CONTENTS

1 A Letter to Black Folks & Our Co-conspirators in Liberation
2 Executive Summary of 2021 Redistricting Map and Implications on Black Political Power
3 Acknowledging Our Team, Partners, and Technical Experts
4 Data Lab: Key Analysis Memos
5 CA Black Hub Library
6 Study Room: Lessons Learned and Advice for the Future
7 Last Word: Black Hub Faces and Voices
To: Black Folks and Our Co-Conspirators in Liberation

A letter from the leaders of the CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub and the CA Power Network

Dear California,

In 2019, California Calls launched the California Black Census and Redistricting Hub (Black Hub), a network of Black-led and Black-serving organizations across the state focused on maximizing participation in the census and redistricting process among hard-to-count Black communities. When we first started the Black Hub in 2019, our goals were straightforward, but ambitious. We wanted to:

1. build a strong coalition with capacity to have significant impact on the census and redistricting processes;
2. motivate and mobilize “hard-to-count” Black (and allied) grassroots residents to participate;
3. marry community organizing with policy and technical expertise to ensure Black people have a strong voice in the processes; and
4. ensure coordination with both Black and non-Black allies to promote unity and collaboration as opposed to competition.

Using a mix of training, strategic communications, data, grassroots organizing, and community engagement, we sought to build on the work and experience of California Calls’ anchor groups, their leadership in African American Census outreach and Redistricting plans in 2000 and 2010, and the evolution of the 3-year African American Civic Engagement Project from 2016 to 2018. We always knew that census and redistricting weren’t the beginning or end of our fight for Black political power. We got into these fights because (a) Black people deserved it, (b) California needed a strong Black voice in these arenas, and (c) we knew it was important to set the stage for the next 10 years of funding and policy battles in order to improve the living conditions and opportunities for Black Californians.
Our Accomplishments

Looking back on the last several years of work, I’m proud of all that we’ve accomplished with our coalition members, partners, and allies. Some of those accomplishments include:

- Building a coalition of 35 Black-led and Black-serving organizations in 13 counties across 6 regions of the state
- Contacting over 1.3 million residents through phoning, door knocking, and digital organizing (My Black Counts), and encouraging them to complete the census to bring federal, state, and local funding to our communities as the State’s Black census outreach contractor
- Emerging as one of the leading voices for BIPOC communities in the redistricting process and engaging nearly 500 community leaders and residents in 51 community conversations to identify key communities of interest
- Submitting a 300+-page map submission to the California Citizens Redistricting Commission with the help of our partners at USC’s Equity Research Institute and Professor Tom Wong at UC San Diego
- Mobilizing coalition partners and residents to advocate for the commission to protect Black communities in San Diego, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Central Valley, Sacramento, and the Bay Area while also protecting and defending the opportunity to expand Black political power in the redistricting process

Our Future

What makes me even more proud, however, is the thought that the work doesn’t end here. With decennial census outreach complete and redistricting now concluding, the Black Hub coalition will transfigure to a new long-term, statewide power-building effort called the California Black Power Network (CBPN). CBPN will be dedicated to organizing Black grassroots groups and residents to change the lived conditions of Black Californians and achieve systemic change for all. Our charge is simple. Success will be measured by our ability to do three things:

1. increase the capacity of participating organizations to build power through community organizing, civic engagement, policy development and advocacy, and narrative development and public consciousness-shifting, among other things;
2. create a vibrant and growing ecosystem of grassroots, Black-led organizations working together in community and strategic collaboration to address discrimination, systemic racism, and anti-Black racism; and
3. make substantial and measurable impact at the local, regional, and statewide levels on key issues disproportionately impacting Black communities in California.

I will be leading this effort as CBPN’s Executive Director, joined by my colleague Kevin Cosney as Associate Director and a few members of our team from the Black Hub. We are excited to take on this new work and get started. In 2022, the CA Black Power Network will work to get out the vote, build a Black policy agenda, hold elected officials accountable to their promises, increase the capacity of partners, and more so that we can begin to see a California that allows Black people to thrive, not just survive.
Our Why

In the end, Black people deserve time, attention, and investment. Black people have played a critical role in the growth and development of California. We have led and sparked civil rights and social justice movements both in the past and in the last several years; we have been a key driving economic force in many instances; and we have pushed the State of California to be the best it can be on a range of issues.

