



THIRD ACT

Together, We Build

2025
Impact
Report

Table of Contents

7

Reflections:
How did we meet
this moment?

29

A Year
in Action

15

Our Impact:
The Change
We Made

37

What We Learned,
Where We're Going

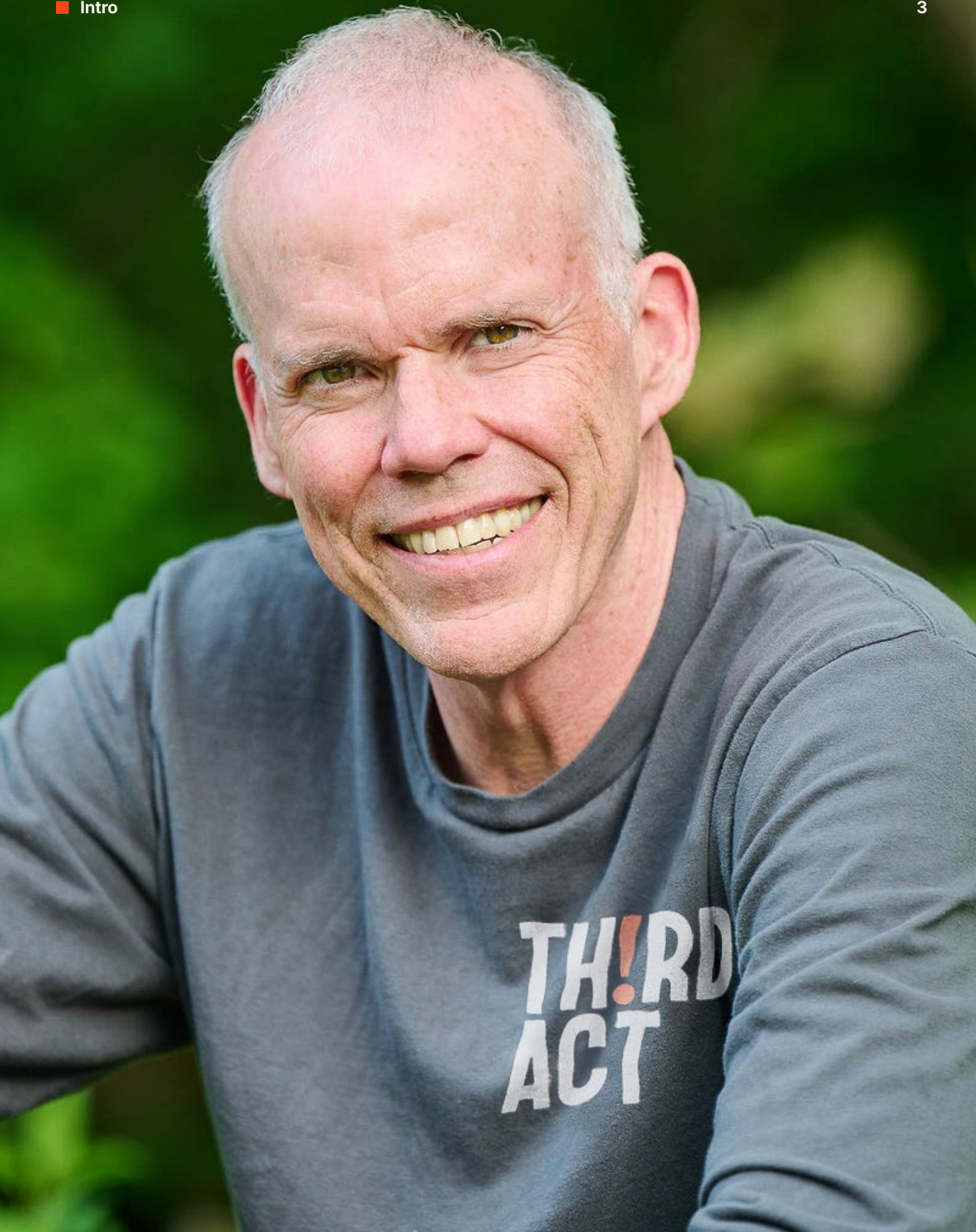
In 2025, at a time when our democracy faced unprecedented tests and our climate crisis demanded urgent action, 110,000 Americans over sixty did something remarkable: they refused to be silent. They refused to sit still. They organized, mobilized, and transformed their collective experience into power.



