions reached out to their members and their families through voter education materials and voter mobilization efforts. An extensive paid media campaign, funded primarily by the c4 Stop Dirty Energy that included TV, radio and mailers, began in late August. This media campaign was accompanied by c3 voter engagement efforts in targeted communities and aimed at independent voters and Latinos.

Communities United organized and implemented an impressive and large scale voter engagement program (funded by its own fundraising, by Stop Dirty Energy and by the CA League of Conservation Voters) which included:

- Conducting one-on-one conversations at the door or on the phone (in English, Spanish and Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese) with 250,000 households in the 10 counties that are home to 75 percent of CA's voters of color. Communities United partnered with existing organizations (Mobilize the Immigrant Vote, California Alliance, CA Environmental Justice Alliance and PowerPAC) for this part of the program, insuring that these organizations will continue to see themselves, and be seen, as environmental leaders.

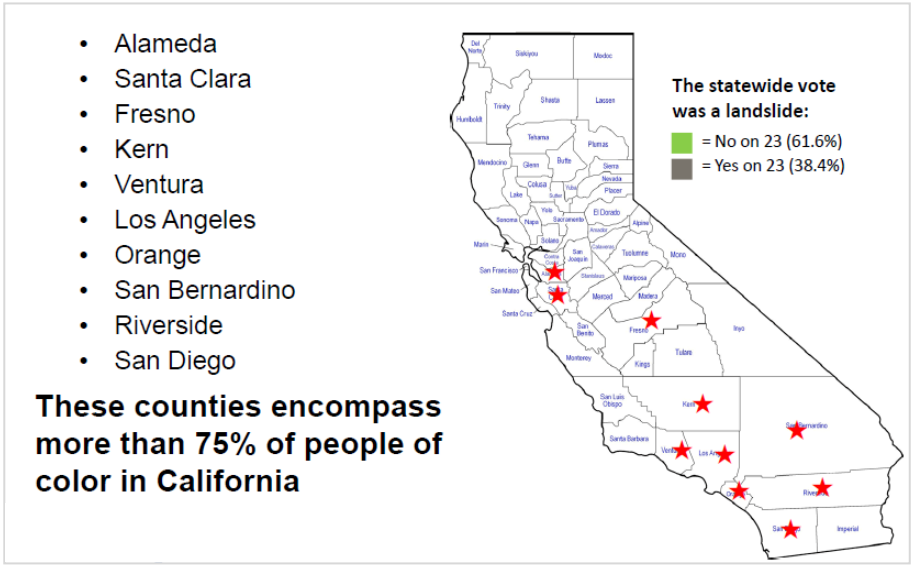
- Mailing 280,000 pieces of direct mail (also in English, Spanish and Chinese) to targeted likely voters of color in those same 10 counties.

- Sponsoring a successful *UV-MC* caravan to six college campuses across the state which featured popular hip hop artists and attracted thousands of young people to the cause. A hip hop no on 23 anthem went viral on You tube thanks to the tour and the popularity of the artists. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QCR4QF7w7Aw

- Organizing Days of Action – rallies and street events that drew tens of thousands of activists and community members in nearly a dozen California communities, including Wilmington (which is home to several major refineries), San Diego, Riverside and Oakland. These events all attracted earned media, particularly ethnic radio stations and newspapers, which are the main source of news for many Californians.

- Reaching every ethnic media outlet in California in its own language, with activists and leaders from those communities. This was the first time an environmental campaign reached out to California ethnic media outlets, which in many cases are the primary sources of news and opinion for their communities. Stories appeared in everything from large print dailies like *La Opinion* in Los Angeles to small weeklies and big radio and TV outlets such as Univision to small

community-based stations. In addition, Communities United purchased $200,000 worth of radio time in every major media market in the state and ran Spanish language ads featuring LA mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and legendary United Farm Workers founder Delores Huerta.