And yet, our communities continue to be the most disproportionately impacted across a wide range of issues including housing, education, health care, and economic opportunity. For example, Black people are less likely to own a home, more likely to be suspended or expelled from school, and more likely to be incarcerated and subjected to use of force by state actors than any other racial or ethnic group in the state.

Our state faces many challenges. But too often, Black people have borne the brunt of those challenges. We need more people in positions of power who are taking these issues seriously and addressing these issues on behalf of the nearly 3 million Black Californians in this state and the tens of millions of others who live in community with them. To be clear, the Black community is growing in California. The Black population grew by over 5% over the last 10 years. The Black population is also becoming more diverse as more Black people identify as multi- or biracial throughout the country and in the state of California.

Black people deserve a California where we are seen, heard, and respected. More importantly, we deserve a California that puts words to action and implements policies that will ensure the dream it promises is actually attainable for all, not just a select few. Change is possible, and it won’t happen overnight. We look forward to working with our members, partners, and allies to build the California we all deserve to see.

Sincerely,

James Woodson
Redistricting Lead, California Black Census and Redistricting Hub
Executive Director, California Black Power Network
Our Analysis of Black Power and the 2022 CA Redistricting Map

An executive summary analyzing the redistricting map and its implications on Black communities in California

While redistricting can be an inherently political process, the Black Hub decided to take a community and data-driven approach, both in our decision-making and strategic planning processes and in evaluating the impact of our work. Specifically, one of our goals was to build the data and technical expertise needed to craft statewide maps and build long-term capacity in data collection and analysis that would support rigorous civic engagement in Black communities throughout the state. Accordingly, we partnered with Professor Tom Wong at UC San Diego to analyze the final state and federal maps adopted by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission and provide insights on the opportunities and threats to Black political power that the maps presented. Professor Wong’s analysis follows.

Based on Professor Wong’s research and analysis, there are 3 takeaways that we’d like to uplift:

1. **Opportunities to push racial and social justice policy have increased or maintained in key regions across the state.** Every cycle of redistricting presents an opportunity for communities of color to gain or lose political representation and power. During this cycle, one of the goals of the Black Hub was to help ensure that districts in key regions across the State (namely, San Diego, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, the Central Valley, Sacramento, and the Bay Area) maintained or increased opportunities to push policy solutions that increase racial equity and justice. We believe our efforts helped to accomplish this goal. As Professor Wong’s analysis points out, based on an analysis of some key ballot initiatives on which members of the Black Hub worked, districts in San Diego County, the Central Valley, and the Bay Area became more “racial/social justice oriented” across at least two levels of government. Based on this analysis, districts in places like Sacramento and the Inland Empire also increased or maintained opportunities to push racial justice and equity initiatives and policy solutions across at least two levels of government. This political landscape sets the stage for groups on the ground to continue to build bridges and work with racial and social justice minded elected officials to increase opportunities for racial justice and equity in the decade ahead.
2. Opportunities to increase Black civic participation abound in key emerging areas across the state as Black migration continues in California. Over the last decade, due to gentrification, displacement, and cost of living increases, we have seen Black residents moving out of traditional urban areas like the city of Los Angeles and Oakland to new emerging areas like the Inland Empire, the Antelope Valley, the Central Valley, and eastward in the Bay Area towards Contra Costa and the Sacramento Valley. This migration has created a gap in infrastructure, as Black organizing and power-building resources have largely been focused in the traditional urban hubs and less in shifting communities. The data bares this dynamic out, as seen in Table 1 of Professor Wong’s report. There is a clear gap between the registration rates in Los Angeles and Oakland-based districts (Congressional Districts 37, 43, and 12) and congressional districts like 33, 39, and 6, based in San Bernardino, Riverside and Sacramento Counties, respectively. In these emerging districts, we see that Black citizen voting age population (CVAP) is almost 2 times larger than the percentage of Black eligible voters who are actually registered. These numbers indicate both a threat in that there are Black eligible voters who are not being engaged in these emerging areas and an opportunity to shift that trend and ensure that Black civic participation remains robust and strong throughout the state.

