



# 2018 ELECTORAL REPORT



**OHIO ORGANIZING  
COLLABORATIVE**

[www.ohorganizing.org](http://www.ohorganizing.org)

# ABOUT THE OOC

Formed in 2007, the Ohio Organizing Collaborative (OOC) is an innovative statewide organization uniting community groups, faith institutions, labor unions, and policy groups across Ohio. The OOC is an alliance of 19 organizations with members in every major metropolitan area across the state, working on campaigns to increase access to opportunity, end mass incarceration, protect safety-net programs, and increase civic participation.

The vision of OOC is to organize everyday Ohioans to build a transformative base of power for the purpose of achieving social, racial, and economic justice in Ohio. We carry out this mission by investing in a diverse portfolio of organizing methods, experimental strategies, non-partisan 501c3 electoral

programs, leadership training, and integration with policy organizations.

At the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, one of our central goals is to encourage more people to participate in the electoral process, as we believe that civic engagement contributes to healthy communities. For more than a decade, the OOC has run successful non-partisan 501c3 civic engagement programs across Ohio, impacting hundreds of families and thousands of voters.

In 2018, we ran one of our biggest programs to date collecting signatures to qualify Issue 1 for the ballot, registering more than 140,000 voters, and running Get Out the Vote programs across the state.



## TEN YEARS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

### 2010

Beginning in 2010 in Cincinnati, the OOC in partnership with OJPC passed Ohio's first municipal legislation to Ban the Box, ending the practice that required those convicted of a felony to check a box (which when checked makes a return to full time employment near impossible for many returning citizens). We then went on to pass Ban the Box legislation in 13 other Ohio cities and counties. Advancing Ban the Box campaigns in so many different places built momentum for greater statewide change.

### 2012

In 2012, OOC and the Ohio Justice and Policy Center passed collateral sanctions reform through the Ohio legislature, that removed key employment barriers for returning citizens, encouraged employers to hire ex-offenders and stopped the courts from imposing additional jail time on those faced with child support obligations, court fees and other costs. This win increased opportunity for more than 1.9 million Ohioans who are returning citizens.

### 2015

In 2015, the work to pass local fair hiring ordinances in communities across the state culminated in the passage of the statewide Ohio Fair Hiring Act in December of that year. That legislation banned the box on all public job applications. The OOC and OJPC were instrumental in drafting the bill providing returning citizens with an opportunity to rebuild their lives.

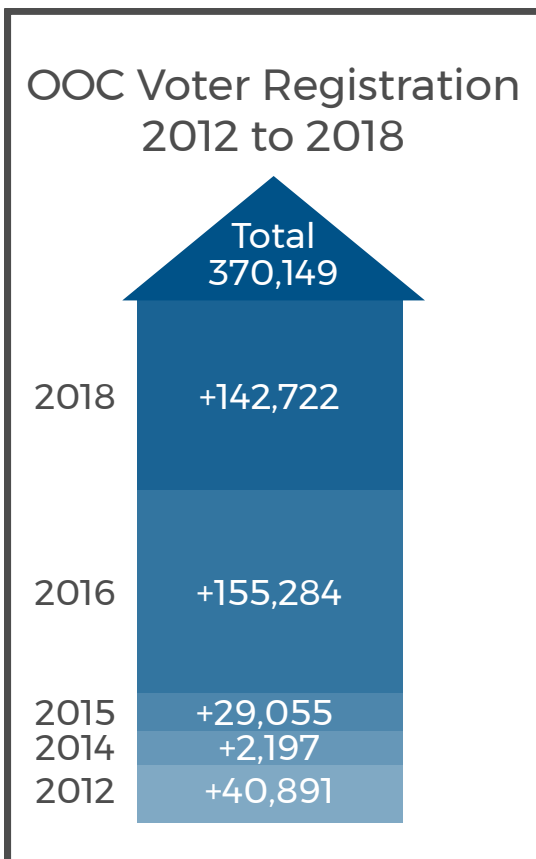
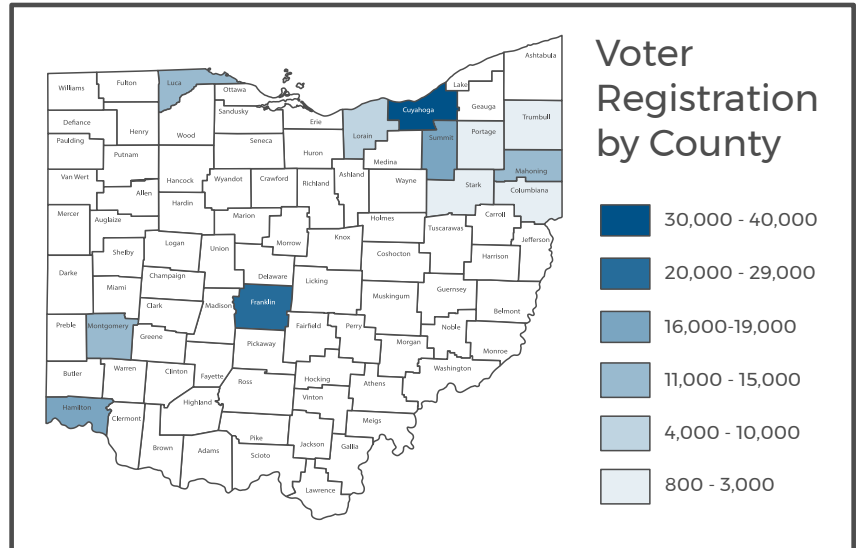
Since our first Ban the Box victory in Cincinnati, the OOC has led the organizing of formerly incarcerated and convicted people and their families to win on critical racial and economic justice issues. Formerly incarcerated women and men joined with the Ohio Student Association to defeat a deadly Stand Your Ground bill. OOC leaders led actions to end the automatic suspension of driver's licenses of those convicted of drug crimes (a bill passed in 2015). There are several other local and statewide victories the OOC has had in the last 10 years that has made mass incarceration and the War on Drugs front and center in Ohio.

