

## America Votes State Summit 2020

March 4-6, 2020

Walter E. Washington Convention Center

801 Mt. Vernon Place NW

Washington, DC



# America Votes State Summit 2020 Agenda

*\*\*Times and sessions are subject to change\*\**

## Wednesday, March 4

10:30 AM – 4:30 PM: **Registration Open**

11:30 AM: **Lunch Served**

12:00 PM – 12:45 PM: **Welcome and Introduction of Community Power Builders**

12:45 PM – 2:00 PM: **What Just Happened? What Does It Mean and Why Does It Matter?**

The 2020 State Summit's opening panel discussion will address that big elephant in the room: "what the heck just happened across Super Tuesday's 16 primary contests?" And more importantly what we know (or what don't we know at all) about the long road ahead to November and well beyond. This session will be moderated by America Votes President Greg Speed in discussion with the State Summit's favorite political analyst, Amy Walter of The Cook Political Report and the PBS NewsHour, along with a group of the progressive movement's foremost strategists to discuss the results and very early takeaways from the night (and early morning) before.

2:00 PM – 2:15 PM: **Break**

2:15 PM – 3:25 PM: **What if Everybody Votes? Implications of a Possible 2020 Turnout Surge**

The 2018 US House elections saw a 45% increase in turnout over 2014 and in 2019 we saw even bigger boosts. It's possible, if not likely, that turnout in 2020 will set an all-time record, bringing tens of millions of new voters to the polls. What do progressives need to know to register, educate, and mobilize a winning coalition of voters in 2020? This panel will explore various turnout scenarios for 2020, the implications and imperatives for key demographic groups, and the work progressive organizations are doing to build a winning coalition.

3:25 PM – 3:40 PM: **Break**

3:40 PM – 4:55 PM: **Breakout Sessions**

### **Modernizing Elections: Leveraging Vote by Mail, Same-Day Registration, and Automatic Voter Registration**

Election modernization policy wins in several states present an opportunity to grow the electorate. How do we leverage these new voter laws in a high turnout environment? Focusing on states with new laws in place, we'll take a look at how these laws work in practice and programs to take advantage of them.

### **GOTP (Get Out The Protection): Preparing For and Responding to Voter Suppression**

Protecting the vote isn't just a concern on the first Tuesday in November. Voter suppression takes many forms: from restrictive voting policies to disinformation to outright intimidation at the polls. In a high turnout environment, we know conservatives will likely continue practices we saw in '16 and '18 to suppress the vote. Local, state-based, and national groups will share lessons on how best to fight against voter suppression and shift the narrative on this issue - moving from responding on

just Election Day to proactively fighting for everyone's right to vote and removing barriers to voting every day.

### **Expanding the Electorate: Voter Registration & Everything After...**

Voter registration will play a key role in making sure we are ready for Election Day. What does this landscape look like? What are the trends? How do we make sure new registrations aren't just more names on the rolls, but become engaged and empowered new voters? Also, how does this look in states with Automatic Voter Registration?

### **2020 Turnout Surge Implications: Rethinking GOTV**

What does it mean for our GOTV programs when projections indicate that far more of our traditional "turnout targets" voters are highly motivated to vote in 2020? This session will drill deeper into the implications of a 2020 turnout surge through two lenses: GOTV targeting and tactics, and community engagement and empowerment. We'll be joined by experts to cover topics including: what we know (and what we don't know) about the most marginalized (or "lowest-propensity") voters, how we need to rethink our GOTV programs and tactics to engage them, and perspectives on how investment in this 2020 imperative must be sustained to capitalize on an opportunity for long-term power.

### **Organizing LGBTQ Voters: Programs that Engage, Empower, and Mobilize**

While generally supportive of progressive policies and elected leaders, eligible voters who identify as LGBTQ are less likely to be registered to vote. How do we use a high turnout election to engage more of these voters than ever before? What do successful LGBTQ mobilization programs look like? How can all partner programs be more inclusive of these voters? During this session we will hear from national and in-state experts to review the landscape of the LGBTQ electorate, tactics to mobilize, and historical barriers to voting.

### **Disinformation in the 2020 Election: Effective Responses to Defend Democracy**

Politically relevant disinformation was found to have reached over 158 million estimated views in the last year, enough to reach every reported registered voter in the US at least once. Progressive organizations on the frontlines of the election arena need to have the ability to rapidly respond to the tsunami of disinformation headed our way. You read about these issues in the news almost daily, but what do these terms mean and what can be done about it? This session will brief attendees on the hallmarks of the way election interference is showing up online, the social media landscape, and how you, your organization, and partners can plug in to help combat it.