3. Multiracial alliances and power-building will continue to be key to our organizing. Black communities in California will need to continue to work together with other minority communities, communities of color, and multiracial efforts in order to leverage the opportunities presented by the new maps and push for effective racial justice and equity policies at the state and federal level. Professor Wong’s analysis shows that the new maps contain no Black majority districts and only a handful of Black opportunity or influence districts (where Black CVAP is at or over 20%) at each level of government. As such, the key to advancing racial and social justice policy efforts will be both organizing Black communities to engage and working with non-Black communities to protect Black interests and advance mutual interests shared by multiracial coalitions of voters and residents. This opportunity is further strengthened by the increase in the number of Black residents who identify as multiracial, as seen in Professor Wong’s analysis on 2020 census data.

These takeaways are insights that we have long suspected, but take on renewed meaning and value as we solidify our assumptions through data and analysis. The CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub will pass on these insights to organizations within the new Black Power Network as we work to make good on the opportunities presented by the new maps and mitigate the threats to Black political power in key regions throughout the State. The political future of Black California will be paved and shaped by our collective efforts to activate existing Black hubs of political power, expand the electorate in new and emerging Black hubs, and work across lines of racial difference and common interests to strengthen multiracial coalition building.
Whitepaper: Analysis of 2022 CA Redistricting Map

A white paper developed by Tom Wong, associate professor of political science and founding director of the U.S. Immigration Policy Center (USIPC) at the University of California, San Diego.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub, a project of California Calls, expresses deep gratitude to the following leaders and organizations that provided critical leadership, guidance, and technical assistance to make this project successful.

The Core Staff for the CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub
A team of organizers, communications strategists, project managers, fundraisers, and policy advocates convened to oversee the strategy and operations for ensuring Black voice and representation in the 2021-2022 redistricting process:

- Natasha Brown, Organizing Coordinator at California Calls
- Kevin Cosney, Associate Director of CA Black Power Network
- Kristin Nimmers, Policy and Public Affairs Manager at California Calls
- LaNae Norwood, Principal Consultant of Lanae Norwood & Associates
- Ama Nyamekye, Principal and Founder, Good Influence Consulting
- Kaci Patterson, Founder and Chief Architect of Social Good Solutions
- James Woodson, Executive Director of CA Black Power Network

Our Robust Technical Experts
The following leaders provided a critical technical backbone that enabled the CA Black Hub to make strategic policy, political, mapping and legal decisions:

- Angelo Ancheta, 2010 CA Redistricting Commission Chair and Lawyer
- Gabriel De Roche, PhD student in political science at the University of California, San Diego
- Bernard Dory, External Affairs Consultant
- Grace Garner, Palm Springs City Council Member
- Jeffer Giang, Data Analyst at the Equity Research Institute at the University of Southern California
- Joanna Lee, Project Manager at the Equity Research Institute at the University of Southern California
- Tom K. Wong, Associate Professor of Political Science and Founding Director of the U.S. Immigration Policy Center (USIPC) at the University of California, San Diego

Our Learning and Collaborating with Multi-racial Allies
- Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus
- Integrated Voter Engagement Redistricting Alliance (IVE), convened by Advancement Project CA
- Mexican American Legal Defense of Education Fund
- National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Mighty Coalition of Black-led and Black-serving Organizations
In addition to advocating fiercely for Black political representation, the following leaders engaged Black communities across the state in conversations that informed the key communities of interest the CA Black Hub prioritized through our redistricting work.

