

GROWTH &  
OPPORTUNITY  
PROJECT

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# IN DECEMBER 2012,

Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus announced the Growth and Opportunity Project. As the co-chairs of the project, we were charged with making recommendations and assisting in putting together a plan to grow the Party and improve Republican campaigns. We were asked to dig deep to provide an honest review of the 2012 election cycle and a path forward for the Republican Party to ensure success in winning more elections.

As requested by Chairman Priebus, we made recommendations in the following areas:

1. Messaging
2. Demographic Partners
3. Campaign Mechanics
4. Friends and Allies (Third Party Groups)
5. Fundraising
6. Campaign Finance
7. Primary Process

We met with, or spoke to more than 2,600 people, both outside Washington and inside the Beltway. We spoke to voters, technical experts, private sector officials, Party members, and elected office holders. We sought out Republicans from all ideological backgrounds. We convened in-depth focus groups with voters in Iowa and Ohio who used to call themselves Republicans, but who left the Party because they thought we weren't conservative enough or because we were too conservative. We conducted a poll among 2,000 Republican Hispanic voters. We surveyed political practitioners at the state and national level and also conducted a survey of GOP pollsters. We consulted with independent pollsters. And more than 36,000 individuals participated in our online survey to determine priorities and to identify additional volunteers for the Party.

We encourage every Republican to read the report and review our findings. Our Party has an incredible opportunity on our hands, but we must seize it enthusiastically. We are confident these recommendations and others shared with the Chairman can lead to many victorious campaigns for our party. We look forward to joining our fellow Republicans in the work ahead.

Onward to Victory,

Henry Barbour  
Sally Bradshaw  
Ari Fleischer  
Zori Fonalledas  
Glenn McCall

# GAP **GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY PROJECT** BY THE NUMBERS



## 52,000+ CONTACTS MADE

ONLINE SURVEYS:  
**36,000+**



CONFERENCE CALLS: **800+**  
Including Examples: RNC Members, Hispanics, Asian Americans, State and Local Legislators

FOCUS GROUPS: **50+**

DES MOINES, IA

COLUMBUS, OH

OTHER SURVEYS:

WOMEN: **2,640+**

HISPANICS: **2,000+**

POLLSTERS: **100+**

CONSULTANTS: **225+**

VOLUNTEERS: **6,390+**

FIELD STAFF: **600+**

GROUP LISTENING SESSIONS WITH CHAIRMAN OR PROJECT CO-CHAIRS:

### 3,000+

Regional:

Los Angeles, CA  
Palo Alto, CA  
San Francisco, CA  
Denver, CO  
Washington, DC  
Miami, FL

Des Moines, IA  
Chicago, IL  
Charlotte, NC  
New York, NY  
Austin, TX  
Seattle, WA

### GROUP LISTENING SESSION EXAMPLES:

TECHNOLOGY AND DATA  
WOMEN  
AFRICAN AMERICANS  
HISPANICS

ASIAN AMERICANS  
VOTE BY MAIL/EARLY VOTING/ABSENTEE VOTING  
YOUNG VOTERS  
VETERANS

ONE-ON-ONE PHONE CALLS WITH CHAIRMAN OR CO-CHAIRS OF PROJECT: **500+**

ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS WITH CHAIRMAN OR CO-CHAIRS OF PROJECT: **250+**

# MESSAGING

1. Some People Say, "Republicans Don't Care"
2. America Looks Different
3. The Way Forward

# INTRODUCTION TO MESSAGING

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The GOP today is a tale of two parties. One of them, the gubernatorial wing, is growing and successful. The other, the federal wing, is increasingly marginalizing itself, and unless changes are made, it will be increasingly difficult for Republicans to win another presidential election in the near future.

Republicans have lost the popular vote in five of the last six presidential elections. States in which our presidential candidates used to win, such as New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, Iowa, Ohio, New Hampshire, Virginia, and Florida, are increasingly voting Democratic. We are losing in too many places.

It has reached the point where in the past six presidential elections, four have gone to the Democratic nominee, at an average yield of 327 electoral votes to 211 for the Republican. During the preceding two decades, from 1968 to 1988, Republicans won five out of six elections, averaging 417 electoral votes to Democrats' 113.<sup>1</sup>

Public perception of the Party is at record lows. Young voters are increasingly rolling their eyes at what the Party represents, and many minorities wrongly think that Republicans do not like them or want them in the country. When someone rolls their eyes at us, they are not likely to open their ears to us.

At the federal level, much of what Republicans are doing is not working beyond the core constituencies that make up the Party. On the state level, however, it is a different story.

Republicans hold governorships in 30 states with 315 electoral votes, the most governors either party has had in 12 years, and four short of the all-time GOP high of 34 governors who served in the 1920s.

Republican governors are America's reformers in chief. They continue to deliver on conservative promises of reducing the size of government while making people's lives better. They routinely win a much larger share of the minority vote than GOP presidential candidates, demonstrating an appeal that goes beyond the base of the Party.

It is time for Republicans on the federal level to learn from successful Republicans on the state level. It is time to smartly change course, modernize the Party, and learn once again how to appeal to more people, including those who share some but not all of our conservative principles.

At our core, Republicans have comfortably remained the Party of Reagan without figuring out what comes next. Ronald Reagan is a Republican hero and role model who was first elected 33 years ago — meaning no one under the age of 51 today was old enough to vote for Reagan when he first ran for President. Our Party knows how to appeal to older voters, but we have lost our way with younger ones. We sound increasingly out of touch.

As Mike Gerson and Pete Wehner wrote recently, “It is no wonder that Republican policies can seem stale; they are very nearly identical to those offered up by the Party more than 30 years ago. For Republicans to design an agenda that applies to the conditions of 1980 is as if Ronald Reagan designed his agenda for conditions that existed in the Truman years.”<sup>2</sup>

The Republican Party needs to stop talking to itself. We have become expert in how to provide ideological reinforcement to like-minded people, but devastatingly we have lost the ability to be persuasive with, or welcoming to, those who do not agree with us on every issue.

Instead of driving around in circles on an ideological cul-de-sac, we need a Party whose brand of conservatism invites and inspires new people to visit us. We need to remain America’s conservative alternative to big-government, redistribution-to-extremes liberalism, while building a route into our Party that a non-traditional Republican will want to travel. Our standard should not be universal purity; it should be a more welcoming conservatism.

## 1. SOME PEOPLE SAY, “REPUBLICANS DON’T CARE”

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Jack Kemp used to say, “No one cares what you know until they know you care.”

The perception, revealed in polling, that the GOP does not care about people is doing great harm to the Party and its candidates on the federal level, especially in presidential years. It is a major deficiency that must be addressed.

One of the contributors to this problem is that while Democrats tend to talk about people, Republicans tend to talk about policy. Our ideas can sound distant and removed from people’s lives. Instead of connecting with voters’ concerns, we too often sound like bookkeepers. We need to do a better job connecting people to our policies.

We are the Party of private-sector economic growth because that is the best way to create jobs and opportunity. That is the best way to help people earn an income, achieve success and take care of their families.

But if we are going to grow as a Party, our policies and actions must take into account that the middle class has struggled mightily and that far too many of our citizens live in poverty. To people who are flat on their back, unemployed or disabled and in need of help, they do not care if the help comes from the private sector or the government — they just want help.

Our job as Republicans is to champion private growth so people will not turn to the government in the first place. But we must make sure that the government works for those truly in need, helping them so they can quickly get back on their feet. We should be driven by reform, eliminating, and fixing what is broken, while making sure the government's safety net is a trampoline, not a trap.

As Ada Fisher, the Republican National Committeewoman from North Carolina, told us, "There are some people who need the government."

Our policies must lead people to a better life through a thriving, growing private sector that works for the middle class, and those in need. As Senator Marco Rubio said, "What people who are struggling want more than anything is a chance — a chance to make it in life."

The Republican Party must be the champion of those who seek to climb the economic ladder of life. Low-income Americans are hardworking people who want to become hard-working middle-income Americans. Middle-income Americans want to become upper-middle-income, and so on. We need to help everyone make it in America.

We have to blow the whistle at corporate malfeasance and attack corporate welfare. We should speak out when a company liquidates itself and its executives receive bonuses but rank-and-file workers are left unemployed. We should speak out when CEOs receive tens of millions of dollars in retirement packages but middle-class workers have not had a meaningful raise in years.

If we believe our policies are the best ones to improve the lives of the American people, all the American people, our candidates and office holders need to do a better job talking in normal, people-oriented terms and we need to go to communities where Republicans do not normally go to listen and make our case. We need to campaign among Hispanic, black, Asian, and gay Americans and demonstrate we care about them, too. We must recruit more candidates who come from minority communities. But it is not just tone that counts. Policy always matters.

As part of the Growth and Opportunity Project's effort, focus groups were conducted in Columbus, Ohio, and Des Moines, Iowa, to listen to voters who used to consider themselves Republicans. These are voters who recently left the Party.

Asked to describe Republicans, they said that the Party is "scary," "narrow minded," and "out of touch" and that we were a Party of "stuffy old men." This is consistent with the findings of other post-election surveys.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Grand Old Party should be synonymous with the name "Growth and Opportunity Party."
2. The Republican Party needs to stop talking to itself. We have become expert in how to provide ideological reinforcement to like-minded people, but devastatingly we have lost the ability to be persuasive with, or welcoming to, those who do not agree with us on every issue.
3. It is time for Republicans on the federal level to learn from successful Republicans on the state level. It is time to smartly change course, modernize the Party, and learn once again how to appeal to more people, including those who share some but not all of our conservative principles.

4. The perception that the GOP does not care about people is doing great harm to the Party and its candidates on the federal level, especially in presidential years. It is a major deficiency that must be addressed.
5. We need to do a better job connecting people to our policies. Our ideas can sound distant and removed from people's lives. Instead of connecting with voters' concerns, we too often sound like bookkeepers.
6. The Republican Party must be the champion of those who seek to climb the economic ladder of life. Low-income Americans are hard-working people who want to become hard-working middle-income Americans. Middle-income Americans want to become upper-middle-income, and so on. We need to help everyone make it in America.
7. We have to blow the whistle at corporate malfeasance and attack corporate welfare. We should speak out when a company liquidates itself and its executives receive bonuses but rank-and-file workers are left unemployed. We should speak out when CEOs receive tens of millions of dollars in retirement packages but middle-class workers have not had a meaningful raise in years.
8. If we believe our policies are the best ones to improve the lives of the American people, all the American people, our candidates and office holders need to do a better job talking in normal, people-oriented terms and we need to go to communities where Republicans do not normally go to listen and make our case. We need to campaign among Hispanic, black, Asian, and gay Americans and demonstrate that we care about them, too.

## 2. AMERICA LOOKS DIFFERENT

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The nation's demographic changes add to the urgency of recognizing how precarious our position has become.

America is changing demographically, and unless Republicans are able to grow our appeal the way GOP governors have done, the changes tilt the playing field even more in the Democratic direction.

In 1980, exit polls tell us that the electorate was 88 percent white. In 2012, it was 72 percent white. Hispanics made up 7 percent of the electorate in 2000, 8 percent in 2004, 9 percent in 2008 and 10 percent in 2012. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, in 2050, whites will be 47 percent of the country while Hispanics will grow to 29 percent and Asians to 9 percent.

If we want ethnic minority voters to support Republicans, we have to engage them and show our sincerity.

President George W. Bush used to say, "Family values don't stop at the Rio Grande and a hungry mother is going to try to feed her child." When Hispanics heard that, they knew he cared and were willing to listen to his policies on education, jobs, spending, etc. Because his first sentence struck a chord, Hispanic Americans were willing to listen to his second sentence. We heard this from other demographic groups as well. President Bush got 44 percent of the Hispanic vote, a modern-day record for a Republican presidential candidate.

If Hispanic Americans perceive that a GOP nominee or candidate does not want them in the United States (i.e. self-deportation), they will not pay attention to our next sentence. It does not matter what we say about education, jobs or the economy; if Hispanics think we do not want them here, they will close their ears to our policies. In the last election, Governor Romney received just 27 percent of the Hispanic vote. Other minority communities, including Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, also view the Party as unwelcoming. President Bush got 44 percent of the Asian vote in 2004; our presidential nominee received only 26 percent in 2012.

As one conservative, Tea-Party leader, Dick Armey, told us, “You can’t call someone ugly and expect them to go to the prom with you. We’ve chased the Hispanic voter out of his natural home.”

We are not a policy committee, but among the steps Republicans take in the Hispanic community and beyond, we must embrace and champion comprehensive immigration reform. If we do not, our Party’s appeal will continue to shrink to its core constituencies only. We also believe that comprehensive immigration reform is consistent with Republican economic policies that promote job growth and opportunity for all.

Younger voters are increasingly put off by the GOP. A post-election survey of voters ages 18-29 in the battleground states of Virginia, Ohio, Florida, and Colorado found that Republicans have an almost 1:2 favorable/unfavorable rating. Democrats have an almost 2:1 favorable rating.<sup>3</sup>

For the GOP to appeal to younger voters, we do not have to agree on every issue, but we do need to make sure young people do not see the Party as totally intolerant of alternative points of view. Already, there is a generational difference within the conservative movement about issues involving the treatment and the rights of gays — and for many younger voters, these issues are a gateway into whether the Party is a place they want to be.

If our Party is not welcoming and inclusive, young people and increasingly other voters will continue to tune us out. The Party should be proud of its conservative principles, but just because someone disagrees with us on 20 percent of the issues, that does not mean we cannot come together on the rest of the issues where we do agree.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. If we want ethnic minority voters to support Republicans, we have to engage them, and show our sincerity.
2. As stated above, we are not a policy committee, but among the steps Republicans take in the Hispanic community and beyond we must embrace and champion comprehensive immigration reform. If we do not, our Party’s appeal will continue to shrink to its core constituencies only. We also believe that comprehensive immigration reform is consistent with Republican economic policies that promote job growth and opportunity for all.
3. When it comes to social issues, the Party must in fact and deed be inclusive and welcoming. If we are not, we will limit our ability to attract young people and others, including many women, who agree with us on some but not all issues.

## 3. THE WAY FORWARD

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Republicans are thriving on the state level. Republican governors, conservatives at their core, have campaigned and governed in a manner that is inclusive and appealing. They point the way forward.

Across America, GOP governors are working successfully with their legislatures to enact meaningful changes in people's lives.

- Eight of the 10 states with the lowest unemployment in America have Republican governors.
- In Georgia, Governor Nathan Deal saved the state's popular college scholarship program from bankruptcy. His plan could serve as a role model for how the federal government can enact well-thought-out entitlement reforms.
- In Kansas, Governor Sam Brownback reformed the state Medicaid program to improve and expand services while saving the state more than \$800 million over five years — without cutting provider rates or removing people from Medicaid.
- New Jersey Governor Chris Christie saved retirees their pensions through pension reform, which also resulted in taxpayers saving \$120 billion over 30 years. Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's historic collective-bargaining reforms saved taxpayers more than \$1 billion.
- Ohio Governor John Kasich closed an \$8 billion shortfall without raising taxes. He revamped economic development and diversified his state's employment base, and Ohio's unemployment rate has dropped steadily.
- Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal transformed education in his state by enacting parental choice and teacher accountability measures into law. Education reforms that focus on the needs of children, not adults, have been passed in many GOP states. These changes include lengthening the time a teacher can qualify for tenure from just three years to five years in Tennessee, while linking tenure status to ongoing performance evaluations. Minority children have been empowered in many GOP states thanks to scholarship programs and charter schools.
- Many GOP governors have successfully eliminated duplicative programs and streamlined the size of government, making their states more "customer" focused and responsive to their citizens.
- Legal reform, ethics reform, and civil service reform have been passed in many GOP states, changing old and ossified systems to make them more responsive to the needs of taxpayers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, while creating stronger environments for job growth.

The governors' focus on improving the economic standing of the people of their states is paying off.

As Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell told us, "Republicans need to focus on a results-oriented conservatism."

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, describing the Obama/Walker voters who he says can be key swing voters, told us, "People in the middle need to feel that someone is fighting for them. They want someone who will fundamentally look out for them as a voter."

Mitch Daniels, the former governor of Indiana who won re-election with 58 percent of the vote, ran as a reformer who emphasized economic issues. He told us that young voters' share of the national debt is many times greater than the amount of their college loans. "They're getting the shaft," he said, "There's an opening, and a need, for someone to be their voice."

Demographics may change America, but American history shows that it is the power of ideas that changes us the most. Republicans should never look at one group of Americans and assume we can't reach them. Good ideas reach everyone.

1. Reference Mike Gerson WP column, February 21, 2013
2. Commentary Magazine, February 13, 2013, "How to Save the Republican Party"
3. Survey by American Viewpoint on November 7-8, 2012. In VA, voters between 18-29 give Republicans a 36%-61% favorable/unfavorable rating. Democrats are 68:29. Ohio is 40:54% for Republicans and 60:34 for Democrats. Florida is 44:53 for Republicans and 59:38 for Democrats. Colorado is 41:53 for Republicans and 64:31 for Democrats.

# DEMOGRAPHIC PARTNERS

1. A Growth and Opportunity Inclusion Council
2. Hispanics
3. Asian and Pacific Islander Americans
4. African Americans
5. Women
6. Youth

# INTRODUCTION TO DEMOGRAPHIC PARTNERS

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The Republican Party must focus its efforts to earn new supporters and voters in the following demographic communities: Hispanic, Asian and Pacific Islanders, African Americans, Indian Americans, Native Americans, women, and youth. This priority needs to be a continual effort that affects every facet of our Party's activities, including our messaging, strategy, outreach, and budget.

Unless the RNC gets serious about tackling this problem, we will lose future elections; the data demonstrates this. In both 2008 and 2012, President Obama won a combined 80 percent of the votes of all minority voters, including not only African Americans but also Hispanics, Asians, and others. The minority groups that President Obama carried with 80 percent of the vote in 2012 are on track to become a majority of the nation's population by 2050. Today these minority groups make up 37 percent of the population, and they cast a record 28 percent of the votes in the 2012 presidential election, according to the election exit polls, an increase of 2 percentage points from 2008. We have to work harder at engaging demographic partners and allies. One outside group that has been particularly successful at engaging its community and increasing its Republican support is the Republican Jewish Coalition. We should incorporate some of its tactics in our efforts.

By 2050, the Hispanic share of the U.S. population could be as high as 29 percent, up from 17 percent now. The African American proportion of the population is projected to rise slightly to 14.7 percent, while the Asian share is projected to increase to approximately 9 percent from its current 5.1 percent. Non-Hispanic whites, 63 percent of the current population, will decrease to half or slightly less than half of the population by 2050.

In addition, the Republican Party lost youth and women voters in 2012. It is imperative that we reverse this troubling trend, as women represent the majority of voters and youth are future voters for decades to come.

The pervasive mentality of writing off blocks of states or demographic votes for the Republican Party must be completely forgotten. The Republican Party must compete on every playing field.

# 1. A GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY INCLUSION COUNCIL

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There should be a stronger grassroots program administered by the RNC to empower and support ethnic minorities in their communities. In many of our listening sessions, participants mentioned the success of the New Majority Council of the late nineties.

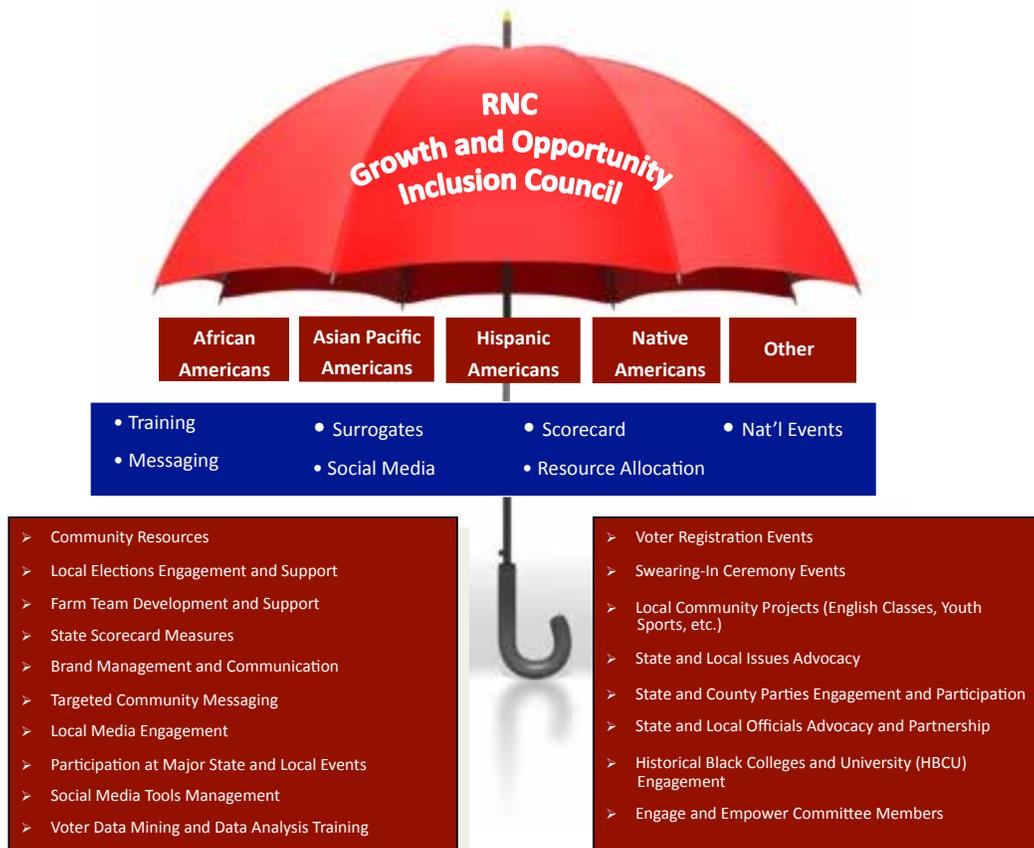
The New Majority Council was founded in 1997 by the Republican National Committee. This council, in partnership with state Republican parties and other Republican organizations, sought to capitalize on the Party's national vision of inclusion, and reflected the Party's modern vision to expand and diversify the base of the Republican Party, both locally and nationally.

The council comprised nonwhite Americans (African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, Native Americans, etc.), with representation based on the number of electoral votes allotted per state. Additionally, the council had a Governing Board of Directors in which members served four-year terms.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. We recommend the formation of a new Growth and Opportunity Inclusion Council within the RNC modeled after the program founded in 1997 by the RNC. This organization would convene a minimum of four times annually for training, sharing of ideas, and assessment of the effectiveness of current strategies.
2. This new organization should work in conjunction with each state to develop statewide initiatives designed to expand and diversify the base of the state party. The RNC should highlight these successful events.
3. This new organization should build a broad grassroots outreach effort to increase the Party base by promoting the inclusion in the Party of traditionally under-represented groups and affiliations.
4. This new organization should conduct nationwide grassroots educational programs through symposiums, lectures, and forums to exchange ideas and to raise awareness of alternate political solutions to addressing the concerns of minority communities and the electorate at large. It should serve as an educational resource on economic, social and political issues affecting minority Americans at all levels of government.
5. This new organization should identify, prepare and promote a diversified and talented pool of future candidates and leaders within the Party, and identify and recruit individuals whose values and beliefs are consistent with the ideals, philosophy and principles espoused by the Republican Party through leadership summits, etc.
6. This new organization should convene national and state focus groups with non-Republican ethnic groups in an effort to gain insight as to real and perceived issues affecting their communities.