Those 110,000 people are Third Act: a movement of Americans over sixty fighting for a livable future. We've lived through enough to know what's worth protecting, and now we're using our experience, our networks, and our moral authority to safeguard our planet and democracy.

Together, we organize bold campaigns to protect voting rights, accelerate the clean energy transition, and cut off the money pipeline to the fossil fuel industry: all powered by elder volunteers who bring decades of expertise, advocacy experience, and an urgent sense of purpose.

Their collective action shaped this year in profound ways. Here's what we achieved together, and what comes next.



A letter from Bill

Third Act has grown large enough—and wonderfully sprawling enough—that it's gotten hard to keep track of everything our enormous crew of volunteers has accomplished. Most of the state-level working groups are now publishing regular newsletters and every time I read one I learn of victories in fights I didn't even know they were engaged in, as they become lobbying powers at state capitols and city halls.

On a national level, our two chief aims are to defend a working climate and a working democracy—goals that are connected, and that can be pursued in many ways.

Our climate and energy work this year focused on accelerating the astonishing rise of renewable energy—the first truly good news in the long fight against global warming. In an effort to keep America in this field despite the efforts of the current administration, we led the organizing for Sun Day, the first nationwide day of advocacy for renewable power in almost fifty years. It was a spectacular success—more than 500 rallies, demonstrations, and events in every corner of the country (well, except South Dakota). It drew huge media attention—and just to give one sense of its impact, in the weeks since, legislation to allow plug-in or 'balcony' solar has been introduced in several state legislatures in the country.

The fight for democracy was more profound this year than perhaps ever in America's history, and Third Act was in the forefront, continuing our ongoing work on voter registration and ballot access, but also helping organize turnout for the two No Kings Days and other such protests. One journalist after another noted that older Americans were dramatically over-represented in these rallies—indeed, we were all cheered when President Trump's aide Stephen Miller complained that "elderly hippies" were the main obstacle they faced in militarizing Washington DC. He said that we should "go home and take a nap," but we won't. We have much work to do!

Bill McKibben

Co-Founder, Volunteer,
and Advisor



A letter from Kafia and Vanessa

After a year of hard losses and deep divisions, we're reflecting on where we are now and how hard we've worked to get here. The past year often felt like trying to move through quicksand—that tug, that loss of footing is familiar to us. But we were made for a moment like this, one that asks us to protect what's good and push back against what harms and exploits.

That's required balance in a constantly shifting landscape. Uncertainty has a way of knocking you off-centre and demanding focus on what matters. This year, we practiced that again and again. Our democracy and climate have been under steady attack, yet we showed up every day—in big ways, like Sun Day actions across the country, and in small ways, like mutual aid when government failed communities.

This moment calls on us to be clear about where we stand. We reaffirm our commitment to justice. While some choose the path of least resistance, we've doubled down. We're more determined than ever to help create the world we want to live in. When others chose cruelty, injustice, and the theatre of authoritarianism, we countered by pushing back fiercely and treating one another with dignity and compassion.

As we close out this difficult year, let this be another declaration: we remain committed to the work of strengthening our democracy and protecting our planet. We imagine a world where everyone has what they need to thrive. Every day, we work to make that world possible.

We're grateful to be on this journey with you.



