

**Southern Partners Fund
Southern Organizing Strategy Concept Paper
Working Document**

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The Concept:

From 2012 through 2016, Southern Partners Fund (SPF) members, grantees and funder allies will work together on a Southern Organizing Strategy with a grant making focus on three issue areas: voter rights, immigrant rights and education reform.

This focus will be complemented with support strategies for capacity building for community organizing, get out the vote resources, and a philanthropic accountability campaign in rural communities across the South.

The Southern Organizing Strategy will radiate from a shared vision of building the base of community organizing in the rural South to effectively impact elections, public policy, and philanthropic support. To implement the Southern Organizing Strategy SPF pledges to:

1. Raise an additional \$8,000,000 in funds and resources from outside supporters to aggressively promote a Southern strategy to unite and build the power of rural communities;
2. Through our “philanthropic accountability campaign” we will encourage our peers in philanthropy to unify their voices and execute financial actions to actively resist the divisive tactics of the Koch brothers, ALEC, Pope Family Foundation and other philanthropic and financial powerhouses seeking to promote a regressive agenda in the South.
3. Re-shape sixty percent of our grantmaking to support the Southern strategy; and
4. Continue to provide culturally appropriate capacity building technical assistance and leadership development programming to strengthen community organizing and voter engagement in the region’s rural areas.

The South’s New Context

It is a truism that the South is in a period of monumental demographic, economic and social change. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the South is now home to 57% of African Americans, the largest percentage of the African American population since 1960. The same Census, revealed the South is also increasingly the place of choice for settled out migrant

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workers as well as new Latino immigrants, causing explosive growth trends from this population. For instance, in Georgia 28% of the state's population growth between 2000 and 2010 was fueled by Latinos. Like the Latino population, African-Americans moving south also tend to be young: 40 percent of those moving to Southern states in the 2010 Census count were ages 21 to 40. The Institute for Southern Studies interprets this to mean that the political force of the latest phase of African-American reverse-migration and new immigrant influx will be felt for years to come. [Institute for Southern Studies News 9/28/'11].

For SPF, these trends offer both challenges and opportunities, for us and our allies interested in shaping the region. Rather than a region which continues to be mired in the legacy of xenophobia, poor education, poverty, and the structural discrimination of its past; we seek a region that looks to a future of greater social and economic equity, strong community, and top pre-school through adult educational institutions.

It is our analysis that as the South goes politically, so eventually trends the rest of the country. In this moment, our community partners tell us the South is "ground zero" for the struggle for immigrant rights, voter rights, and quality, accessible, and equitable, educational opportunity.

SPF'S SOUTHERN STRATEGY: A THREE ISSUE FOCUS

SPF recognizes that even when fully endowed at \$9,000,000 in 2013, it will not have the human and financial resources to fight the plethora of issues springing up like mushrooms around the South. As a result we pledge to adopt strategies focused on three issues we've judged to most strongly impact the future of human rights in the region and offer the greatest potential for building powerful coalitions:

- Immigrant rights;
- Education reform; and
- Voter rights.

Why these three? First, SPF's theory of change identifies the organizing we've funded for each of these issues as deeply connected to principles basic to SPF's understanding of effective democratic practice:

- Those most impacted by a problem are the most innovative resource in providing a systemic remedy;
- Full, inclusive, and open democratic participation in decisions about policy (regardless of legal status) is the qualifying hallmark of a well functioning democracy; and

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- Womb to tomb, high quality, accessible, educational opportunity is the basis for creating a society oriented toward a sustainable future, with the capacity to fulfill its mandate for social justice and economic equity.

Second, each of these issues lead to a multiplicity of other issues, which when redressed, open to a progressive vision for the South.