# VOTER REGISTRATION: EXPANDING THE ELECTORATE

Since 2012, the OOC has run large scale voter registration programs focused on young people and Black communities across Ohio.

**In the past six years, we've collected a staggering 370,149 voter registrations.**

This year's program focused on twelve counties, overlapping with signature collection for Issue One, core urban counties, and counties that have college campuses: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Summit, Hamilton, Montgomery, Lucas, Mahoning, Lorain, Stark, Trumbull, Portage, Columbiana



On Tuesday, October 9th, 2018, the Ohio Organizing Collaborative finished its voter program registering 142,722 voters within all of Ohio's 88 counties, surpassing its goal of 117,000 voters.

The OOC voter registration program has always been focused on engaging and registering individuals who fit within a new voting cohort branded the "New American Majority." This cohort is comprised of people of color, women, and young adults. The OOC has been successful at engaging this New American Majority, as more than 50% of our new registrants are a part of the Millennial Generation, over 64% are people of color, and more than 50% are women.

Our 2018 program was comprised of three components: our in-house field program run in collaboration with Black Fork Strategies (Ohio's Movement Owned Field Vendor), integration with the Issue One campaign that was simultaneously collecting signatures to qualify the initiative, and supporting Ohio Voice in adding electoral capacity to grassroots groups who were new to voter registration programs.

The OOC staged its voter registration operation in all of Ohio's major cities and most of its smaller cities.

# SIGNATURE COLLECTION FOR ISSUE ONE

For many years, Ohio has been at the center of national conversations about police community relations, racial disparities in the criminal justice system, and the need for an end to mass incarceration. In 2018 a set of organizations made this a defining political issue by putting a criminal justice reform policy on the ballot.

While Issue One did not pass, it fundamentally changed the conversation in Ohio about criminal justice reform.

## The Columbus Dispatch

November 11th Editorial in Columbus Dispatch:

“Multiple intents of Issue 1 were laudable. First, it recognized that Ohio prisons have been overflowing with people whose crime was to become addicted to drugs and whose lives would forever be burdened by the weight of a felony conviction. The proposal also offered a solution, namely to free up funds for more drug treatment by keeping drug users out of prison and thus reducing costs of running state prisons.”