Kafia Ahmed
CEO



Vanessa Arcara
President

1

A woman in the center of the frame wears an orange t-shirt with 'THIRD ACT' and a sun-like headpiece. She has her arms outstretched. To her left is a large, spiky orange headpiece. In the background, a man in a black shirt and cap holds a camera, and a woman in a white shirt and red skirt stands nearby. A banner for 'WILSON STREET BREWERY' is visible in the background.

**Reflections:
How did we meet
this moment?**

This year demanded both adaptation and resolve. After the 2024 election, we faced a question: How do we organize for climate action and democratic participation when the political winds shift? Our answer was to go deeper—into communities, into relationships, into work that transcends election cycles.

We learned that our power doesn't come from a single tactic or campaign. It comes from connection.

In an era of isolation and division, we found that bringing elders together around shared values—protecting our grandchildren's future, defending democracy, accelerating climate solutions—was itself resistance. This year, we focused on three things:



“ For many of us, the main thing driving us is what kind of planet and what kind of democracy we want to leave our children and our grandchildren.

Chris C, Third Act Colorado



Building Elder Power

We turned concern into action. Our 37 Working Groups—many of which doubled in size this year—became places where experienced organizers worked together. These weren't just meetings. They were training grounds, support networks, and launching pads for campaigns that won.

When we expanded our training programs, we weren't just teaching tactics. We were helping elders see that their decades of experience, their community relationships, their hard-won wisdom—that's what this moment needs. Over 1,000 elders learned to engage with media, turning personal stories into public advocacy. Hundreds attended our Hope & Joy webinars, finding community and respite from climate grief.

Accelerating Climate Solutions

Our climate work in 2025 happened at every level. Nationally, we organized Sun Day—over 500 events across 49 states—proving Americans are ready for clean energy. Our 47,000-signature petition demanding streamlined solar permitting sparked action in six states, which moved to introduce balcony-solar legislation following Utah’s law.

Locally, we got specific. Through Simplify Solar, volunteers researched permitting rules in their towns and met with municipal leaders. In Arizona, Third Actors helped stop Amazon’s proposed Project Blue data center in Tucson.

In New Mexico, volunteers rallied support for the Rancho Viejo community solar array. And in Oregon, we helped pass three energy-affordability bills ensuring data center costs don’t fall on residents.

We also followed the money. Over 40,000 petition signatures went to Wells Fargo branches, demanding the bank reinstate climate commitments. We delivered petitions representing 2 million people to L.L. Bean’s CEO, urging them to break ties with Citibank, their credit card partner that finances fossil fuels.

“My Hispanic roots run deep in the Sonoran Desert and I know that if we lose the battle against climate change, a 7th generation of my family will not be able to live and thrive here. My love for our planet, people and ecosystems is the driving force for my activism.

Betsey W, Third Act Arizona



Strengthening Democracy

In 2025, we focused on democracy work where power lives closest to home: state and city elections, local courts, and public commissions. These levels of government often set the stage for national legislation. We showed up with phone banks, postcard parties, and door-to-door organizing.

Our efforts paid off. In Wisconsin, Third Actors helped elect Supreme Court Justice Susan Crawford. In New York City, we canvassed and fundraised for Mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani—who won. In New Jersey, we made calls supporting Mikie Sherrill for

governor. In Georgia, our phone banks supported Public Service Commission candidate Peter Hubbard.

When authoritarianism threatened Social Security, Medicare, and federal workers, we took to the streets in April for Hands Off! protests. In June and October, our No Kings actions organized hundreds of demonstrations around the principle that no one—including the presidency—is above the law.

Our Movement by the Numbers

Behind every number is a person who chose to act. These metrics tell the story of a movement gaining momentum.