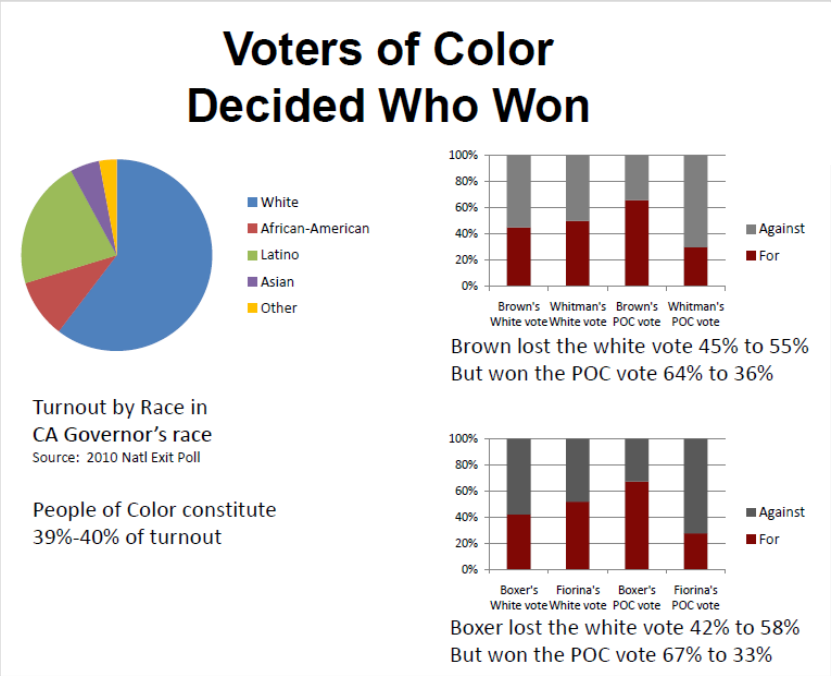


A word about money: Because Communities United and Stop Dirty Energy were out of the box quickly, and with clear and obviously effective strategies in place --and because the stakes were so high—fundraising for both efforts moved quickly. Here is where George Schultz' participation (and then-Governor Schwarzenegger's as well) was key: while progressive donors answered the call for support generously, Schultz and Schwarzenegger were able to convince many conservative donors and corporations in California to stay out of the fight. Early money to oppose 23 and pressure from two high profile Republican lawmakers who take climate seriously helped level the playing financial field and in the end, No on 23 forces raised around $30 million, while the yes campaign spluttered and, recognizing it had been outflanked, ultimately raised only about $10 million.

Photo courtesy of Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Prop
http://communitiesagainstprop23.com

THE RESULTS

It wasn't even close –**Prop 23 went down to a resounding defeat, with 61.6 percent voting no and only 38.4 percent voting yes**. But there is more to the story: Voters of color comprised 37 percent of the electorate and whites 63 percent. However, **73 percent of voters of color and 57 percent of white voters voted against the measure.** One million new voters of color came to the polls in November 2010 in California, and clearly the vast majority of them opposed Prop 23. Even had white voters supported Prop 23, this huge outpouring of motivated voters of color would have guaranteed its defeat.



Voters of color were the climate firewall

Here's why: while environmentalist Jerry Brown defeated former Ebay CEO Meg Whitman in the Governor's race with about 52 percent of the vote overall, only **45 percent of white voters cast their ballots for him, while 64 percent of voters of color supported him.** Similarly, climate champion US Senator Barbara Boxer kept her seat, winning 54 percent of voters overall. However, **Senator Boxer got just 42 percent of the white vote, but a stunning 67 percent of the voters of color vote.** In other words, **these climate champions are in office today solely because of overwhelming support from voters of color.**

This is great news for climate and environmental issues. According to 2010 US Census data, California's population is now "majority minority," as the old, and soon to be outdated, cliché goes. Only 40 percent of its residents are white and 60 percent are of color. Latino/as account for nearly 38 percent of the population, with Asians (nearly 13 percent), African Americans (about six percent), Native Americans and mixed race individuals accounting for the remaining 22 percent. As noted above, however, the electorate is the mirror opposite: whites comprised 60 percent of the electorate in 2010. However, given current demographic trends, this proportion will change, possibly in time for the 2016 elections.

In 2010, about 10.3 million Californians voted. A little more than 17 million Californians were registered to vote and another 6.3 million Californians (most of them of color) were eligible to vote but not registered; by 2012, some 3.5 million immigrants in California will be eligible for naturalization, which

Race	Region	% Yes	% No
African American	Ladera Heights (70.8%)	19.8%	80.2%
	View Park-Windsor Hills (88%)	17%	83%
Asian American	Monterey Park (61.8%)	31.4%	68.6%
	Cerritos (58.4%)	36.2%	63.8%
Latino/as	East Los Angeles (97%)	23%	77%
	Belvedere (97%)	25%	75%