- Rahmo Abdi, Community Organizer, Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans
- Chala Bonner, Program Manager & Lead Organizer, Safe Return Project
- Demita Burgess, Program Coordinator, COPE
- Laniesha Butler, IVE Manager, Oakland Rising
- Ron Collins, Campaign Coordinator, LA Black Workers Center
- Chyna Davis, Civic Engagement Coordinator, BLU Educational Foundation
- Jamileh Ebrahimi, Director of Programs & Organizing, RYSE Youth Center
- Jeanine Erikat, Policy Associate, Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans
- Danny Espinoza, Campaign Coordinator, Lift Up Contra Costa
- Nicole Franklin, Oakland/Berkeley Chapter Representative, Black Women Organized for Political Action
- Kaya Herron, Deputy Director, Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce
- Nick Hill III, President, Kern County Black Chamber of Commerce
- LaNiece Jones, Executive Director, Black Women Organized for Political Action
- Carmen Taylor Jones, Black Women for Wellness
- Olani LaBeaud, College Access & Community Engagement Advisor, Public Policy & Advocacy Fellow, BLU Educational Foundation
- Sheryl Lane, Executive Director, Building Blocks for Kids
- Cassie Love, Executive Assistant, Kern County Black Chamber of Commerce
- Bryan Minor, IVE Coordinator, Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education
- Pharaoh Mitchell, Executive Director, The Community Action League
- Malcolme Morgan, Muslim Organizer, Pillars of the Community
- Eryn Wilson Nieves, Civic Engagement Program Director, Alliance San Diego
- Eric Payne, Executive Director, Central Valley Urban Institute
- Vonya Quarles, Executive Director, Starting Over
- Kirk Samuels, Director of Civic Engagement, Community Coalition
- Taylor Sims, Special Projects Coordinator, Lift Up Contra Costa
- Joshua Smalley, Marketing & Communications Coordinator, Time For Change Foundation
- Derek Steele, Executive Director, Social Justice Learning Institute
- Liz Suk, Executive Director, Oakland Rising
- Romelia Turner, Administrator & Project Manager, Pillars of the Community
- Tamisha Walker, Executive Director, Safe Return Project
- Pete White, Executive Director, Los Angeles Community Action Network
- Min Quan Williams, Civic Engagement Lead Organizer, COPE
The CA Black Hub Data Lab

This digital lab includes key data and analysis that informed our approach to commission advocacy.

- Final Whitepaper Analysis of the Approved Redistricting Map
- Preliminary Analysis of Census 2020 Legacy Data
- Memo on The Black Electorate and Electing Black Leaders in the California Assembly
- Memo on The Black Electorate and Electing Black Leaders to Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives
- Comparisons between Antioch, East Contra Costa, and Central Contra Costa communities
- Comparisons between Fresno COIs and Clovis
- Comparisons between Long Beach COIs, Carson, and the rest of Long Beach
- Comparisons between El Cajon COI, Mesa communities, and East County San Diego
- Comparisons between Vallejo, Contra Costa COIs, and the rest of Solano County
The CA Black Hub Library

These resources and publications were developed to uplift critical Black voices, data, and communities.

- The 2021 Redistricting Map submitted by the CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub
- 2021 Redistricting Map Presentation conducted by the CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub
- 2021 Redistricting COI Presentation conducted by the CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub
- Representation: The Road to Home and Housing Justice, a blog post featuring CA Black Hub coalition leaders Pete White and Taylor Sims
- Representation on the Road to Liberation: Redistricting and the future of Criminal Justice Reform featuring Malcolm Morgan, Ingrid Archie
- Our Road Trip: Listening to Black California featuring Eryn Wilson, Demita Burgess, Kirk Samuels, Kaya Herron, and Nicole Franklin
The Black Hub Study Room

The 2020 CA Black Census and Redistricting Hub created this study room for our future selves, the next generation of Black organizers, communicators, fundraisers, project managers, policy and advocacy leaders who take on the Herculean effort of defending and expanding Black power in the 2030 CA Redistricting Commission process. While it’s still fresh on our minds, we are capturing a time capsule with our lessons learned and key advice.

1 Lessons Learned and Advice on Communications and Organizing

2 Lessons Learned and Advice on Policy and Advocacy

3 Lessons Learned and Advice on Building Infrastructure
LESSONS LEARNED AND ADVICE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND ORGANIZING:

1. **BE UNAPOLOGETICAL**
   You may face pressure to apologize for taking up too much space. Some may even imply or explicitly say that building Black Power means not being collaborative or inclusive. Our architect and the Founder of California Calls, Anthony Thigpenn, said it best: You have to have power to share power. Our advice to you is: Always center Black Power and Black Joy, even as you acknowledge our Black trauma and struggle, even as you work to build multiracial unity.