110,000

Americans over 60 organizing for progressive action



37

Working Groups active in 31 locations, with 6 functioning as affinity groups



43.9%

increase in website visitors (12% first-time visitors) — both deepening engagement and new growth



10,000+

people joined national organizing calls



\$150,000

granted directly to Working Groups—tripling last year's total



1,000+

elders trained in storytelling and media engagement

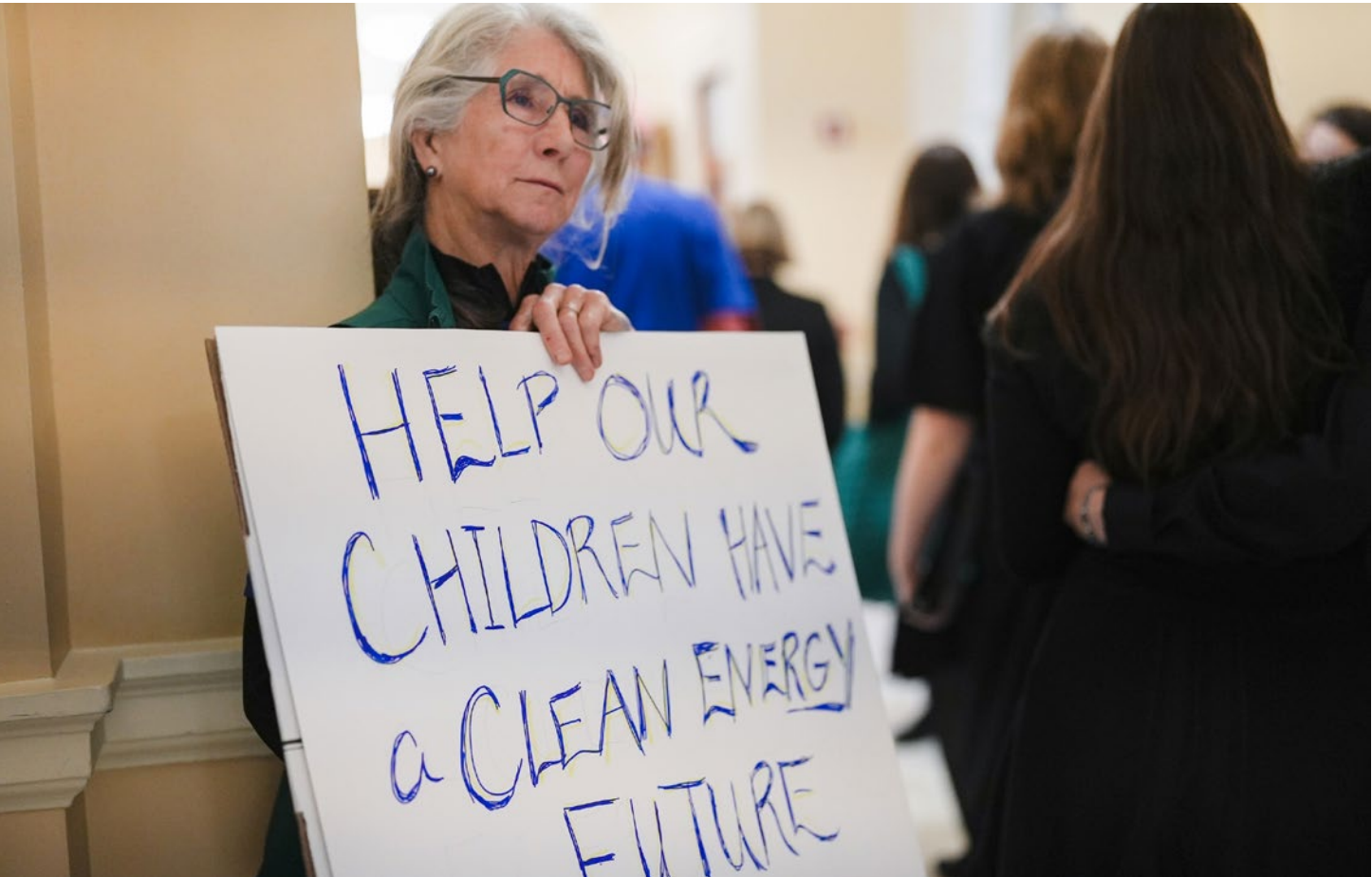
2



**Our Impact:
The Change
We Made**

Third Act harnesses the collective power of older Americans across three areas: strengthening community in elderhood, advancing climate solutions, and revitalizing democracy. Through training, resources, and shared purpose, we empower elders to take bold action for a just and sustainable future.