7. This new organization should design a surrogate program to train and prepare ethnic conservatives for media presentations nationally and locally. Surrogates would speak on behalf of the Republican Party on issues of the day.
8. This new organization should develop a program designed to educate Republicans on the importance of developing and tailoring a message that is non-inflammatory and inclusive to all.
9. There should be fundraising events hosted by this new organization to support a diversified candidate pool.
10. This new organization should collaborate with other Republican organizations of diversity, to the extent allowed by law.
11. Because we can't expect to address these demographic groups if we know nothing about them, this new organization should establish a training program available to all Republican candidates that would educate them on the particular culture, aspirations, positions on issues, contributions to the country, etc., of the demographic group they are trying to reach.
12. The RNC should establish a grassroots program to help grow the Republican share of the minority vote and begin by targeting it in red states with significant minority populations. The plan would outline anticipated demographic changes, recent electoral history, whom we should target and some suggestions on how that could be done. This would be a reasonably inexpensive program and only require one staffer at a state party to coordinate the effort. It is also a good candidate program for matching funds from out-of-state donors.
13. This new organization should encourage governors to embrace diversity in hiring and appointments to the judiciary, boards and commissions.
14. The RNC should consider hiring a faith-based outreach director to focus on engaging faith-based organizations and communities with the Republican Party.



## 2. HISPANICS

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It is imperative that the RNC changes how it engages with Hispanic communities to welcome in new members of our Party.

If Hispanic Americans hear that the GOP doesn't want them in the United States, they won't pay attention to our next sentence. It doesn't matter what we say about education, jobs or the economy; if Hispanics think that we do not want them here, they will close their ears to our policies. In essence, Hispanic voters tell us our Party's position on immigration has become a litmus test, measuring whether we are meeting them with a welcome mat or a closed door.

Throughout our discussions with various Hispanic groups, they told us this: Message matters. Too often Republican elected officials spoke about issues important to the Hispanic community using a tone that undermined the GOP brand within Hispanic communities. Repairing that relationship will require both a tone that "welcomes in" as well as substantial time spent in the community demonstrating a commitment to addressing its unique concerns. As one participant in a regional listening session noted, "The key problem is that the Republican Party's message offends too many people unnecessarily. We win the economic message, which is the most important to voters, but we then lose them when we discuss other issues."

President George W. Bush used to say, "Family values don't stop at the Rio Grande ... and a hungry mother is going to try to feed her child." This tone, coupled with the longstanding relationship with Hispanics he built as governor, demonstrated to the Hispanic community that Republicans cared equally about all Americans. Because his tone was inclusive and his effort to build a relationship was long-term, Hispanic Americans were willing to listen to his principles and policies on education, jobs, spending and other issues. Hispanics want to know our Party wants no less for them than for any other American. They want to know that we are not just the party for those at the top of the economic ladder because our dream of a better life is for them, too. This path is still open to us; it was only eight years ago that President Bush received 44 percent of the Hispanic vote, a modern-day record for a Republican presidential candidate.

It is encouraging that there are many Republican leaders both in the House and the Senate working on immigration proposals. As the party advocates for positive solutions on immigration, we will be more successful appealing to Hispanic voters on other issues. This includes policies the Republican Party has not really emphasized, yet which have especially high levels of support in Hispanic communities. Perhaps no policy demonstrates the depth of our Party's commitment to all Americans as strongly as school choice — our promise of "equal opportunity in education" to all children regardless of color, class or origin.

In addition, the RNC must improve how it markets its core principles and message in Hispanic communities (especially in Hispanic faith-based communities). These communities care about relationships, not just politics. Democrats have built relationships with Hispanics while Republicans have faltered. According to the listening sessions, Hispanics believe that Republicans have not had an effective Hispanic engagement program since President George W. Bush's re-election campaign. We need to build a team that is one with the Hispanic community.

It is also a fair criticism that Republicans do not do enough to elevate Hispanic leaders within the Party infrastructure. This includes not just candidates running for office, but also senior decision-makers in the RNC's infrastructure. These personnel should not be pigeonholed into demographic outreach, but should be promoted to positions to develop political strategy and provide input on all budgeting decisions. The RNC must rebuild a nationwide database of Hispanic leaders and donors that can be a resource to the Republican community at large.

Democrat organizations have successfully built a voter registration effort for new citizenship ceremonies where they register new voters on a weekly basis. Republican organizations have to duplicate this effort and build a strategic plan to register new American citizens to vote as Republicans.

The RNC must put significant effort and resources into reaching out to Hispanic media and news outlets. This needs to be a high-level presence on all Latino media. The RNC must rebuild an updated, working list of Hispanic surrogates, not just RNC staff, to help carry and sell our message to the Hispanic community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC should hire Hispanic communications directors and political directors for key states and communities across the country.
2. On issues like immigration, the RNC needs to carefully craft a tone that takes into consideration the unique perspective of the Hispanic community. Message development is critical to Hispanic voters.
3. The Republican Party is one of tolerance and respect, and we need to ensure that the tone of our message is always reflective of these core principles. In the modern media environment a poorly phrased argument or out-of-context statement can spiral out of control and reflect poorly on the Party as a whole. Thus we must emphasize during candidate trainings, retreats, etc., the importance of a welcoming, inclusive message in particular when discussing issues that relate directly to a minority group.
4. The RNC should hire field staff within Hispanic communities nationally to build meaningful relationships. This cannot happen every four years but needs to be a continuous effort.
5. Promote forward-looking positive policy proposals to Hispanic communities that unite voters, such as the Republican Party's support for school choice.
6. The RNC must rebuild a nationwide database of Hispanic leaders.
7. The RNC must improve on promoting Hispanic staff and candidates within the Party. The GOP has substantial Hispanic elected officials at all levels, and we need to ensure they are being used as surrogates both in their communities and with the national media. At the staff level, the personnel should be visible and involved in senior political and budget decisions and not be limited to demographic outreach.
8. Engage the Hispanic faith-based community in our efforts.
9. The RNC must rebuild a Hispanic surrogate list to promote a high-level presence in both Hispanic and mainstream media.
10. Establish swearing-in citizenship teams to introduce new citizens after naturalization ceremonies to the Republican Party.

11. Consider how to help demographic ally groups flourish and sustain traditional partners under auspices of the RNC.
12. The RNC should encourage individuals to participate in cultural organizations so that these organizations' leadership is no longer dominated by Democrat-leaning individuals.
13. The RNC must invest financial resources in Hispanic media. In a \$1 billion campaign, much less than 1 percent of the total budget was spent on Hispanic or other demographic group oriented media. At one point during the 2012 campaign, OFA was outspending us 8 to 1 in these media markets. If we are going to attract these groups to our Party and candidates, our budgets, and expenses need to reflect this importance.
14. Develop an extensive network of Hispanic and other demographic groups' political operatives that can help provide continuity for Republican political candidates around the country.
15. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

### 3. ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICANS

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The RNC must actively engage Asian and Pacific Islander American (APA) communities to help welcome in new members of our Party.

One common theme throughout our discussion with various APA groups is that the Republican Party needs to stop talking about outreach and begin talking about inclusion. As such, the Party can no longer function with a "flyover campaign" mentality where candidates fly in and out of communities for fundraisers but do not substantively engage with members of the communities. The RNC must greatly expand its inclusion effort and presence in APA communities, and in many cases that means hosting events or listening sessions on new territory — both culturally and geographically.

There is a belief that the RNC should develop a rising star program at the state and local level for each state so that we can encourage members of minority communities to pursue higher elected office. Additionally, the APA communities that participated in our listening sessions decried the lack of help that county and state parties are able to give candidates. We need to help strengthen state and local parties and incentivize their support for minority candidates. The Party also needs to have flexibility on certain policy issues, especially in diverse demographic areas.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC should hire APA communications directors and political directors for key states and communities across the country.
2. The RNC must substantively engage with the APA community throughout the year. Inclusion efforts can no longer be lip service, but need to be an organized effort within the community.

3. The Republican Party is one of tolerance and respect, and we need to ensure that the tone of our message is always reflective of these core principles. In the modern media environment, a poorly phrased argument or out-of-context statement can spiral out of control and reflect poorly on the Party as a whole. Thus we must emphasize during candidate trainings, retreats, etc., the importance of a welcoming, inclusive message in particular when discussing issues that relate directly to a minority group. This includes flexibility for allowing candidates to run as Republicans who may break with the Party on certain issues, whether economic or social.
4. Hire field staff within APA communities nationally to build meaningful relationships. This cannot happen every four years but needs to be a year-round effort.
5. Promote forward-looking, positive policy proposals to APA communities that unite voters, such as the Republican Party's support for policies promoting economic growth.
6. The RNC should develop a nationwide database of APA leaders.
7. The RNC must improve on promoting APA staff and candidates within the Party. The GOP should utilize APA elected officials as surrogates both in their communities and with the national media. At the staff level, the personnel should be visible and involved in senior political and budget decisions and not be limited to demographic outreach.
8. The RNC must develop a national APA surrogate list to promote a high-level presence in Asian American media.
9. Establish swearing-in citizenship teams to introduce new citizens after naturalization ceremonies to the Republican Party.
10. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

## 4. AFRICAN AMERICANS

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Similar to the approach it must take with other demographic communities, the RNC must embark on a year-round effort to engage with African American voters. The engagement must include not only persuasion based upon our Party's principles but also a presence within community organizations. There are numerous outside groups that are studying the best way for the Republican Party to better reach African American voters. The Republican Party should leverage the best practices identified by such organizations. Investing time and resources in African American communities by leveraging best practices of organizations like the Texas Federation for Republican Outreach (an affiliate of the Republican Party of Texas) is essential.

The African American community has a lot in common with the Republican Party, and it is important to share this rich history. More importantly, the Republican Party must be committed to building a lasting relationship within the African American community year-round, based on mutual respect and with a spirit of caring.

The Party must also engage with each of its demographic partners and allies individually. Hispanics and Asians are not the only demographic groups emotionally invested in immigration issues. Caribbean, Jamaican, and Haitian immigrants, as well as many other black minority groups, have a vested interest in immigration policy because it affects them and their families.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC should hire African American communications directors and political directors for key states and communities across the country.
2. The RNC should work with the RSLC to develop best practices of Republicans who were successfully elected in districts with a high population of African American voters.
3. Establish a presence in African American communities and at black organizations such as the NAACP. We are never going to win over voters who are not asked for their support. Too many African American voters have gotten in the habit of supporting Democrats without hearing anyone in their community making a case to the contrary.
4. The RNC should create a program that is focused on recruiting and supporting African American Republican candidates for office.
5. Engage historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) with the goal of educating the community on Republican ideals and the Party's history.
6. The RNC should conduct a pilot project in several targeted urban markets to identify potential target groups of voters and to enlist support from demographic partners and allies in voter contact efforts. Big-city mayoral races provide our best 2013 opportunities for these projects. The findings of these pilot projects can inform a more robust effort in the 2014 governors' races to build coalitions and greater support in urban areas.
7. The RNC should develop a nationwide database of African American leaders.
8. The RNC must improve on promoting African American staff and candidates within the Party. The GOP should utilize African American elected officials as surrogates both in their communities and with the national media. At the staff level, the personnel should be visible and involved in senior political and budget decisions and not be limited to demographic outreach.
9. The RNC must develop a national African American surrogate list to promote a high-level presence in African American media.
10. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

## 5. WOMEN

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Much was written after the 2012 election regarding the Republican Party's "women" problem; these conclusions were based on both perception and data. Women are the majority of voters, making up 53 percent of the electorate in 2012. In 2012, President Obama won women by 11 points, whereas Governor Romney won married women by 11 points. However, it is important to note that 40 percent of female voters are single and that Obama won single women by a whopping 36 percent.

The RNC must improve its efforts to include female voters and promote women to leadership ranks within the committee. Additionally, when developing our Party's message, women need to be part of this process to represent some of the unique concerns that female voters may have. There is

growing unrest within the community of Republican women frustrated by the Party's negative image among women, and the women who participated in our listening sessions contributed many constructive ideas of ways to improve our brand with women throughout the country and grow the ranks of influential female voices in the Republican Party.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Communicating, organizing, and winning the women's vote should be part of all activities that the RNC undertakes. Women are not a "coalition." They represent more than half the voting population in the country, and our inability to win their votes is losing us elections. While the Co-Chair of the RNC should continue, as has been the case, to lead the effort to create and implement programs to connect with female voters and help female candidates, this effort should not be restricted to the Co-Chair's office. It should be a mandate for all relevant departments in the building.
2. The RNC should implement training programs for messaging, communications, and recruiting that address the best ways to communicate with women. According to the liberal group Center for American Progress, the No. 2 issue for female voters this election was "a candidate who will fight for them." Our candidates, spokespeople and staff need to use language that addresses concerns that are on women's minds in order to let them know we are fighting for them.
3. The RNC should develop a surrogate list of women based upon areas of policy and political expertise. The media affairs team at the RNC should be focused on booking more women on TV on behalf of the party and be given metrics to ensure that we aren't just using the same old talking heads. This list should not be limited to outstanding national surrogates such as Governors Nikki Haley and Susana Martinez, Senator Kelly Ayotte, and Congresswomen Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Marsha Blackburn (among many other excellent surrogates), but should also include mayors, county officials, and state legislators.
4. Be conscious of developing a forward-leaning vision for voting Republican that appeals to women. The Republican Party needs to offer that same vision and message demonstrating that our policies, principles and vision address the concerns of female voters.
5. Republicans should develop a more aggressive response to Democrat rhetoric regarding a so-called "war on women." In 2012, the Republican response to this attack was muddled, and too often the attack went undefended altogether. We need to actively combat this, better prepare our surrogates, and not stand idly by while the Democrats pigeonhole us using false attacks. There are plenty of liberal policies that negatively impact women, and it is incumbent upon the party to expose those and relentlessly attack Democrats using that framework.
6. Republicans need to talk about people and families, not just numbers and statistics. Female voters want to hear the facts; many of them run the economies of their homes and understand economics better than the men in their families. But they are also the caregivers for their families. Women need to hear what our motive is — why it is that we want to create a better future for our families and how our policies will affect the lives of their loved ones. Those are things that cannot be communicated well in graphs and charts — and we need to do a better job communicating why our policies are better, while using female spokespeople to do it.

7. The Republican Party committees need to understand that women need to be asked to run. Women are less likely to run for office on their own, and we should be encouraging and championing their desire to seek elective office. Additionally, the Republican Party must recognize the unique challenges that female candidates face when running for office, as well as the unique opportunities female candidates provide in winning elections. The Party should provide training programs for potential female candidates that includes fundraising guidance, digital strategy, etc.
8. Republicans need to make a better effort at listening to female voters, directing their policy proposals at what they learn from women, and communicating that they understand what a woman who is balancing many responsibilities is going through. Too often, female voters feel like no one listens to them. They feel like they are smart, engaged, and strong decision makers but that their opinions are often ignored. Many female voters feel that Washington, D.C., is a city full of politicians that simply don't listen and don't understand what their daily lives are like. Female candidates are far better at connecting with these voters because they are more likely to understand them.
9. The RNC should reevaluate the committee member process to help incentivize more women in leadership roles rather than solely in the "committeewoman" slot.
10. The RNC should use Women's History Month as an opportunity to remind voters of the Republican's Party historical role in advancing the women's rights movement.

## 6. YOUTH

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In 2012, Mitt Romney won individuals older than 30 by 1.8 million votes; he lost voters younger than 30 by 5 million votes. The RNC must recognize that today's young voters will be voters for the next 50-plus years. For many of the youngest voters and new 2016 voters, their perception of the two parties was born during the Barack Obama era, and that perception will help determine their worldview moving forward. The Party is seen as old and detached from pop culture. The RNC needs to make immediate efforts to reverse this narrative. It can be done; look at the two benches. While the Democrats have Joe Biden and Hillary Clinton, we have leaders like Marco Rubio, Paul Ryan, Kelly Ayotte, and Bobby Jindal, among many others. We also have a youthful RNC Chairman, Reince Priebus. The RNC must more effectively highlight our young leaders and fundamentally change the tone we use to talk about issues and the way we are communicating with voters. This means acknowledging the problem and then building an infrastructure or youth component to all of our political efforts.

Young voters need to be attracted to the Republican Party by both the message and the candidate. Obama was seen as "cool" in 2008, and his popularity spread like wildfire among young voters. Obama and his "Change we can believe in" slogan was a trend in 2008 to which many young Americans were attracted. In 2008 and again in 2012, the Obama campaign used young supporters as precinct captains and boots on the ground. They were enthusiastic voices bringing their friends and neighbors into the campaign. The RNC and Republican candidates need to establish the same network of committed young voters who will help spread our message.

On messaging, we must change our tone — especially on certain social issues that are turning off young voters. In every session with young voters, social issues were at the forefront of the discussion; many see them as the civil rights issues of our time. We must be a party that is welcoming and inclusive for all voters.

We also need to communicate with young voters where they get their information. We can't use old communication tools for young voters. Technology is second nature to young voters. Using social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, and Instagram is important, but we also need to be actively looking for and utilizing the newest and most cutting-edge social media platforms to engage this generation.

Highlighting the young leaders we have is important, as is cultivating new ones. We need to have strong, relatable leaders from all demographic groups as the face of the Party. Young voters will look to these people as role models and inspiration to join the Party.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Promote forward-looking, positive policy proposals that unite young voters, such as the Republican Party's education policies.
2. Empower an RNC youth liaison to work closely with the College Republicans, Young Republicans, and Teenage Republicans.
3. The RNC should host quarterly discussions on youth issues with Chairman Priebus, a leading GOP youth surrogate or elected official and young voters.
4. Encourage young candidates to run for office by preparing them with training and support.
5. All digital and data efforts should have the young voter as one of our key targeted end users in all our products in development.
6. Establish an RNC Celebrity Task Force of personalities in the entertainment industry to host events for the RNC and allow donors to participate in entertainment events as a way to attract younger voters.
7. Empower young, creative people to have a seat at the table on all digital issues.
8. The RNC should develop an "Under-30" list of surrogates and actively book young surrogates.
9. The RNC and state parties should re-engage with college campuses, including hosting events on college campuses.
10. Republican leaders should participate in and actively prepare for interviews with The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, MTV and magazines such as People, UsWeekly, etc., as well as radio stations that are popular with the youth demographic.
11. Develop a youth advisory committee at the RNC to help define the rebranding efforts of the Party.
12. The RNC, state parties, and candidates should establish college media lists and regularly pitch surrogates and elected officials.
13. Republican candidates should advertise in college newspapers.
14. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

# CAMPAIGN MECHANICS

1. Generating Better Data
2. Building a Data Analytics Institute
3. Early and Absentee Voting Programs
4. Digital
5. Candidate Recruitment
6. Vendor Selection
7. Training Campaign Managers and State Party Staff in the Use of Data
8. Investment in Field Staff Operations
9. Voter Contact
10. Voter Registration
11. Survey Research/Polling
12. Media Buying and Placement
13. State Parties
- Conclusion

# INTRODUCTION TO CAMPAIGN MECHANICS

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The Campaign Mechanics subgroup of the Growth and Opportunity project conducted significant research to gain insight and to make recommendations with the single purpose of electing more Republican candidates at all levels. We spoke directly with hundreds of practitioners at every level of the Party and presidential, statewide, congressional, and legislative races to seek their input on voter files, voter contact, data, digital communications and technology, absentee and early voting, survey research/polling, and media placement and buying, among other areas.

In addition, we conducted online surveys of both professional campaign and Party staffers and strategists and GOP pollsters regarding campaign mechanics. Survey summaries and additional data have been provided to Chairman Priebus and RNC staff.

Some of the recommendations listed apply directly to the RNC, state parties, and other Party committees (NRCC, RSLC, NRSC, and RGA). Others will require RNC leadership working with outside entities and supporters.

First and foremost, with respect to campaign mechanics, there was general consensus and concern about the quality of our voter contacts in comparison to our competition. Despite reaching more voters than ever before through traditional forms of voter contact, we lost. Our conversion rates from contact to votes are a serious challenge for future campaigns and the 2016 presidential race. And volunteer contact has to be used not only to identify voters but also to persuade them to support our candidates.

Democrats had the clear edge on new media and ground game, in terms of both reach and effectiveness. Obama's campaign knocked on twice as many doors as the Romney campaign, and Obama's campaign had a ballot edge among those contacted by both campaigns.

In addition, the president's campaign significantly changed the makeup of the national electorate and identified, persuaded, and turned out low-propensity voters by unleashing a barrage of human and technological resources previously unseen in a presidential contest. Marrying grassroots politics with technology and analytics, they successfully contacted, persuaded and turned out their margin of victory. There are many lessons to be learned from their efforts, particularly with respect to voter contact.

Another consistent theme that emerged from our conversations related to mechanics is the immediate need for the RNC and Republicans to foster what has been referred to as an "environment of intellectual curiosity" and a "culture of data and learning," and the RNC must lead this effort. We need to be much more purposeful and expansive in our use of research and more sophisticated in how we employ data across all campaign and Party functions. No longer can campaign activities be compartmentalized or "siloes" in a way that makes sharing resources and knowledge less efficient.

To that point, greater collaboration and sharing of information is critical. Republicans do not do this very well, but we must if we intend to compete with Democrats who have naturally embraced a more collective approach. Doing so has allowed them to assemble more complete and detailed snapshots of voters — what motivates them and how to better reach them in a way that actually results in votes. The RNC must take the lead in developing an environment in which information is shared and GOP entities work together to ensure greater communication.

Use of data and measurement is critical in this process — determining how best to message, target voters through paid and volunteer turnout efforts, and raise funds. And we need candidates, managers, Party operatives, communications professionals, fundraisers and strategists who understand and are willing to employ data in decision-making at every level.

We must also test messaging and voter contact throughout the election process to determine what methods and messages are most effective in converting contacts to votes. Whether we are fundraising online or using volunteer phone scripts or developing television advertising, we need to know what language is most likely to motivate a donor or a voter and convert them into a vote for Republican candidates. Republican campaigns in the future need to be grounded in rigorous testing and trial-and-error processes to ensure our strategies, messages and tactics are effective in persuading voters. We cannot leave anything to intuition, gut instincts or “traditional” ways of doing things. Modern technology gives us the ability to run pretests on just about everything a campaign does in terms of contacting a voter. We should pressure test our assumptions before allowing them to drive our campaigns.

A commitment to greater technology and digital resources in all areas referenced above is critical. These are not stand-alone functions but tools that must be used to improve the quality and effectiveness of our voter contact. Much has been written about the Democrats’ advantage in this area. The need to integrate these functions across all levels of both the national Party structure and national campaigns is clear.

Related to this concern was a strong belief that we must develop a deeper talent pool that understands and can deploy data and technology/digital campaigning in decision-making processes and targeting efforts. More active recruiting on college campuses, providing internships and scholarships, and recruiting from commercial firms that may harbor talent with relevant skills sets is critical in providing the talent for future campaigns. The RNC should strive to establish working relationships and open lines of communication with thought leaders in Silicon Valley to ensure the Party is at the forefront of new developments and trends in digital technology. The Party can and should play an important role in building bridges between its digital operatives and the best minds in the Valley and elsewhere. And we must make an earlier commitment to field operations and ground game than we have made in the past to ensure a year-round, election-cycle-to-election-cycle presence that can improve the quality of our voter contact.