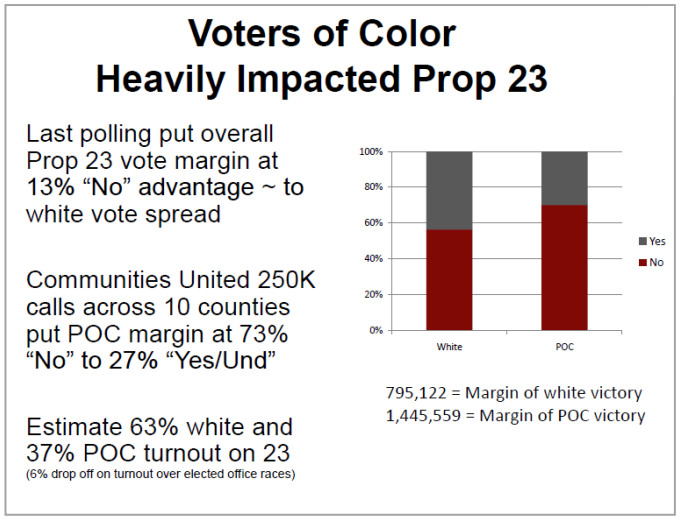
means they too will be eligible to vote. Any increases in voter turnout and registration will significantly increase the number of people of color coming to the polls in California.

And if the Prop 23 and related ballot outcomes are any indication, these changes should be positive ones for environmental and climate policy, if these new voters' environmental values can be turned into voting issues that resonate with them.

LOOKING AHEAD

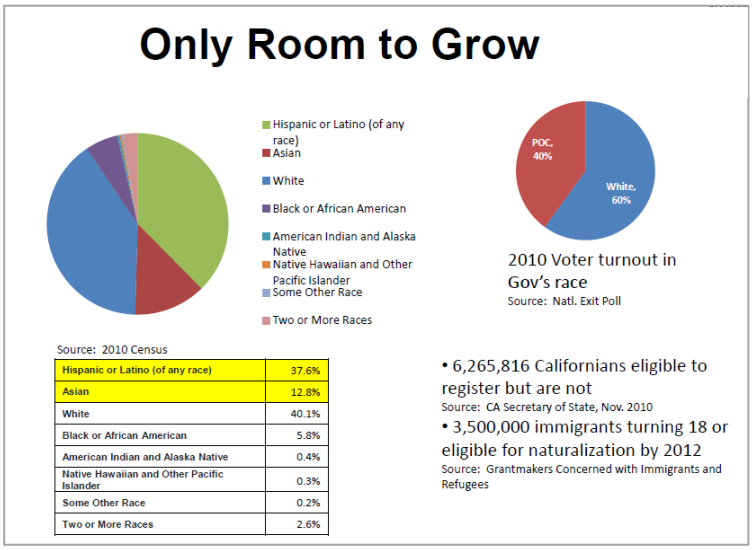
What are the lessons of the Prop 23 victory?

- People of color are environmentalists and are, in fact, the future of the environmental movement.
- Taking the offense and framing issues first were essential to victory. Prop 23 opponents organized early to seize the issue so that initiative backers were never really able to get traction with the "jobs killer" argument.
- Partnership and shared leadership, not command and control, enabled the creation of a smart, sophisticated campaign built on respect and a recognition of where political power in California really lies. Partners also acknowledged that community and constituency based organizations knew which messages and strategies would be most effective.
- The no on 23 efforts, especially Communities United, used existing infrastructure to reach voters by partnering with community organizations and with experienced civic engagement organizations like SCOPE/AGENDA in Los Angeles. No one relied on "paratrooper" organizers, but instead took advantage of existing organizers and organizations committed to engaging their communities around social, economic and environmental justice issues on an ongoing, long term basis.
- By creating a shared frame, but a variety of messages and messengers, the no on 23 effort was able to reach and sway the vast majority of Californians. Again, eschewing command and control, the campaigns listened to constituent organizations and communities and tailored messages and strategies for maximum effectiveness.
- Whatever difficulties existed among the leadership of the no on 23 efforts, they were never public. What **was** public was a united front that looked like California.
- While opposing Prop 23, the campaigns avoided the negative and instead created a vision of a sustainable, opportunity rich, healthy, diverse, democratic, and vibrant California built on broadly shared prosperity. The California envisioned by Californians United and its allies is a hopeful one.



