



FLORIDA RISING

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State: Florida

Core Constituency/ Target Audience: Young people, immigrants, women, and people of color

Website: floridarising.org

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Florida Rising is a merger of New Florida Majority and Organize Florida, two of the state's largest and longest standing grassroots power-building organizations. They organize multi-racial movements that center Black and brown communities to win elections, change laws, and create a state where everyone can be safe, happy, healthy and whole.

Florida Rising's principles and values:

- Every individual has power, and we have more power together
- Organizing is the heart of all they do
- Membership is ownership of shared work
- They activate communities to take action
- Their members are expert in their lives

STATE LEGISLATIVE WORK

Florida Rising works to equip their staff and communities with the tools they need to advocate for or against bills proposed in the state legislature. In February 2021, they held virtual Legislative Session Priorities Trainings, where their political education and membership teams covered significant bills of the 2021 session and Florida Rising's plans for the year. This legislative session, Florida Rising expects the GOP majority to use what they call a "dual crisis" of the pandemic and the minimum wage increase to justify permanent corporate tax rate cuts, deregulation, anti-worker laws, and corporate preemption laws, alongside politically motivated attacks on Floridians' fundamental rights. These policies will disproportionately harm Black, brown, and working class people.

Some of the largest threats to Floridians include the DeSantis Anti-Protest, Censorship and Repression [Bill](#), and a [bill](#) that would undermine the minimum wage increase by allowing a second-class wage for returning citizens, workers under 21, and "hard to hire" workers. Republican Legislators are also working to undermine democracy by [increasing](#) the Ballot Initiatives signature threshold, and [making it more difficult](#) for residents to permanently vote by mail. They have also refiled a [package of voter suppression](#) laws that was defeated in 2020 in an attempt to make it more difficult for Floridians to vote.

Florida Rising is gearing up to fight those regressive policies, while working to elect champions that will advance progressive governance in the Sunshine State. Through collaborative governance with the Florida for All coalition, Florida Rising is drafting, filing and championing policies that will ensure a Florida that works for us all.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2020, the Florida For All coalition (a partnership of Florida Rising, SEIU Florida, Florida Immigrant Coalition Votes, Dream Defenders Action, and Florida Planned Parenthood PAC) worked with Win Justice national partners to run a robust campaign program in 19 counties across Florida. Their program focused on a universe of 3.8 million voters, which included:

- 1.7 Million Black Voters
- 1.8 Million Latino Voters
- 2.2 Million Women Voters
- 1.3 Million Voters under the age of 35

While they were unsuccessful in delivering Florida's electoral votes for President-Elect Biden, they won 70 of their 108 General Election Races, and won another 25 Races outright in the primary. They also helped pass [Amendment 2](#), which increased the state minimum wage.

Their 2020 campaign made over 25.7 million direct voter contact attempts and had over 1.2 million conversations with Florida voters. Their organizers centered a Community Events Program and a Volunteer phone and textbanking program, which produced over 12.4 million direct voter contact attempts. They had 10,624 completed volunteer shifts with 5,511 unique volunteers.

GOALS IN 2021-2022 CYCLE

During the 2021 legislative session, Florida Rising will work to implement the minimum wage increase, pass the Renters Bill of Rights, stop the DeSantis anti-protest bill, increase access to unemployment benefits, defend voting rights, and ensure that the state's covid relief plan benefits all residents of the state. They will also support progressive candidates in legislative and gubernatorial elections in 2022.

At the local level, Florida Rising aims to advocate for affordable housing, reproductive justice, and divesting from the police and reinvesting those resources in local communities. Florida Rising will also support candidates in spring and fall municipal elections in Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, Broward, Pinellas, Orange and Seminole counties.

ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO FLORIDA RISING

Expanding Democracy

Florida Rising won't be stopped by barriers, voter suppression, or attempts to take away the right to vote. They educate, register, and mobilize voters as one key way of holding politicians accountable and making Floridians' voices heard.

Climate Justice

Florida Rising wants a regenerative future and a just transition to clean energy that puts frontline communities at the center of energy policy, disaster response, food policy, and all climate change initiatives.

Housing Justice

Florida Rising believes that housing is a human right, not a profit tool for greedy landlords. They fight for safe, affordable homes, rent control, and development that doesn't displace residents.

Gender and Reproductive Justice

Florida Rising fights back against policies and practices that seek to control and restrict women and femmes' bodies.

Criminal Justice Reform

A prison and police-only approach does the opposite of creating real community safety. Florida Rising works to end mass incarceration, defend immigrants, and eliminate laws that take away the vote from people with felony convictions.



ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP



Andrea Cristina Mercado

Andrea Cristina Mercado is the Co-Executive Director at Florida Rising. The daughter of South American immigrants and a South Florida mother of two, she has been working on race, gender and economic equity issues for 20 years. She has been recognized for her work leading New Florida Majority, co-founding the National Domestic Workers Alliance, chairing We Belong Together, a national immigrant rights initiative, and building the San Francisco Area-based Mujeres Unidas y Activas

(MUA). She is fluent in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

IN THE NEWS

- [Coalition touts Florida Clean-Energy Plan to protect climate and create jobs](#)

FLORIDA FAST FACTS

- **Current Control:** Republican Trifecta (since 2011)
- **Gubernatorial Election:** 2022
- **Length of House term:** 2 years
- **Redistricting:** Congressional and State Legislative districts are drawn by the State Legislature. The Governor has the power to veto Congressional maps, but not state maps.
- **Sister District Target:** Blue Inroads
- **House:** 78 R/42 D; Senate: 22 R /18 D
- **Legislative Session:** March 2nd to April 30th, 2021