All of these areas of focus will require a reprioritization of resources through not only the RNC budget but also the budgets of the other national party committees, state parties, campaigns, allied groups, and Super PACs. But this is critical in order for us to move forward.

For the RNC to be successful at winning elections in 2013, 2014, and beyond, it must establish a clear and guiding purpose and a set of objectives that include not only winning, but also how we want to win — the establishment of a new culture driven by data, technology, analytics, and personal contact. We have to be the Party that is open and ready to rebuild our entire playbook, and we must take advice from outside our comfort zone. Our brand requires rebuilding publicly,

but the “RNC” brand requires rebuilding as well so that state parties, candidates, managers, vendors, and volunteers have confidence in the work we do and the outcomes we will produce. And we have to be willing to accept occasional failures as a part of an evolving process that includes testing, measuring what we do, and demanding accountability on the road to create a formula for success.

Listed below are individual recommendations by subject related to campaign mechanics. In order for these recommendations to be implemented, Chairman Priebus, working with a small group of respected Party leaders both inside and outside the RNC, should meet by April 2013, to share the recommendations of the Mechanics portion of this report and recommend specific action be taken, timelines established and, where legally permitted, tasks divided among those entities most suited to implementing the recommendations of the task force.

## 1. GENERATING BETTER DATA

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To win campaigns, the GOP needs better data, better access to data, and better tools to make the most of that data. Although the RNC has always made significant investment in data, there is significant remaining work to do to ensure that our data is the best it can be.

First, the GOP needs every available data asset at its disposal. New sources of data must be identified, additional data enhancements must be purchased, and all data must be compiled as frequently as possible, including in real time.

In addition, better integration of data is needed to support more efficient campaigns. Voter and volunteer data, fundraising and donor data, digital data, consumer data, and media habits must be better integrated to better understand voter habits and behavior. Data must not be allowed to exist in “silos.” To facilitate better access to data, a robust data platform is needed. The data platform must be accessible for analysis and reporting and available to interact with web and mobile applications. Application programming interfaces (APIs) should be open to Republican candidates, state and national committees, friendly third-party organizations, and supporting vendors/consultants/developers in primary and general elections. These APIs should facilitate more user interfaces (UI) to address all manner of campaign function and level of sophistication including file selections, modeling and analysis, and the feedback of touch-point and response to marketing initiatives. As an inducement to marketing and technical innovation, the platform should allow vendors/users to share insights and applications for free and for profit. The data should be secured by agreements with data contributors and users and strict permission-based access. Data exchange agreements and other legal mechanisms must be in place to ensure the strict legality of this effort. With such a platform, GOP users will have access to advance information and intelligent technology without significant financial burden and with the assurance that valuable proprietary information of the GOP will not be misused.

According to our survey of GOP professionals (see chart on page 28), in an open-end question, better data management, and an enhanced voter file were the second most prevalent theme in answers, with 31 percent of responders commenting on it.

In an effort to provide more data at a lower cost during the 2012 election cycle, the RNC entered into a list exchange agreement with Data Trust. Although it is the preference of the task force that the RNC continue its relationship with Data Trust, if Data Trust is not capable of rising to the new data challenges we face, other partners should be identified.

The commitment of Democrats to make significant investment in data and data platforms extends back eight years to the 2004 cycle. This effort is expensive and labor-intensive, but we must make this a priority in order to be competitive on data going forward. And although the RNC tracked early and absentee votes in real time during the 2012 cycle, we must improve on not only tracking these votes in real time, but also developing a strategy to win in every state instead of assuming we will make up the ground on Election Day.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

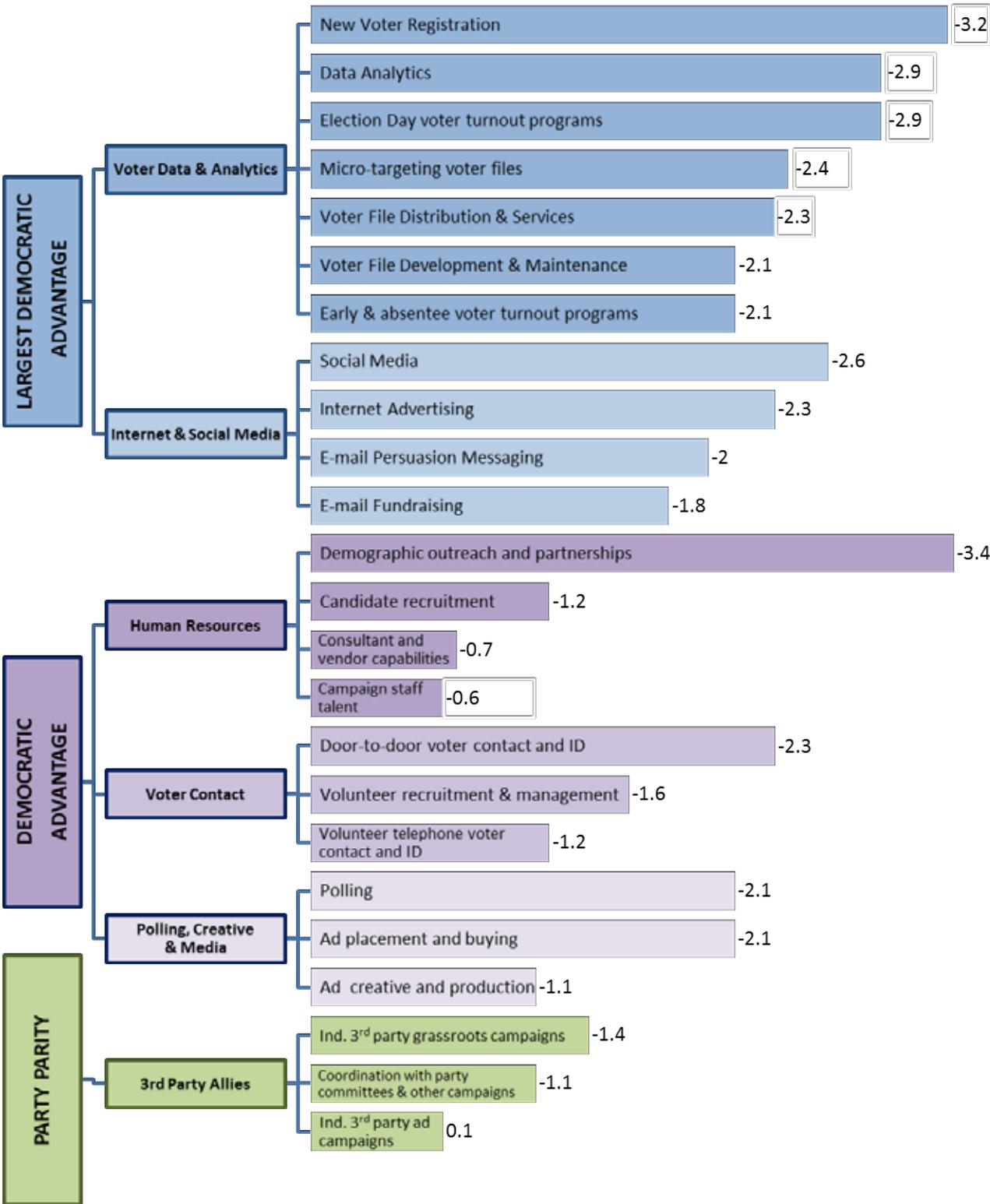
1. Convene extensive listening sessions for all high-level GOP data users and contributors, to elicit up-front buy-in. New products cannot be developed without significant input from future users.
2. Support the creation of a new data platform accessible (through rentals, subscriptions, licenses or data exchange agreements) to all qualified Republican organizations and campaigns, approved vendors and research organizations for data enhancement, analytics and application development. To facilitate better access to data, advanced open-source access must be in place to make it easy to receive data, contribute data, and see the benefits in real time.
3. Recruit and competitively compensate talented and committed long-term data staff at the RNC. The Data team at the RNC is too small to adequately provide strong data and analysis of data for all state parties, candidates and organizations. The RNC is a national party and must have the staff resources available in this area to assist all 50 states, not just battleground states. The RNC should immediately expand the strategic/data staff to prepare for upcoming elections in 2013. More staff will be needed in an election year.
4. Conduct a national road show to ensure that state parties and campaigns at all levels of the ballot understand how data can benefit them, and train them in the tools made available to them. This is essential to building confidence throughout the Party and its consultant class and getting the most out of our investment.

## 2. BUILDING A DATA ANALYTICS INSTITUTE

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Having better data is only the first step in a critical process of becoming a more “data- driven” Party. We need basic research to increase our fundamental understanding of voting behavior (with respect to groups such as women, minorities, youth, our base, early voters, etc. and so on), which over the long term will become the basis for the development of strategies and tactics in message development, targeting, direct contact and media placement to convert contacts into votes. This work is essential in helping the Party, particularly at the presidential ballot level, identify and understand how to build a “50 + 1” coalition of voters that will overcome our demographic challenges.

Voter data and analytics are where Republicans most clearly trail Democrats according to our Internet survey of 227 GOP campaign managers, field staff, and other political professionals, consultants, and vendors. They compared the two parties' capabilities on +5 to -5 scale for 24 different campaign components and political activities. Democrats were seen as having the advantage in all but one. The lengths of the bars are proportionate to the relative Democratic advantage. The bars are grouped into categories based on a type of correlation (factor) analysis that shows the statistical similarities among the 24 different categories. Groups are ranked by the overall Democratic advantage.



According to our survey of GOP professionals, “data analytics” was ranked as the top priority among 26 areas for improvement in 2014 and 2016, with 35 percent of respondents listing it as one of their top three priorities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Identify a team of strategists and funders to build a data analytics institute that can capture and distill best practices for communication to and targeting of specific voters. Using the GOP’s data, the data analytics institute would work to develop a specific set of tests for 2013 and 2014 — tests on voter registration, persuasion, GOTV, and voter mobilization — that will then be adopted into future programs to ensure that our voter contact and targeting dollars are spent on proven performance. These tests should be the first order of business of the analytics team and should incorporate pollsters, data managers, and messaging professionals at the table developing a variety of approaches that would be subject to measurement.
2. Organize an academic and private sector advisory group to assist the analytics team in their efforts and identify opportunities for testing and research.

## 3. EARLY AND ABSENTEE VOTING PROGRAMS

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The number of early and absentee voters continued to increase this cycle, and Election Day voting continued to fall. In 2004, 76 percent of the electorate voted on Election Day; in 2012, 65 percent voted on Election Day, a decrease of 12 percent in eight years. The Democrats successfully front-loaded many of their votes this cycle, expanding their early vote and absentee reach and giving them a much better picture going into Election Day of who had already voted and who remained a target for their efforts. They continued to expand their advantage in early voting, and this cycle they ran a much more focused effort on absentee voting, which helped them close their margins.

This trend in early, absentee, and online voting is here to stay. Republicans must alter their strategy and acknowledge the trend as future reality, utilizing new tactics to gain victory on Election Day; it is imperative to note that this will be a critical cultural shift within the Party. Additionally, early voting should be factored into all aspects of political strategy, messaging and budgeting so that we understand that we are no longer working in an environment where 72-hour GOTV efforts will determine an election outcome. And again, we must test and retest what will work best with respect to contacts and persuasion of early and absentee voters.

The Democrats’ effort on maintaining a year-round presence with field operations, and investing in infrastructure to support early and absentee vote programs, had a significant impact on the outcome of the election.

We have to match and exceed this effort in order to ensure victory in future midterm and Presidential-year elections.

And going forward, everyone on the GOP side including vendors and allied groups to whom the information can legally be provided must in real time to be able to provide and receive lists and accurate, detailed reports of who has voted and when.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Working with other committees and state parties, the RNC must design, fund, and implement an aggressive early voting and absentee effort for target races in 2013. The program must task the field team with the responsibility for local follow-up on voters contacted about early voting. Where possible, early voting prospects should not be absorbed into a national follow-up program, but remain a primary concern of the local campaign and Victory team.
2. Campaigns, parties, and third-party groups will have to begin targeted advertising earlier to address the increase in early voting.
3. State parties and third-party groups should engage in ballot security training initiatives for political and field staff.
4. We must test these strategies in the 2013 elections to measure efficacy and apply our lessons learned for 2014 and 2016.

## 4. DIGITAL

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Perhaps the area of campaign 2012 that received the most interest from a media standpoint is the “digital divide” that existed between the GOP and the Democrats as a result of the Obama campaign’s significant commitment to building an in-house tech and digital team and sharing data resources across multiple entities within the campaign. From social network processing of traditional broadcast media messaging to more effective targeting for voter contact, the Obama campaign benefited greatly from a relatively seamless integration of digital, tech, and data in their campaign efforts. Voter contact was regularly tested — be it through use of emails in fundraising to volunteer phone scripts — and decisions were made based on real-time feedback from those tests. The effectiveness of traditional media through penetration of social network “chatter” allowed development of models to better gauge what messaging to deploy.

Our survey asked political professionals in what areas they would like to receive more training and education, and digital and social media were the second most popular items listed. In an open-ended question, 29 percent of all respondents mentioned one or both of these items in their comments.

Our challenge is less of a technology problem and more of a culture problem. As referenced earlier, we need to strive for an environment of intellectual curiosity, data, research, and testing to ensure that our programs are working. We need to define our mission by setting specific political goals and then allowing data, digital, and tech talent to unleash the tools of technology and work toward achieving those goals. And just as with all forms of voter contact, digital must be tested, and we must measure our rate of return.

Competition is critical in all forms of voter contact. Particularly in digital, competition can inspire innovation and development of the best ideas.

In a recent *New York Times* article, an unnamed GOP digital operative said the following:

“We’re looking for someone who comes to us and is like: ‘All right, what do we need to do? I’m going to trust you to do it, I’m going to give you a real budget, you’ll have a seat at the table and will be just as important as the communications guy and the field guy. And you know what, those other guys need to be more modern too, and that’s the campaign we’re going to run. So let’s start plotting out how we’re going to do that’ ... and we haven’t had that person yet.”

RNC leadership has to be that person — or certainly has to be the starting point. And we need to embrace the fact that during this process of “where to on digital” we will have failures along with successes. But that will get us where we need to be. Digital can simply no longer be an afterthought in our campaigns. It has to be embedded in every function and backed up with appropriate staffing and funding. This is a major cultural shift that the RNC is uniquely positioned to initiate.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC should recruit and hire a chief technology and digital officer for the RNC by May 1, 2013, whose experience and background sends a strong and immediate signal that we are serious about growing our digital and tech operations and data integration. The chief technology and digital officer should identify, recruit and hire a working group of data scientists, tech and digital advocates to build a structure that can eventually be deployed during the 2014 midterm elections and the 2016 presidential race to provide a 21<sup>st</sup> century digital, data and tech operation for our candidates.
2. The RNC should begin the search for expanded technology and digital teams that can be deployed across every division of the RNC — fundraising, political, communications, and so on to integrate the work of those divisions and increase the potential to use technology and digital in an efficient and effective manner. (These employees are separate and distinct from those described in the data section earlier.) Technology and digital should be treated as two separate but related functions in this process. The search for members of these teams should be expanded beyond the traditional political sphere and include individuals with significant professional experience in web development and marketing programs. Integration across all areas/offices/divisions is critical for success.

3. The RNC should create in-house staff training programs for digital recruits to ensure the cultivation of mid-level tech/digital leaders who can effectively administer large programs within the digital team, like email, social content, fundraising, and digital field organizing.
4. The chief technology and digital officer should have regular “working group” meetings with representatives from different campaign committees, elected leadership, vendors, and party tech leaders on the GOP side who have an interest in participating in the debate/discussion about how best to build the structure needed to grow our tech and digital efforts. The RNC should help seed some efforts, but also be willing to tap into the best of what emerges organically from other entities. And the RNC should strive to be an active member of a thriving digital community — talking, encouraging, prodding where necessary — but supporting competition in the marketplace to ensure that the best ideas rise to the top.
5. The development of “political technology” products that are user-friendly for volunteers is essential. We need tools that easily allow voter registration, the request for an absentee ballot, managing of walk-lists online, and so on. These tools can be developed in-house with the digital team or developed by working with vendors, and the committee would need to determine how to legally transfer and/or share these tools with candidates.
6. As with voter contact, test technology by harnessing competition to create innovative results. Conduct tests in real-world conditions to develop best practices for digital contact and/or persuasion.
7. As with data, digital training is critical. The Republican Party needs a new training institute that can benefit all Party committees, state parties, campaigns, and outside groups. This could be established in the form of a 501(c) 4 group to train and develop political/digital talent. Groups are already undertaking this effort, and we applaud their initiative.
8. Establish an RNC fellows program to recruit data, digital, and tech “fellows” from college campuses, targeting potential graduates in fields such as computer science and mathematics.
9. Develop Digital Campaign Colleges and network events in high-tech cities such as San Francisco, Austin, New York, Denver, and so on to foster and build stronger relationships within the tech community.

## 5. CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT

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The RNC, working with state party chairmen and outside groups, must become much more intentional about candidate recruitment to ensure that we are recruiting the highest-quality candidates with the greatest potential for leadership and make certain that we are actively engaging women and minorities in our efforts. While RGA, NRSC, NRCC, and RSLC traditionally take the lead in this effort, we need better communication between state party leadership and the RNC to identify potential candidates well in advance who can be approached, recruited and trained for vacancies at all levels.

According to our survey, “Candidate recruitment” ranked third overall of areas most in need of improvement, with 22 percent of respondents listing it as one of their top three priorities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Programs such as the Republican State Leadership Committee’s “Future Majority Project” ([www.futuremajority.com](http://www.futuremajority.com)) to recruit minority candidates and women candidates for the 2012 cycle have been highly effective and should be encouraged, and the RNC and state parties should expand their efforts in this area. In the 2012 cycle, the RSLC committed to spend \$3 million to identify and support new GOP candidates of Hispanic descent and women for state office. Ultimately the RSLC identified 125 new Republican Hispanic candidates and 185 new women candidates. More than \$5 million was used to successfully elect 84 new women and grow the state-level Republican Hispanic caucus. The RSLC has now established a Future Majority Caucus led by new Mexico Governor Susana Martinez and Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval along with a board of 10 rising stars from state legislatures across the country. Together, these leaders will help identify new candidates and develop even more ambitious goals for electing the new generation of GOP leaders.
2. The RNC must work with state parties to identify candidates for local office (mayor, county commission, city council, etc.), with a goal to recruit, train and elect strong Republican leaders that can help the Party navigate our demographic challenges. We need to strengthen our farm team to ensure that we are competitive in up-ballot elections in the future when the electorate will be considerably more diverse.
3. Emphasis needs to be placed on training for candidate recruitment. Everyone has a different measure and approach for how to recruit. State party chairmen are frequently the lead, along with state legislative leaders, on how to recruit legislative candidates, while the RGA, NRSC, NRCC, and RSLC are involved with recruitment of governors, members of Congress and state legislators. The RNC could take the lead in facilitating conversations among these individuals and groups to develop best practices that could be shared at workshops or future training sessions.

## 6. VENDOR SELECTION

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Some have expressed concern that the RNC needs a best practices approach to the issuance of large contracts. Currently, RNC practice is to request at least three bids for all contracts that exceed \$100,000 in cost. Such contracts require the approval of a second RNC officer in addition to the Chairman. There generally are no audit provision requirements included in the RNC’s standard contracts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. For contracts that exceed \$50,000 that involve polling, registration efforts, and voter contact, where practical, the RNC should identify and recommend a minimum of three qualified vendors who meet a predetermined price structure. It is not the intent of this task force to in any way restrict the vendors selected by a presidential campaign or any other campaign. We fully support the right of any campaign to choose the vendors and staff that it feels are best equipped to perform a service. That said, concerns have been expressed that state parties who are expected to run programs would benefit from exposure to a wider array of recommended vendors and that there is a need for greater competition among vendors to spur more creativity and better outcomes and we agree.
2. The RNC, to the extent practical, should include in its independent contractor agreements provisions granting the RNC the right to audit, examine, and duplicate the contractor's financial and other records pertaining to the activities covered by the contract; and requiring the contractor to establish and maintain records sufficient to allow such audit, examination, and duplication. Currently, audit language is not required (and therefore not included) in RNC contracts. The significant resources allocated for specific vendor services demand that the RNC have the ability to audit any contract for any purpose at any time should RNC officials feel it is necessary and appropriate.

## 7. TRAINING CAMPAIGN MANAGERS AND STATE PARTY STAFF IN THE USE OF DATA

Part of developing campaigns that can make data-driven decisions is training managers and staff to use data — from voter file data to use of data in targeting message and message delivery to use of data in fundraising and voter contact.

According to our survey, when asked in what areas they would like to receive more training or education, 30 percent of all respondents chose “Data & Analytics,” making it the most popular response.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. As part of an immediate and ongoing process, integrate a major emphasis on how to best use data and analytics into all campaign manager and finance schools. This could be integrated into the RNC's Campaign Management Colleges but should be treated as its own area of expertise.

2. Identify opportunities for greater collaboration among operatives in sharing tactics and strategies that are working with respect to everything from data use to voter contact. The RNC should host webinars or regional workshops for candidates and managers several times a year during which best practices can be shared.
3. Develop a GOP Data/Analytics School with a target of graduating 500 managers and staff in year one with additional large numbers graduated in subsequent years.

## 8. INVESTMENT IN FIELD STAFF OPERATIONS

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There is a strong consensus that we have not invested the financial resources in a labor pool that can actively conduct and run “in-person” contact at the ground level. The Obama campaign budgeted its spending to ensure the most personal forms of voter contact were a priority. But they went beyond this. They gave volunteers and field staff flexibility in implementation and creativity in decision-making to get the most out of their field teams. And they acted based on information they received from volunteers through their voter contact operation. We need to write campaign plans that reflect an increased presence of field staff in states starting much earlier than we have done in the past.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. By June 15, 2013, make an investment in field staff beyond traditional battleground states and make an earlier commitment to building the field team in all state operations. It is essential for the Party to grow the playing field. There are too few existing paths to 270 electoral votes for our presidential nominee under current trend lines. We need to aggressively work to put more states in play where we have infrastructure advantages over the Democrats based on our foothold in the governorships. And this requires an early commitment to building the team.

## 9. VOTER CONTACT

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The use of highly targeted and personal voter contact based on data was an area where the Obama campaign clearly excelled in 2012. Despite the GOP expanding voter contact significantly over the previous election cycles (more than 2.5 times more volunteer voter contacts — 65 million — occurred in 2012 than in 2004 and 2008 combined), we did not see the conversion rates necessary to turn contacts into votes at a level that could have driven the outcome of the election our way. And we are facing a very real deficit between our vote goals and the number of known GOP supporters.

We need to better understand the role that peer-to-peer contact has in improving direct political communication, and we need to test every form of political communication and contact that we employ. We need to look at our methods of contact and test each — mail, phones, door-to-door, and digital efforts, and fundraising appeals — to determine what provides the best quality of contact and most likely conversion to actual votes.