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

The human and political rights of new immigrants and migrant labor represent the core moral issue of our times. Our focus on immigrant rights speaks to issues of fair labor practices, social services for the needy as a human right, social equity, environmental justice and solidarity. All issues which the South has been historically on the wrong side of from slavery, through Reconstruction, the importation of Asian and European immigrant labor, through the bracero program, up to present times. It is almost a cliché to note this region's history of employing exploited labor; while simultaneously suppressing laborers' political voice, and attempts at social equity.

When SPF promotes the immigrant's right to fully participate in our social and economic life, we stand for an enlargement of the democratic franchise. By supporting immigrant rights, we also promote humane and fair working conditions in states rooted in a legacy of worker abuse, environmental hazards, and poor safety enforcements under the guise of "right to work" laws and "pro-business de-regulation". Of particular concern are the recent trends of hundreds of thousands of deportations that divide families and the massive detentions in facilities that have become a cash market for investors like Wells Fargo Bank. We assert that basic human dignity requires us to make sure those in need, regardless of documentation or social standing, whether of Latino, Asian or African descent, have access to the goods and services which will allow them to progress toward economic self-sufficiency.

VOTING RIGHTS

SPF focuses on voting rights because these rights lie at the heart of the formation and exercise of our democracy. It is these very rights, which generations of women and civil rights activists bled to gain, which are now under attack throughout our region. The racial and economic bias of many of the policies promoted to limit this franchise by ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Franchise) and others is more than obvious.

ALEC's nine task forces, consisting of corporate representatives and Republican legislators, (who are ALEC state chairmen in most of SPF's states), draw up model bills to be slotted into Republican controlled state legislatures and governorships. "The bills cover a lot of ground",
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said Center for Media and Democracy's Lisa Graves, in an letter introducing their website, "ALEC Exposed". And all of the recommended policies in these "model bills" favor and protect corporate profits, weaken environmental protections, and limit individual voter rights while expanding the influence of corporations on the democratic process.

Attempts on voter restrictions through the use of voter ID's, drug testing, gerrymandering districts, disenfranchising the formerly incarcerated (or in the case of Florida, reversing legislation that extended rights to non-violent former offenders) and limiting early voting have become heavily promoted proposals in many Southern states including North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, West Virginia, and Florida. In an Oct. 3, 2011 New York Times article, it was reported that NYU's Brennan Center for Justice estimated as many as 5,000,000 currently eligible voters (mostly people of color, college students, elderly, poor, or disabled) could be prevented from voting by these changes nationwide. The Center predicted that five million voters are enough voters to have impacted the outcome of the elections in 2000 and 2004. As of this writing, the Justice Department is reviewing the legality of these changes in Southern states under 1960's Civil Rights statutes.

As the founders of this country recognized early on, the right to vote is the right to control one's destiny. Georgia Congressman John Lewis called these voter restrictions, "poll taxes by another name" and SPF cannot stand idle when legislatures seek to restrict voting. We stand with our predecessors, who always organized to enlarge the franchise to enrich democracy. We choose to help our people stand against the hegemony of the corporate elite seeking to suppress voter rights.

EDUCATION REFORM

In SPF's analysis, the issue of education reform, connects to school integration, encouraging bilingual education, abolishing the public funding of Southern White Academies, raising educational achievement, and increasing access generally pre-school through adulthood; while closing the achievement gap between Whites and people of color. And yet by many rankings, Southern states fall near the bottom of far too many essential ratings for quality education.

The past 20 years have seen a pernicious trend toward locating prisons in low income communities; and building prisons projected on the school suspension rates of elementary and high schools in low income and minority communities. The planning for a school to prison pipeline was likely first identified by Southern Echo over two decades ago. Southern Echo supported its analysis of this pipeline with a dramatic mapping project in its home state of Mississippi. Now we see national school to prison pipeline planning gaining national visibility and fortunately being opposed by the Public Interest Project's Just and Fair Schools Fund, funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, and others. Education reform short-circuits thinking that all

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under achievers and low performing children are potential criminals. Holistically, education reform reduces wasteful spending on jails and prisons and encourages investments producing high performance school districts, principals, teachers, and schools with parental engagement. It keeps students from being marginalized with high suspension “zero tolerance” policies, which, experience shows, lead to criminal records, under-employment and loss of voting rights in many Southern states.