### **Breaking Thru: Connecting Down-Ballot in a Very Noisy Election**

Advancing progressive policies in the states means engaging voters on critical state and local elections, even in a presidential election year like 2020. During this session we'll hear from leaders who are engaging the base, expanding the electorate, and advancing progressive change by targeting down-ballot races. We will dig into the strategies, unique (multi-cycle) techniques, and programmatic considerations essential to capitalizing on these often-overlooked opportunities to build power.

**4:55 PM – 5:10 PM:** Break

**5:10 PM – 5:55 PM: Meeting the Moment: How We Organize & Invest to Win**  
This session looks at the intersection of progressive leaders, funders, and organizers dedicated to engaging and mobilizing communities of color and their collective impact in delivering victories at the ballot box and meaningful change over the long-term.

**6:00 PM – 8:00 PM: Cecile Richards Progressive Leader Award Reception Honoring the House Democratic Caucus**  
Join America Votes in celebrating the 2020 Cecile Richards Progressive Leader Honoree, the House Democratic Caucus, for their leadership around the advancement of voting rights and democracy in the 116th Congress. Accepting the award on behalf of the Caucus will be two voting rights champions: House Democratic Caucus Chairman Hakeem Jeffries and Representative Terri Sewell.

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## Thursday, March 5

**8:00 AM – 1:00 PM: Registration Open**

**8:00 AM: Breakfast Served**

**9:00 AM – 9:30 AM: Opening Session**

**9:30 AM – 10:30 AM: Winning in 2020 AND Building Long-Term Power**  
This session will feature national and state leaders for a discussion centered around the absolute imperatives of winning in 2020 and building power beyond Election Day. Panelists will share examples of in-state and national programs that have successfully mobilized their communities and discuss best practices and lessons learned from their experiences (hint: early sustained investment matters). They will also consider ways we can move away from transactional relationships to support community-driven programs to win in 2020, a key to gaining back progressive power, and sustaining it.

**10:30 AM – 10:45 AM: Break**

**10:45 AM – 12:00 PM: Breakout Sessions (Breakouts Repeated in Afternoon)**

**“It’s an Honor Just to Be Asian!”**

America’s Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities are the fastest growing, as well as the bluest-trending, demographic groups in the country. Yet most campaigns do not understand or recognize the diverse set of communities, people, and languages that the AAPI community is made up of. Challenges persist in engaging them, ranging from limited investment in civic engagement and political campaign infrastructure to limitations in data to categorizations (including “AAPI”) that fail to address the varied nationalities, cultures, experiences, and histories of these very communities - and their immigration stories in the U.S.

**Gen Z: The First-Time Voters Who Could Transform America**

Millions of Americans born after 1996 (Gen Z) will cast ballots this year for the first time. It is estimated that Gen Z could comprise 10% of the electorate, exceeding the Silent Generation’s total vote, and the youngest generations (Gen Z and Millennials) could cast 37% of all ballots. Gen Z is America’s most educated and diverse generation with a near-majority people of color, nearly one-quarter Latinx, and more than twice the multi-racial population than other generations. This panel will address the potential impact of Gen Z in 2020 and beyond as well as effective programmatic strategies and tactics to reach them.

**Black Women: Protecting Democracy. Reclaiming Our Time!**

Black women have long been the vibrant core of the Democratic voting base. Voting trends in the Trump era show that Black women are a super-charged segment of the electorate whose support is more essential than ever to the path to victory, even while Black women remain under-represented in campaign budgets, org charts, and as elected officials. This session will center Black women on the 2020 path to victory and over the long-haul by drilling into what motivates their engagement at the ballot box and what their voice and leadership brings to their households, communities, and overall electoral strategies for candidates running for elected office.

**The Swing Voter Redefined: Men of Color and the 2020 Opportunity**

While men of color are often left out of early communication and persuasion campaigns conducted by the progressive community, trends indicate this voting block could be the single greatest source of additional votes in key states in 2020. During this session, we will review recent research that shows distinct and growing differences along lines of gender and generations in the Black and Latino communities and some of the strategies to combat concerted efforts and outreach being made by conservatives. And we will hear from leaders within national and state organizations that are employing on the ground and online strategies to connect with and empower this key constituency.

**The Future is Latina: Strategies from the Field and What it Will Take to Win in 2020 and Beyond**

This session will focus on what Latinas on the front lines have always known: in order to build state-based power, including electoral victories, sustained investment in programs is paramount. Groundbreaking research from EquisLabs has shown that Latinas are key to preserving American democracy, yet, aren't shored up to participate in the election at scale. Why is that and what's needed to flip the script? Attendees will learn from *poderosas* leading programs across key battleground states and nationally and will leave ready to redefine who is a low propensity voter, what programs are needed across the country, and how to invest to win in this historic election and beyond.