Elections in Virginia and New Jersey in 2013 and midterm elections in 2014 provide a great opportunity for us to test our voter contact and fine-tune our future efforts. Massachusetts also has a race for the United States Senate in June of 2013. There are several special congressional elections (Illinois CD 2 — April 9; South Carolina CD 1 — May 7; Missouri CD 8 — June 8). There are also some opportunities in large city mayoral elections available for testing (Cincinnati, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh). We need to demonstrate that the RNC is committed to developing and applying research and best practices to campaigns at all levels going forward.

In addition, while continuing to target voters in “battleground states,” we also need to make a concentrated and serious effort to go after new voters and that means targeting and converting lower propensity voters in the urban core and city centers. Democrats made it clear they are now willing to expend the resources to reach low propensity Democrat voters, and we can expect that they will continue to do so in midterm elections. Identifying new sources of support require us to not only send the clear signal that we are reaching into new areas to identify new potential targets but to actually act on those signals and commit resources where appropriate.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC Political Division, working with other committees, state parties, and new GOP data analytics entities should conduct tests of paid mail, phone and volunteer phones, digital and personal “in person” voter contact in target areas during the 2013 cycle to determine most effective messaging, contact and conversion to votes. Potential tests include messaging/paid media tests as to whether targeted media buys are more impactful and at what GRP level does an ad reach its maximum impact. “In person” contact should be tested vs. “personal” contact (volunteer phone calls; live phone calls). Also, tests should be conducted on not only advocacy but actual interaction with voters. The Obama campaign asked voters what they needed to make their decision; information was then provided to volunteers and relayed to the same voters. Additionally, “72-Hour Project” tests conducted in Virginia and New Jersey in 2001 could be revisited, strengthened, and retested.
2. The RNC Political Division should conduct a pilot project in several targeted urban markets to identify potential target groups of voters and to enlist support from demographic partners and allies in voter contact efforts. Big city mayoral races provide our best 2013 opportunities for these projects. The findings of these pilot projects can inform a more robust effort in the 2014 governors’ races to build coalitions and greater support in urban areas.
3. The RNC should engage a group of data scientists to assist with the testing described above. Some of this relates to the previous recommendation with respect to building a data analytics institute.

4. Where possible, the RNC should encourage and support the hiring of locals who are known to be active in a particular area for participation in field operations. The Obama campaign excelled in recruiting and training operatives who understood the states and communities where they were working. This enabled their field operation to interact in a more personal manner with voters. It is important for the RNC to strive to cultivate a roster of field operatives who are from the battleground states and/or well-versed in the unique politics and culture of each one.

## 10. VOTER REGISTRATION

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Another concern expressed by those interviewed is the dramatic drop-off in registration efforts conducted by the RNC and state parties over the last several election cycles. Registration is an expensive process but one that is increasingly underfunded. We need dynamic and targeted voter registration efforts tied to specific issues, and funds should be invested now to ensure their success and year-round availability. The Obama campaign registered 1.8 million new voters in the battleground states since the launch of its 2012 program. In five states, it registered more voters than Obama's margin of victory.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC should develop a "Mobile Voter Registration" program that can be deployed quickly in states based on specific issues — both national and local — that motivate potential Republican interest in targeted areas to register.
2. The RNC Political Division working with state parties should set target registration goals and identify target groups and locations for a registration program, and registration volunteers and drives should be identified and implemented quarterly. These drives could focus on issue areas and target opportunities like gun shows, naturalization services, church fellowship opportunities, and so on.
3. State parties should create a specific program for follow-up with new registrants. One thing we learned during our 72-hour program testing is to treat a newly registered voter uniquely, making certain they know their polling location and how to vote early or absentee.

# 11. SURVEY RESEARCH/POLLING

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Seventy percent (70 percent) of the Republican pollsters surveyed in our task force online survey said that Democratic polling in 2012 was better than our own. Fully 22 percent felt the Democrats did “much better” than the Republicans when it came to accuracy and reliability.

There is no consensus on the top problem facing pollsters, according to our survey, though it’s clear that public pollsters and private pollsters of both parties faced several challenges during the 2012 election cycle. When asked to choose the single most important issue or problem facing pollsters when it comes to telephone polling accuracy, four problems (cell phones, demographics, refusals, and turnout) bubbled to the top in a close grouping, each mentioned by 18 to 21 percent as most important.

Concerns expressed by pollsters include the increasing use of cell phones, making contact on land-lines more difficult and accurate polling more expensive and expansive. Another issue of concern is the need to include more young voters and Hispanics in polling samples given the growth in the electorate in these groups. An additional challenge facing pollsters was a nonresponse bias that occurred as various groups reached different levels of fatigue in the elections process. 24 percent describe higher refusal and no-answer rates as a “very important” factor. For example, following Governor Romney’s first debate performance, both public and private polling firms reported a drop-off in the number of Obama supporters who would agree to participate in surveys. Understanding this bias and correcting for it is a major challenge facing pollsters in the future. And finally, 36 percent of pollsters believe that “flawed turnout models” are a “very important” factor in poll inaccuracy. The concerns expressed in our survey mirror the concerns raised in specific conversations with pollsters during the course of our task force work.

Responses to open-ended questions in the pollsters’ survey suggest that many pollsters would welcome regular meetings with other researchers to share best practices and pitfalls. It is important that GOP pollsters share information on a regular basis about sampling and weighting of samples, as well as assumptions made in interpretation of survey research, to ensure more accurate data that can be used in allocating campaign and Party resources.

The significant challenge of reaching the right mix of people on the phone may sometimes require that we dedicate more resources to ensuring that our samples accurately reflect the electorate that will actually vote. This could mean enlisting bilingual interviewers in districts and states with large Hispanic populations. As mentioned earlier, it also means that a significant portion of polling samples must be dedicated to cell phones (while recognizing that auto-dialed calls cannot legally be made to cell phones). And it could mean that polls need to be fielded over longer periods and with larger samples. In addition, more spending may be required for research into special populations (e.g., youth, Hispanics) by Party organizations for private learning that could be shared with campaigns and other Party committees when appropriate.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC should convene a quarterly summit by April 15, 2013, of leading GOP pollsters to discuss the current political environment and debate assumptions, sampling, screening, and weighting of samples in an attempt to generate more accurate and consistent data across multiple committees and campaigns. Different pollsters might take turns leading the quarterly discussions and presenting recent trends or developments that could improve polling outcomes and accuracy.
2. The RNC should conduct a test of random digit dialing vs. listed voter sample to determine which list source provides more accurate polling/survey research for campaigns, or whether a combination proves most accurate. The Obama campaign and the Democratic Party are moving to listed voter samples and away from random digit dialing. We should address this head-on and seek to develop consensus in our polling community about the path forward.
3. “Likely Voter” screening data collected by various firms in 2012 should be re-examined to see which voters eventually voted and which did not, allowing a validation of the most predictive screening questions, and likely voter scales. Special attention needs to be given to this question to ensure that we are not screening out casual interest voters who nevertheless show up on Election Day. Screeners that are too robust, particularly during presidential cycles, have the potential to skew results to the favor of our candidates because they exclude too many young and minority voters.
4. The RNC should strongly encourage that all Republican surveys include no less than 25 percent cell phone subsamples and recognize that in certain states and districts a higher number may be required. The recommendation does not apply to surveys done using auto dialers.
5. Republican pollsters should collect and share trend data regarding noncooperation rates (refusals and no answers) and that best practices be identified and tested from all sources proposing strategies that compensate for “noncooperations.”

## 12. MEDIA BUYING AND PLACEMENT

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Much has been written about the way in which the Obama campaign targeted its messaging through sophisticated buying and placement of advertising across multiple media as well as cost savings due to early placement. The Obama team looked at new ways to deliver messages. During their 2008 and 2012 campaigns, the Obama people invested resources in both data and labor to improve the quality of their media plan.

Many Republican media agencies with which we spoke are currently using new data sources to plan media buys. They would like to invest additional resources and staff in this area, but cost is an issue.

Media decisions are made at the campaign level. The RNC will have only limited ability to influence those decisions, but can play a role in creating a “culture of data” that includes the media function.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Train campaign managers and candidates in basic media terminology and media budgeting/management. Campaigns spend the bulk of their budget on advertising placement, and our survey shows that television is second only to personal contact as an effective communications tool. Yet most managers are uncomfortable admitting that they do not really know what a GRP is or what cookies do. Consequently, they do not know the right questions to ask their consultants or how to best manage them.
2. Give media buyers a seat at the table with the manager, the pollster, and the ad producers in big budget campaigns. This was a consistent recommendation we heard from media-buying agencies, managers and some ad producers who say that data cannot influence campaign media buys unless the person who knows the data plays a role in the decisions.
3. Media plans and buys must integrate all platforms. What worked in the last campaign will no longer work in the next campaign. Continued audience fragmentation means media plans must incorporate increasingly diverse mixes of broadcast television, cable television, Hispanic advertising, sports programming, radio, Internet advertising, social media, mobile, and other emerging media such as online television viewing and radio listening.
4. Targeted media demands targeted messages. The one-spot-fits-all model used by Republican presidential campaigns since the Reagan era is no longer enough. On television, Obama ran at least four separate media schedules, each with a different series of creative executions. Pollsters, ad producers, and media buyers working together can determine the right mix of creative executions and media weight.
5. Campaigns must be willing to pay the cost in order to get the payoff of data-driven media buying. Media data can improve efficiencies by 10 to 25 percent, but it is not free — there are the additional costs of data acquisition, analysis and implementation. The human labor costs are the largest component. The Obama media research and buying staff was 5 to 15 times larger than the Romney staff. New online media require much more active staff and daily tweaking than traditional media.
6. The RNC should explore bulk data purchases and, to the extent legally permitted, make the latest media research data more available and affordable for campaigns and their consultants/vendors. This will require an investment in additional staffing to track and interpret the data. The RNC and the Party campaign committees should explore relationships with providers of syndicated media and consumer research (e.g., Nielsen, Scarborough, Arbitron, MRI, Simmons, Comscore, Rentrak, CMAG, Delta, Polaris, and others) with the intent to create greater awareness about the importance of data-driven decisions in media buying and placement.

# 13. STATE PARTIES

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Many have raised the concern that the level of communication between the RNC, the other national party committees, and state parties needs more focus. Better communication at all levels will ensure sharing of resources and better outcomes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Working in partnership with the leadership of our state parties, the RNC should develop a series of benchmarks that can help state parties become more self-sufficient and effective.
  - Areas from which to set goals and measure progress should include the following:
    - Fundraising
    - Voter Registration
    - Volunteer Recruitment/Management
    - Staffing/Training
    - Voter File Management
    - Coalition Building
    - Minority Outreach
    - Candidate Recruitment
2. The RNC should work with state parties to determine the unique needs and challenges facing varying state party infrastructures. The RNC could then help each state party with crafting a road map that is tailored to its specific goals.
3. The RNC should conduct a series of regular calls with the state parties to monitor their progress toward meeting the benchmarks and to share best practices and acknowledge successes in the states. The goal should be to create a culture where the Party apparatus as a whole is working together and being held accountable for achieving clearly defined goals that will help us win elections. But this will not succeed as a top-down driven effort — it requires a partnership between the national and state party committees to drive best practices and outcomes. Just as the RNC and its vendors and programs will have to be more accountable through testing and use of data, the creation of benchmarks, and the public sharing of how each state is progressing will create a competitive environment that will ultimately strengthen the Party as a whole and benefit our candidates.
4. The RNC should consider redeveloping a program similar to the GOP Team Leader program from 2002 to cover grassroots and coalition building.
5. The RNC should work with state parties to find new ways to recruit and motivate our volunteers. We need to establish programs that incentivize and reward volunteers for their work in multiple areas. And we need to provide them with better tools to assist in their efforts and ensure that they know we value their importance. They are a critical path to our success. We cannot contact and persuade voters without them.

# CONCLUSION

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To summarize, a focus on the quality of voter contact is critical going forward. We can improve our voter contact by developing a culture where learning and research are valued, information is shared, every form of contact is tested and measured, and our talent pool particularly in the areas of data, digital and technology is expanded. This requires a significant reallocation of resources, but doing so will pay significant dividends in the future and best position our Party for future wins.

# FRIENDS & ALLIES

## (THIRD PARTY GROUPS)

1. Competitive Primaries
2. TV Spending
3. Technology: Organize or Lose
4. Silence is Not Always Golden; Public Sharing of Information is Good
5. Polling
6. Division of Labor and the Need for RNC Leadership
7. Testing
8. Bottom-Up, not Top-Down
9. Training and Ground Game
10. Promote Our Governors
11. Define the D's Early and Track 'Em
12. Groupthink is a Loser

# INTRODUCTION TO FRIENDS AND ALLIES

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On the political right, there are a multitude of effective third-party groups that we will refer to as “Friends and Allies” that serve as critical components of the Republican Party. These groups come in all shapes and sizes and range from advocacy organizations to think tanks to political action committees to SuperPACs to associations. Most of these friends and allies are legally organized as 527s, SuperPACs or 501(c) (4) organizations. The functions of the organizations vary as well; some focus on supporting or opposing particular candidates while others concentrate on particular policy issues of interest to that group’s members.

It is important to remember that these friends and allies are independent of the political party committees and campaigns and thus operate on their own, with their own funding, and with their own sets of priorities. The Republican Party should view these organizations as valuable additions to the public discourse, as educators and helpers in the work of persuading Americans to believe in our Party’s principles, and as important conduits of our Republican messages and beliefs.

The McCain-Feingold campaign finance law has hamstrung political parties at the national, state, and local levels, which has, in turn, led to a shift in relative importance among participants in the political environment. Third-party groups have flourished in the effort to fill the void left by McCain-Feingold’s severe restrictions on political parties. As a result, outside organizations have flourished in the effort to fill this void. While we are pleased that recent court decisions have restored First Amendment rights of many Americans who wish to participate in the political process through non-party organizations, political candidates, and party committees have suffered by comparison and Washington has become increasingly polarized. Please see the Campaign Finance portion of this report for further discussion on this issue and our recommendations for how to improve it.

Despite a disappointing 2012 election cycle for Republicans, the political and donor environment for friends and allied groups remains healthy. And while we applaud the efforts of these organizations to augment the traditional political party infrastructure, it is clear that the RNC has a central and critical role to play in leading our Party forward. Chairman Priebus is in a unique role of leadership for the Party at this critical time given the RNC’s national infrastructure that will help Republicans forge a path to victory for a successful 2013, 2014, and 2016.

# 1. COMPETITIVE PRIMARIES

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Friends and allied groups often promote individuals they deem as the best candidates in elections. However, the challenge is that who is the best candidate is a highly subjective question.

We've had successful and unsuccessful candidates with various views on myriad issues. There is no magic formula or litmus test. It would be a mistake for any one organization to think it can circumvent GOP voters and hand-pick our nominees. No one has a monopoly on knowing who is the best candidate; the electorate ultimately makes the decision.

We need to have a participatory nominating processes. Based upon our experiences in recent elections, we understand and believe that voters, when given choices, will ultimately make better decisions than any outside group, individual set of operatives or activists. Increased choice, robust conversation about issues, and strong voter engagement is the appropriate path forward to allow voters to select the best candidate. Consequently, we believe that the Republican Party should have a solid and persistent preference for primaries. In the past, abiding by this set of principles has led to the emergence of outstanding candidates such as Senator Marco Rubio, Senator Ted Cruz, and Senator Ron Johnson — all of whom won the primary and the general elections, and have gone on to become thought leaders in elected office.

We believe the sign of a healthy party is one in which there are competitive primaries where candidates must work to earn voters' support to become the party's nominee. However, winning primaries is not enough. We are in the business of winning general elections. In order to affect public policy, the Republican Party must win general elections and not only primaries.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. We believe that, absent some material or obvious reason otherwise, the Republican Party should have a solid and persistent preference for primaries.
2. Washington should not try to dictate candidate choices. Voters will ultimately decide.

# 2. TV SPENDING

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Political campaigns have a tendency to do the same things they've always done because that is how they've run campaigns in the past. This won't cut it anymore. Throughout this report, there are examples of how the Obama campaign was innovative and applied the standard fundamentals of a grassroots campaign in a modern world. We must learn from its success and recognize our challenge in this respect.

One glaring example of our tendency to conduct campaigns on autopilot is spending on TV. Simply put, TV spending is out of control. Outside groups spent approximately \$1 billion on TV ads in swing states in the final six months of the 2012 campaign.

Despite the extraordinary amount of money that was invested in TV by outside groups in 2012, the final results of the election barely differed from the polls six months earlier. There are lots of arguments for why this is the case, and we don't believe we lost because of third-party TV ads. However, the pendulum has swung too far when it comes to spending on TV ads.

TV is important and is still proven to be one of the best ways to drive a message; however, it is becoming less important to reaching many voters. Yet, the incentive system rewards expensive TV buys, despite the fact that most campaign committees and conservative organizations tightly negotiate these fees and make sure that decision-makers are not rewarded based upon TV ad commissions. The incentive system does not reward nuts-and-bolts organizing and development of field staff, data collection and analytics or rigorous testing, where we must renew our focus to effectively compete with the Democrats. As a Party, we need to recognize the return on investment opportunity is incredibly ripe in developing our ground game, and friends and allies should shift material amounts of their paid media funds to organizational efforts and other means of connecting with voters.

We must also improve our education of donors to our friends and allied organizations about this process and the incentive structure of the groups to which they are giving money.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Our friends and allies need to fundamentally address the incentive structure for their consultants to encourage a balanced approach to spending.
2. Encourage friends and allies to invest in ground and field development and technology in addition to traditional TV buying. In some cases this includes shifting spending from TV ads to other investments.
3. Educate donors of our friends and allies on incentive payment structure for consultants regarding TV buys.

## 3. TECHNOLOGY: ORGANIZE OR LOSE

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As stated in other sections of this report, one of the clearest lessons from 2012 is that Republicans must catch up on how we utilize technology in our campaigns. The Obama team is several years ahead of everyone else in its technological advantage, which the campaign effectively combined with an incredible organizational effort. This gave the Obama campaign more information on voters than any other political campaign in history, and it had the right analytics team in place to effectively leverage this voter data to reshape and win the election. This data collection and analytics effort was woven through every aspect of the campaign, including testing and re-testing innovative approaches to connecting with voters and integrating the use of data and analytics throughout the campaign.

Carol Mumford, Republican National Committeewoman from Rhode Island, told us: "What the Obama campaign did was run a national campaign like a local election." That is a lesson many people miss, because they are so taken by the technology utilized by the Obama campaign. The RNC

and our friends and allies must understand that it is going to take an incredibly people-intensive effort from the precinct level up to have the data to put in the appropriate data platform that is developed. All the technology in the world is worthless if you don't have the data. And the data is only useful if it is analyzed and utilized in tandem with our messaging and ground game, not to mention fundraising.

We understand that our team must improve, and must improve quickly on technology and organization. This will require resources, focus, and time, so we cannot wait until the cusp of the next election to begin. This effort will also require teamwork among the RNC, NRSC, NRCC, RGA, RSLC, and the many friends and allies to determine how we can legally get all the data together, share it and utilize it in coming campaigns. To be clear, this needs to be a collaborative project and not one team deciding to do everything itself. Teamwork is hard in politics, particularly when so many groups have big piles of money and can go their own way. The RNC can and must lead on this issue. Our campaign mechanics section in this report lays out our recommendations on how to get started with a strong platform of our own.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Work with friends and allies and other committees as much as legally possible to determine the best way forward to achieve improvements on data and technology.
2. Invest in people and organize from the bottom up to help this intensive data-collection effort.

## 4. SILENCE IS NOT ALWAYS GOLDEN; PUBLIC SHARING OF INFORMATION IS GOOD

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It was a surprise to no one on the Republican side when the Obama campaign began to define Governor Romney as unacceptable. The 2004 Bush campaign pursued the same effective strategy against Senator John Kerry. However, the sound of silence from our side in response to the damaging attacks must never happen again. Many post-election analyses correctly conclude that our side was never able to recover from these attacks once we let them stand with minimal response.

Our friends and allies must not let this happen again. These organizations must expand their thought processes to include considering positive advocacy of candidates they support as well as negative advocacy against candidates they oppose. Moreover, our nominee's team must release information to the public to help friends and allies craft the most effective response.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC must gather messaging players to discuss a better approach. The RNC is the only entity that can effectively lead on issues and messaging, and it must aggressively work with our governors, congressional leaders, state and local officials, and friends and allies to help direct the overall effort.
2. This will require regular communications and planning between RNC, NRCC, NRSC, RGA, RSLC and the various friends and allies. While there are legal limits to how we work together, we need to take a lesson from how the other side collaborated in 2012 and make sure we are in harmony on general strategy and party-building efforts.
3. Campaigns, state parties, and campaign committees need to do a better job of publicly educating and informing friends and allies and their donors. This may mean placing TV buys earlier, promoting paid media, putting out press releases about bus tours, announcing plans for victory headquarters, etc. Until the laws change, we have to do a better job of making the right things public.

## 5. POLLING

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Friends, allied organizations and campaigns employed top Republican opinion researchers to prevent Republicans from flying blind and to help us react to voters' responses. Without question, our side got this wrong, and it hurt us badly. Our pollsters were guided by old assumptions about the electorate rather than trusting the current data to determine the turnout model. Our recommendations on this front are in the campaign mechanics section of this report, but we must make a long-term commitment to collecting and analyzing the data in better, more comprehensive ways. Friends and allies can and should be part of this effort.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Friends and allies can help improve polling efforts for Republicans. Making a long-term, party-wide commitment to collecting and analyzing our data more effectively will help improve our polling efforts.

## 6. DIVISION OF LABOR AND THE NEED FOR RNC LEADERSHIP

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There is a great deal of discussion about how to collaborate between the national committees and friends and allies. At the outset, the role of each committee and allied organization needs to be determined based upon which is best equipped to handle a particular role. For example, the RNC

made some of the best ads of 2012, but it is unclear whether that is the best use of its limited resources. The RNC and the state parties are best to organize the ground game, but there is a complementary role for friends and allies to play organizationally.

It's clear that with respect to many political functions, it is important to minimize redundancies and turf battles, and leadership must be exerted to make sure better cooperation takes place. Republican organizations need to understand that all of this will work better if they will all participate in these discussions and play their respective roles. The RNC needs to sit down with various players and determine, as the law allows, who is doing what. Only the RNC can serve this role, and it is certainly one of the challenges in operating in the current environment.

Chairman Priebus should call for a command performance meeting of the leadership of our friends and allies and not allow anyone to leave the room until it's determined, to the extent allowed by law, who is doing what that can be divided legally. This is likely the most important recommendation in this friends and allies section of this report. Without this sort of teamwork, there will be too much redundancy, turf battles, and waste.

Lone wolf groups are more likely to waste their donors' money and act in a redundant, unhelpful manner.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC needs to sit down with the various players and determine, as the law allows, who is doing what. Only the RNC can serve in this role, and it is certainly one of the challenges in operating in the current environment.
2. The RNC should hire someone to help coordinate this effort, particularly with respect to how the RNC, congressional leaders, and governors work together on issue development and messaging.
3. We believe the RNC would be wiser to focus on the ground game, rather than TV ads, since there seems to be a never-ending supply of friends and allies eager to run TV ads. If the RNC believes it needs to lead on message, then it should do so through public communications.