Education reform is the issue dearest to the heart of every parent and looms large for anyone unemployed who seeks re-training. Education reform is necessary to secure an environmentally sustainable future, and a future of economic equity and social harmony. Without better education there can be no deep change in the South.

Finally, SPF’s Southern Organizing Strategy is built on these issues because our groups have demonstrated they can win.

WINNING ON IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

Tennessee, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama have pushed some of the harshest measures against new immigrants in the country. Southern states have become a testing ground for sponsoring discriminatory legislation through a combination of arguments promoting xenophobia (fear of the foreigner) and libertarian economic policies, which would deny government funding for all social programs. The experience of SPF’s grantees tells us we can successfully fight regressive immigration policies. The work in Florida lead by the Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC) is an example. Building on the legacy of the Farmworker Association’s of Florida’s long history of successfully organizing workers of Hispanic and African descent, FLIC is also using cross-racial alliance building between African Americans and Latinos. FLIC has successfully formed coalitions that have stalled particularly regressive immigration policies. In Alabama, recent judicial decisions have favored the unfair treatment of immigrants. But in Florida, coalition members stayed day and night in Tallahassee, the state capitol, to fight. As a result of their strong base, and savvy organizing, they stopped the anti-immigrant legislation.

The Farmworker Association of Florida, an SPF member organization, responded to a call for help in the majority Latino city of Fellsmere after it was devastated by a hurricane in 2004. A Year later, the farmworker community was still being unheard and underserved by the “Good Ol’ Boy” city government in Indian River County. The city government decided not only to continue practices discriminating against the majority population but hired a new city manager. The city manager developed new housing regulations for low income housing projects, which housed large numbers of Latino farmworkers. Upon hearing of these proposed changes, the

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organizer for the Farmworker Association worked with the community to fill the city hall with protesters. They demanded the regulations not be implemented and that the city manager be removed. They also, registered new voters and got them to the polls to elect the most diverse slate of office holders in the city's history: two White women, two Latinos and a White male. After the city council change, a new mayor was also elected, who expeditiously replaced the city manager. That who visit, say the whole attitude of the government has changed. This could not have been achieved without the cross-racial organizing expertise of the Association's organizer. Fellsmer, now has not only dropped implementation of the harmful housing regulations, but the community started a community garden and has engaged in a series of community building projects. Typical of rural communities it only took 130 votes to make a difference in the city election. One resident made sure all 40 of his children and grandchildren (almost 1/3 of the needed votes) went to the polls for this election. The change in city government, not only earned new respect for the Latinos living there, but has encouraged others to run for government. Fellsmer, once mired in division and discrimination, though far from perfect, is now a city oriented toward a cooperative and inclusive future.

WINNING ON EDUCATION REFORM

Southern Echo has been working vigorously to improve public education in Mississippi for twenty years. The primary focus of their education reform work has been in the Mississippi Delta region, where the issues concerning underperforming schools are most pronounced and concentrated.

In Echo's analysis, the education problems in the Delta region "were not created by parental or student indifference to the need for all children for a quality first-rate public education. To the contrary, the problems Mississippi is struggling so hard to overcome today are the result of the intended consequences of conscious education and other public policies, customs and practices that were designed to limit the access of African American children to a quality education, meaningful economic opportunity and effective access to the political process. "

They state this, "Notwithstanding the extraordinary efforts to change these policies, customs and practices during the past 15 years, the problems and dilemmas created by these historic policies, customs and practices remain deeply rooted in Mississippi's public education culture."