Our Working Groups—led by volunteers, organized by geography or shared interest—are at the heart of our organizing. They link elders through a shared progressive vision, advance national campaigns, and shape local strategy.



Building Capacity

This year, Third Act deepened our commitment to unlocking the power of older Americans. In a time of isolation and division, connection itself became a radical act. Our relational organizing turns connection into action, linking elders across geography and experience.

How we built capacity in 2025:

Working Groups	37 active across the country, many doubled membership.
Trainings	Expanded programs on the fundamentals of organizing, backing up targeted communities, intergenerational organizing, building online community.
Hope & Joy	Six webinars engaging hundreds in finding community and respite from climate grief.
Media Preparation	1,000+ elders trained in storytelling and media engagement.
Digital Tools	Onboarded all 37 Working Groups to Action Network (a user-friendly digital organizing tool); strengthened peer-to-peer coaching.
Regional Convergences	Brought together leaders from the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions for hands-on learning

Climate: From Protest to Policy

Third Act mobilizes elders to demand bold climate action, holding governments and corporations accountable while advancing local solutions that speed the clean energy transition. Our work spans every level: pressing banks and insurers to divest from fossil fuels; pushing for laws that make polluters pay; and helping towns cut red tape so solar can flourish.



Sun Day: A National Movement

Third Act joined more than 80 partner organizations for Sun Day: a nationwide day of action celebrating solar energy and community power. First envisioned in 1978, Sun Day returned at a time when technologies like solar, batteries, EVs, and heat pumps are readily available. What’s needed now is political will.

Across 49 states, 500+ events took place, with Third Actors leading 160 of them—from solar-home tours and art festivals to faith-based Sunbeam Congregations and solar-powered

concerts. The petition urging local governments to streamline residential rooftop solar permitting gathered 47,000+ signatures, prompting several states to begin drafting balcony-solar legislation modeled on Utah’s 2025 law.

Governments took notice: Wisconsin, Philadelphia, and Branford, CT issued official Sun Day proclamations. Media coverage in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The New Yorker*, and CNN reached over 500,000 people.

Sun Day Impact

Third Actors led **160 of the 500+ events** across 49 states.

47,000+ petition signers urging local governments to streamline residential rooftop solar permitting.

70+ media stories reaching **500,000+ people**.

4 states—California, Florida, Maryland, and Texas—passed streamlined rooftop-solar laws, with New Jersey awaiting the Governor’s signature.





“ It’s hard to be a climate activist in Texas. There’s all these scattered little environmental groups that are used to losing. But hey, now we’re winning! Sun Day has inspired us. The Free Market has spoken, Renewables are here to stay!

— Nan, Third Act Texas

Making Polluters Pay

Ten Working Groups—from California to Maine—championed state “climate superfund” bills to make polluters cover climate-damage costs. Maryland’s was passed but vetoed; volunteers are organizing to overturn it by 2026. In California, Third Actors helped persuade several cities to endorse legislation for 2026, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Berkeley, and Richmond.

