

Somos Votantes

Climate Strategy Group: Due Diligence Notes

Executive Summary:

Somos Votantes provides a centralized hub for research, messaging, training, persuasion and mobilization of Latino Communities in support of Democratic causes and candidates. We are in just our second program cycle - in our first cycle we knocked on over 1.9 million doors to help turn out record numbers of Latino voters for President Biden. An estimated 1.4 million Latinos voted in Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin with President Biden winning more than 980,000 of those votes - giving him a margin of 40 points over Trump. Building on our 2020 work and extensive messaging research, we are continuing our program in the key states of Nevada, Arizona, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Somos focuses on quality programs and conversations with Latino voters & community members focusing on issues that matter most to them - those surrounding the economy.

Theory of Change:

Somos Votantes aims to provide a centralized hub for research, messaging, training, persuasion and mobilization of Latino communities to support Democratic causes and candidates.

In Community, our goal is to empower Latino communities to create an impact by equipping them with the tools and knowledge they need to participate in our nation's democracy by taking action in their own communities.

Electoral, we engage Latino voters in battleground states with a simple mission: to persuade (increase Democratic support) and mobilize (increase voter participation) Latino voters in order to win elections.

Through Advocacy, we work to promote, pass, and ensure implementation of policies that will improve our communities.

Unique Strategy/Special Sauce:

Somos Votantes is unique because we are the first organization to focus not only on the research and messaging needed to understand and communicate to Latino voters but also to immediately distill and deploy that messaging into a large scale electoral program. In 2020, we knocked on 1.9 million doors, and completed over 4.2 million live calls and texts. That year, President Biden won approximately 70% of the Latino vote nationwide. An estimated 1.4 million Latinos voted in Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin (states where we ran programs) with President Biden winning more than 980,000 of those votes - giving him a margin of 40 points over Trump.

Messaging Description:

We know that the economy is a key issue for voters across race and place, and outside of each party's loyal base, the economy can be a liability during election years. 2020 Post Election Research and Voter File analysis has shown that a key reason for movement of Latino voters toward Trump in 2020 was anchored in the economy and economic concerns. And research with the Winning Jobs Narrative Project has shown that these economic concerns continue to be front and center in voters' minds. Over the past year, the Winning Jobs Narrative Project, which Somos Votantes helped to lead, has gathered over 60,000 qualitative and quantitative voter conversations and responses from 17 states across the country including every major battleground and has emerged with a messaging strategy to reverse the trends we see with Latino voters. This year, our messaging is fully centered on the issues that people are concerned about on a daily basis - issues around the economy. We center the hardworking Latinos of our country in our message - and talk about their contributions to the economy and our country. We then focus on "kitchen table issues" that we know are important to them: jobs, the economy, healthcare, and childcare. Our narrative elements are:

1. Name, Center, and Lead with our heroes - hardworking Latinos
2. Value and support their hard work
3. Situate working people (Latinos) as the engines of our economy
4. Position government in a supporting (not starring) role
5. Relate broadly and to the economy

Fundraising:

- 501(c)3 Gap - \$800,000
- 501(c)4 primary purpose Gap: \$7,542,182
- 501(c)4 unrestricted/ Super PAC Gap: \$14,091,397

We have included our budgets below.

If we received \$100,000 tomorrow, we would invest it in our Organizing and Canvass program so that we could have more high quality face to face conversations with voters and community members.

Timing Constraints:

We need the majority of our funding by the end of September so that we can most effectively use it in the lead up to the November elections.

Primary Influence Tactic:

Our main tactics are canvassing (both traditional door to door and site based canvassing) and deeper, cultural community organizing in Latino communities - our digital, paid media, and mail programs are then used to reinforce the messages we use with our paid communications. Our program targets broadly – engaging our Latino community with both Persuasion & Mobilization Programs. In addition, Somos is going deeper with key segments of our Latino communities, including: Youth Outreach, Latina-specific Engagement, Immigration Clinics, and Latino Small Business Recruitment.

Other Influence Tactics:

- **Digital Advertising:** We use digital media to reach Latino voters with persuasion and mobilization messages early in English and Spanish. Test, measure and adjust advertising dynamically during the campaign to drive stronger ad performance.
- **Mail:** Mail programs targeted to both persuasion and mobilization communities using research-tested messaging and language preferences
- **TV & Radio:** English, Spanish & Bilingual TV and radio ads that boost candidate ID and use research-based persuasion messaging.

Current Activity:

We currently use all of the above tactics - Organizing and canvassing, paid and organic digital, mail, and paid TV. We have already knocked on over 190,000 doors in our three main states.

Future Goals:

In the long term, we would like to be able to build permanent infrastructure in key states - at the moment we are focusing on building a permanent team and infrastructure in Nevada, and are working to raise long term funding for our team there.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Statement:

Somos Votantes does not have an official DEI statement, however, our entire organization is born out of a vision rooted in lived experience and a deep commitment to the Hispanic and Latino community. Our staff is composed of a majority Latino members and we value a commitment to continuing to maintain Somos as a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. Below is a chart that outlines our current staff.

	Total #	BIPOC	Immigrant (first and second generation)	Prefer not to state	Male	Female	Trans, non-binary gender, or other not listed	Prefer not to state
Board Members	5			X		5		x
Executive Director / President (or equivalents)	2	2	2			2		
Management and Senior Staff*	3	2	2		2	1		
Total Staff	10	9	6		5	5		

Leadership Team Roles + Board Members:

Somos PAC Board Members:

Sylvia Ruiz, Latina Woman

Beatriz Lopez, Latina Woman

[Open Spot] – We had a Latina Board Member leave to work at the White House and are actively looking to fill that role.

Somos PAC/ Somos Votantes Leadership:

Melissa Morales - Latina Woman

Cecia Alvarado - Latina Woman, Immigrant

Emmanuelle Leal-Santillan - Latino Man, Immigrant, LGBTQ

Eric Borja - Latino Man

Organization's Structure & Overhead:

We have a 501(c)3, 501(c)4 and a Super PAC.

Combined Operating Budget 2020: \$33 million

Combined Operating Budget 2021: \$1.4 million

Combined Operating Budget 2022: \$28,637,054

Impact Reporting:

We are happy to complete any reporting required if we receive funding from 1.5° Climate Strategies Group. Generally our grants require a post-election or end of year report-out on our activities related to the grant, which we are happy to provide.

Barriers/Risks:

Our biggest challenge at the moment is a lack of PAC funding heading into September so we can do our political work in priority states. In 2020, a vast majority of our PAC funding came in October, and while we were able to scale quickly, the reality is that with vote by mail and early voting in key states, many voters have already cast their ballots by mid-to-late October.

Landscape/Collaborators/Competitors:

There are many other organizations in the space that we work with including BlackPAC, Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy. We are a part of America Votes and work with many other organizations through them.