A new environmental movement, led by people of color

Perhaps the single biggest takeaway from the Prop 23 battle is that **people of color are environmentalists.** They may not be members of mainstream Green Groups; they may not talk about issues the same way that so-called mainstream environmentalists do, but their values are just as strongly environmental ones. In fact, according to poll after poll, it appears that people of color are more concerned about environmental problems and more committed to environmental values than are white people. For example:



- A July 2011 Public Policy Institute of CA poll found that 61 percent of Californians believe the effects of global warming have already hit the state and 66 percent of Californians support AB 32's overall goal, with 58 percent believing action must be taken NOW to mitigate impacts. Blacks and Latinos (69 percent each) are much more likely than Asians (53 percent) and whites (51 percent) to say the state should act right away. Seventy-five percent of Californians also believe that global warming is a serious threat to the state's future economy and quality of life. Latinos (66 percent) and blacks (63 percent) are far more likely than whites (38 percent) and Asians (30 percent) to say global warming is a very serious threat to California.

- March 2009 poll found that in CA, 52 percent of whites said they considered themselves "environmentalists," but 83 percent of Asian Pacific Islanders (API) called themselves environmentalists.

- In July 2010, a Public Policy Institute of CA poll found that while 67 of all Californians polled said they supported AB 32, only 59 percent of white people supported it. However, 80 percent of Latinos, 75 percent of Asian Pacific Islanders and 69 percent of African Americans voiced support for AB 32.

- A November 2010 *LA Times*/USC poll found that Latinos and Asian Pacific Islanders are more concerned about global warming and air pollution than are whites. Just 27 percent of whites said they 'worried" about global warming, but 50 percent of Latino/as and 46 percent of APIs expressed worry. And while 31 percent of whites were concerned about air pollution, 66 percent of Latino/as and 51 percent of APIs were.

California is not alone

California's demographic changes are not unique. 2010 census data indicate that four states (CA, TX, HI, NM) and the District of Columbia are now "majority minority," and another dozen or so states are rapidly heading in that direction. Latino/as represent the fastest growing demographic group in the US, and today comprise about 20 percent of the population in CO, FL, NY, NV, and AZ and more than ten percent of the population of IL, VA, RI and CT. And Americans under 30 are already "majority minority," and are moving into leadership in business, politics and community life. **People of color, young people**

Photo courtesy of Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Prop http://communitiesagainstprop23.co m

and women (especially single women of all ages) together comprise what many call the "emerging American electorate" and it is they who will both determine environmental policy and live with the consequences of those decisions.

Again the good news is that the emerging electorate has environmental values and will act on them. But here is where the lessons of Prop 23 ring loud and clear. We cannot win by talking about "climate change" and "climate policy" and "greenhouse gas emission reductions" alone. It's true that reducing greenhouse gas emissions will benefit everyone on the planet, but HOW those reductions are achieved is the most pressing question for most people, including people of color, low -income communities and labor. Climate policy, like all public policy, can help or hurt; it can address and redress inequities or it can exacerbate them. It can create new opportunities or it can maintain the status quo.

In framing messages about Prop 23, Communities United focused on two things: public health, particularly air pollution and respiratory diseases that are epidemic in CA's low income communities of color, and the jobs and economic opportunity that will flow from an investment in a clean, sustainable economy**. Its messages never mentioned climate, but instead focused on AB 32 as a force for clean air and a new, more broadly shared prosperity for all Californians.** They also implied that Prop 23 was an attempt to undercut community power and the ability of communities of color to create their own sustainable, healthy futures. **The Communities United campaign emphasized that a positive, healthy future is possible – if individuals get involved and take action, in this case on Prop 23, but also long term on other issues. Communities United set the stage for long term organizing and mobilizing and, indeed, the organization has now morphed into Communities United for Clean Energy and Jobs.**

The movement on the ground is making gains, even as policy stalls

As Communities United For, this coalition has the potential to frame and drive environmental victories, not just in climate policy, but in air and water quality, smart growth and sustainable communities, water management, parks and open space and toxics. In fact, the organizations who are part of Communities United, working in concert with union and environmental allies, are already driving change, often on a community by community basis, but with real results. Some examples:

- In 2009, Communities for a Better Environment, working with local partners, prevented the city of Vernon in southeast Los Angeles County from building a 943 megawatt fossil fuel power plant. This plant would have annually emitted 1.7 million tons of toxins, such as PM2, SoX, Nox, etc., as well as 2.5 million tons of greenhouse gases. The campaign against this plant was led and carried by mostly Latina immigrants and Latino/a high school students. Their efforts prevented more than 100 million tons of greenhouse gases from being emitted into the atmosphere over the next four decades or more from that one single plant. At the time of the Vernon victory, some 24 similar new fossil fuels were being proposed across the state and this community-led win put all of them on hold. However, the Southern California Air Quality Management District and its utility industry allies responded by moving a bill through the state

legislature and into law that overturned the Vernon court victory and allowed new plant construction to continue (the City of Vernon had already ended its efforts to secure a permit for its plant). Environmental justice advocates have filed a law suit to challenge the legislation and insure that all Californians benefit from this grassroots victory.