## 7. TESTING

The RNC should work with our friends and allies to develop a plan for testing of organizational, voter contact, messaging, digital, data, outreach, and other efforts. The 2013 and 2014 elections present us with many testing opportunities in state and local elections.

Friends and allied groups should conduct targeted tests of messaging to young voters and attempt to empower young people via social media with worthwhile tasks. It's important to make volunteers an important part of campaigns because they can actually help us win elections. Our friends and allies can help us build the party from the bottom up by engaging young voters and reinforcing that they have an important stake in elections.

Similarly, there is minimal GOP outreach to women ages 18–40; our friends and allies can help recruit women to participate in campaigns and run for political office. One African American woman told us, “People have to be invited. They go where they are invited.” People want to know you care, and our third-party allies can help significantly on this front.

Bill Calhoun of the Texas GOP added, “Don’t try to get African Americans to become Republicans, but persuade them to vote independently by voting their principles and not party affiliation.” He said they will be more open to the independent pitch. Calhoun suggested that the RNC or an allied group consider helping fund a \$200,000 program to engage 300,000 African American voters in Texas. There are many opportunities like this for our friends and allies to consider help funding, and these should be explored and publicized.

Under the leadership of Governors Martinez and Sandoval, the RGA is working with the American Action Network on a Hispanic microtargeting effort to acquire real data that could prove constructive in campaigns going forward. This is the sort of innovation with our friends and allies that we want to encourage.

To help with our messaging and connecting with non-traditional Republican voters, an allied group could produce videos of minorities, women, and young voters explaining why they are Republicans and post them on the Internet.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Our friends and allies should conduct targeted tests of messaging to young voters and attempt to empower young people via social media.
2. The RNC should publicize a clearinghouse of opportunities to engage voters to help grow the Party that our friends and allies might consider implementing. The RNC should track the results to develop best practices that can be shared with state parties, campaigns, and our friends and allies.

## 8. BOTTOM-UP, NOT TOP-DOWN

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With regard to organization, the RNC, campaigns and our friends and allies have become too Washington-centric and top-down oriented. The best campaigns and organizations hire senior people and empower them at the state and local level. We need to grow the Republican Party from the ground up, not from the top down. This grassroots plan must be hinged with our political and social media plan.

The RNC must hire seasoned Regional Political Directors and field finance directors to help state parties and campaigns win from the precinct level up. We need a lot more of the Evelyn McPhail grassroots approach to politics. As the committee was told by a participant during a listening session in North Carolina, “Make the precinct captain the most important person in a

campaign.” While the 72-hour program was incredibly effective during the Bush 43 years, we need to recruit significant local volunteers, rather than shipping in outsiders to do fieldwork. This should be a neighbor-to-neighbor effort, and non-party organizations with local ties and knowledge can play a key role.

The current campaign finance environment has led to a handful of friends and allied groups dominating our side’s efforts. This is not healthy. A lot of centralized authority in the hands of a few people at these outside organizations is dangerous for our Party. This report pushes hard for campaign finance reform that would help the RNC return to its rightful position as the national Party leader, but we also believe the growth of more third-party groups would encourage more innovation and spread the resources beyond a handful of Washington, D.C.-based consultants. It’s not that these consultants are not capable, but there will continue to be a huge risk of a 2012 repeat if we move forward with the same model.

The conservative cause is fortunate to have many strong friends and allies promoting our beliefs and our candidates. One issue of concern is that too often it seems these outside groups (and our 2012 presidential campaign) tend to hire one vendor to handle all of their paid media, mail, phones, etc. We are concerned that leads to a lack of innovation and too many decisions being made by a small, centralized team. Don’t forget that our base of voters is naturally skeptical of centralized leadership attempting to control too many things. Our friends and allies should hire multiple vendors to foster competition and more ideas and to minimize the risk of poor performance.

A number of these groups are empowering local conservative leaders to help rally voters behind the best conservative candidates. This is a much more effective approach than anyone in Washington trying to dictate our primaries.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Our friends and allies should parallel the RNC’s effort to hire field organizers at the local level who are a part of the community of voters.
2. Our friends and allies should hire multiple vendors to avoid overly centralized leadership and to encourage competition and innovative political strategies.
3. Our friends and allies should empower local conservative leaders to help rally voters behind the best conservative candidates.

## 9. TRAINING AND GROUND GAME

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In our discussions with our friends, allies, and state parties, it’s clear that voter registration efforts are struggling. The answer is not to punt. While county and state parties must lead on party-building activities such as voter registration, we urge a bottom-up approach to voter registration, and our friends and allies need to be willing to invest smartly. Cluster voting is a good tool for 501(c) (4) groups where we have a high percentage of conservative voters in a certain area.

There can be testing of various approaches, but oftentimes the best answers are the old ways of setting up voter registration tables at targeted grocery stores in red neighborhoods. Again, make your precinct captains your most important people and empower them to get real people to register people one person at a time. It's not sexy, but it works. It also works to target voter registration to issue areas such as Second Amendment rights, restrictions on prayer, etc. This is an area where key friends and allies can play a significant role in voter registration and complement the Party's efforts.

More and better training is a consistent theme in this report. It is critical that we train and empower volunteers who share our core principles. This is needed at the local level, and our friends and allies should aggressively develop training opportunities throughout the country; state parties should do the same. Certainly, the RNC and interested friends and allies should have this on their list of nuts-and-bolts organizing that needs tending and planning.

It sounds simple, but if campaigns, state parties, and our friends and allies don't know how to reach potential voters and volunteers, we have a problem. Well, we have a problem. Too often, our lists do not have cell phone numbers, email addresses or social media handles. We cannot function if we cannot reach people. Friends and allies should invest in getting cell phone numbers added to the voter file. There is the old-fashioned approach of doing it by asking our precinct captains to help get cell phone numbers for voters in their neighborhoods. Most schools, churches, civic organizations, etc., have lists of names with email and cell phone numbers. Give local volunteers a job to do and they will do it. This is not glamorous work, but it's necessary. Again, state parties must lead in this area, but our friends and allied groups can augment their efforts. Party organizations and campaigns can buy these lists inexpensively and engage in list exchange agreements with groups that may have uses for voter file information.

Training is not just for volunteers. It is a challenge to identify experienced campaign staff. The NRSC told us it plans to beef up its campaign schools. The RNC and NRCC should coordinate with the NRSC in this effort. In addition, the RNC needs to lead an effort to train our media consultants on how to use social media. We suggest that the RNC use social media industry leaders to conduct this training as opposed to other political consultants. Certainly, our friends and allies could play a significant role in assisting with this training effort.

In our discussions with the RGA, we learned that it has been able to conduct party-building efforts in key states like Pennsylvania during a governor's race that happens to coincide with a U.S. Senate race. We would urge the RNC, NRSC, RGA, and RSLC to discuss how to expand this effort in a legal manner. This is an important opportunity to maximize our dollars.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Our friends and allies should significantly invest in voter registration and grassroots efforts.
2. Our friends and allies should develop numerous training opportunities for volunteers and campaign staff including in social media.
3. Our friends and allies should augment the effort of state parties to include cell phones and email addresses in the voter file.

# 10. PROMOTE OUR GOVERNORS

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Our governors enjoy strong support as a whole. They are often the policy and political innovators in the Party. They can be some of the most effective recruiting tools as we grow the Republican Party. Our friends and allies should work with the governors' offices to sponsor tours for governors to help publicize the significant accomplishments and sterling records of many of our current Republican governors.

Former Governor Haley Barbour suggested to us that the RNC, RGA, and state parties coordinate a similar effort to get each of the 30 Republican governors to hold a series of meetings around the state with African Americans, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, Hispanic Americans, women, young people, and union members.

In 2013, all the governors should hold at least four meetings with each of these groups around the state to engage these voters and help them realize that Republicans not only care about them but are working hard for their interests. We badly need to reach beyond our base of supporters to share our pro-growth economic policies for America and how they can help hard-working folks attain their goals and dreams. Like any decent campaign, we need to be sure to capture all the names and contact information of the people who participate in these events so we can help build the list of prospective supporters and follow up with them by email and social media to ask them to participate in our campaigns and events. As they respond favorably, empower them to help us grow in their neighborhoods and communities.

The RNC is too heavily focused on Washington. The RNC needs to showcase Republican Governors along with the RGA. In addition, the RNC should promote our lieutenant governors, secretaries of state, attorneys general, legislators and other local officials. This is a prime opportunity for the RNC to work hand-in-hand with the RGA, RSLC, and RAGA.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Our friends and allies can help tout successes of Republican governors and their records.
2. Our friends and allies should help governors host events with African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, youth, women, and union members to help reach new demographics.
3. All 30 Republican governors should hold a series of meetings in their states to help promote our Republican principles and grow the Party.

## 11. DEFINE THE D'S EARLY AND TRACK 'EM

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The Democrats played in our primaries and spent more money than ever before attacking Governor Romney and other Republicans. They tried to pick our nominees and soften up our candidates early in the process. Our friends and allied groups already do some of this, but we strongly recommend our side actively seeks to define our opponents as early as possible in the process.

Well-funded conservative groups should seek to hire activists to track Democrat incumbents and candidates with video cameras constantly recording their every movement, utterance, and action. Within the applicable legal constraints, we need to create our own video content, bank it, and release it when it suits our candidates' needs.

An allied group dedicated solely to research to establish a private archive and public website that does nothing but post inappropriate Democrat utterances and act as a clearinghouse for information on Democrats would serve as an effective vehicle for affecting the public issue debate.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Our friends and allies should define Democrats early in election cycles.
2. An outside group should be established that focuses solely on research of Democrats should be established.

## 12. GROUPTHINK IS A LOSER

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Peggy Noonan recently wrote about how our Party has stifled debate and how groupthink has taken over. She quoted Joe Scarborough saying, "Everybody's afraid to talk." She then related that in 1994 the Republican Party "was alive with ideas: John Kasich on the budget, Jack Kemp on taxes, John Engler on welfare reform, Tommy Thompson on crime control. This was the bubble and fizz of a movement at its height." Third-party groups that promote purity are hurting our electoral prospects. As Noonan quoted Scarborough again, "The national conversation is more constricted, with radio stars, websites and magazines functioning as unofficial arbiters and limiters of domestic and foreign policy debate." Our friends and allies are in a strong position to help promote the Party's ideas and encourage a diversity of ideas and solutions consistent with our core principles.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Our friends and allies must realize that the Party is at its best as the Party of ideas, and healthy debate of those ideas is fundamentally good for the Republican Party.

# FUNDRAISING

1. Major Donor Fundraising
2. Low-Dollar Fundraising
3. Digital Fundraising
4. Direct Marketing (Mail and Phones)
5. Events and Surrogates
6. Fundraising Training

# INTRODUCTION TO FUNDRAISING

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The RNC broke all major donor fundraising efforts in 2011 and 2012. In 2012 alone, major donor fundraising at the RNC totaled \$140,523,792. By comparison, in 2009-2010 combined, major donor fundraising totaled only \$7,060,187. \$182 million was raised online through Romney Victory. There was significant growth in online fundraising; the RNC added 1.2 million donor emails to our file and 2.2 million additional emails.

While the RNC broke its own record during the 2012 cycle, the RNC is just beginning to scratch the surface to compete with Democratic groups and must invest smartly to make up this ground. Moreover, the RNC must push forward with the same intensity and an even more sophisticated effort because the fundraising environment is now worse due to the disappointing losses in 2012 despite unprecedented donor efforts. The RNC has a long history of investing in its fundraising shop, and we strongly urge the RNC to keep its foot on the accelerator and take it to another level. The finance operation, whether at the RNC, a state party or a campaign, is the one shop where it's easy to see the return on investment of hiring additional good staff. With all the new donors to the RNC as a result of the last two years, we need to do all we can to keep them participating.

Fundraising, whether at the RNC or state parties, needs to be an integrated process and not piecemeal. As we look to capitalize on the digital opportunity, we must center what we are doing around data and bring fundraising, political and communications people together to coordinate their efforts. Training needs to be a genuine priority, and the RNC should develop a common training book, so we can strengthen our state parties and campaigns. Rigorous testing is a must, so we can innovate and make sure our efforts are effective and efficient. The RNC should continue to cultivate and capitalize on joint fundraising committees with state parties. Their important role is only going to grow, and the RNC should study how to further capitalize on them in the 2014 and 2016 cycles.

CMDI President John Simms wrote recently in *Campaigns and Elections*: "The first lesson from 2012 is that it is possible to raise much more money than anyone ever thought possible. Hopefully a second lesson is that centralizing marketing data across all marketing channels and conducting rigorous analysis and testing will optimize an already very productive fundraising process. The result will be more funds raised at lower cost."

Stu Trevelyan of the Democratic firm NGP VAN wrote in *Campaigns and Elections*: "As we look towards the future, it's also important to recognize that fundraising is changing, but we shouldn't be distracted by the shiny bauble. We need to stay focused on results. Things like mobile and social will find a place, but despite the click-bait headlines pronouncing otherwise, email is not dead, direct mail is not dead, events are not dead, and call time isn't dead either. For the vast majority of campaigns, call time is still going to be a primary source of funding."

This report will provide recommendations that will encourage donors to support targeted projects recommended by the Growth and Opportunity Project so that donors understand that their investments will be put into action to position the Republican Party for long-term growth. The contributions can include not only contributions to the RNC, but also direct contributions to state parties to help fund training, organizational efforts, data collection and analytics, minority engagement, rigorous testing, and other programs.

## 1. MAJOR DONOR FUNDRAISING

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As stated in our introduction, the RNC had a record election cycle in major donor fundraising. At the start of the 2012 election cycle, the RNC had 57 active major donors, yet had 6,500-plus by December 2012. This is a result of the incredible work ethic of the RNC Chairman in making phone calls and attending events, a working national finance committee led by an aggressive RNC Finance Chairman, the Romney campaign's outstanding finance team, and teamwork between the RNC, the Romney campaign and state parties. There is much to learn from how our major donor fundraising was executed in the 2012 cycle, particularly considering this was practically a 180-degree change from the 2010 cycle.

In addition, major donor club membership expanded exponentially in 2012; this includes expanded membership for Team Regents, Team 100, and the Eagles Program. Lastly, it is important to note that while the fundraising increased, the overall fundraising cost to the RNC decreased in 2012 largely due to the successful major donor fundraising.

## 2. LOW-DOLLAR FUNDRAISING

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The RNC must expand its low-dollar fundraising program. This means building a real national grassroots fundraising team through our state parties to expand our network of donors. The only way to achieve this is for our state parties to empower their volunteers with low-dollar fundraising responsibilities. Just as volunteers drive major donor fundraising with peer-to-peer efforts, we need to organize similar efforts focused on low-dollar contributions. State parties must establish a point of contact for volunteers who want to get involved, and make finance a part of what they are asked to do. We must empower the volunteers to help not only on the political level, but also at the finance level. We need to help state parties develop a real fundraising infrastructure with responsibilities and accountability to improve our low-dollar fundraising efforts nationally. Utilize volunteers to raise money through phone calls, letter writing, email, social media, door-to-door efforts, etc. At the RNC staff level, reinstate the field finance team with experienced state party fundraisers to assist and help train state parties and hold them accountable.

Some state parties are doing a great job with low-dollar fundraising, but too many are not. The RNC must help state parties become more self-reliant by requiring state party finance plans and fundraising budgets and encouraging them to build their fundraising infrastructure from the bottom

up. The RNC finance team should audit each state party regarding their particular fundraising challenges and then help the state parties build a plan to improve. The RNC finance team should encourage state party finance teams to innovate and should constantly question why state parties are raising the money the way they always have and whether that is most effective.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. State parties should establish goals and rewards for volunteers who achieve fundraising benchmarks. Just like major donor programs reward individuals for fundraising success, we need to employ this same model at the low-dollar level. State party chairmen should reward successful fundraisers with invitations to special events with Party leaders.
2. It is critical to improve the state party donor lists to help them raise money for themselves. Ask volunteers to help us build and update the list with donor contact information.
3. The RNC should establish a program to accept state party proposals for RNC matching funds for low-dollar peer-to-peer fundraising pilot programs. Following the tests, the RNC should highlight the results with all state parties.

## 3. DIGITAL FUNDRAISING

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The RNC must significantly work to grow its digital fundraising efforts by investing in new technology and testing and integrating this operation with the political and communications digital effort. While the RNC and many federal campaigns have had success with online fundraising, it's clear we are only beginning to scratch the surface of this explosive opportunity.

Data is the mother's milk of online fundraising. How good is the email list and the data appended to it? Do records in the master file have social media accounts associated with them? These are key questions for any political entity hoping to engage in online fundraising. We must center what we are doing around data and get finance, political and communications teams to the table. The RNC, with the help of savvy vendors who compete for the work, can assist state parties and campaigns in devising effective plans.

News events are significant catalysts of online fundraising. We have learned that online contributions skyrocket when big news items break, so state parties and campaigns must have the infrastructure and team in place to capitalize on these opportunities. RNC field finance teams need to focus on this.

*Campaigns and Elections* magazine reported that an "active email list is a gift that keeps on giving." We agree. Email continues to generate significant revenues and, importantly, can provide hard dollars in the fall when the major donors are maxed out. State parties and campaigns must invest in the data to continue to grow their working email lists and harvest them for fundraising and political benefit. It is worth noting that in 2012 email raised more than twice the percentage of total funds it raised in 2008.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Continue to invest in digital fundraising efforts.
2. Integrate digital fundraising with the political plan and all digital and communication plans.
3. The RNC should study real online fundraising successes that have been used by campaigns and committees and apply the best practices to their digital fundraising development.
4. The RNC should fund digital fundraising tests in 2013. During our listening session over the last several weeks, we heard from many innovative vendors. The RNC should establish a quarterly fundraising challenge from vendors to propose creative online fundraising programs. The RNC could select a winner each quarter and invest a set amount of resources to test the program in a state party that is meeting RNC benchmarks. As programs succeed, the RNC should promote these with the state parties via the field finance team.
5. Identify third-party groups to invest in online fundraising and share their successes with state parties and campaigns as allowed by law.

## 4. DIRECT MARKETING (MAIL AND PHONES)

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The RNC has a long, successful history with its direct marketing program. It invested wisely in prospecting over the last 20 years.

In 1996, the RNC invested \$3.3 million and garnered 450,000 first-time donors who gave the RNC \$169 million by the end of 2012. In 2011, the RNC invested \$2.6 million to garner 187,000 first-time donors who by the end of 2012 had given \$18.1 million.

Without the investment in 2011, the RNC would have had \$18.1 million less in 2012, and without the investment in 1996, the RNC would not have had the \$8.5 million from 36,000 inception donors from 1996 who gave in 2012.

There are some who believe mail is finished as an effective fundraising channel; however, according to John Simms of CMDI, "Direct mail was the second largest fundraising channel and raised twice as much as the web" for Republicans in the 2012 presidential campaign.

In 2012, the cost for the RNC to mail a direct mail prospecting letter was \$0.244. This low cost allows the RNC to aggressively and effectively mail voter file records. Last year, about 39 percent of RNC prospecting volume was to voter files (almost 50 percent if modeled/enhanced voter files are included in the count).

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. A pilot program should be developed in which state parties may opt in to large mailings with certain RNC direct mail packages or techniques to take advantage of the RNC's large volume of mail over the course of at least six months. There are many logistical questions for those state parties that wish to participate (where is the database housed, who will cage the mail, who writes the copy, etc.) that would need to be worked out, but the most important aspect of this program is that the state party must assign a specific staffer to oversee these mailings and learn the process to run a proper program. Likewise, the RNC would need field finance staff to help state parties stick to deadlines, review results, and set goals. The ultimate goal is to give state parties the opportunity to build a proper direct marketing program and train in-state staffers who can manage it.

## 5. EVENTS AND SURROGATES

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The GOP has a good track record of holding fundraising events, and this must continue. Look for opportunities to bring in creative surrogates to bring new donors into the Party. Some of our recommendations are Fundraising 101, but it's clear too many state parties and campaigns do not have functioning finance committees and other fundamental tools for fundraising success.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. We encourage the RNC to create a master surrogate group that will commit to going on the road for two to three days and cover approximately six to eight events. Give those dates to the various state parties and organize the same basic event at each stop. Seven or eight surrogates can cover the country in three days. Do this twice per year, rotating the surrogates so on the second round each event has a different headliner. Don't be afraid to think big, because these can be big drivers for state party events.
2. State parties need to develop local finance committees that actively raise funds for the state party in their communities each year with events with the state GOP chairman or elected Republican officials.
3. Invite up-and-coming down-ballot Republican officials to local fundraising events to help draw a crowd and groom the officials for higher office.
4. State chairmen should headline no fewer than 20 local fundraisers each year for the state party. Some of these events could split revenue with local party organizations.
5. We encourage the RNC to organize call days four to six weeks prior to events with key finance committee members joined by a Party leader for some calling and casual lunch with the callers.

## 6. FUNDRAISING TRAINING

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An important and overriding theme through the Growth and Opportunity report is that the Party must train our people. We need to develop the sense with state parties that the RNC is here to help and should be used as a tool to build the ground-up movement to take back our country. We also need to hold state parties accountable and push them to become stronger, just as they need to push their local party organizations to do the same. Training in fundraising is an integral part of this effort.

Part of training is simply sharing best practices. For instance, the Team Michigan major donor program has helped set the standard, and its practices should be shared with others.

One of the hidden gems in 2012 was the admin shop at the Romney campaign. In 2008, McCain for President processed about \$350 million with a treasury staff of more than 30. In 2012, the Romney operation developed a financial platform that handled the treasury, budgeting, and compliance of Romney for President, Romney Victory JFC and RNC Presidential Trust — over \$1 billion in all — with only nine individuals. This represents a tenfold increase in efficiency. The RNC should consider how to promote the lessons learned from that operation and others with similar success.

From low-to-high-dollar fundraising, as well as all fundraising techniques such as mail, phones, online, events and leadership, the RNC can play the critical role of preparing our state parties, and campaigns to succeed.

We need to test and re-test. We should constantly evaluate why we are doing things a certain way and look for innovative ways to improve our fundraising efforts. We also need to drive home the importance of the basics of fundraising beginning with the single most important lesson for any fundraiser: You gotta ask.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Reinstitute field finance team structure and hire experienced and highly successful state party fundraisers.
  - a. Help state party staff determine goals and write state finance plans with state party staff to help them accomplish their goals.
  - b. After the plan is written, determine the scope of work needed to coordinate a seamless plan.
  - c. There should be monthly calls between RNC field finance and the state parties to track their progress on fundraising and to discuss best practices of other states for them to test.
  - d. The RNC should have a conference call every two months with vendors so the right hand knows what the left is doing.

