

Creating Coalitions Workshop

A Successful Strategy for Affordable Housing Advocacy

Massachusetts "No on 2" Campaign

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Aug 10, 2011

Campaign to Protect the Affordable Housing Law
Support Our Seniors and Working Families



What is 40B?

- Passed in 1969, sets a reasonable goal for all communities to provide at least 10% of their homes as affordable
- At least 25% of the homes must be affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income (approximately \$66,000 for a family of four in Greater Boston)
- Enables municipal zoning boards to approve affordable housing under flexible zoning rules if at least 20%-25% of the homes have long-term affordability restrictions
- Must meet all state environmental laws and building requirements
- Every proposal must first be approved under a state or federal housing program

Challenges

- **Complicated issue to explain**
- **Staying out of the weeds**
- **Opponents co-opted “pro-affordable housing” message**
- **Controversial in many communities (specific projects determine public opinion)**
- **Fundraising**
- **Having to reach millions of voters within limited timeframe**

The Beginning of No on 2

- **25 member Steering Committee**
- **200 member Advisory Committee**
- **Earned Media and Polling Consultants**

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No on 2 Campaign Structure

- **8 Person Leadership Team**
- **Full-time campaign manager, 8 organizers, office staff**
- **Earned Media, Paid Media, Social Media, and Polling Consultants**
- **1,600 Supporters**
- **Raised \$1.2 million from more than 1,000 individuals and organizations**

Key Themes and Messages

- “Affordable Housing”
- 80% of new affordable housing outside the larger cities over the past decade
- 58,000 homes for working families and seniors
- 47,000 jobs and \$9.3 billion in economic activity over past decade
- Law creates real homes for *real* families (homeowner videos)
- Law responsible for high quality housing developments across Massachusetts (development profiles)

Highlighted Residents



Highlighted Developments



Building a Coalition

Natural Allies and Outreach to Key Communities

- **Development and Real Estate Community**
- **Faith Community**
- **Senior Services Community**
- **Civic Engagement Community**
- **Environmental Community**
- **Smart Growth Community**
- **Unions**

Building a Coalition

A diverse coalition of over 1600 individuals and groups joined together to protect 40B, including:

- **Habitat for Humanity**
- **AARP**
- **Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce**
- **Greater Boston Real Estate Board**
- **League of Women Voters of MA**
- **Environmental League of MA**
- **MA Affordable Housing Alliance**
- **MA AFL-CIO**
- **MA Association of Realtors**
- **MA Council of Churches**
- **Progressive Business Leaders Network of MA**
- **Soldier On/United Veterans of America**
- **YMCA of Central MA and the North Shore**

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Role of Coalition

- Provided overall advice on message and strategy (held six advisory committee meetings)
- Reached out to constituencies with common message (e-mail, web site, social media, mailings, door to door)
- Provided in-kind staffing and other resources
- Hosted community meetings
- Assisted with fundraising
- Worked with local media

Grassroots Outreach & Organizing

Outreach to local elected officials and opinion leaders

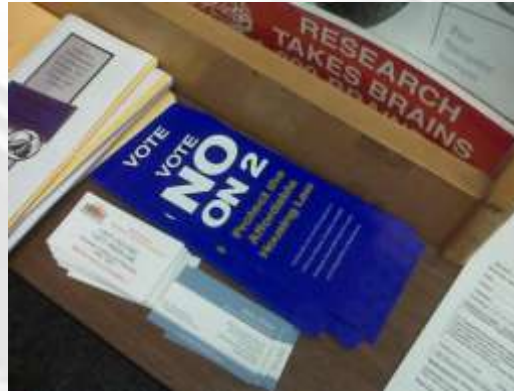
- **Legislators**
- **Local Elected Officials**
- **Party Officials**
- **Gubernatorial Candidates**
- **Housing Authorities**
- **Affordable Housing Management Companies**

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Grassroots Outreach & Organizing

- 4,500 lawn signs
- 1.2 million palm cards
- Elected officials
- Direct mailings
- Community meetings and visibility events
- Literature drops at affordable housing developments



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Grassroots Outreach & Organizing

Visibility Efforts and Using Volunteers



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Grassroots Outreach & Organizing

Election day coverage

653 Polling Locations Covered

In 150 Cities and Towns (of 351)



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Communications Strategy

- www.protectaffordablehousing.org Website
- Earned Media
- Social Media
- Paid Media

