

Annual Report 2014



A better Alabama for all!

We're stronger together.

You have a vision for a better Alabama for all – and you're not alone. Across the state and across the country, thousands of you have banded together – as individuals, as members of your churches or community groups – to work toward a more inclusive Alabama. We all share a goal: a state where everyone has a chance to lead a happy and productive life, where everyone has a voice in the policymaking process, where everyone works to promote the common good. It's a bold vision for a brighter future. Together, we're making it a reality.

You're making life better for families all across Alabama.

Your support has helped bring greater security and peace of mind to thousands of our friends and neighbors. Nearly 100,000 Alabamians signed up for 2014 health coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace created under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Most received tax credits to make insurance more affordable, and many got covered for the first time in their lives.

ACPP at a glance

Arise Citizens' Policy Project (ACPP), founded in 1994, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of 155 congregations and organizations promoting public policies to improve the lives of low-income Alabamians. ACPP also has hundreds of individual members. We analyze state policies, educate the public on poverty and equip members to advocate for a better Alabama.

It was a rousing success, and your support helped make it happen. When Alabama refused to create its own Marketplace or allow state workers to promote the federal one, that left outreach



and enrollment efforts up to community-based organizations and volunteers. With your help, ACPP organized the Alabama Enrollment Coalition to help bring these advocates together and coordinate enrollment work statewide. This people-powered team helped Alabama top its 2014 federal sign-up goal and raised hopes for yet another enrollment breakthrough in 2015.

You helped build a foundation for other breakthroughs, too.

Your support helped ACPP travel across the state, from Huntsville to Dothan, to educate the public and lawmakers about just how devastating high-cost loans can be and to make the case for an end to triple-digit interest rates in Alabama. Our work and your advocacy began to get results this year when state officials ordered the creation of a database to make

it easier to enforce payday loan limits. Together, we'll continue to make even more progress – on reining in high-cost lending, on making it easier for people to rebuild their lives after serving their time for a drug crime, on a host of other issues where good public policy can make life better for all Alabamians.

Together, we're building toward a brighter future.

Our movement for a better Alabama is growing because of you. We were thrilled last year when our individual membership increased by nearly 50 percent. We're even more excited this year, because your determination, your loyalty and your passion to make Alabama a better place allowed us to set yet another membership record in 2014. Your commitment allowed ACPP to hire two new organizers to help us add more member groups and reach out to more people across the state. Your support also helped us broaden our media outreach by allowing us to have a full-time communications director for the first time in four years. As a result, we're drawing even more public attention to our shared vision through broadcast and print interviews, through op-eds and news releases, and through a growing social media following.

We're all in this together. That's the message your support of ACPP sends. Together, we made life better in Alabama this year. By sticking together, we'll achieve even more in the years to come.

A letter from Kimble



Dear ACPP supporter,

We'll remember 2014 as the year nearly 100,000 Alabamians signed up for health care. With your help, Arise played a leadership role in the enrollment campaign. While we didn't directly sign people up, we led three coalitions on key aspects of health care reform implementation. That meant many groups across the state looked to us for clarity on "the big picture."

We challenged each other to "think like Gov. Robert Bentley." What messages would be most likely to persuade him to expand Medicaid? Would he be persuaded by the story of the small-town waitress whose take-home pay would double if she didn't have to spend half her check on health insurance? What about the study projecting that Medicaid expansion would create more jobs than Alabama's industry recruiting created in the past year?

In January, Bentley's State of the State address was a diatribe against Medicaid expansion. He called Medicaid "dependency," and he insisted he would concentrate on creating jobs instead. But his either-or framing doesn't fit the reality of poverty in Alabama.

Most adults below the poverty line have jobs already. They don't need a job; they need a health plan they can afford. Nearly 185,000 Alabama workers would gain health coverage if Bentley expanded Medicaid. They're the people doing low-paying but important work:

construction, child care, food service. Will gaining health care make them dependent, or will it make them better workers and better providers for their families?