2. **BE A GRIOT**
   Our greatest power is in our people’s voices and stories, particularly those most impacted by the inequities and injustices we seek to remedy. Don’t be a conduit or representative of those stories. Let the community speak for itself. When armed with the right tools, data, and support, our voices on the ground have the power to move the people, policies, and politics you will encounter on and around the redistricting commission.

3. **BE VIGILANT**
   Start by creating a power analysis to map out where power currently exists in our communities. Where do folks fall on the continuum of Black power and liberation? Who is supportive? Who is neutral or moveable? Who is in opposition? Then, think about the assets, motivators, strategy, and self interests. Think about what will drive and influence those with power—elected, appointed, and community leaders.

4. **BE FLEXIBLE**
   You may get a pandemic, corrupt president, resurgence of white supremacy militias, misinformation, wild fires—you name it—thrown in your path. Have a clear plan, think through “what if” contingencies, and be flexible in your strategy and approach.

5. **BE AWARE**
   Your coalition members may be busy, strapped for time, and might not have the benefit of the kind of philanthropic support other non-Black-led organizations enjoy. Invest deeply in them through regrants, training, technical tools and platforms, and carving sacred time and space to dream and plan together. Ensure the CA Black Hub coalition is aware of the landscape, power structures, and political dynamics, and engaged in conversations about how the on-the-ground tactics shape the big picture strategy.
LESSONS LEARNED AND ADVICE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND ORGANIZING:

6  **BE THREE STEPS AHEAD**
Start planning early, and develop the tools and systems you need to walk coalition members through the various steps and phases of the work—from what it looks like to hold a community of interest listening session, to what it looks like to interview with a reporter or publicly testify before a redistricting commission.

7  **BE IN CONSTANT COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION**
You will have multiple tables where you sit and need to collaborate, negotiate, and coordinate. Have a system and process for coordinating across organizations and inside of organizations. Identify early the key organizations who can be allies and who will marshal their resources to influence redistricting. Start building relationships with strategic partners early by understanding what’s at stake for them and their communities, and sharing what’s at stake for the CA Black Hub and our communities.

8  **BE FOCUSED**
While your strategic path may take unexpected twists and turns, your destination—which is maximizing and expanding Black political representation and power—should remain your North Star. Stay focused on the mission of defending and expanding Black political power and representation through redistricting. Understand the organizational or individual egos and self-interests of others, but remain focused on your prize: Black power for all (not some) Black people!

9  **BE CREATIVE**
Don’t be afraid to be creative and think outside the box in all areas of your work. The path to success will have many unexpected bumps and obstacles so you will need to think creatively and strategically about how you turn potholes into opportunities. This is true for all your work—communications, fundraising, policy, advocacy, organizing, external affairs, etc.

10 **BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE**
Build on this work and don’t be afraid to build what does not yet exist, particularly when it comes to cultivating Black talent and expertise in the fields of organizing and communications.
LESSONS LEARNED AND ADVICE ON POLICY AND ADVOCACY

1. **KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SCOT)**
   Begin your work by conducting a power analysis of community-based organizations, legacy leaders, elected officials, philanthropic players, etc. Use that analysis to determine the groups that should be part of your coalition based on their reach into key issue areas (ex: housing justice or criminal justice reform), demographics (ex: Black immigrants) and regions (ex: Fresno). Start building those relationships in untraditional and growing Black hubs (like Coachella Valley, Antelope Valley etc.) where Black populations are growing.

2. **BUILD BLACK TECHNICAL CAPACITY EARLY**
   Identify and start building the capacity of Black talent to lead key aspects of this work, such as data analysis, demography, and the ability to serve on a redistricting commission. There was not the capacity we needed in 2020, so we worked with a few non-Black POC allies to lead our data, demography, and line-drawing work, but we suggest starting early to identify and train Black technical talent. This might mean forging strategic partnerships with academia, where you might build a formal fellowship or funded graduate school award/position focused on this work.