2. If the RNC hopes to hold state parties accountable, then it should circulate state party fundraising success against key benchmarks such as the percentage of budget raised, actual dollars raised, cost of fundraising, prospecting, online success, etc. The field finance team should encourage competition among state parties and reward the top-performing states. Rewards don't have to be financial; it might be sending a top surrogate to that state or technical assistance from RNC staff to assist the state in growing its list or online efforts.
3. As a serious priority, the field finance staff should assist state parties in establishing a plan to raise corporate money early in the cycle to relieve pressure later in the cycle of federal dollars.
4. The RNC should identify best practices in the post-campaign finance reform era to overcome the burdensome federal regulations.
5. The RNC should establish more robust field fundraising schools for state and local levels.
6. The RNC should recommend software programs for state party use, including programs that allow state parties and campaigns to track fundraising successes of volunteers for both major donor and low-dollar fundraising.
7. The RNC should develop a training manual, particularly with new state party executive directors and finance directors in mind. This will help establish consistency and provide helpful templates. It should include all facets of fundraising and compliance.
8. As part of this training manual, the RNC could point to the Romney campaign's administration shop as a model.
9. Establish a mentor program. Recruit experienced operatives and fundraisers to serve as part of a kitchen cabinet of state party executive directors and finance directors, especially less experienced ones. Many of our best people would gladly volunteer, if asked.
10. Promote list exchanges between state parties and the RNC.
11. The RNC should develop recommendations on how to hire direct marketing vendors with basic guidelines. Most of our vendors are great, but some are not.
12. The RNC should hire an experienced modeler to analyze the voter files and identify potential donors for the RNC and state parties. A modeler would be able to help low-dollar fundraising at all levels by identifying not only whom we should mail, but whom we shouldn't (both are equally important). This person would build models at the state level and nationally using the voter file using proper firewalls. There is a big opportunity for growing our reach with a modeler, but it's important that the modeler have the ability to do what is asked.
13. The RNC should develop contests between state parties related to their fundraising efforts to promote smart investments and practices. The winners of these contests should be rewarded with the RNC's investing in the state party's fundraising efforts by funding creative tests or by sending a SWAT team of experts to come to the state to evaluate operations and help devise a plan to improve.

# CAMPAIGN FINANCE

1. Federal Campaign Finance
2. Review and Revise State Campaign Finance Laws and Regulations
3. Strengthening the State Parties

# INTRODUCTION TO CAMPAIGN FINANCE

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Recent election cycles have seen a troubling diminishment of the role of political parties and even candidates themselves in our democracy. The national and state political parties are well on their way to the intensive care unit. McCain-Feingold now makes it impossible for the national parties to use funds raised under a state's own laws to support state and local candidates and parties in that state, and it forces them to use federal money for what are truly state and local activities. Even state parties are prohibited from spending money that is legal under state law on important grassroots activities to help state and local candidates. Although the Supreme Court thankfully has restored the First Amendment rights of many organizations, the free speech rights of political parties and federal candidates remain smothered by McCain-Feingold. Even though national and state parties are the most transparent, accountable and grassroots-oriented groups in our political system, they are the most heavily restricted by federal campaign finance law. However, outside groups — such as SuperPACs, 501(c)(4)s and 527s — use unlimited, and often unreported, amounts of the same money federal candidates and national parties are now prohibited from spending or raising. The result is an illogical system where candidates and their parties no longer have the loudest voices in campaigns or even the ability to determine the issues debated in campaigns. Outside groups now play an expanded role affecting federal races and, in some ways, overshadow state parties in primary and general elections. As a result, this environment has caused a splintered Congress with little party cohesion so that gridlock and polarization grow as the political parties lose their ability to rally their elected officeholders around a set of coherent governing policies.

Fixing the inability of the political parties to be true national parties must be a top priority. Unless Congress acts, the country will continue to suffer under the current misguided statutory scheme that over regulates campaign finance, limits free speech and empowers the very so-called special interests this law was meant to diminish. Congress must take a bipartisan approach to saving our two national parties, as well as remove restrictions on voter registration and GOTV efforts of state and local party committees or else suffer the consequences of the current state of play. This should be an issue where Republicans and Democrats can come together to forge a reasonable solution. The first two sections below thus are not about how Republicans can win more elections, but rather they are about how Republicans and Democrats can revive the important historical role of parties and candidates in our democracy. In the third section, we discuss a few ways that Republican state parties can be strengthened even under the hyper-regulated legal regime that governs them.

# 1. FEDERAL CAMPAIGN FINANCE

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Federal campaign finance laws need to be revised to loosen the restrictive burdens that have stifled the voices of candidates and parties. Slightly more than a decade ago, under the mantra of “reform,” Congress passed McCain-Feingold, which treats national party committees — and to a large extent even state party committees — as if they are federal committees. It places onerous restrictions on their ability to fund grassroots activity at the state and local level, and it even more severely restricted the ability of third-party groups to engage in political activity. Since at this point only the rights of non-party organizations have been restored in a meaningful way, the parties and candidates are at a huge disadvantage, particularly given the low contribution limits with which they must contend.

In short, current campaign finance law diminishes the role of national political parties and does not allow them to participate on level terms with third-party groups. In addition, the current campaign finance environment in turn limits free speech, with the result that voters are denied the ability to hear more from parties and candidates themselves relative to third-party groups. The recommendations below are a road map toward what an ideal campaign finance world would look like to help strengthen political parties and encourage freedom of speech.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Allow the national political parties to again raise and spend money that is legal under state law for use in those states. It makes no sense that in many states the national parties are more restricted in how they can fund state and local political efforts than corporations, labor unions and other nonpolitical organizations. Even short of this, national parties should be able to solicit state money within federal restrictions just as members of Congress can do.
2. Restore the ability of state parties to run Party-building programs with a combination of federal and state dollars depending on the number of federal and state candidates on the ballot for each election. The federalization of a huge swath of state and local grassroots activity has put many state and local parties in the intensive care unit and made it much harder for them to engage in grassroots activities.
3. Increase contribution limits for federal campaigns. In the age of SuperPACs and other such organizations, the contribution limits to federal candidates must be increased so candidates have more control of the message and voters have a better understanding of the viewpoints of candidates rather than of third-party groups.
4. Ensure that any campaign finance legislation in Congress takes into account the growing awareness among members of both parties that the parties need to be strengthened at the national, state and local levels in order to restore parties’ proper role in our political system. Reviving the parties is essential to the health of our democracy.
5. Convince Congress to remove the biennial aggregate contribution limits. Many donors would like to fully support efforts to win majorities in the Senate and House and the presidency. They should be allowed to do so. The McCutcheon case aims to accomplish this goal, but Congress can fix the problem through legislation.

6. Abolish the entire presidential public financing system, including the matching funds program for the primaries and the public grant for the general election. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor has said, “Eliminating this program would save taxpayers \$617 million over ten years, and would require candidates and political parties to rely on private contributions rather than tax dollars.” Less than 10 percent of taxpayers check the \$3 box on their tax returns. President Obama opted out of the public financing system in 2008 and 2012, and Governor Mitt Romney opted out in 2012. Both campaigns shattered fundraising and spending records, so it is hard to imagine a future major presidential candidate using this system.
7. Replace the system of taxpayer funding of national conventions with a system that allows additional contributions to the national party committees for convention activities. National conventions have historically played an integral role in our democracy. Under current law, they are funded with tax revenue designated by taxpayers through the political check-off program. Establishing a system under which the Republican and Democratic National Committees could raise money outside the current federal limits and prohibitions for the purpose of funding their conventions would allow removal of the taxpayer funding without forcing the parties to divert regular federal dollars from traditional campaign activity.
8. Restore the building fund for political party committees. Campaign committee office buildings are deteriorating for both parties. Both parties find it difficult to justify spending federal dollars on capital improvements. But such expenditures do not directly benefit any candidate and thus cannot justifiably be hindered by the same donor limits. Republicans and Democrats should unite to seek an additional \$32,400 allowance for building fund contributions that does not affect donor federal aggregate limits.
9. Increase coordinated spending limits. When parties spend money in coordination with their candidates, the candidates are responsible for the message and are easily held accountable by the voters. Such is not the case with spending by third-party organizations. So the kind of speech for which candidates are most accountable other than that of their own campaigns is far more limited than speech by third-party groups, for which candidates have no accountability. The coordinated spending limits for national and state parties should be removed or at least increased to allow voters to hear more of the candidates’ messages to compete with the messages of third-party groups and the media.

## 2. REVIEW AND REVISE STATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

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As stated in the introduction, it is our hope that many of our recommendations will find bipartisan support since they would accrue to the benefit of both parties and to our democratic system overall. It is likely that at both the federal and state levels, Republicans will need to take the lead. The number of Republican governors and Republican-controlled legislatures provides an opportunity for the Republican Party to pursue legislation and litigation regarding state campaign finance reform initiatives.

State campaign finance law varies greatly from state to state. Such is the beauty of our federal system of government — states have the ability to enact legislation to govern their own elections rather than the federal government regulating it all (although, as discussed above, the federal government has become far too intrusive). Thus, different levels of change are needed in different states.

Our recommendations should in no way be construed to imply a federal role or national standards for state campaign finance laws. The action must occur at the state level. At the same time, the First Amendment applies with equal force in every state. Thus, in examining each state's campaign finance system, in some places it will be crucial to legislate or litigate to vindicate the constitutional rights of the parties, candidate, and citizens of those states. In other states, even where there are no constitutional issues, there will be policy improvements that can make the system healthier.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Legislative and regulatory reform should focus on making political speech more robust at the state and local level. In many states, political speech is suppressed to an even greater extent than under federal law. The guiding principle of legislative change should be to work toward fully restoring the free speech rights of the political parties and candidates.
2. Involvement by multiple interested organizations should be encouraged. Many groups are interested in promoting free speech and restoring the health of our democracy. The RNC should meet with selected third-party groups to seek their cooperation in not only studying state campaign finance laws and regulations but also in taking an active role in efforts to improve state laws by engaging in legislative reform efforts as well as litigation.
3. Model legislation should be developed by interested organizations and state legislative leaders to improve state campaign finance laws. Organizations such as the RNC, the RSLC, and ALEC may wish to take a leading role. To turn ideas to action nationwide, experts should develop model statutes that can be replicated across states.
4. Where legislation cannot be adopted, litigation should be considered to lessen the burden on the parties' ability to support their candidates. Where partisan obstruction or other obstacles stand in the way of common-sense improvements to a state's campaign finance system, litigation may be necessary, particularly where there are constitutional concerns.

## 3. STRENGTHENING THE STATE PARTIES

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State parties are the most highly regulated entities under federal campaign finance law. There is something wrong with that. After all, state parties are the bread and butter of our grassroots-oriented political system. But the federal government regulates them extensively and forces them to use federal money for what are truly state and local activities. The system is choking state parties making it harder than it should be to raise money, engage in grassroots activities, and meet the complex compliance requirements thrust upon them at the federal level.

Although the changes recommended above would greatly strengthen state parties, we understand that even those that occur will take some time to implement. Meanwhile, state and local party committees continue to toil under an oppressive regulatory regime. They need more assistance in order to optimize their operations. Assistance does not mean money. Rather, they need a hand in training and education regarding — and adoption of — best practices in fundraising and compliance.

State parties are suffering the most under the current campaign finance laws. It is critical that we provide more support to state parties to allow them to do more with scarcer resources in the current environment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The RNC should improve fundraising training. This effort should include reinstating the Field Finance program at the RNC. Like regional political directors, regional finance directors would work directly with state parties in their respective regions. In concert with legal and compliance experts, they will help state parties develop and implement fundraising strategies that are best-suited to their state. In addition, as stated in the “Fundraising” section of this report, the RNC should develop a “swat team” of experts that goes into the field periodically to complement the field finance efforts by further training staff and volunteers.
2. The RNC should increase campaign finance schools in field. As part of the RNC’s training efforts and increased focus on skills-building programs, the RNC should expand the campaign finance and compliance components of its campaign management curriculum. This should apply to both in-person training and virtual training programs online.
3. The RNC should manage a password-protected website to serve as a clearinghouse and resource for state parties on campaign finance issues.
4. State parties should more aggressively take advantage of existing training opportunities. These include the RNC Counsel’s Office Legal Compliance Seminars and Federal Election Commission in-person and online tutorials, as well as state-level training.
5. Every state party should have an identified campaign finance lawyer and compliance specialist.
6. The RNC should promote state party best practices. The RNC should develop a list of best practices gleaned from state parties that have robust and successful fundraising operations and compliance programs and share it with the other state parties.

# PRIMARY PROCESS

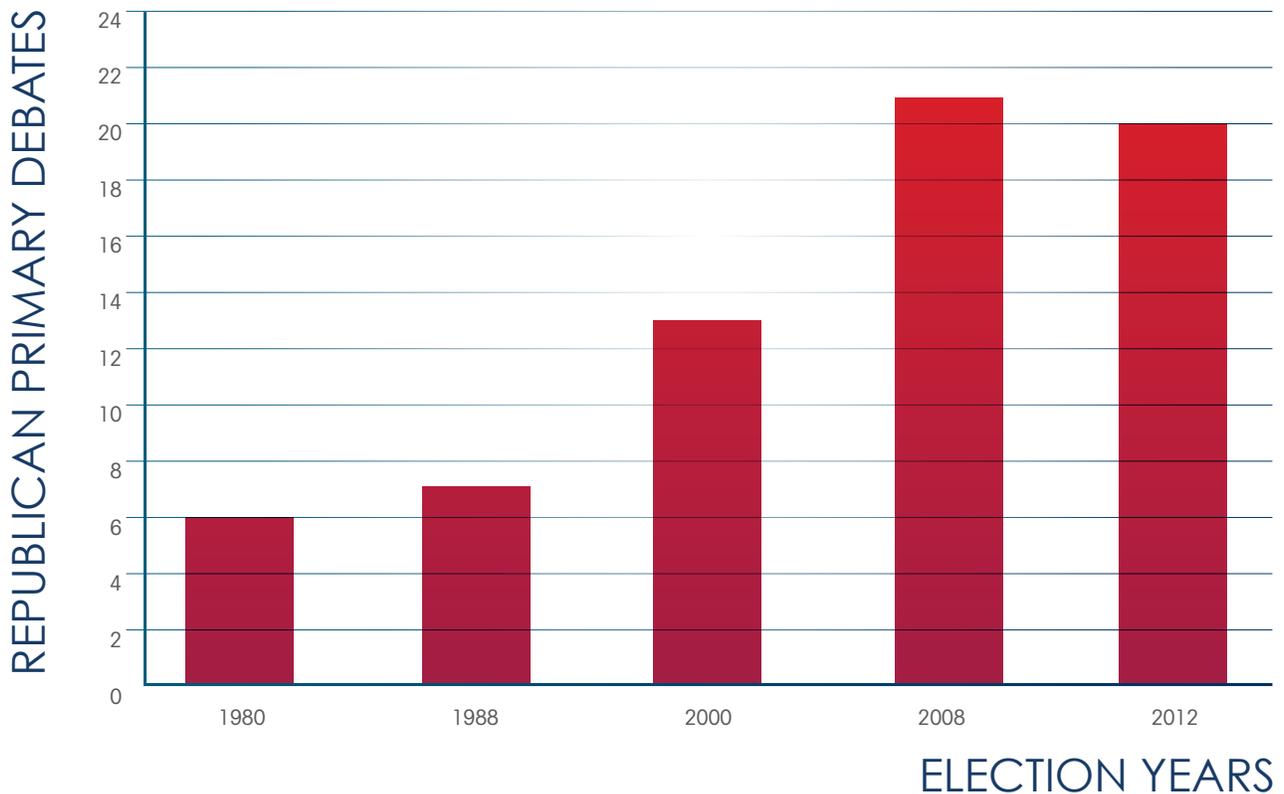
1. Debates
2. The Primaries

# 1. DEBATES

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Debates are a vital part of the primary process. For candidates, debates are essential forums to demonstrate they are qualified to become President of the United States. For Republican primary voters, debates can be fascinating and lively forums to judge the men and women who seek their support.

In 1980, there were 6 primary debates. In 1988, there were 7 debates. In 2000, there were 13 debates, in 2008 there were 21 debates, and in 2012, there were 20.



Debates must remain a central element of the GOP nominating process, but in recent years there have been too many debates, and they took place too early. The first debate of the 2012 cycle took place on May 5, 2011, eight months before the first votes were cast in the Iowa caucuses. In contrast, the first Republican primary debate of the 1980 election took place on January 5, 16 days prior to the Iowa caucuses. On January 7 and 8 last year, two debates took place within 12-hours of each other. The number of debates has become ridiculous, and they're taking candidates away from other important campaign activities.

It should be recognized that depending on a candidate's standing in the polls, some candidates will want to participate in an unlimited number of debates, as early as they can and as often as they can.

If some candidates decide to team up with media organizations that seek to sponsor debates, it will be impossible to hold a reasonable number of debates. The media will decide how many debates the party should have — instead of the Party making the decision. In order to have a process that respects a candidate's time and one that helps the Party win, the Party should create a system that results in a more rational number of debates.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The number of debates should be reduced by roughly half to a still robust number of approximately 10 to 12, with the first occurring no earlier than September 1, 2015, and the last ending just after the first several primaries (February – March 2016).
2. After the first several primaries (February – March 2016), candidates themselves should decide whether they want to accept or decline additional debates. In the event the Party is in a position similar to the Democratic primary of 2008, the candidates and the GOP may gain by holding additional debates. At that stage, it should be up to the candidates to decide. The Party's limits will not apply after that time.
3. In addition, we urge the Party to give consideration to alternative and additional means to make certain the number of debates does not grow out of hand. These could include:
  - An announcement by the RNC in late 2014 or early 2015 of the exact dates, locations and sponsors of the sanctioned debates in 2015 and 2016.
  - The possibility of penalizing candidates and/or state parties (perhaps through the RNC rules process) through the loss of delegates to the convention if they do not abide by the potential new debate structure.

We are intrigued with the suggestion some have made for an organization to be formed that can host robust, vigorous, tough, and professional debates. Doing so would create an additional impetus for candidates to participate in RNC-sanctioned debates only, but even if this happens, it will remain important to work closely with the media so they agree to broadcast them. After all, there is no point in putting on a debate that almost no one watches. It makes no sense to take back the debates so we can keep them to ourselves.

Any such organization or the RNC will also need to work closely with state parties so they also agree to abide by this potential new system. Several states and institutions within those states have histories of hosting debates. We need to respect these traditions and work together.

The cost of putting on a broadcast-quality debate is considerable, and the money would need to be raised to host them. Estimates range from \$500,000 to \$1 million per debate. A moderator with an outstanding reputation for independence, diligence, and toughness would need to be selected. No debate will be meaningful if it is not challenging, vigorous, and fair. Hosting a well-run, credible, and professional debate is a highly complicated matter.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To help determine the best structure and approach for the staging of the 2016 debates, we recommend test runs of this debate structure be conducted in 2014 in prominent statewide primary races.

## 2. THE PRIMARIES

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The 2015–2016 primaries will be different from 2012 because both parties will have open contests. The fact that our nominee will not be running against an incumbent means many of the organizational advantages that the President enjoyed will no longer be in place for the Democratic nominee.

The 2016 cycle will also reflect the growing influence of candidate-specific SuperPACs. The ability of wealthy individuals to write unlimited checks on behalf of one candidate has changed how campaigns are conducted. It should be noted that 99 percent of the money raised by the Romney SuperPAC, Restore Our Future, was donated by individuals, not corporations. (American Crossroads also raised 99 percent of its money from individual donors, as did the Perry SuperPAC. The Santorum SuperPAC raised 98 percent of its money from individual donors. The Gingrich SuperPAC raised 79 percent from individual donors.) SuperPAC money is a wild card that weakens our eventual nominee, regardless of who he or she is, due to the onslaught of negative ads against that candidate.

We also assume that whoever the nominee is in 2016 will continue the trend begun by then-Senator Obama in 2008 of declining public financing for the presidential campaign.

As a result of all these factors, we believe it is better for the Party to have a nominee selected earlier in the 2016 cycle rather than later. We also believe it is advantageous to move quickly into the general election phase of the campaign, allowing the nominee to spend general election money sooner.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Republican Convention should be held earlier in the summer. It should be moved to late June or sometime in July, allowing our nominee more time to begin the general election phase. (Note: The 2016 Olympics will be held August 5–21.)

2. Because the nominee will still need an estimated 60–90 days to prepare for the Convention, changes will need to be made to the primary calendar. If the Convention were to be held in July, the last primary would need to be held no later than May 15. If the Convention were to be held in late June, the final primary would need to be held no later than April 30. Moving primaries up will require states and state parties to cooperate.
3. We take no position on whether a contest should be winner take all or proportionate. The fact is, both methods can delay or speed up the likelihood of a nominee being chosen. It all depends on who is winning and by what margins in each primary or caucus election.
4. To facilitate moving up primary elections to accommodate an earlier convention, the Party should strongly consider a regional primary system or some other form of a major reorganization instead of the current system. The current system is a long, winding, often random road that makes little sense. It stretches the primaries out too long, forces our candidates to run out of money, and because some states vote so late, voters in those states never seem to count. Such a change would allow for a broader group of Republicans to play a role in selecting our nominee.
5. Recognizing the traditions of several states that have early nominating contests, the newly organized primaries would begin only after the “carve-out” states have held their individual elections. It remains important to have an “on ramp” of small states that hold unique primary days before the primary season turns into a multi-state process with many states voting on one day. The idea of a little-known candidate having a fair chance remains important.
6. We also recommend broadening the base of the Party and inviting as many voters as possible into the Republican Party by discouraging conventions and caucuses for the purpose of allocating delegates to the national convention. Our party needs to grow its membership, and primaries seem to be a more effective way to do so. The greater the number of people who vote in a Republican primary, the more likely they will turn out and vote again for the Republican candidate in the fall election.

# COMPILATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

# MESSAGING

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## SOME PEOPLE SAY, “REPUBLICANS DON’T CARE”

1. The Grand Old Party should be synonymous with the name “Growth and Opportunity Party.”
2. The Republican Party needs to stop talking to itself. We have become expert in how to provide ideological reinforcement to like-minded people, but devastatingly we have lost the ability to be persuasive with, or welcoming to, those who do not agree with us on every issue.
3. It is time for Republicans on the federal level to learn from successful Republicans on the state level. It is time to smartly change course, modernize the Party, and learn once again how to appeal to more people, including those who share some but not all of our conservative principles.
4. The perception that the GOP does not care about people is doing great harm to the Party and its candidates on the federal level, especially in presidential years. It is a major deficiency that must be addressed.
5. We need to do a better job connecting people to our policies. Our ideas can sound distant and removed from people’s lives. Instead of connecting with voters’ concerns, we too often sound like bookkeepers.
6. The Republican Party must be the champion of those who seek to climb the economic ladder of life. Low-income Americans are hard-working people who want to become hard-working middle-income Americans. Middle-income Americans want to become upper-middle-income, and so on. We need to help everyone make it in America.
7. We have to blow the whistle at corporate malfeasance and attack corporate welfare. We should speak out when a company liquidates itself and its executives receive bonuses but rank-and-file workers are left unemployed. We should speak out when CEOs receive tens of millions of dollars in retirement packages but middle-class workers have not had a meaningful raise in years.
8. If we believe our policies are the best ones to improve the lives of the American people, all the American people, our candidates and office holders need to do a better job talking in normal, people-oriented terms and we need to go to communities where Republicans do not normally go to listen and make our case. We need to campaign among Hispanic, black, Asian and gay Americans and demonstrate that we care about them, too.