- Chevron's Richmond CA refinery covers 3000 acres in the highly urbanized east side of San Francisco Bay; its emissions negatively effect the health of nearby low income African American, Latino/a, and Laotian communities. In 2009, Chevron announced plans to expand its operations to begin refining dirtier grades of crude oil, possibly including crude from the Canadian tar sands, a process that is more energy intensive than other kinds of refining. In addition, it would have emitted a host of pollutants, as well as an estimated 900,000 tons of greenhouse gases per year. A campaign led by CBE, Asian Pacific Environmental Network, and the West County Toxics Coalition organized local residents and stopped the project. The story is not over, however, since Chevron has come back with a new expansion proposal; the community remains committed in its opposition and the three organizations will continue to organize and advocate for a clean, sustainable future for Richmond.

- The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are the busiest in the nation, and before 2008, some 10,000 trucks drove in and out of their facilities every day, creating some of the dirtiest and most unhealthy air in the nation. The Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) in 2007 launched a Clean and Safe Ports Campaign whose mission was cleaning up the air and improving the lives of the primarily low income immigrants who drive those trucks. LAANE put together a coalition that included environmental organizations, labor, community residents, progressive businesses and elected officials to push for a comprehensive reform of port operations. In 2008, thanks to savvy campaigning and a brilliant use of insider/outsider tactics, the ports of LA and Long Beach adopted the plan; it has since been contested by the American Trucking Association (ATA) and others and is in legal and regulatory limbo as of this writing, but over the past three years, this program has resulted in the removal of nearly 7000 dirty trucks from highways and communities. As of August 2010, the Port of Los Angeles estimates that this new fleet of trucks means a reduction of more than 30 tons of diesel particulate matter annually, and equates to removing the particulate matter emissions of nearly 200,000 automobiles from California highways over the course of one year. Thanks to LAANE's membership in the national Partnership for Working Families, coalitions in Oakland, New York/New Jersey and Miami are demanding the same kinds of changes in their ports even as the ATA challenge continues.

Similar success stories can be found across California and the nation, and their direct impact on greenhouse gas emissions and air quality is significant, but at this point undocumented and too often dismissed as singular "local struggles." These local battles can be –and indeed have been -- leveraged into policy and electoral victories, as the history of the modern environmental movement and the environmental justice movement demonstrates. The national environmental community has embraced the defeat of Proposition 23, but it is part of a long strong and continuing string of mainstream victories fueled by grassroots environmental and social justice organizations.

For example, already in 2011, members of the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA), partnering with the mainstream environmental community, played a key role in winning the nation's most aggressive renewable energy standards, which increased California's mandate for renewable energy from 20 percent to 33 percent by 2020. EJ organizations not only helped make the bill's passage possible by securing three critical committee votes, but also added important components to the bill,

including codifying into the law the "Garamendi Principles" (a set of principles aimed at reducing the negative environmental impacts of proposed new energy transmission infrastructure) and a commitment to distributive generation via local renewable energy projects. Governor Jerry Brown signed this visionary bill into law in mid-April, in the midst of partisan bickering over the state budget and tax policy and near total gridlock in Sacramento. He has also committed to building 12,000 megawatts of distributive generation in California, despite massive opposition from utilities who want to continue their domination of power production and delivery. Serving on the official stakeholder implementation group, CEJA and its allies are committed to building a true clean energy future for California, one that is decentralized, sustainable and controlled by local communities, and will be at the forefront of advocacy and organizing, playing both insider and outsider roles.

Photo courtesy of Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Prop
http://communitiesagainstprop23.com

THE RESULTS

The Proposition 23 victory is worth careful examination for its implications for future funding. This White Paper is an invitation to begin that examination, including a set of conversations about what successful climate and environmental funding will look like in the years to come. A few big ideas jump out immediately, however.