Source:

<https://stagenc.build.dispatch.com/opinion/20181111/editorial-moving-on-from-issue-1-should-be-legislatures-job-one>

**This transformational criminal justice reform amendment set out to address mass incarceration and the addiction crisis by putting rehabilitation before incarceration. It aimed to:**

1. Change fourth & fifth-degree drug possession felony charges to misdemeanors and reclassify past offenses.
2. Prohibit prison sentences for probation violations that are not new crimes. Judges will implement community- based alternatives.
3. Expand the ability for incarcerated people to earn up to 25% off of their sentence through participation in rehabilitative programs.
4. Redirect funds saved (estimated over \$100 million) from prison spending into drug treatment, mental health, and trauma recovery services.



**The Ohio Organizing Collaborative led a dynamic volunteer signature collection effort with more than 7,700 volunteers garnering 100,808 signatures over a three and half month span.**

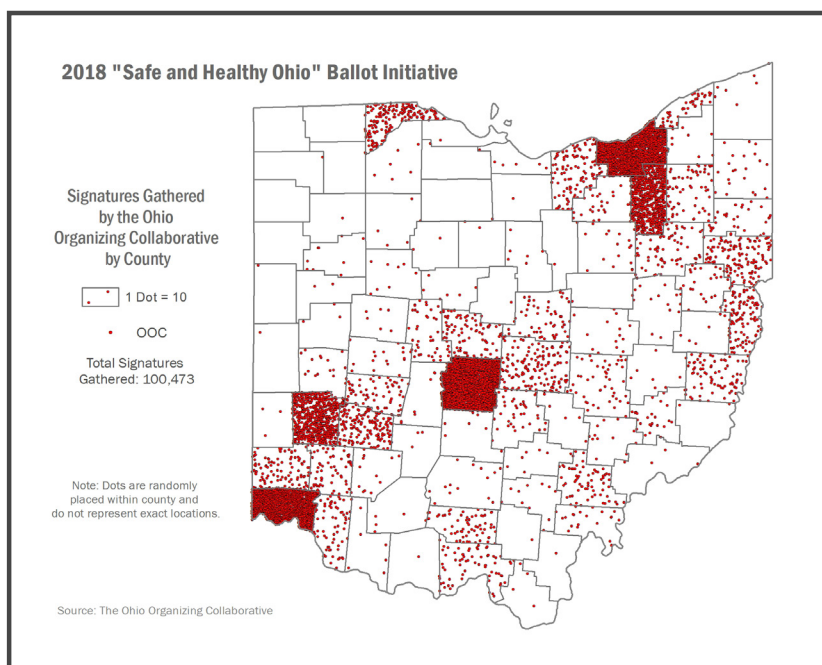
In addition to volunteer collection, the Ohio Organizing Collaborative's sister 501c4 Organization, Stand Up for Ohio collected 401,540 signatures through its paid program.

In total, over 730,000 signatures were submitted to the Secretary of State, the second largest amount for any ballot initiative in Ohio's history with the OOC and Stand Up submitting more than 500,000 of those.

On November 6th, more than 1.5 million people voted for Issue One. Although the measure was defeated, this campaign engaged thousands of volunteers, hundreds of thousands of voters, and made a defining statement about the need for criminal justice reform in the state.

Over ten years, the OOC and our partners have led multiple local and statewide campaigns to end mass incarceration. Thousands of leaders have worked to win reforms that have opened up job opportunities, removed collateral sanction barriers, reduced prison time, and other substantial victories. Issue One is not a loss, but another key step along this journey as we work to transform our criminal justice system!.

City	Anchor Partner	Signatures Collected
Akron	Akron Organizing Collaborative	8,583
Cincinnati	The AMOS Project	22,379
Statewide	SEIU 1199	8,872
Dayton	Miami Valley Organizing Collaborative	6,721
Cleveland	Khnemu Lighthouse	10,905
College Campuses	Ohio Student Association	12,275
Columbus	Columbus People's Partnership/ PJP	20,954
Rural Ohio	OOC Small Town Team	8,037
Toledo	Toledoans United for Social Justice and Action	2,082
Volunteer Collection Total		100,808



# GET OUT THE VOTE PROGRAM: VOLUNTEER SUCCESS



**411**  
VOLUNTEER  
CANVASSERS



**40,320**  
DOORS KNOCKED  
BY VOLUNTEERS



**70,866**  
VOLUNTEER  
PHONE CALLS



**81,211**  
VOLUNTEER TEXTS



**18,901**  
CONVERSATIONS

The Ohio Organizing Collaborative continues to run large scale Get Out the Vote programs this year focusing on volunteer participation while Stand Up for Ohio (501c4) ran the paid program. This year's GOTV program focused on community events, door knocking, phones, and a text program.



