



AUGUST 2024

VOTE FOR SOMETHING Messaging Guide

Overview and Goals

Our movement isn't just about what we're fighting against — oppression, bigotry, and domination. It's about what we're fighting for — freedom, liberation, and a world where we can all thrive and live in our full dignity.

In 2024, as distrust and anxiety grow among voters, we have an opportunity to relate to voters while empowering each of us to paint our vision for the future.

We aim to do this through the **“Vote for Something”** research-based and organizer-tested narrative campaign.

- “You don't have to vote for everything, but vote for something.”
- “I vote for my cousin's access to quality education, regardless of where he lives.”
- “I vote for everyone to have the freedom to love and be whoever you want to be.”
- “I vote for my mother to be able to afford her dialysis treatments. What do you vote for?”

Through **“Vote for Something.”** the State Voices Affiliated Network invites our movement community to customize your own “Vote for” message, graphics, and assets over social media, email, web, and in-person canvassing and events to encourage people to vote — not out of fear, but as a practice of using their voice to build a hopeful future that we can create together.

We have quantitative goals of registering 800,000 voters, making over 250 million voter contacts, and encouraging 100,000 people to [make a plan to vote](#).

Timeline

On Tuesday, August 6th, State Voices will publicly roll out the Vote for Something campaign to supporters through a coordinated push by State Tables, along with other state and national partners. Promotion will happen across social media, email, and a [new campaign landing page](#) on the State Voices website. Customizable content will be provided on the [State Voices Campaign toolkit](#) to ensure all partners can weave this messaging into their communications plans from now until the election.

There are many ways for State Tables and partners to promote and engage with the **Vote for Something** campaign:

- **Join our [campaign launch event \(August 6th\)](#):** State Tables and partners are invited to join our Virtual Rally to kick off the campaign, discuss goals and messaging, and find out how to get involved. You can register [here](#).
- **Participate in promotion on launch day (August 6th):** We encourage State Tables and partners to help promote the **Vote for Something** campaign on and after launch day. Here's what you can do:
 - **Post on your organization's social media**, using prepared social copy and graphics from the State Voices toolkit.
 - **Customize the sample press release** in the State Voices toolkit to your state context, and send to local media. You can include your organization's leadership as a spokesperson.
 - **Reach out directly to your audiences** through your **email** or **SMS programs**, using prepared language from the State Voices toolkit.
 - **Share the [new campaign landing page](#)** with your audiences.
- **Continue to engage with the campaign through Election Day:** We will continue to provide touchpoints for State Tables and partners to amplify the **Vote for Something** campaign throughout the fall. Here's what you can do:
 - **Use the State Voices toolkit**, housing communications resources that are updated monthly.
 - **Share state-specific actions** that will be live on the State Voices website this summer.
 - **Encourage your audiences** to use State Voices' [make a plan to vote tool](#) through continued amplification.
- **Events To Come:** State Voices will be hosting text and phone banks, canvassing events, and vote early rallies in the lead-up to the election. Stay tuned for more information!

Campaign Key Messages

Overview

The following are key messages intended for State Tables and partners to use throughout the campaign to engage with voters and encourage them to take action. You can use these messages on social media, in emails to your networks, and in speeches and talking points for media appearances.

Messaging consistency across the Network and partners is critical to the success of this campaign, but individual organizations can customize this language further depending on the specific audience and context at hand. Overall, it is paramount that “Challenge” messages be at least paired with “Solutions” and “Calls-to-Action” language, but not used on their own without a positive next step our audiences can take.

Vision/Values

Lead with value messages meant to answer the questions: Why are we launching this campaign? What kind of world are we working toward? What vision are we asking people to vote for?

- Everyone deserves the ability to achieve their full potential and the freedom to be their truest selves. We envision a country in which this is a reality.
- BIPOC communities must be at the decision-making table because those most impacted by the problems have the best ideas for the solutions.
- Voting is an action we can take to achieve our shared vision — and casting a ballot should be easy and accessible to each voter. Every vote must count.



Challenges

After communicating our values, we acknowledge the challenges our audiences face and this campaign seeks to solve while naming a villain.

- Greedy corporations and extreme politicians are counting on voters of color to sit this election out.
- They are hoping that the very obstacles they have put in our way — higher prices at the grocery store and gas pump, preventing doctors from providing reproductive care, restrictions on our right to vote, and bans on books they don't like — will convince us to stay home this November.

- They have warped our political system to give themselves more money and power. This is how they make profits on our backs and impose an extremist agenda on all of us.
- The bad actors fueling this fire are afraid of our power and afraid of change. They've seen what we can accomplish when we vote, one school board, state legislator, mayor, or Congressman at a time. They know we have defeated them before and can do it again.
- [INSERT EXAMPLE OF RECENT STATE-SPECIFIC WIN OBTAINED THROUGH BIPOC ORGANIZING & VOTING, NO MATTER HOW SMALL].

Solutions

How can we solve these problems? Be as specific as you can to keep the audience from feeling overwhelmed.

- You don't have to vote for everything, but vote for something this November.
- No matter who you are, where you live, what you believe in, or who you love, there is something you can vote for as you head to the polls.
- Whether it's the ability to make your most personal health care choices, quality public schools, well-paying jobs, equal rights, climate action, or affordable housing, your vote can make a big difference.
- Vote for [INSERT PERSONAL ANECDOTE HERE].
 - Example: "Vote for my mother's immigration status," "Vote for my child's access to books in school," "Vote for my freedom to make my own decisions at the doctor's office."
- You don't have to fight every single battle, but if you do one thing, cast your vote this year. Don't let extremists win in their push to silence your voice.

Calls-to-Action

What do we want audiences to do so that as many BIPOC voters as possible turn out this November?

- You don't have to vote for everything, but vote for something. Your vote is your voice this year. Use it.
- You don't have to vote for everything or everyone, but you can make your voice heard for something that matters to you most.
- In a time when extremist politicians are trying to divide us, we can come together to vote for something that matters to our communities. Make your voice heard this November!

- Every one of us can help make our country work for all people no matter their age, race, financial status, gender, or zip code.
- Change is achieved through a series of small steps. Take the first step today by visiting statevoices.org/get-ready-to-vote, pledging to vote, and making a plan to do so.
- Tell your friends and family, and encourage them to visit statevoices.org/get-ready-to-vote. Together, we can make a difference.

References

- [We Make the Future/ASO Communications Guide to Messaging Our Freedoms](#)
- [Race Class Narrative Message Checklist](#)
- [The Hub Project: Advocating for Abortion Rights and What's at Stake](#)
- [Beyond Democracy: A Narrative Strategy for Southern Communities of Color](#)
- [Pew 2023 Survey: Americans' Dismal Views of the Nation's Politics](#)