**Indigenizing Organizing: Amplifying our Voice, Vote, and Collective Power**

Native American voters could influence election results in at least seven major states: Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Colorado. Yet, unique and tremendous barriers to voting disproportionately affect this community and electoral programs centering Native organizing are often overlooked until Election Day is weeks away. How do we break this cycle and empower communities to engage the Native Vote in 2020 and beyond? Join this session to hear from Native leaders about current issues facing this community and strategies to build the collective power of the Native Vote.

**12:00 PM – 12:45 PM: Lunch Served**

**12:45 PM – 1:45 PM: Keynote Session: In Conversation with Ibram X. Kendi**

Ibram X. Kendi, the 2019 Guggenheim Fellow and New York Times best-selling author, will be joining a conversation with America Votes Executive Director Sara Schreiber, as a featured speaker for the Summit. Kendi is one of America's foremost historians and leading antiracist voices and will speak about his upcoming book *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* and his recent article in *The Atlantic* titled "The Other Swing Voter."

**1:45 PM – 2:15 PM: Book Signing & Break**

**2:15 PM – 3:30 PM: Afternoon Breakouts (Repeated Sessions from Morning)**

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**3:30 PM – 3:45 PM:** Break

**3:45 PM – 5:00 PM:** **After Election Day: Working to Build Power and Advance Progressive Policies in the States**  
While so much of our work is geared toward Election Day, the fight is far from over once ballots are cast - and that's especially true when we win. Our community must not only keep up the pressure to ensure the promises made on the campaign trail are translated into strong progressive policy, but also we must also organize to support elected officials who want to do the right thing, even in the face of enormous pressure from outside forces. Along the way, it is absolutely imperative we continue to center the communities long-ignored in the policy-making discussion. For a look at the successes and challenges in transforming our wins at the ballot box into wins at the state capital, this discussion will focus on two states where progressives recently took full control of state government: Virginia and New Mexico.

**5:00 PM – 7:00 PM:** **America Votes Partner Diversity Coalition Reception**

The America Votes Partner and Diversity Coalition, in partnership with Hip-Politics, presents a live podcast taping of “The New Faces of the Progressive Movement: What Does the Progressive Movement Look Like When Led by People of Color?”

In addition to networking with your fellow brothers and sisters of the movement, join us for a taping of a live conversation with representatives of organizations of the progressive movement that are being led by atypical faces in the progressive movement. Hip-Politics seeks to mobilize the political power of the hip-hop generation. The intersectionality of hip-hop and politics is the key to unlocking the collective force of millions of people around the world, and Hip-Politics aims to educate and direct the voice of the hip-hop community to organize and create effective political and social justice campaigns. Hip-hop has a large influence over people under 65 across Black, Latinx, and White demographics.

**7:00 PM - 9:00 PM:** **Evening Reception and Networking co-hosted by EveryAction and Catalyst**

Summit attendees are invited to continue networking and toast to the year ahead at an evening reception.

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## Friday, March 6

Day 3 will focus on key updates on the path to victory in states. We'll start the day by pulling together the discussions from Day 1 and Day 2, mapping out cross-state strategies, and learning about how we're viewing campaigns and programs differently in 2020. Then, we'll have a series of breakouts to review the key imperatives to winning 270 electoral votes as well as updates from the Senate, state legislative and key races all the way down-ballot.

**8:30 AM:** **Breakfast Served**

**9:00 AM – 10:00 AM: Paths to Victory in 2020**

The last two days have covered different trends, strategies, and empowering key communities of voters. This panel will bring it all together and consider how we take everything we know and integrate it into a shared strategy to win. A discussion with national and state partners will walk through the shifting battleground maps, cross-state strategies, and how America Votes and our national and state partners are working to execute these plans across the state network.

**10:00 AM – 10:15 AM: Break**

**10:15 AM – 11:45 AM: Breakout Sessions**

**State-By-State: Everything You Need to Know About the Plans to Win**

Where are we toward the path to victory just three days after Super Tuesday? Join these interactive discussion sessions to learn about strategic imperatives to winning in states, what progress has been made toward planned programs, opposition activity, and what is needed next. Participants will also engage in a discussion about how the many possible outcomes and landscape shifts over the next nine months are changing or not changing their program approach.

**Pennsylvania and Maine**

**Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Montana**

**Michigan, New Hampshire, and Ohio**

**Florida, Georgia, and New Mexico**

**North Carolina and Colorado**

**Arizona and Nevada**

**11:45 AM – 12:00 PM: Break**

**12:00 PM – 1:00 PM: Lunch and Closing Session**

We'll close the State Summit by hearing the highlights from the state-by-state discussions and key insights for our work together moving forward as attendees head home to win in 2020!