

## What is America Votes?

**From NPR, August 4, 2008:**

America Votes is an umbrella group formed in 2004 to coordinate the efforts of liberal groups trying to defeat President Bush... The organization, which calls itself "the largest grassroots voter mobilization effort in the country today," is meant to help liberal advocacy groups work together and avoid overlapping efforts.

The coalition includes the following groups: 21st Century Democrats, ACORN, AFL-CIO, AFSCME, Alliance for Retired Americans, American Association for Justice, American Federation of Teachers, Americans United for Change, Ballot Initiative Strategy Center, Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence united with the Million Mom March, Campaign for America's Future, Change to Win, Campaign for Community Change, Civic Participation Campaign, Clean Water Action, Communities for Quality Education, Defenders of Wildlife Action Fund, Democracy for America, EMILY's List, The Human Rights Campaign, INDN's List, League of Conservation Voters, League of Young Voters, LULAC, MoveOn.org Political Action, My Rural America, NAACP National Voter Fund, NARAL Pro-Choice America, NDN, National Education Association, National Jewish Democratic Council, People for the American Way, Planned Parenthood Action Fund, Progressive Majority, ProgressNow Action, SEIU, Sierra Club, USAction, Voices for Working Families, Women's Campaign Forum, Women's Voices. Women Vote., Working America and Young Democrats of America.

**Funders:** Fund for America, \$2.8 million in 2008 and \$1 million in 2007; George Soros, \$1.25 million in 2007 and \$2.15 million in 2006; SEIU, \$1.25 million in 2007; and contributions from member organizations.

## ACORN-America Votes Connections

America Votes lists ACORN as part of its national coalition. ([America Votes Website](#))

**Until recently, ACORN was listed as part of America Votes' Missouri "State Coalition." Sometime after October 17, 2009, that reference was scrubbed from their website.** (America Votes--Missouri Website Archives)

**In 2008, America Votes' Board included two members of ACORN: Maude Hurd, President of ACORN, and Zach Polett, National Political Director of ACORN.** ([America Votes IRS Form 8871](#))

**House Committee on Oversight and Government reform calls America Votes an "ACORN affiliate."** ACORN maintains a list of 59,995 campaign contributors to President Barack Obama's election efforts. The Obama campaign made a substantial contribution to Citizens Services Inc. ("CSI"), a nonprofit corporation. However, in notes dated April 6, 2006 about ACORN affiliate America Votes, the document stated: *We prefer that political money go to us in the form of a vendor, which would be CSI, our for-profit business, which doesn't have to report the cash because it's a business, like the phone company.* ([Report, July 23, 2009](#))

## **Robin Carnahan & Democrats deny close relationship with ACORN**

**Carnahan on video:** “I don’t have any ties to ACORN. I’m not sure why they did that. I think just to have something to talk about.” (Available on YouTube)

**Missouri Democratic Party:** “It’s just a normal part of the process of being secretary of state. [There was] nothing inappropriate. Completely within the bounds of the role of the secretary of state’s office...” (KRCG, November 2, 2009)

**Carnahan spokesman: (via Post-Dispatch Political Fix, October 13, 2009):** Zakula said that Carnahan’s relationship with ACORN should be put in context, suggesting it’s no different than other relationships she has with chambers of commerce, for instance, or other organizations that do business with the Secretary of State.

## **Top Carnahan aides go to work for ACORN-linked organization**

Despite Robin Carnahan’s claims that she has no relationship with ACORN and her insistence that her communication with the group is “normal,” evidence continues to mount that Carnahan’s ties to ACORN run much deeper than she acknowledges.

- Mindy Mazur managed Robin Carnahan’s 2004 campaign for Secretary of State and was named her Chief of Staff on December 3, 2004. She served in this capacity until early 2008.
- According to emails obtained by the Missouri Republican Party, Mazur played a central role in facilitating the relationship between Carnahan and ACORN.
- From April 2008 to March 2009, Mazur was the Missouri State Director for American Votes.
- In February 2009, Mazur went back to work for Carnahan’s campaign for Senate as her campaign manager.
- Paula Hodges, Carnahan’s former Deputy Director of Policy and Government Affairs, is currently listed on the America Votes—Missouri website as their Political Director.