



TO: The Presidential Transition Team
FROM: Brandon Silverman, Communications Director, Center for Progressive Leadership
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Building A Truly Collaborative Political System

Today's youth represent one of the most diverse sets of generations we've seen in the history of this country. Moreover, their views toward race, gender, class and sexual orientation, some of the most long-standing and ingrained sources of division in our politics, are more progressive and open-minded than ever before. They have the potential to usher in a new era of politics that moves beyond the barriers and obstacles of our country's history.

But our political discourse around young people has been consistently limited to those young people that happen to be political expedient for any given moment. The opportunity is there for new Obama/Biden administration to design a political system that is driven by the passionate, energetic, and proven young leaders who not only represent the full diversity and multiculturalism of our country's communities but are more willing to work together than any of their predecessors.

Driving the Progressive Agenda

The grassroots approach of the Obama/Biden presidential campaign created an national groundswell of enthusiasm and energy among young people for the Presidential campaign. That same passion and excitement can be translated from the campaign to Obama's approach to governing.

Young people have demonstrated that they can be a powerful community of advocates and organizers, capable of driving the agenda of the incoming administration through online tools, peer-to-peer outreach, and community organizing. Moreover, they are passionate and proven leaders for the issues that Obama has committed his administration to achieving; all they need are the tools and the investment to help lead the effort.

Recommitting Ourselves to Civic Involvement and Service

Young voters turned out in record numbers this election cycle. But the larger story is that the energy around the election was only part of a broader reality of high civic engagement among today's young people that has been true for years. The Millennial generation has a higher rate of volunteering, civic engagement and voting than any generation in recent history. A new administration has the potential to seize that energy and work with today's young people to reconstitute our national commitment to civic involvement.

The next four years represents an opportunity to help turn the corner on the politics of the 1960's, when a generation turned away from politics, by creating more pathways for young people to jumpstart lifelong careers in politics, redefining what it means to be an active member of a democracy and making the administration's work relevant to even broader set of young people. That process starts with tangible and concrete ways for today's youth to play an active role in our political process and committing to a broad definition of opportunity in the process, including:

- Working with youth organizations to make the case for automatic voter registration
- Hiring a full-time youth liaison who has experience working in traditionally underrepresented communities
- Creating concrete, paid opportunities for young people to organize in their communities
- Expanding the White House Fellowship program to focus on diverse young leaders earlier in their careers
- Investing in paid internship and Fellowship programs that promote community organizing and social entrepreneurship
- Expanding opportunities for service and making it the work financially feasible and relevant for all young people

About the Center for Progressive Leadership

The Center for Progressive Leadership (CPL) is the nation's largest progressive political training institute with nearly 50 staff and faculty in Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Washington, DC. CPL provides comprehensive training for diverse progressive leaders working to organize their communities, advocate for progressive policies, manage campaigns, or run for office. Since launching in 2003, CPL has trained almost 5,000 progressive leaders.



CPL specializes in long-term leadership development programs with interactive workshops, mentorship, leadership coaching, field work, and peer networking and support for: future candidates and public officials, campaign professionals, advocacy and nonprofit leaders, community organizers and activists, and policy, government and media leaders. CPL targets leaders from communities that have traditionally lacked access to political power, including women, people of color, and GLBT individuals.