3. **FIND ADVISORS WHO SHARE YOUR VALUES AND BRING INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY**
   As part of your SCOT, go back to the 2021 Redistricting Commissioners to determine who may be helpful to your 2030 redistricting efforts. Ask yourself: Who seems to be aligned with our mission and values? Who might be willing to serve as an advisor to your efforts or a consultant helping you navigate the redistricting commission policy, procedures, and dynamics.

4. **KNOW WHAT’S AT STAKE FOR CURRENT ELECTEDS**
   Start to identify the priorities and concerns of current Black elected leaders, map out who lives where, who might be preparing to retire, whose region might be changing dramatically based on population trends, what assets (institutions, businesses, landmarks, and economic drivers) matter most to elected leaders. Don’t let these insights be the primary driver of your work, but let them inform your understanding of how existing leaders might respond to various mapping configurations. Knowing these concerns will save you tremendous trouble later down the mapping road.
LESSONS LEARNED AND ADVICE ON POLICY AND ADVOCACY

5 KNOW YOUR ALLIES AND COLLABORATORS
As you begin working with multiracial allies and collaborators on potential unity mapping or simply productive coordination, make sure there is alignment between values, working styles, and capacity. You may find an ally that is very mission aligned, but does not have the capacity to collaborate fully. Explore a menu of ways you can collaborate directly and indirectly with allies and make sure that menu is focused on vetting allies and collaborators to see if they meet some of the following criteria: 1.) Mission aligned (this was mandatory for us), 2.) Working style aligned, 3.) Capacity aligned. You may start to feel external or internal pressure to approach the commission with a unity map reflecting multi-racial interests. Before approaching the decision to submit a unity map, make sure that decision is in the best interests of Black communities and is the best way to move the commission. In 2022, we ultimately decided that the best way to move the Commission and preserve Black interests was by submitting an independent Black Hub Redistricting map, but we coordinated, negotiated, and collaborated with our allies.

6 BUILD OUT COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ALONGSIDE POLICY AND ADVOCACY STRATEGY
Build out a process and structure for ensuring policy and communications team members are coordinating around how best to package and present key data that should inform and influence the commission’s approach to line drawing. For instance, we found it important to have a process for taking key data findings and turning those into social and/or traditional media messages that could influence the public and the commission.

7 ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS ARE ENGAGING AT KEY POINTS AND MAKE THAT PART OF GRANT REQUIREMENTS OR CONTRACTUAL MOUS
You may find that the point person for the coalition may be different from the organizational leader who needs to sign off on key decisions, such as endorsing a redistricting map. For instance, Joe may be the coalition point person, but Joe may be managed by his organization’s executive director. In these instances, it is important to map out the key times and issues where organizational leaders/decision makers in the coalition need to attend meetings, review recommendations, vote or endorse particular positions and actions. Spelling this out in formal agreements will help ensure alignment in expectations.
LESSONS LEARNED AND ADVICE ON POLICY AND ADVOCACY

8 ENGAGE AND EDUCATE THE COMMISSION EARLY
Before beginning direct advocacy with the redistricting commission, you will have opportunities to engage and educate the commission on the issues, geographies, and considerations that most impact Black communities in California. Consider developing a pre-game strategy that includes tactics such as creating thought leadership blogs, briefings, presentations, etc. focused on uplifting community perspectives, insights, and data relevant to Black folks and redistricting. This pre-game strategy can help position your coalition as credible and deeply connected to the communities and issues that will be affected by redistricting decisions.

9 BRING AND BUILD LEGAL AND POLICY CAPACITY AND CAPABILITIES
One of the most important strategies we leveraged to move the commission was having deep monitoring of commission meetings, policy and procedural actions, and legal implications. As you approach identifying a set of trusted advisors, consider bringing on legal and policy experts who can monitor, interpret, and guide you on redistricting policies and procedures. These experts can be game-changing in terms of informing the advocacy strategies that will effectively move the commission.