Southern Echo proposes, " In order to overcome the consequences of these barriers rooted in the past, our strategy must be to include the historically-excluded communities most affected by the efforts to reform among the architects of education policy, and not merely the objects of such policies. We need to appreciate the importance of this shift toward meaningful democratic inclusion as essential to the development of a more knowledgeable policy process

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and as a core value in the creation of a fair society.” [Southern Echo comments to the (MS) Legislative Taskforce To Study Underperforming Schools and School Districts. January 2010]

Southern Echo’s testimony backed by allied organizations lead to the adoption of a number of substantive recommendations by the Taskforce that became amendments to Mississippi’s Children First Act of 2009.

Southern Echo is now sponsoring workshops for parents leaders on school suspension policies, juvenile justice practices, alternative schools and alternatives to incarceration.

Southern Echo’s long record of successes demonstrates we can win in policy change, we can win new methods of policy making by advocating for more parent leadership and we win when we help parents and youth develop their leadership skills to address reform.

WINNING ON VOTING RIGHTS

Just south of Miami, lies Homestead, Florida. Homestead is a majority 60% Latino town. In a wave of arrogant power, the Homestead Housing authority acted to close school buildings connected to public housing. Public housing served here, as in many communities in rural Florida, as farm labor camps. Essentially, residents had to make farm labor wages to live there. The public housing site had become the traditional site for after-school classes for the children of migrant laborers and received operation subsidies from the Miami Dade Department of Education. For years a contract was maintained between the Homestead Housing Authority and the Miami Dade Department of Education to maintain the after-school program. And then in 2009, the city decided that this program was not really helping the “larger community”, and refused to re-sign the contract. As a result the buildings were closed. This sparked an organizing campaign by the Farmworker Association of Florida, which brought in the school superintendent as an ally. The campaign ended with the buildings re-opened, and the school restored through a new signed contract.

Organizing coupled with an aggressive Get Out The Vote campaign, registered and delivered many new voters to the polls, sweeping in a new woman mayor, and a Latino and two Anglos to the City Council. This new administration, sensitive to its newly active electorate, changed the members of the housing authority and replaced them with representative community folks. The chair of the Hempstead Housing Authority, saw the handwriting on the wall, and resigned in protest rather than work with his new members.

Farmworker Association leaders, have long maintained that with more support, they could have even more impact. In other rural towns they have observed wins and losses by 10 votes or other small margins. The Association recently received technical assistance to support their

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electoral organizing in 20 towns where they have influence in either the African American or Latino communities and where the two make up a majority.

SPF does not see these examples as flukes, but as proof of what can come from strategic organizing combined with effective GOTV in rural towns and communities in the South.

SPF believes rural communities throughout the South must quickly gain the resources, and capacity to form similar coalitions or we face losing not just on immigration but on education reform and voting rights as well.

SPF'S SOUTHERN ORGANIZING STRATEGY: A THREE ISSUE FOCUS WITH THREE SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES

To effectively move these three issues from a reactive agenda to one where SPF and its allies drive to produce a South with the capacity to restore the American dream, SPF will enlarge on and continue to engage and strengthen work with the quarter of our grantees currently working for immigrant rights, voting rights and education reform.

We will also build on three support strategies, which our constituents and leaders have identified as components for building powerful coalitions. Two strategies are not new to SPF, nor the funding world; but one is an innovation in the field of philanthropy generally. The three support strategies are:

- To increase the capacity of community organizations through culturally appropriate technical assistance and leadership development programming;
- To encourage and support “get out the vote” and 501c4 campaign work; and,
- To engage our philanthropic allies in what we are terming a “philanthropic accountability campaign”.