## AMERICA LOOKS DIFFERENT

1. If we want ethnic minority voters to support Republicans, we have to engage them and show our sincerity.
2. As stated above, we are not a policy committee, but among the steps Republicans take in the Hispanic community and beyond we must embrace and champion comprehensive immigration reform. If we do not, our Party's appeal will continue to shrink to its core constituencies only. We also believe that comprehensive immigration reform is consistent with Republican economic policies that promote job growth and opportunity for all.
3. When it comes to social issues, the Party must in fact and deed be inclusive and welcoming. If we are not, we will limit our ability to attract young people and others, including many women, who agree with us on some but not all issues.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PARTNERS

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### A GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY INCLUSION COUNCIL

1. We recommend the formation of a new Growth and Opportunity Inclusion Council within the RNC modeled after the program founded in 1997 by the RNC. This organization would convene a minimum of four times annually for training, sharing of ideas and assessment of the effectiveness of current strategies.
2. This new organization should work in conjunction with each state to develop statewide initiatives designed to expand and diversify the base of the state party. The RNC should highlight these successful events.
3. This new organization should build a broad grassroots outreach effort to increase the Party base by promoting the inclusion in the Party of traditionally under-represented groups and affiliations.
4. This new organization should conduct nationwide grassroots educational programs through symposiums, lectures, and forums to exchange ideas and to raise awareness of alternate political solutions to addressing the concerns of minority communities and the electorate at large. It should serve as an educational resource on economic, social, and political issues affecting minority Americans at all levels of government.
5. This new organization should identify, prepare and promote a diversified and talented pool of future candidates and leaders within the Party, and identify and recruit individuals whose values and beliefs are consistent with the ideals, philosophy and principles espoused by the Republican Party through leadership summits, etc.
6. This new organization should convene national and state focus groups with non-Republican ethnic groups in an effort to gain insight as to real and perceived issues affecting their communities.
7. This new organization should design a surrogate program to train and prepare ethnic conservatives for media presentations nationally and locally. Surrogates would speak on behalf of the Republican Party on issues of the day.

8. This new organization should develop a program designed to educate Republicans on the importance of developing and tailoring a message that is non-inflammatory and inclusive to all.
9. There should be fundraising events hosted by this new organization to support a diversified candidate pool.
10. This new organization should collaborate with other Republican organizations of diversity, to the extent allowed by law.
11. Because we can't expect to address these demographic groups if we know nothing about them, this new organization should establish a training program available to all Republican candidates that would educate them on the particular culture, aspirations, positions on issues, contributions to the country, etc., of the demographic group they are trying to reach.
12. The RNC should establish a grassroots program to help grow the Republican share of the minority vote and begin by targeting it in red states with significant minority populations. The plan would outline anticipated demographic changes, recent electoral history, whom we should target and some suggestions on how that could be done. This would be a reasonably inexpensive program and only require one staffer at a state party to coordinate the effort. It is also a good candidate program for matching funds from out-of-state donors.
13. This new organization should encourage governors to embrace diversity in hiring and appointments to the judiciary, boards, and commissions.
14. The RNC should consider hiring a faith-based outreach director to focus on engaging faith-based organizations and communities with the Republican Party.

## HISPANICS

1. The RNC should hire Hispanic communications directors and political directors for key states and communities across the country.
2. On issues like immigration, the RNC needs to carefully craft a tone that takes into consideration the unique perspective of the Hispanic community. Message development is critical to Hispanic voters.
3. The Republican Party is one of tolerance and respect, and we need to ensure that the tone of our message is always reflective of these core principles. In the modern media environment a poorly phrased argument or out-of-context statement can spiral out of control and reflect poorly on the Party as a whole. Thus we must emphasize during candidate trainings, retreats, etc., the importance of a welcoming, inclusive message in particular when discussing issues that relate directly to a minority group.
4. The RNC should hire field staff within Hispanic communities nationally to build meaningful relationships. This cannot happen every four years but needs to be a continuous effort.
5. Promote forward-looking positive policy proposals to Hispanic communities that unite voters, such as the Republican Party's support for school choice.
6. The RNC must rebuild a nationwide database of Hispanic leaders.
7. The RNC must improve on promoting Hispanic staff and candidates within the Party. The GOP has substantial Hispanic elected officials at all levels, and we need to ensure they are being used as surrogates both in their communities and with the national media. At the staff level, the personnel should be visible and involved in senior political and budget decisions and not be limited to demographic outreach.

8. Engage the Hispanic faith-based community in our efforts.
9. The RNC must rebuild a Hispanic surrogate list to promote a high-level presence in both Hispanic and mainstream media.
10. Establish swearing-in citizenship teams to introduce new citizens after naturalization ceremonies to the Republican Party.
11. Consider how to help demographic ally groups flourish and sustain traditional partners under auspices of the RNC.
12. The RNC should encourage individuals to participate in cultural organizations so that these organizations' leadership is no longer dominated by Democrat-leaning individuals.
13. The RNC must invest financial resources in Hispanic media. In a \$1 billion campaign, much less than 1 percent of the total budget was spent on Hispanic or other demographic group oriented media. At one point during the 2012 campaign, OFA was outspending us 8 to 1 in these media markets. If we are going to attract these groups to our Party and candidates, our budgets, and expenses need to reflect this importance.
14. Develop an extensive network of Hispanic and other demographic groups' political operatives that can help provide continuity for Republican political candidates around the country.
15. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

## ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICANS

1. The RNC should hire APA communications directors and political directors for key states and communities across the country.
2. The RNC must substantively engage with the APA community throughout the year. Inclusion efforts can no longer be lip service, but need to be an organized effort within the community.
3. The Republican Party is one of tolerance and respect, and we need to ensure that the tone of our message is always reflective of these core principles. In the modern media environment, a poorly phrased argument or out-of-context statement can spiral out of control and reflect poorly on the Party as a whole. Thus we must emphasize during candidate trainings, retreats, etc., the importance of a welcoming, inclusive message in particular when discussing issues that relate directly to a minority group. This includes flexibility for allowing candidates to run as Republicans who may break with the Party on certain issues, whether economic or social.
4. Hire field staff within APA communities nationally to build meaningful relationships. This cannot happen every four years but needs to be a year-round effort.
5. Promote forward-looking, positive policy proposals to APA communities that unite voters, such as the Republican Party's support for policies promoting economic growth.
6. The RNC should develop a nationwide database of APA leaders.
7. The RNC must improve on promoting APA staff and candidates within the Party. The GOP should utilize APA elected officials as surrogates both in their communities and with the national media. At the staff level, the personnel should be visible and involved in senior political and budget decisions and not be limited to demographic outreach.
8. The RNC must develop a national APA surrogate list to promote a high-level presence in Asian American media.

9. Establish swearing-in citizenship teams to introduce new citizens after naturalization ceremonies to the Republican Party.
10. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

## AFRICAN AMERICANS

1. The RNC should hire African American communications directors and political directors for key states and communities across the country.
2. The RNC should work with the RSLC to develop best practices of Republicans who were successfully elected in districts with a high population of African American voters.
3. Establish a presence in African American communities and at black organizations such as the NAACP. We are never going to win over voters who are not asked for their support. Too many African American voters have gotten in the habit of supporting Democrats without hearing anyone in their community making a case to the contrary.
4. The RNC should create a program that is focused on recruiting and supporting African American Republican candidates for office.
5. Engage historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) with the goal of educating the community on Republican ideals and the Party's history.
6. The RNC should conduct a pilot project in several targeted urban markets to identify potential target groups of voters and to enlist support from demographic partners and allies in voter contact efforts. Big-city mayoral races provide our best 2013 opportunities for these projects. The findings of these pilot projects can inform a more robust effort in the 2014 governors' races to build coalitions and greater support in urban areas.
7. The RNC should develop a nationwide database of African American leaders.
8. The RNC must improve on promoting African American staff and candidates within the Party. The GOP should utilize African American elected officials as surrogates both in their communities and with the national media. At the staff level, the personnel should be visible and involved in senior political and budget decisions and not be limited to demographic outreach.
9. The RNC must develop a national African American surrogate list to promote a high-level presence in African American media.
10. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

## WOMEN

1. Communicating, organizing and winning the women's vote should be part of all activities that the RNC undertakes. Women are not a "coalition." They represent more than half the voting population in the country, and our inability to win their votes is losing us elections. While the Co-Chair of the RNC should continue, as has been the case, to lead the effort to create and implement programs to connect with female voters and help female candidates, this effort should not be restricted to the Co-Chair's office. It should be a mandate for all relevant departments in the building.

2. The RNC should implement training programs for messaging, communications and recruiting that address the best ways to communicate with women. According to the liberal group Center for American Progress, the No. 2 issue for female voters this election was “a candidate who will fight for them.” Our candidates, spokespeople, and staff need to use language that addresses concerns that are on women’s minds in order to let them know we are fighting for them.
3. The RNC should develop a surrogate list of women based upon areas of policy and political expertise. The media affairs team at the RNC should be focused on booking more women on TV on behalf of the party and be given metrics to ensure that we aren’t just using the same old talking heads. This list should not be limited to outstanding national surrogates such as Governors Nikki Haley and Susana Martinez, Senator Kelly Ayotte, and Congresswomen Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Marsha Blackburn (among many other excellent surrogates), but should also include mayors, county officials and state legislators.
4. Be conscious of developing a forward-leaning vision for voting Republican that appeals to women. The Republican Party needs to offer that same vision and message demonstrating that our policies, principles and vision address the concerns of female voters.
5. Republicans should develop a more aggressive response to Democrat rhetoric regarding a so-called “war on women.” In 2012, the Republican response to this attack was muddled, and too often the attack went undefended altogether. We need to actively combat this, better prepare our surrogates, and not stand idly by while the Democrats pigeonhole us using false attacks. There are plenty of liberal policies that negatively impact women, and it is incumbent upon the party to expose those and relentlessly attack Democrats using that framework.
6. Republicans need to talk about people and families, not just numbers and statistics. Female voters want to hear the facts; many of them run the economies of their homes and understand economics better than the men in their families. But they are also the caregivers for their families. Women need to hear what our motive is — why it is that we want to create a better future for our families and how our policies will affect the lives of their loved ones. Those are things that cannot be communicated well in graphs and charts — and we need to do a better job communicating why our policies are better, while using female spokespeople to do it.
7. The Republican Party committees need to understand that women need to be asked to run. Women are less likely to run for office on their own, and we should be encouraging and championing their desire to seek elective office. Additionally, the Republican Party must recognize the unique challenges that female candidates face when running for office, as well as the unique opportunities female candidates provide in winning elections. The Party should provide training programs for potential female candidates that include fundraising guidance, digital strategy, etc.
8. Republicans need to make a better effort at listening to female voters, directing their policy proposals at what they learn from women, and communicating that they understand what a woman who is balancing many responsibilities is going through. Too often, female voters feel like no one listens to them. They feel like they are smart, engaged and strong decision makers but that their opinions are often ignored. Many female voters feel that Washington, D.C., is a city full of politicians that simply don’t listen and don’t understand what their daily lives are like. Female candidates are far better at connecting with these voters because they are more likely to understand them.

9. The RNC should reevaluate the committee member process to help incentivize more women in leadership roles rather than solely in the “committeewoman” slot.
10. The RNC should use Women’s History Month as an opportunity to remind voters of the Republican’s Party historical role in advancing the women’s rights movement.

## YOUTH

1. Promote forward-looking, positive policy proposals that unite young voters, such as the Republican Party’s education policies.
2. Empower an RNC youth liaison to work closely with the College Republicans, Young Republicans and Teenage Republicans.
3. The RNC should host quarterly discussions on youth issues with Chairman Priebus, a leading GOP youth surrogate or elected official and young voters.
4. Encourage young candidates to run for office by preparing them with training and support.
5. All digital and data efforts should have the young voter as one of our key targeted end users in all our products in development.
6. Establish an RNC Celebrity Task Force of personalities in the entertainment industry to host events for the RNC and allow donors to participate in entertainment events as a way to attract younger voters.
7. Empower young, creative people to have a seat at the table on all digital issues.
8. The RNC should develop an “Under-30” list of surrogates and actively book young surrogates.
9. The RNC and state parties should re-engage with college campuses, including hosting events on college campuses.
10. Republican leaders should participate in and actively prepare for interviews with The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, MTV, and magazines such as People, UsWeekly, etc., as well as radio stations that are popular with the youth demographic.
11. Develop a youth advisory committee at the RNC to help define the rebranding efforts of the Party.
12. The RNC, state parties and candidates should establish college media lists and regularly pitch surrogates and elected officials.
13. Republican candidates should advertise in college newspapers.
14. The RNC and State Parties should make every effort to feature and use diverse committee members.

# CAMPAIGN MECHANICS

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## GENERATING BETTER DATA

1. Convene extensive listening sessions for all high-level GOP data users and contributors, to elicit up-front buy-in. New products cannot be developed without significant input from future users.
2. Support the creation of a new data platform accessible (through rentals, subscriptions, licenses or data exchange agreements) to all qualified Republican organizations and campaigns, approved vendors, and research organizations for data enhancement, analytics, and application development. To facilitate better access to data, advanced open-source access must be in place to make it easy to receive data, contribute data, and see the benefits in real time.
3. Recruit and competitively compensate talented and committed long-term data staff at the RNC. The Data team at the RNC is too small to adequately provide strong data and analysis of data for all state parties, candidates and organizations. The RNC is a national party and must have the staff resources available in this area to assist all 50 states, not just battleground states. The RNC should immediately expand the strategic/data staff to prepare for upcoming elections in 2013. More staff will be needed in an election year.
4. Conduct a national road show to ensure that state parties and campaigns at all levels of the ballot understand how data can benefit them, and train them in the tools made available to them. This is essential to building confidence throughout the Party and its consultant class and getting the most out of our investment.

## BUILDING A DATA ANALYTICS INSTITUTE

1. Identify a team of strategists and funders to build a data analytics institute that can capture and distill best practices for communication to and targeting of specific voters. Using the GOP's data, the data analytics institute would work to develop a specific set of tests for 2013 and 2014 — tests on voter registration, persuasion, GOTV, and voter mobilization — that will then be adopted into future programs to ensure that our voter contact and targeting dollars are spent on proven performance. These tests should be the first order of business of the analytics team and should incorporate pollsters, data managers, and messaging professionals at the table developing a variety of approaches that would be subject to measurement.
2. Organize an academic and private sector advisory group to assist the analytics team in their efforts and identify opportunities for testing and research.

## EARLY AND ABSENTEE VOTING PROGRAMS

1. Working with other committees and state parties, the RNC must design, fund and implement an aggressive early voting and absentee effort for target races in 2013. The program must task the field team with the responsibility for local follow-up on voters contacted about early voting. Where possible, early voting prospects should not be absorbed into a national follow-up program, but remain a primary concern of the local campaign and Victory team.

2. Campaigns, parties, and third-party groups will have to begin targeted advertising earlier to address the increase in early voting.
3. State parties and third-party groups should engage in ballot security training initiatives for political and field staff.
4. We must test these strategies in the 2013 elections to measure efficacy and apply our lessons learned for 2014 and 2016.

## DIGITAL

1. The RNC should recruit and hire a chief technology and digital officer for the RNC by May 1, 2013, whose experience and background sends a strong and immediate signal that we are serious about growing our digital and tech operations and data integration. The chief technology and digital officer should identify, recruit and hire a working group of data scientists, tech and digital advocates to build a structure that can eventually be deployed during the 2014 midterm elections and the 2016 presidential race to provide a 21<sup>st</sup> century digital, data, and tech operation for our candidates.
2. The RNC should begin the search for expanded technology and digital teams that can be deployed across every division of the RNC — fundraising, political, communications and so on to integrate the work of those divisions and increase the potential to use technology and digital in an efficient and effective manner. (These employees are separate and distinct from those described in the data section earlier.) Technology and digital should be treated as two separate but related functions in this process. The search for members of these teams should be expanded beyond the traditional political sphere and include individuals with significant professional experience in web development and marketing programs. Integration across all areas/offices/divisions is critical for success.
3. The RNC should create in-house staff training programs for digital recruits to ensure the cultivation of mid-level tech/digital leaders who can effectively administer large programs within the digital team, like email, social content, fundraising, and digital field organizing.
4. The chief technology and digital officer should have regular “working group” meetings with representatives from different campaign committees, elected leadership, vendors and party tech leaders on the GOP side who have an interest in participating in the debate/discussion about how best to build the structure needed to grow our tech and digital efforts. The RNC should help seed some efforts, but also be willing to tap into the best of what emerges organically from other entities. And the RNC should strive to be an active member of a thriving digital community — talking, encouraging, prodding where necessary — but supporting competition in the marketplace to ensure that the best ideas rise to the top.
5. The development of “political technology” products that are user-friendly for volunteers is essential. We need tools that easily allow voter registration, the request for an absentee ballot, managing of walk-lists online and so on. These tools can be developed in-house with the digital team or developed by working with vendors, and the committee would need to determine how to legally transfer and/or share these tools with candidates.
6. As with voter contact, test technology by harnessing competition to create innovative results. Conduct tests in real-world conditions to develop best practices for digital contact and/or persuasion.

7. As with data, digital training is critical. The Republican Party needs a new training institute that can benefit all Party committees, state parties, campaigns, and outside groups. This could be established in the form of a 501(c) 4 group to train and develop political/digital talent. Groups are already undertaking this effort, and we applaud their initiative.
8. Establish an RNC fellows program to recruit data, digital and tech “fellows” from college campuses, targeting potential graduates in fields such as computer science and mathematics.
9. Develop Digital Campaign Colleges and network events in high-tech cities such as San Francisco, Austin, New York, Denver, and so on to foster and build stronger relationships within the tech community.

## CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT

1. Programs such as the Republican State Leadership Committee’s “Future Majority Project” ([www.futuremajority.com](http://www.futuremajority.com)) to recruit minority candidates and women candidates for the 2012 cycle have been highly effective and should be encouraged, and the RNC and state parties should expand their efforts in this area. In the 2012 cycle, the RSLC committed to spend \$3 million to identify and support new GOP candidates of Hispanic descent and women for state office. Ultimately the RSLC identified 125 new Republican Hispanic candidates and 185 new women candidates. More than \$5 million was used to successfully elect 84 new women and grow the state-level Republican Hispanic caucus. The RSLC has now established a Future Majority Caucus led by new Mexico Governor Susana Martinez and Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval along with a board of 10 rising stars from state legislatures across the country. Together, these leaders will help identify new candidates and develop even more ambitious goals for electing the new generation of GOP leaders.
2. The RNC must work with state parties to identify candidates for local office (mayor, county commission, city council, etc.), with a goal to recruit, train and elect strong Republican leaders that can help the Party navigate our demographic challenges. We need to strengthen our farm team to ensure that we are competitive in up-ballot elections in the future when the electorate will be considerably more diverse.
3. Emphasis needs to be placed on training for candidate recruitment. Everyone has a different measure and approach for how to recruit. State party chairmen are frequently the lead, along with state legislative leaders, on how to recruit legislative candidates, while the RGA, NRSC, NRCC, and RSLC are involved with recruitment of governors, members of Congress and state legislators. The RNC could take the lead in facilitating conversations among these individuals and groups to develop best practices that could be shared at workshops or future training sessions.

## VENDOR SELECTION

1. For contracts that exceed \$50,000 that involve polling, registration efforts and voter contact, where practical, the RNC should identify and recommend state party a minimum of three qualified vendors who meet a predetermined price structure. It is not the intent of this task force to in any way restrict the vendors selected by a presidential campaign or any other campaign. We fully support the right of any campaign to choose the vendors and staff that it feels are best equipped to perform a service. That said, concerns have been expressed that state parties who are expected to run programs would benefit from exposure to a wider array of recommended vendors and that there is a need for greater competition among vendors to spur more creativity and better outcomes and we agree.

2. The RNC, to the extent practical, should include in its independent contractor agreements provisions granting the RNC the right to audit, examine and duplicate the contractor's financial and other records pertaining to the activities covered by the contract; and requiring the contractor to establish and maintain records sufficient to allow such audit, examination and duplication. Currently, audit language is not required (and therefore not included) in RNC contracts. The significant resources allocated for specific vendor services demand that the RNC have the ability to audit any contract for any purpose at any time should RNC officials feel it is necessary and appropriate.

## TRAINING CAMPAIGN MANAGERS AND STATE PARTY STAFF IN THE USE OF DATA

1. As part of an immediate and ongoing process, integrate a major emphasis on how to best use data and analytics into all campaign manager and finance schools. This could be integrated into the RNC's Campaign Management Colleges but should be treated as its own area of expertise.
2. Identify opportunities for greater collaboration among operatives in sharing tactics and strategies that are working with respect to everything from data use to voter contact. The RNC should host webinars or regional workshops for candidates and managers several times a year during which best practices can be shared.
3. Develop a GOP Data/Analytics School with a target of graduating 500 managers and staff in year one with additional large numbers graduated in subsequent years.

## INVESTMENT IN FIELD STAFF OPERATIONS

1. By June 15, 2013, make an investment in field staff beyond traditional battleground states and make an earlier commitment to building the field team in all state operations. It is essential for the Party to grow the playing field. There are too few existing paths to 270 electoral votes for our presidential nominee under current trend lines. We need to aggressively work to put more states in play where we have infrastructure advantages over the Democrats based on our foothold in the governorships. And this requires an early commitment to building the team.

## VOTER CONTACT

1. The RNC Political Division, working with other committees, state parties, and new GOP data analytics entities should conduct tests of paid mail, phone and volunteer phones, digital and personal "in person" voter contact in target areas during the 2013 cycle to determine most effective messaging, contact and conversion to votes. Potential tests include messaging/paid media tests as to whether targeted media buys are more impactful and at what GRP level does an ad reach its maximum impact. "In person" contact should be tested vs. "personal" contact (volunteer phone calls; live phone calls). Also, tests should be conducted on not only advocacy but actual interaction with voters. The Obama campaign asked voters what they needed to make their decision; information was then provided to volunteers and relayed to the same voters. Additionally, "72-Hour Project" tests conducted in Virginia and New Jersey in 2001 could be revisited, strengthened, and retested.

2. The RNC Political Division should conduct a pilot project in several targeted urban markets to identify potential target groups of voters and to enlist support from demographic partners and allies in voter contact efforts. Big city mayoral races provide our best 2013 opportunities for these projects. The findings of these pilot projects can inform a more robust effort in the 2014 governors' races to build coalitions and greater support in urban areas.
3. The RNC should engage a group of data scientists to assist with the testing described above. Some of this relates to the previous recommendation with respect to building a data analytics institute.
4. Where possible, the RNC should encourage and support the hiring of locals who are known to be active in a particular area for participation in field operations. The Obama campaign excelled in recruiting and training operatives who understood the states and communities where they were working. This enabled their field operation to interact in a more personal manner with voters. It is important for the RNC to strive to cultivate a roster of field operatives who are from the battleground states and/or well-versed in the unique politics and culture of each one

## VOTER REGISTRATION

1. The RNC should develop a "Mobile Voter Registration" program that can be deployed quickly in states based on specific issues — both national and local — that motivate potential Republican interest in targeted areas to register.
2. The RNC Political Division working with state parties should set target registration goals and identify target groups and locations for a registration program, and registration volunteers and drives should be identified and implemented quarterly. These drives could focus on issue areas and target opportunities like gun shows, naturalization services, church fellowship opportunities, and so on.
3. State parties should create a specific program for follow-up with new registrants. One thing we learned during our 72-hour program testing is to treat a newly registered voter uniquely, making certain they know their polling location and how to vote early or absentee.