10 BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE
Build on this work and don’t be afraid to build what does not yet exist, particularly when it comes to cultivating Black talent and expertise in the fields of policy, advocacy, demography, and data analysis.
Lessons Learned and Advice on Building Infrastructure

Infrastructure Checklist: These assets, resources, and structures were essential to our 2021 redistricting work

1. **Have a coach and advisor** who can help hold the "big picture" in terms of protecting and expanding Black political representation and power in California. Having someone who is not in the day-to-day weeds of the work will help you think strategically about the people, levers, efficiency and impact that matters most. This person should be someone who can think about and has relationships within Black and multiracial power building.

2. **Have a clear process for identifying and vetting organizations** that can serve on your coalition, serve as multiracial allies, endorsers, and technical experts/advisors. This process should include factors that enable you to assess mission fit, capacity, and working styles.

3. **Develop a clear staffing structure** for how to oversee redistricting work. Our staffing structure included: Project Manager coordinating people, contracts, funding, and external relations; Advocacy and Policy Lead coordinating line-drawing efforts; Organizing Lead and two Organizing Coordinators ensuring coalition engagement and mobilization; Communications Lead overseeing branding, traditional, and social media strategy. Our staffing structure was supported by people and resources within California Calls that bolstered efforts with financial and development capabilities.

4. **Consider creating consulting roles** that are hybrid and hyper focused on your unique capacity needs. (For instance, our legal advisor was also a former redistricting commissioner who could guide us around to the legal and policy process.) These roles should complement the capabilities and working styles of your core FTE staff working on redistricting. As you build a team of part-time consultants and full-time employees, know that the more players you bring to the table, your coordination, planning, and meeting structures will need to be sophisticated and clear. We brought on the following key consulting roles: legal advisor; data analyst, 3 redistricting mappers, commission engagement and policy analyst tracking and shaping our responses to commission updates and decisions, and external affairs advisor supporting outreach to key community and elected leaders.
LESSONS LEARNED AND ADVICE ON BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure Checklist: These Assets, Resources, and Structures were essential to our 2021 redistricting work

5. **Learn from archived video reels** and snippets of commission testimonies archived on the CA Redistricting Commission website and in this toolkit. These resources can help your coalition better understand the kind of engagement and work they will need to execute. These resources can be used as part of training aimed at helping to break down the steps of a redistricting process that can feel very high-level and intangible. The resources include, COI listening sessions, COI commission presentations, map presentations, real-time line drawing moments, and commission testimonies.

6. **Identify media tracking services and coordination structures** to automate analyzing media and facilitate real-time translation of data into communications strategies and messages. Consider having explicit expectations and training for your coalition around amplifying media messages within their respective online and on-the-ground communities. This may include having accessible media toolkits and training, interviewing protocols, and coaching.

7. **Consider automating and scheduling fundraising processes** around donor tracking, proposal development, report writing, and donor/partner communications so you are able to efficiently stay in constant contact with your partners. This will be essential to enabling you to save time and energy that can be directed toward doing—not only funding—the redistricting work.
THE LAST WORD...

At the end of the day, we were driven by and accountable to one interest group—Black People! So it’s only fitting that we let a few of our coalition leaders share what they learned about the future of Black political power in California. Click the thumbnails below to watch the full conversations.

Ron Collins, Los Angeles Black Worker Center
"Black political power holds such a special and historical role in Los Angeles...so it's important for us to build and preserve strong Black communities...it's incumbent on Black folks to come together and protect our voting districts and build strong allies with folks in neighboring communities who are dealing with similar issues and want to build stronger communities."

Eric Payne, Central Valley Urban Institute
"I have learned about the importance of coalition building and finding allies and like-minded individuals that might not look like you to move an agenda forward and create equitable boundaries for our community."

Eryn Wilson Nieves, Alliance San Diego
"We were able to talk to so many diverse Black people who spoke different languages and weren't previously engaged in the process, but were interested in ensuring they create a world where their kids can thrive."

Chala Bonner, Safe Return Project
"I hope we can have great representation who is able to bring in resources that our community needs so we can thrive and succeed--anything from housing to workforce development, and resources for our young people"

Chyna Davis, BLU Educational Foundation
"What I have learned from this redistricting process is that our Black community has so much voting power...my hope for the future is that we can increase our awareness and really understand how impactful our voice and vote can be...today and for future generations."