Support Strategy #1: BUILDING THE CAPACITY of COMMUNITY ORGANIZING: FUNDING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Community organizing has a long and prestigious history in our region going back to Reconstruction. It has proven itself effective whether its focus is on miners in Appalachia, farm workers in Florida; small farmers in Mississippi and Alabama; or our many rural communities facing environmental racism or gender and racial discrimination in housing and employment. The South is currently confronted by a host of issues: intense fighting over budget cuts to services; efforts to privatize prisons, public schools, and immigrant detention camps; efforts to eliminate a woman’s right to choose; efforts to drug test people before they

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can access public assistance; and constant attacks on workers' rights. All of these issues follow on the ongoing struggles for the "Right to Return" in New Orleans and other Gulf communities. True to the trend set in the Gulf, now communities throughout the South hit by tornadoes and hurricanes, floods and fires are being triaged for FEMA aide. The Right is even calling into question FEMA funding for disaster relief, which since the '70's has been part of our compact with all disaster stricken communities in the U. S. SPF cannot effectively address all of these issues with money. But we can build the capacity of rural Southern communities to effectively organize and address most issues.

Community organizing is a process of analysis, action and reflection on the interplay of issues and power. Through organizing, communities collectively identify an issue, analyze the lines of power maintaining it, and collectively act to attack the issue's root cause. Organizing is a process that builds community leadership with the capacity to address the root causes of injustice by changing laws, institutions, social structures, and customs.

Like SPF's focus issues, the strategy of community organizing is deeply connected to basic principles of SPF's theory of change. Our experience has lead us to see that building local communities' capacities to organize with grants, technical assistance and peer training, both allows them to work effectively on a local level and to network with other organizers at our Social Justice Institute and other programing.

Why this approach? The potential for creating a 12 state regional network of community organizations active on their local levels, but sharing a common strategy could lead to locally controlled but regionally coordinated campaigns. This would give us the power to collectively address the coordinated strategies of ALEC, Art Pope, and the Koch brothers.

While still in the beginning stages, SPF believes we are slowly building a common language and common basis for cooperating through our convening, technical assistance and capacity building grants. We envision each of our organizations acting as nodes to further promote both organizing strategies and a shared analysis with neighboring communities. Every year our grant committee members (who are organizers and activists in their home communities) spread knowledge not only of how to gain resources from foundations but also ideas based on their own experience and from other site visits throughout the South about improving local organizing. This is a process of cross-pollination with enormous potential for the rural South.

SUPPORT STRATEGY #2: VOTER OUTREACH, CULTIVATION, AND ENGAGEMENT

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Along with a strategy of strengthening and spreading the practice of community organizing, SPF will support local efforts to register, educate, and involve rural voters. The 2010 census confirms what our communities have noted anecdotally, that the U.S. is undergoing a second “Great Migration”, but this time it is from the North to the South. Add to this the influx of Latino, and growing Asian, and Native American populations and it is not difficult to foresee people of color as majority populations once again throughout the South. SPF is committed to supporting the organizing of these populations, to educate them on the issues impacting their communities, to teach them to engage their friends and neighbors, and to get all who are eligible out to vote. In a democracy, an organized population, means a population with power.

During this initiative SPF will aggressively support our grantees and allies outreach to new voters, Black/Brown coalitions, and re-settled migrants from the North. We will encourage strategies focused not just on the short term goal of getting them to the poles to vote their economic and political interests but to also, as organizing always does, develop leadership skills, and involve themselves deeply in the civic life of their communities in an ongoing fashion regardless of their document status. The last mid-term election makes it clear, we can’t just target the quadrennial presidential cycles, but must be just as prepared for the mid-term and local races, if we are to move our states back to serving majority interests. Each of these strategies will broaden the membership base of rural community organizations.

It is our analysis that broadening the membership base of a community organization serves to both build the collective power of that organization and is an opportunity for the continual political education of its membership. Their growth in skills and political analysis as members and organizers are tested and enhanced in each campaign that they wage for better schools, cleaner environments, an enlarged franchise, worker rights, diverse political leadership, and accountability and transparency. Studies have shown that this activism is then easily moved to the polls on every election day, not just the national quadrennial ones.