Our job, together, is to help our friends and our governor understand the facts. We must speak up for the people who work hard for a small paycheck. Their well-being affects the care they give our children, the safety of our food preparation, the reliability of our home repairs, and the work of our caregivers in hospitals and nursing homes.

There may be a pitched political battle between the extremes, but there's still room for nuance. The stories we tell together can help our neighbors and leaders see how the lives of people who earn small paychecks are intertwined with the lives of everyone in Alabama. Your support helps us spread a vital message: We're all in this together.

Yours in hope,

Kimble Forrister
Executive Director

ACPP's organizing work

As an ACPP member, you understand that people are hurting because of decisions made in the State House. You support ACPP because you believe low-income Alabamians deserve a voice in developing the policies that affect their lives. ACPP organizers work closely with low-income communities to help make their voices heard about unfair state policies and the attitudes that produce them.

We strengthen our coalition by deepening member involvement. Your support allows us to host educational workshops and other meetings where the public can discuss poverty issues and policy alternatives. ACPP organizers this year held 195 meetings across Alabama, including 103 events focused on health care reform.

With your help, we're boosting our e-advocacy network. It's an exciting way to help people learn about our issues, inform others, and advocate for policy change. Our online outreach builds on our in-person work and gets even more people involved in the democratic process.

Providing quick and accessible policy information is the goal of our website, arisecitizens.org. Here you'll find all our fact sheets, handbooks and other resources.

You also can get the latest news coverage of poverty issues through our *Daily News Digest* and stay connected with Arise through email, Facebook and Twitter.



ACPP's policy analysis

Policy analysis is a vital part of our work, and your support allows us to keep it going. Our policy team analyzes proposed and current laws to assess their effects on low-income Alabamians. ACPP's analysts also monitor broader poverty and economic trends. The policy team produced 38 legislative updates and 10 newsletters this year, as well as three fact sheets and six issue briefs. ACPP staffers also issued 16 news releases and statements, wrote five op-eds and were quoted in dozens of print, TV and radio stories about how public policy can make life better for all Alabamians.

How change happens

Thank you, ACPP contributors!

We can't do our work without you! Arise Citizens' Policy Project thanks the following individuals and groups for their tax-deductible contributions received between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014:

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make Alabama better
for everyone! Learn
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A note from Brenda



Putting your name on something takes courage and conviction. That's why we're proud to name every organization and individual who financially supports ACPP.

Some organizations refuse to identify their donors, professing a need to protect them from harassment. By contrast, ACPP donors are fearless in supporting positions that you fervently believe are needed to make Alabama a more just, moral place to live. And you don't mind saying so publicly!

ACPP members are well-informed about the challenges facing low-income Alabamians because your contributions help support research that uncovers bad policies affecting low-income people. You understand that Alabama's General Fund budget has hit rock bottom, and that our regressive taxes place too great a burden on low-income Alabamians while raising too little money to fund essential services.

You speak up for legislation to untax groceries to help struggling families. You refuse to accept that it's OK to charge people with a short-term emergency an annual interest rate of up to 456 percent, or to bar people who have served their time for a drug crime from getting food assistance to help feed their families. You understand that justice has a very different meaning for low-income people in Alabama.

Your financial support is critical to our work, but just as important is your willingness to put your name out there to match your conviction. Thank you for your courage!

With appreciation and hope,

Brenda Boman
Development Director



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ACPP financial report

Fiscal Year ended 6/30/14

INCOME

Dues of member groups	\$818
Individuals' contributions	93,756
Foundation grants	801,283
Sponsorships	2,500
Alabama foundations	7,800
Interest	436
Other income	11,751
Total income	\$918,344

EXPENDITURES

Personnel	\$608,396
Office expenses	100,496
Travel/meeting expenses	44,005
Contract expenses	141,882
Total expenses	\$894,779

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