## CONSTITUENCY ORGANIZING

All of our civic engagement programs have four objectives: first, to build power with community members to advance our issue campaigns; second, to educate as many people in our communities as possible about the importance of voting and participating in the political process; third, to continually develop the community engagement skills of our volunteer leaders and base; and fourth, to make sure we are achieving our electoral goals.

Our civic engagement program is fully integrated into the long-term strategy and goals of our organization(s) so that electoral work is but one aspect of a larger strategy to build power for our communities.

The OOC's electoral program is built from the dynamic student, faith, labor, and neighborhood-based organizing across the state. In Cincinnati, dozens of churches organized to collect signatures. In Cleveland, students organized events on numerous campuses. In Columbus, activists, churches, and SEIU collected signatures.

# MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

**Washington Post “Ohio ballot initiative on drug penalties is motivating voters in Cleveland”**

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2018/live-updates/midterms/midterm-election-updates/ohio-ballot-initiative-on-drug-penalties-is-motivating-voters-in-cleveland/?utm\\_term=.40e6b5073e35](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2018/live-updates/midterms/midterm-election-updates/ohio-ballot-initiative-on-drug-penalties-is-motivating-voters-in-cleveland/?utm_term=.40e6b5073e35)

**The Lantern “Behind Issue 1: Student activists fight to reform criminal justice system”**

<https://www.thelantern.com/2018/10/behind-issue-1-student-activists-fight-to-reform-criminal-justice-system/>

**The Blade “Toledo clergy voice support for Issue 1”**

<https://www.toledoblade.com/local/politics/2018/10/29/toledo-clergy-voice-support-for-issue-1-ohio-election/stories/20181029142>

**The Beat “‘Imagine A World Without Cages’: Ohio Voters Can Change The War On Drugs With Issue 1”**

<https://thebeatdfw.com/3106644/imagine-a-world-without-cages-ohio-voters-can-change-the-war-on-drugs-with-issue-1/>

**Dayton Daily News “Issue 1: John Legend lends support to criminal justice reform measure”**

<https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/issue-john-legend-lends-support-criminal-justice-reform-measure/ie8YfIXkdKHs1Pg6ZMuOkI/>

**Blavity “Ohio Students Are Saying ‘No To The Bulls\*\*t’ And Rallied Together To Add Prison Reform On The Ballot This November”**

<https://blavity.com/ohio-students-are-saying-no-to-the-bullst-and-rallied-together-to-add-prison-reform-on-the-ballot-this-november>

**Dayton Daily News “‘Orange is the New Black’ author urges yes vote on Issue 1”**

<https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/local/orange-the-new-black-author-urges-yes-vote-issue/9rx7Q6WJW37yTbcOPZNMN/>

**BG Falcon Media “Drug sentencing issue, addiction questions hit Ohio vote”**

[https://www.bgfalconmedia.com/city/drug-sentencing-issue-addiction-questions-hit-ohio-vote/article\\_9bbfae4c-d27e-11e8-9671-53c17b8767b0.html](https://www.bgfalconmedia.com/city/drug-sentencing-issue-addiction-questions-hit-ohio-vote/article_9bbfae4c-d27e-11e8-9671-53c17b8767b0.html)





**OHIO ORGANIZING  
COLLABORATIVE**

**LOCATIONS:**

**Youngstown: Union Baptist Church  
OOC Main Office**  
25 E. Boardman St, #230  
Youngstown OH 44503

**Akron Organizing Collaborative**  
915 E. Market Street  
Akron, OH 44305

**The AMOS Project**  
103 William Taft Rd  
Cincinnati, OH 45219

**Khnemu Lighthouse Foundation**  
966 East 105th Street  
Cleveland, OH 44108

**The Columbus People's Partnership/  
The People's Justice Project**  
700 Bryden Rd Suite 124  
Columbus OH 43512

**Miami Valley Organizing Collaborative**  
505 Riverside Dr  
Dayton, OH 45405

**River Valley: Small Town Organizing Team**  
506 Walnut Street East  
Liverpool, OH 43920

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