In our experience many community based organizations have not had exposure to strategic GOTV planning and targeting and do not have access to the newest technology available – like the voter activation network (VAN). These tools have not been made available across the South broadly, but currently North Carolina, Mississippi and Virginia has access to these tools. SPF will seek allies to make VAN and other technologies available across the South. Our analysis suggests it is critical that community based organization within SPF’s networks have access to the voter engagement tools and the skills to implement them to increase voter participation. But these tools and skills are also needed to engage their communities in local campaigns around voting rights, education or immigration reform. These tools are a vital component to

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strengthening the capacity and sophistication of ongoing, long-term voter engagement efforts across the South.

It is SPF's goal to equip community organizations in each of our rural communities with the skills, knowledge and resources needed to successfully turnout their constituent communities with an average of 1-2% over their previous elections in 2008.

Such an increase in turnout in our states would shake up the national election and begin the process of taking back local and state policy making bodies, which to date have been ceded to the Republican party without accountability to its low-income and working class populations. To facilitate support for this initiative SPF will house a special 501c4 initiative and supporting 501c3 and 501c4 funding collaboratives. We will also consider acting as the C4 umbrella for organizing efforts in our 12 states who lack C4 status and wish to engage in policy advocacy or issue education. Our goal is become the strategic hub of short and long term funding and planning for rural Southern voter engagement and our focus issues.

We are actively seeking additional money, and contributions of training, technical support, legal advice and GOTV strategies worth \$8,000,000 over the next four years. This is slightly less than SPF's full endowment in 2013 so presents no problems with tipping for contributors. The added resources would support our 3 issue focus, and organizing capacity building and voter education and engagement activities. In addition a small amount of the funds would also be used for an active research and communications campaign aimed at our grassroots and philanthropic allies to expose and push back regressive funders. This is SPF's Philanthropic Accountability Campaign.

SUPPORT STRATEGY # 3 Philanthropic Accountability Campaign

Over the past 30 years numerous sources have plotted the rise of right leaning think tanks, radio programming, the FOX TV network, and PAC's , funded by conservative foundations like Coors, John M. Olin Foundation, Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Sarah Scaife, the Walton Family Foundation and others. [see Media Matters Transparency website.]

Since, the Citizen's United decision however, we seem to be in a new era. We see not just funding the promotion of ideas and strategies, legitimate philanthropic activity no matter what ends they serve; but philanthropic resources are now directly controlling elections and changing public policy. While it can be argued that these foundations are in violation of IRS codes, (several lawsuits against the David Koch Charitable Foundation and the Pope Family Foundation have been filed for just these reasons), in the mean time, foundations like this and their surrogates (e.g. Americans for Prosperity and John Locke Foundation) change election

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outcomes with their spending, stymie educational equity processes (as happened in North Carolina where Art Pope's funding has put on hold a model desegregation plan that worked) and stall implementation of environmental regulations, worker rights and immigration reform. In revealing articles about the Koch brothers and Art Pope, Jane Mayer of New Yorker magazine (Oct. 10, 2011) has exposed the pervasiveness of this emerging strategy and bewails its effectiveness.

In SPF's analysis, with forces like Art Pope, the Koch brothers, ALEC, the John Locke Foundation, and Americans for Prosperity at play, along with the lobbyists deployed by Wells Fargo to boost the value of their investments in detention operations like the GEO Group and Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) by pushing legislation that increases the incarceration of new immigrants; we are in a new moment. A new moment requires new strategies beyond grantmaking, capacity building, and GOTV, if our communities are to stop losing.

SPF is aware of, and applauds those, who fund the Institute for Southern Studies, the Media and Democracy projects ALEC Exposed, Art Pope Exposed, and other advocacy and watch dog groups. But a question remains, "Why do we not use our voice as a field to object to this obvious misuse of philanthropy?"

As a fund dedicated to enhancing the common good, we at SPF are both baffled and outraged that funders of children and families, social and economic development, environmental sustainability, human rights, education, at risk populations, quality education and alternatives to incarceration amongst other social improvements, have been virtually silent as a group, about the Koch brothers, Art Pope and other regressive funders.