- Communities of color do not need to be "educated" about environmental and climate issues. They need to be recognized as environmental and climate activists and, most important, as leaders. **Funding for organizations led by and rooted in communities of color should not be an "add on," but should instead be a driver of strategy and mission for foundations and donors concerned about climate change.**

- Mainstream environmental organizations still have important roles to play, but their future roles will likely be different than those of the past**. The Prop 23 experience points to the need to fund collaborations and partnerships in which mainstream organizations play important, but not dominant, roles.**

- **Funders need to support the infrastructure and "glue" that holds collaborations together (coordination, research, communications, leadership development), rather than efforts that use a "command and control" approach.** And this infrastructure needs to exist permanently, not just when a crisis or opportunity arises. The c3 progressive tables now operating in more than 20 states are good examples of this kind of on-going permanent collaboration.

- **Grassroots organizing and policy advocacy will not achieve appropriate scale victories or political power without concomitant and equal investments in civic engagement strategies, including voter registration, voter identification, and voter education and voter mobilization.** And here, it is important once again to **support and expand existing infrastructure** for voter engagement (in California, this includes the CA Alliance, Mobilize the Immigrant Vote, CA Environmental Justice Alliance, CA League of Conservation Voters, Communities United For and other environmental and progressive organizations) that are building people of color commitment to an environmental agenda.

- **Invest in the many leaders of color -- organizations as well as individuals --**who can speak powerfully and effectively about environmental and climate issues by linking them to healthy communities and an opportunity rich future based on sustainability and shared prosperity.

- **Support the ability of organizations to get out in front of issues and frame them first**, before the opposition does. Foundations in CA played key roles in supporting labor and communities of color to seize the Prop 23 frame early on and continued support enabled them to maintain that advantage. Prop 23 opponents also understood the value of different messages and messengers, all rooted in the same values, to engage different communities.

Examples of Foundation Support to Efforts Around Prop 23

The San Francisco Foundation
Recognizing the importance of community-based efforts to defend California's Global Warming Solutions Act, The San Francisco Foundation invested $200,000 into the education and voter mobilization activities of several of the leading members of the Communities United coalition including the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Communities for a Better Environment, and Greenlining Institute. The Foundation also invested in a New America Media to reach out to 200 ethnic media outlets about climate change.

The Solidago Foundation
Through its Environmental Justice and its Electoral Justice programs, The Solidago Foundation and its sister fund *See Forward Fund* invested over $200,000 in c3 and c4 funding respectively to support the connective efforts of Communities United, and provided general support to some of the strongest local and statewide groups including Asian Pacific Environmental Network, California EJ Alliance, California Calls, Communities for a Better Environment and Oakland Rising. The Foundation also supported the work of the Oakland-based Movement Generation Justice & Ecology Project, which provides in-depth analysis and information about the global ecological crisis, and facilitates strategic planning for action among organizers from urban Bay Area and national organizations working for economic and racial justice in communities of color.

Adequate funding allowed for sophisticated polling, communications strategies and research that were shared with the whole "no on 23" community on a regular basis.

- **Support data gathering and analysis to identify and aggregate the statewide and national environmental impacts of so called "local"** victories--stopping the construction of new power plants or cleans up like that achieved in the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, for example. Too often, these victories are dismissed as small and local, but in fact they have much larger implications, particularly if the impact of dozens of local victories were added together and viewed over time. This would enable EJ organizations, policymakers, the media and the public to see the larger context of their work and to claim the "scale" of impact that is now invisible.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This draft paper is an attempt to launch a conversation about what it will take to actually address global warming and climate change in the United States and to break through the climate denier, anti environmental noise machine. The defeat of Prop 23 is a high-water mark, but its impact was to protect an existing law. **The real challenge ahead is taking the energy, creativity, drive and disciple that fueled that no on 23 effort and turning it into a force for real change – a force with what Blue Green Alliance executive director Dave Foster calls "determinative political power."** If climate advocates had had determinative political power in 2010, they would not have had to fight the Prop 23 battle in the first place—all that time, energy and $30 million could have been spent advancing environmental and climate equity, not protecting the status quo.

Perhaps the most important lesson of Prop 23 is that there is a diverse, rich and growing community of people in California, and around the nation, who are **already** climate and environmental leaders and activists who are working every day to create a sustainable, equitable healthy and democratic future for themselves, their families and their communities. The challenge to us as climate and energy funders is to recognize what they have already accomplished and to support their ability to do even more. It's time to unleash their power.