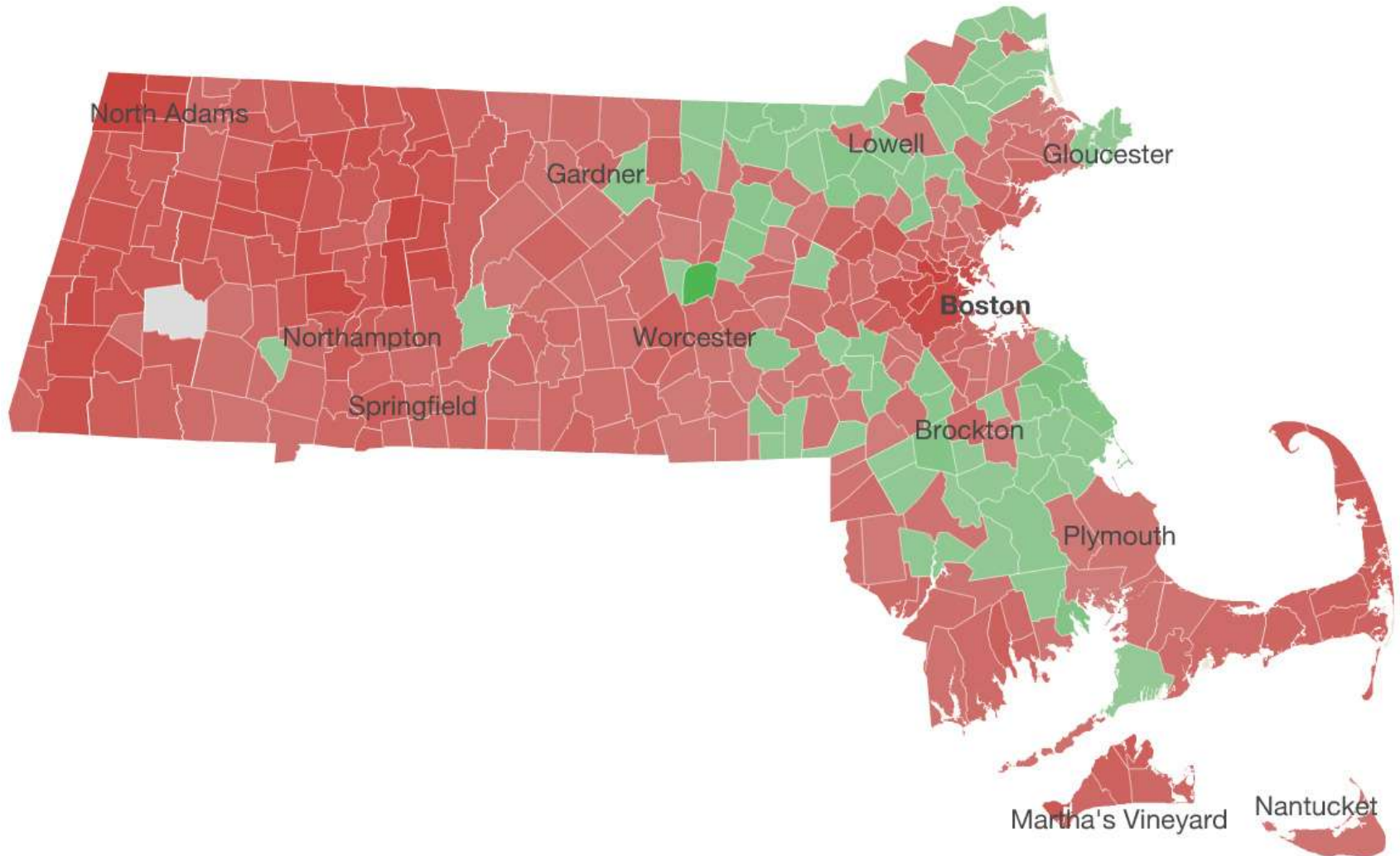
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Election Results

- **58% (1.25 million voters) voted “No” to 42% “Yes”**
- **80% of cities and towns voted “No”**
- **Widest margin of three ballot referendums**

Election Results



TOWN BY TOWN RESULTS

Lessons Learned

- **Have consistent, concise messages**
- **Public opinion polling is critical**
- **Build diverse coalition early; capitalize on existing relationships**
- **Maintain close, in-house staffing of campaign**
- **Use data to support claims made to the media**
- **Involve real people as voices and faces of campaign**
- **Different messages for different audiences**

What's Next?

- **Reconvened Steering Committee post-election**
- **Held 14 community meetings to develop local and state agenda on affordable housing**
- **Maintaining and updating supporter database**
- **Revamping campaign website**
- **Creating online tool for local housing strategies**
- **Working group on 40B improvements**