Why don't we in philanthropy use our forums of communications and gatherings to strategize how to supply communities with the communications and organizing tools to resist this backward push? In our analysis, this is not a mere question of conservative and liberal approaches to servicing the common good. This is a hard Right use of funds to buy elections, intimidate candidates on the left and right into uniformity, and retard or eliminate policies that promote racial and economic equity. SPF has no difficulty in denouncing these strategies as unfair, dangerous, and wrong.

SPF'S PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

SPF has enough belief in the power of democracy to believe that once our communities become alert to these influences, they will act in the interest of the common good. We do not recommend a head to head funding war. The Pope Family Foundation alone, has an estimated \$150,000,000 in assets. Besides, to adopt their strategies would be just as unfair and wrong. Instead we want to engage in a campaign of general education of communities all over the

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twelve Southern states about these pernicious and shadowy influencers; and we want to encourage our philanthropic allies to join us in denouncing these practices and help fund a public education campaign.

We think our communities when informed, can take direct action against the companies that feed these interests. Like the Koch brothers, Pope has created a network combining family fortune, private company resources and family funded policy organizations. It is the “private company resources” from their industries, where both the Pope family and the Koch brothers may be subject to public pressure and forced out of the shadows.

THE COMMUNITY’S ROLE

According to Ms. Jane Meyers’ expose` in the New Yorker, the Pope family fortune has always depended on low-income patrons. Art Pope’s Variety Wholesalers controls over 400 outlets in the Southeast and mid-Atlantic region under a four brand stores: Roses, Maxway, Super 10 and Bargain Town. Their stores locate almost exclusively in neighborhoods that are at least 25% African American with median incomes less than \$40,000. These stores are reported to operate on very tight margins. If an effective communications campaign were backed by our network of community organizations training, a boycott and “speak out” campaign would be easy to initiate.

More research is needed before initiating such actions. And we have no delusions about seriously impacting the profit margins of the Koch brothers or Art Pope, but we do think, it would draw national attention, and give an outlet, for every citizen where their products are sold, to make their buying choice, a statement.

PHILANTHROPY’S ROLE

Philanthropic allies can join us as we place opinion pieces in the Chronicle of Philanthropy and other philanthropy rags, help us to bring notice to our colleagues that the practices of the Koch brothers and Art Pope are endangering the core values of philanthropy and risking tighter federal regulations on all of us.

For those who are promoting equity and fairness with their funding, or even programs for the disadvantaged, we would ask you to help us make the argument that the permanent underclass that the funding of these shadow influencers produces, is not the America the majority works everyday to achieve. Nor is it the America our funds seek to foster.

SUMMARY OF SPF’S INTENT

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Southern Partners Fund strives toward democratic philanthropy in its processes and its outcomes. With a concentrated focus on three issues: immigrant rights, voting rights, and education reform, we seek to produce a South that is more open and more democratically ruled by the people, for the people.

By joining with allies to use funds and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of our communities to organize; and provide them with tools and supply them with strategies for year round and long-term voter engagement, we commit to growing our democracy in a democratic fashion.

And by asking our peers in philanthropy to fund this with us, to stand against the abuse of philanthropy and to help our communities strategically fight back. We are only asking our friends to join the chorus of community voices to speak out for what's fair and serves the common good.

Currently, SPF dedicates close to \$1,000,000 a year to its grant making and capacity building programming. We will seek an additional \$2,000,000 a year over the next four years (\$8,000,000) for the Southern Organizing Strategy.

With these combined resources SPF will commit 60% of its grants to the three issue focus and all of our program support to these strategies for the next four years. The remaining 40% of our grants are reserved for natural disasters, and organizing issues of urgency that touch neglected and marginalized populations or issues.

For more information contact Ron White, Interim Executive Director, Southern Partners Fund.
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