

5. What will the effect on the ACORN organizing staff be if we go to Massachusetts?

The unity of goals and purpose within all parts of ACORN including the staff that was galvanized in Memphis and consolidated in St. Louis and daily reconfirmed through the course of ACORN 80 is indivisible. External efforts to distract or divert the singleness of the staff's purpose will only serve to deepen our commitments in the coming year.

Going to Massachusetts is consistent with our organizing principles and the principles and forces that have made ACORN what it is and will be. This is what brought the staff to ACORN and that is what holds many to the organization who have been here a long time. Going to Massachusetts is an affirmation of the organization of our commitment to organize our constituency wherever they exist, whenever we have the capability. There is nothing negative or spiteful or bitter or personal in this course of action. Were I there, I would counsel other courses and reply with different answers to these questions.

Although the nature of organizing forces us to approach each new project with the humility born of struggle and potential failure, I believe that the staff will feel proud to see Massachusetts our 20th organizing state.

I think organizers in our family and throughout ACORN will believe that this is a great day, a clear day and a proud day for ACORN. Any fireworks we encounter have always served to lend additional bright light to help show the way, and in moving towards Massachusetts I believe that we are taking a strong step in the right direction down a straight path marked out now and long before.

6. What will be the effect on the union organizing in Boston being done now?

Here the impact will be critical and wholly beneficial. This constitutes in my view one of the most salient reasons arguing for organizing in Boston. We have been working the unemployed and youth and CETA constituencies in the city for some time and have been working for months in various worksites to break through on our union efforts. We are pleased and confident about our prospects for creating organizing in this area.

Central to the development of the ULO/ULU everywhere in the country has been a joint community/union model of organizing, where we can maximize the degree of organization throughout the constituency, and then use each piece to build the other, thereby increasing the degree of power that can be built and maintained by both. As the union pieces now develop in Boston, it is important to be able to construct the other half of the equation. Establishing ACORN community organizing among our constituency in the city achieves that objective.

Before the consolidation of WAGE with ULO to produce what we have now, it is important to remember that originally WAGE had attempted to establish this same relationship with Fair Share. Efforts in this direction failed, leading finally to the consolidation with the ULO and the increased activity within the ACORN family as well. To achieve our objectives at this point and to do what we have tried to do in Detroit, Philadelphia and New Orleans, we need to go forward in Boston or isolate and change the prospects and potential for building the union of the unorganized that has occupied a central part of our dreams for years and a major part of our work for the last 18 months. Ending the isolation of our organizing staff and membership in Boston is also a key factor.

In sum, I find these internal reasons compelling and see no other way to satisfy them.