## SURVEY RESEARCH/POLLING

1. The RNC should convene a quarterly summit by April 15, 2013, of leading GOP pollsters to discuss the current political environment and debate assumptions, sampling, screening, and weighting of samples in an attempt to generate more accurate and consistent data across multiple committees and campaigns. Different pollsters might take turns leading the quarterly discussions and presenting recent trends or developments that could improve polling outcomes and accuracy.
2. The RNC should conduct a test of random digit dialing vs. listed voter sample to determine which list source provides more accurate polling/survey research for campaigns, or whether a combination proves most accurate. The Obama campaign and the Democratic Party are moving to listed voter samples and away from random digit dialing. We should address this head-on and seek to develop consensus in our polling community about the path forward.

3. “Likely Voter” screening data collected by various firms in 2012 should be re-examined to see which voters eventually voted and which did not, allowing a validation of the most predictive screening questions and likely voter scales. Special attention needs to be given to this question to ensure that we are not screening out casual interest voters who nevertheless show up on Election Day. Screeners that are too robust, particularly during presidential cycles, have the potential to skew results to the favor of our candidates because they exclude too many young and minority voters.
4. The RNC should strongly encourage that all Republican surveys include no less than 25 percent cell phone subsamples and recognize that in certain states and districts a higher number may be required. The recommendation does not apply to surveys done using auto dialers.
5. Republican pollsters should collect and share trend data regarding noncooperation rates (refusals and no answers) and that best practices be identified and tested from all sources proposing strategies that compensate for “noncooperations.”

## MEDIA BUYING AND PLACEMENT

1. Train campaign managers and candidates in basic media terminology and media budgeting/management. Campaigns spend the bulk of their budget on advertising placement, and our survey shows that television is second only to personal contact as an effective communications tool. Yet most managers are uncomfortable admitting that they do not really know what a GRP is or what cookies do. Consequently, they do not know the right questions to ask their consultants or how to best manage them.
2. Give media buyers a seat at the table with the manager, the pollster and the ad producers in big budget campaigns. This was a consistent recommendation we heard from media-buying agencies, managers and some ad producers who say that data cannot influence campaign media buys unless the person who knows the data plays a role in the decisions.
3. Media plans and buys must integrate all platforms. What worked in the last campaign will no longer work in the next campaign. Continued audience fragmentation means media plans must incorporate increasingly diverse mixes of broadcast television, cable television, Hispanic advertising, sports programming, radio, Internet advertising, social media, mobile, and other emerging media such as online television viewing and radio listening.
4. Targeted media demands targeted messages. The one-spot-fits-all model used by Republican presidential campaigns since the Reagan era is no longer enough. On television, Obama ran at least four separate media schedules, each with a different series of creative executions. Pollsters, ad producers and media buyers working together can determine the right mix of creative executions and media weight.
5. Campaigns must be willing to pay the cost in order to get the payoff of data-driven media buying. Media data can improve efficiencies by 10 to 25 percent, but it is not free — there are the additional costs of data acquisition, analysis and implementation. The human labor costs are the largest component. The Obama media research and buying staff was 5 to 15 times larger than the Romney staff. New online media require much more active staff and daily tweaking than traditional media.

6. The RNC should explore bulk data purchases and, to the extent legally permitted, make the latest media research data more available and affordable for campaigns and their consultants/vendors. This will require an investment in additional staffing to track and interpret the data. The RNC and the Party campaign committees should explore relationships with providers of syndicated media and consumer research (e.g., Nielsen, Scarborough, Arbitron, MRI, Simmons, Comscore, Rentrak, CMAG, Delta, Polaris, and others) with the intent to create greater awareness about the importance of data-driven decisions in media buying and placement.

## STATE PARTIES

1. Working in partnership with the leadership of our state parties, the RNC should develop a series of benchmarks that can help state parties become more self-sufficient and effective.
  - Areas from which to set goals and measure progress should include the following:
    - Fundraising
    - Voter Registration
    - Volunteer Recruitment/Management
    - Staffing/Training
    - Voter File Management
    - Coalition Building
    - Minority Outreach
    - Candidate Recruitment
2. The RNC should work with state parties to determine the unique needs and challenges facing varying state party infrastructures. The RNC could then help each state party with crafting a road map that is tailored to its specific goals.
3. The RNC should conduct a series of regular calls with the state parties to monitor their progress toward meeting the benchmarks and to share best practices and acknowledge successes in the states. The goal should be to create a culture where the Party apparatus as a whole is working together and being held accountable for achieving clearly defined goals that will help us win elections. But this will not succeed as a top-down driven effort — it requires a partnership between the national and state party committees to drive best practices and outcomes. Just as the RNC and its vendors and programs will have to be more accountable through testing and use of data, the creation of benchmarks and the public sharing of how each state is progressing will create a competitive environment that will ultimately strengthen the Party as a whole and benefit our candidates.
4. The RNC should consider redeveloping a program similar to the GOP Team Leader program from 2002 to cover grassroots and coalition building.
5. The RNC should work with state parties to find new ways to recruit and motivate our volunteers. We need to establish programs that incentivize and reward volunteers for their work in multiple areas. And we need to provide them with better tools to assist in their efforts and ensure that they know we value their importance. They are a critical path to our success. We cannot contact and persuade voters without them.

# FRIENDS AND ALLIES (THIRD PARTY GROUPS)

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## COMPETITIVE PRIMARIES

1. We believe that, absent some material or obvious reason otherwise, the Republican Party should have a solid and persistent preference for primaries.
2. Washington should not try to dictate candidate choices. Voters will ultimately decide.

## TV SPENDING

1. Our friends and allies need to fundamentally address the incentive structure for their consultants to encourage a balanced approach to spending.
2. Encourage friends and allies to invest in ground and field development and technology in addition to traditional TV buying. In some cases this includes shifting spending from TV ads to other investments.
3. Educate donors of our friends and allies on incentive payment structure for consultants regarding TV buys.

## TECHNOLOGY: ORGANIZE OR LOSE

1. Work with friends and allies and other committees as much as legally possible to determine the best way forward to achieve improvements on data and technology
2. Invest in people and organize from the bottom up to help this intensive data-collection effort.

## SILENCE IS NOT ALWAYS GOLDEN; PUBLIC SHARING OF INFORMATION IS GOOD

1. The RNC must gather messaging players to discuss a better approach. The RNC is the only entity that can effectively lead on issues and messaging, and it must aggressively work with our governors, congressional leaders, state and local officials and friends and allies to help direct the overall effort.
2. This will require regular communications and planning between RNC, NRCC, NRSC, RGA, RSLC, and the various friends and allies. While there are legal limits to how we work together, we need to take a lesson from how the other side collaborated in 2012 and make sure we are in harmony on general strategy and party-building efforts.
3. Campaigns, state parties and campaign committees need to do a better job of publicly educating and informing friends and allies and their donors. This may mean placing TV buys earlier, promoting paid media, putting out press releases about bus tours, announcing plans for victory headquarters, etc. Until the laws change, we have to do a better job of making the right things public.

## POLLING

1. Friends and allies can help improve polling efforts for Republicans. Making a long-term, party-wide commitment to collecting and analyzing our data more effectively will help improve our polling efforts.

## DIVISION OF LABOR AND THE NEED FOR RNC LEADERSHIP

1. The RNC needs to sit down with the various players and determine, as the law allows, who is doing what. Only the RNC can serve in this role, and it is certainly one of the challenges in operating in the current environment.
2. The RNC should hire someone to help coordinate this effort, particularly with respect to how the RNC, congressional leaders and governors work together on issue development and messaging.
3. We believe the RNC would be wiser to focus on the ground game, rather than TV ads, since there seems to be a never-ending supply of friends and allies eager to run TV ads. If the RNC believes it needs to lead on message, then it should do so through public communications.

## TESTING

1. Our friends and allies should conduct targeted tests of messaging to young voters and attempt to empower young people via social media.
  - The RNC should publicize a clearinghouse of opportunities to engage voters to help grow the Party that our friends and allies might consider implementing. The RNC should track the results to develop best practices that can be shared with state parties, campaigns, and our friends and allies.

## BOTTOM-UP, NOT TOP-DOWN

1. Our friends and allies should parallel the RNC's effort to hire field organizers at the local level who are a part of the community of voters.
2. Our friends and allies should hire multiple vendors to avoid overly centralized leadership and to encourage competition and innovative political strategies.
3. Our friends and allies should empower local conservative leaders to help rally voters behind the best conservative candidates.

## TRAINING AND GROUND GAME

1. Our friends and allies should significantly invest in voter registration and grassroots efforts.
2. Our friends and allies should develop numerous training opportunities for volunteers and campaign staff including in social media.
3. Our friends and allies should augment the effort of state parties to include cell phones and email addresses in the voter file.

## PROMOTE OUR GOVERNORS

1. Our friends and allies can help tout successes of Republican governors and their records.
2. Our friends and allies should help governors host events with African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, youth, women, and union members to help reach new demographics.
3. All 30 Republican governors should hold a series of meetings in their states to help promote our Republican principles and grow the Party.

## DEFINE THE D'S EARLY AND TRACK 'EM

1. Our friends and allies should define Democrats early in election cycles.
2. An outside group should be established that focuses solely on research of Democrats should be established.

## GROUPTHINK IS A LOSER

1. Our friends and allies must realize that the Party is at its best as the Party of ideas, and healthy debate of those ideas is fundamentally good for the Republican Party.

# FUNDRAISING

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## LOW-DOLLAR FUNDRAISING

2. State parties should establish goals and rewards for volunteers who achieve fundraising benchmarks. Just like major donor programs reward individuals for fundraising success, we need to employ this same model at the low-dollar level. State party chairmen should reward successful fundraisers with invitations to special events with Party leaders.
3. It is critical to improve the state party donor lists to help them raise money for themselves. Ask volunteers to help us build and update the list with donor contact information.
4. The RNC should establish a program to accept state party proposals for RNC matching funds for low-dollar peer-to-peer fundraising pilot programs. Following the tests, the RNC should highlight the results with all state parties.

## DIGITAL FUNDRAISING

1. Continue to invest in digital fundraising efforts.
2. Integrate digital fundraising with the political plan and all digital and communication plans.
3. The RNC should study real online fundraising successes that have been used by campaigns and committees and apply the best practices to their digital fundraising development.

4. The RNC should fund digital fundraising tests in 2013. During our listening session over the last several weeks, we heard from many innovative vendors. The RNC should establish a quarterly fundraising challenge from vendors to propose creative online fundraising programs. The RNC could select a winner each quarter and invest a set amount of resources to test the program in a state party that is meeting RNC benchmarks. As programs succeed, the RNC should promote these with the state parties via the field finance team.
5. Identify third-party groups to invest in online fundraising and share their successes with state parties and campaigns as allowed by law.

## DIRECT MARKETING (MAIL AND PHONES)

1. A pilot program should be developed in which state parties may opt in to large mailings with certain RNC direct mail packages or techniques to take advantage of the RNC's large volume of mail over the course of at least six months. There are many logistical questions for those state parties that wish to participate (where is the database housed, who will cage the mail, who writes the copy, etc.) that would need to be worked out, but the most important aspect of this program is that the state party must assign a specific staffer to oversee these mailings and learn the process to run a proper program. Likewise, the RNC would need field finance staff to help state parties stick to deadlines, review results, and set goals. The ultimate goal is to give state parties the opportunity to build a proper direct marketing program and train in-state staffers who can manage it.

## EVENTS AND SURROGATES

1. We encourage the RNC to create a master surrogate group that will commit to going on the road for two to three days and cover approximately six to eight events. Give those dates to the various state parties and organize the same basic event at each stop. Seven or eight surrogates can cover the country in three days. Do this twice per year, rotating the surrogates so on the second round each event has a different headliner. Don't be afraid to think big, because these can be big drivers for state party events.
2. State parties need to develop local finance committees that actively raise funds for the state party in their communities each year with events with the state GOP chairman or elected Republican officials.
3. Invite up-and-coming down-ballot Republican officials to local fundraising events to help draw a crowd and groom the officials for higher office.
4. State chairmen should headline no fewer than 20 local fundraisers each year for the state party. Some of these events could split revenue with local party organizations.
5. We encourage the RNC to organize call days four to six weeks prior to events with key finance committee members joined by a Party leader for some calling and casual lunch with the callers.

## FUNDRAISING TRAINING

1. Reinstitute field finance team structure and hire experienced and highly successful state party fundraisers.
  - a. Help state party staff determine goals and write state finance plans with state party staff to help them accomplish their goals.
  - b. After the plan is written, determine the scope of work needed to coordinate a seamless plan.
  - c. There should be monthly calls between RNC field finance and the state parties to track their progress on fundraising and to discuss best practices of other states for them to test.
  - d. The RNC should have a conference call every two months with vendors so the right hand knows what the left is doing.
2. If the RNC hopes to hold state parties accountable, then it should circulate state party fundraising success against key benchmarks such as the percentage of budget raised, actual dollars raised, cost of fundraising, prospecting, online success, etc. The field finance team should encourage competition among state parties and reward the top-performing states. Rewards don't have to be financial; it might be sending a top surrogate to that state or technical assistance from RNC staff to assist the state in growing its list or online efforts.
3. As a serious priority, the field finance staff should assist state parties in establishing a plan to raise corporate money early in the cycle to relieve pressure later in the cycle of federal dollars.
4. The RNC should identify best practices in the post-campaign finance reform era to overcome the burdensome federal regulations.
5. The RNC should establish more robust field fundraising schools for state and local levels.
6. The RNC should recommend software programs for state party use, including programs that allow state parties and campaigns to track fundraising successes of volunteers for both major donor and low-dollar fundraising.
7. The RNC should develop a training manual, particularly with new state party executive directors and finance directors in mind. This will help establish consistency and provide helpful templates. It should include all facets of fundraising and compliance.
8. As part of this training manual, the RNC could point to the Romney campaign's administration shop as a model.
9. Establish a mentor program. Recruit experienced operatives and fundraisers to serve as part of a kitchen cabinet of state party executive directors and finance directors, especially less experienced ones. Many of our best people would gladly volunteer, if asked.
10. Promote list exchanges between state parties and the RNC.
11. The RNC should develop recommendations on how to hire direct marketing vendors with basic guidelines. Most of our vendors are great, but some are not.
12. The RNC should hire an experienced modeler to analyze the voter files and identify potential donors for the RNC and state parties. A modeler would be able to help low-dollar fundraising at all levels by identifying not only whom we should mail, but whom we shouldn't (both are equally important). This person would build models at the state level and nationally using the voter file using proper firewalls. There is a big opportunity for growing our reach with a modeler, but it's important that the modeler have the ability to do what is asked.

13. The RNC should develop contests between state parties related to their fundraising efforts to promote smart investments and practices. The winners of these contests should be rewarded with the RNC's investing in the state party's fundraising efforts by funding creative tests or by sending a SWAT team of experts to come to the state to evaluate operations and help devise a plan to improve.

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE

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### FEDERAL CAMPAIGN FINANCE

1. Allow the national political parties to again raise and spend money that is legal under state law for use in those states. It makes no sense that in many states the national parties are more restricted in how they can fund state and local political efforts than corporations, labor unions and other nonpolitical organizations. Even short of this, national parties should be able to solicit state money within federal restrictions just as members of Congress can do.
2. Restore the ability of state parties to run Party-building programs with a combination of federal and state dollars depending on the number of federal and state candidates on the ballot for each election. The federalization of a huge swath of state and local grassroots activity has put many state and local parties in the intensive care unit and made it much harder for them to engage in grassroots activities.
3. Increase contribution limits for federal campaigns. In the age of SuperPACs and other such organizations, the contribution limits to federal candidates must be increased so candidates have more control of the message and voters have a better understanding of the viewpoints of candidates rather than of third-party groups.
4. Ensure that any campaign finance legislation in Congress takes into account the growing awareness among members of both parties that the parties need to be strengthened at the national, state and local levels in order to restore parties' proper role in our political system. Reviving the parties is essential to the health of our democracy.
5. Convince Congress to remove the biennial aggregate contribution limits. Many donors would like to fully support efforts to win majorities in the Senate and House and the presidency. They should be allowed to do so. The McCutcheon case aims to accomplish this goal, but Congress can fix the problem through legislation.
6. Abolish the entire presidential public financing system, including the matching funds program for the primaries and the public grant for the general election. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor has said, "Eliminating this program would save taxpayers \$617 million over ten years, and would require candidates and political parties to rely on private contributions rather than tax dollars." Less than 10 percent of taxpayers check the \$3 box on their tax returns. President Obama opted out of the public financing system in 2008 and 2012, and Governor Mitt Romney opted out in 2012. Both campaigns shattered fundraising and spending records, so it is hard to imagine a future major presidential candidate using this system.

7. Replace the system of taxpayer funding of national conventions with a system that allows additional contributions to the national party committees for convention activities. National conventions have historically played an integral role in our democracy. Under current law, they are funded with tax revenue designated by taxpayers through the political check-off program. Establishing a system under which the Republican and Democratic National Committees could raise money outside the current federal limits and prohibitions for the purpose of funding their conventions would allow removal of the taxpayer funding without forcing the parties to divert regular federal dollars from traditional campaign activity.
8. Restore the building fund for political party committees. Campaign committee office buildings are deteriorating for both parties. Both parties find it difficult to justify spending federal dollars on capital improvements. But such expenditures do not directly benefit any candidate and thus cannot justifiably be hindered by the same donor limits. Republicans and Democrats should unite to seek an additional \$32,400 allowance for building fund contributions that does not affect donor federal aggregate limits.
9. Increase coordinated spending limits. When parties spend money in coordination with their candidates, the candidates are responsible for the message and are easily held accountable by the voters. Such is not the case with spending by third-party organizations. So the kind of speech for which candidates are most accountable other than that of their own campaigns is far more limited than speech by third-party groups, for which candidates have no accountability. The coordinated spending limits for national and state parties should be removed or at least increased to allow voters to hear more of the candidates' messages to compete with the messages of third-party groups and the media.

## REVIEW AND REVISE STATE CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. Legislative and regulatory reform should focus on making political speech more robust at the state and local level. In many states, political speech is suppressed to an even greater extent than under federal law. The guiding principle of legislative change should be to work toward fully restoring the free speech rights of the political parties and candidates.
2. Involvement by multiple interested organizations should be encouraged. Many groups are interested in promoting free speech and restoring the health of our democracy. The RNC should meet with selected third-party groups to seek their cooperation in not only studying state campaign finance laws and regulations but also in taking an active role in efforts to improve state laws by engaging in legislative reform efforts as well as litigation.
3. Model legislation should be developed by interested organizations and state legislative leaders to improve state campaign finance laws. Organizations such as the RNC, the RSLC, and ALEC may wish to take a leading role. To turn ideas to action nationwide, experts should develop model statutes that can be replicated across states.
4. Where legislation cannot be adopted, litigation should be considered to lessen the burden on the parties' ability to support their candidates. Where partisan obstruction or other obstacles stand in the way of common-sense improvements to a state's campaign finance system, litigation may be necessary, particularly where there are constitutional concerns.

## STRENGTHENING THE STATE PARTIES

1. The RNC should improve fundraising training. This effort should include reinstating the Field Finance program at the RNC. Like regional political directors, regional finance directors would work directly with state parties in their respective regions. In concert with legal and compliance experts, they will help state parties develop and implement fundraising strategies that are best-suited to their state. In addition, as stated in the “Fundraising” section of this report, the RNC should develop a “swat team” of experts that goes into the field periodically to complement the field finance efforts by further training staff and volunteers.
2. The RNC should increase campaign finance schools in field. As part of the RNC’s training efforts and increased focus on skills-building programs, the RNC should expand the campaign finance and compliance components of its campaign management curriculum. This should apply to both in-person training and virtual training programs online.
3. The RNC should manage a password-protected website to serve as a clearinghouse and resource for state parties on campaign finance issues.
4. State parties should more aggressively take advantage of existing training opportunities. These include the RNC Counsel’s Office Legal Compliance Seminars and Federal Election Commission in-person and online tutorials, as well as state-level training.
5. Every state party should have an identified campaign finance lawyer and compliance specialist.
6. The RNC should promote state party best practices. The RNC should develop a list of best practices gleaned from state parties that have robust and successful fundraising operations and compliance programs and share it with the other state parties.

## PRIMARY PROCESS

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### DEBATES

1. The number of debates should be reduced by roughly half to a still robust number of approximately 10 to 12, with the first occurring no earlier than September 1, 2015, and the last ending just after the first several primaries (February-March 2016).
2. After the first several primaries (February-March 2016), candidates themselves should decide whether they want to accept or decline additional debates. In the event the Party is in a position similar to the Democratic primary of 2008, the candidates and the GOP may gain by holding additional debates. At that stage, it should be up to the candidates to decide. The Party’s limits will not apply after that time.
3. In addition, we urge the Party to give consideration to alternative and additional means to make certain the number of debates does not grow out of hand. These could include:
  - An announcement by the RNC in late 2014 or early 2015 of the exact dates, locations, and sponsors of the sanctioned debates in 2015 and 2016.
  - The possibility of penalizing candidates and/or state parties (perhaps through the RNC rules process) through the loss of delegates to the convention if they do not abide by the potential new debate structure.

4. To help determine the best structure and approach for the staging of the 2016 debates, we recommend test runs of this debate structure be conducted in 2014 in prominent statewide primary races.

## THE PRIMARIES

1. The Republican Convention should be held earlier in the summer. It should be moved to late June or sometime in July, allowing our nominee more time to begin the general election phase. (Note: The 2016 Olympics will be held August 5-21.)
2. Because the nominee will still need an estimated 60-90 days to prepare for the Convention, changes will need to be made to the primary calendar. If the Convention were to be held in July, the last primary would need to be held no later than May 15. If the Convention were to be held in late June, the final primary would need to be held no later than April 30. Moving primaries up will require states and state parties to cooperate.
3. We take no position on whether a contest should be winner take all or proportionate. The fact is, both methods can delay or speed up the likelihood of a nominee being chosen. It all depends on who is winning and by what margins in each primary or caucus election.
4. To facilitate moving up primary elections to accommodate an earlier convention, the Party should strongly consider a regional primary system or some other form of a major reorganization instead of the current system. The current system is a long, winding, often random road that makes little sense. It stretches the primaries out too long, forces our candidates to run out of money, and because some states vote so late, voters in those states never seem to count. Such a change would allow for a broader group of Republicans to play a role in selecting our nominee.
5. Recognizing the traditions of several states that have early nominating contests, the newly organized primaries would begin only after the "carve-out" states have held their individual elections. It remains important to have an "on ramp" of small states that hold unique primary days before the primary season turns into a multi-state process with many states voting on one day. The idea of a little-known candidate having a fair chance remains important.
6. We also recommend broadening the base of the Party and inviting as many voters as possible into the Republican Party by discouraging conventions and caucuses for the purpose of allocating delegates to the national convention. Our party needs to grow its membership, and primaries seem to be a more effective way to do so. The greater the number of people who vote in a Republican primary, the more likely they will turn out and vote again for the Republican candidate in the fall election.



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