Cutting Off Fossil Fuel Finance

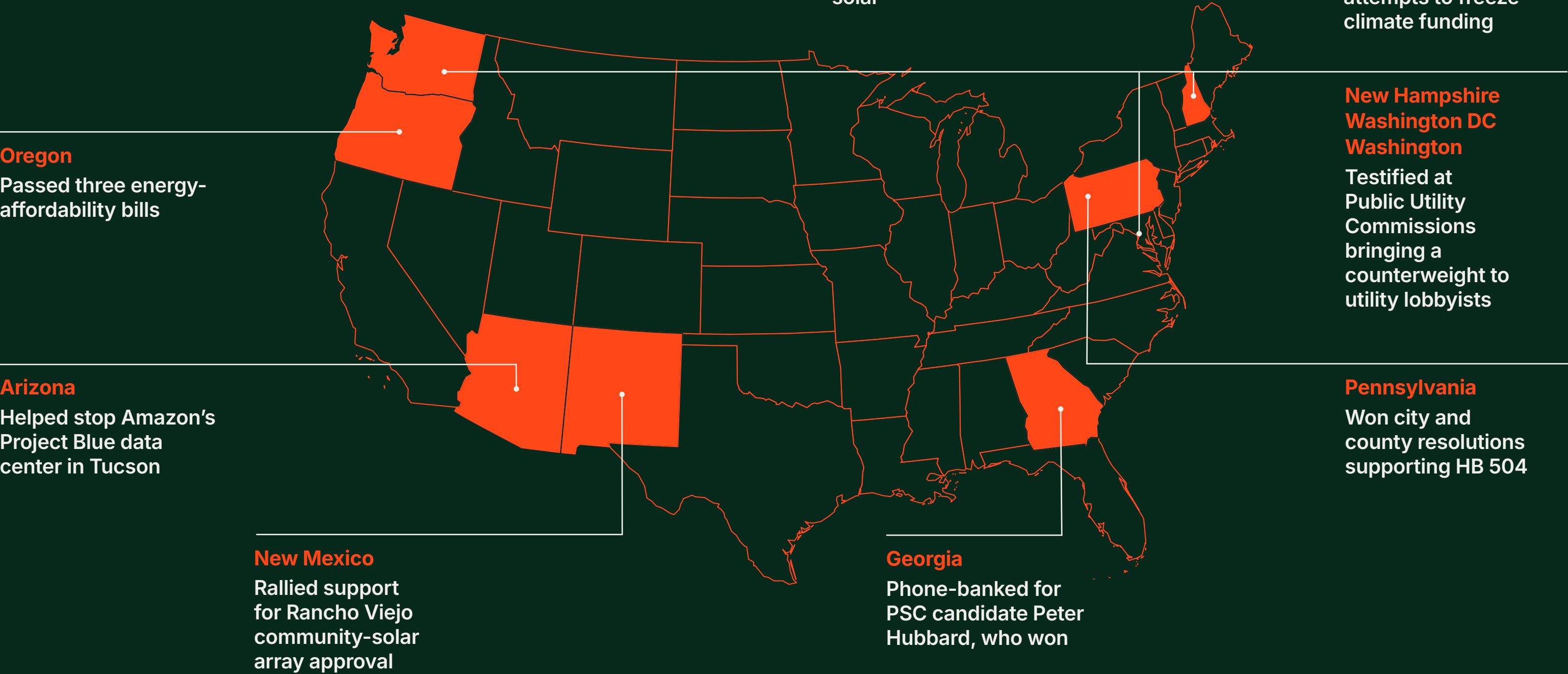
We delivered 40,000+ petitions to Wells Fargo branches, demanding the bank reinstate climate commitments. We delivered petitions and letters—representing 2 million people—to L.L. Bean’s CEO, urging them to break up with Citibank, their credit card partner that finances fossil fuels.

Through partnerships with Green America and This Is What We Did, hundreds of elders moved their money to fossil-free banks and credit unions.



Local Climate Victories

Third Actors won on the ground:



Solar Training

1,000+

attended Solar 101

550+

households signed up to explore rooftop solar

Simplify Solar

6

work parties, volunteers met with officials to promote SolarAPP+

IRA Defense

9,000

letters sent

838

calls placed to Congress opposing attempts to freeze climate funding

Democracy: Renewing the Promise

Third Actors are working to renew—not simply remember—the promise of democracy. Older Americans have a unique role in rebuilding civic trust, expanding participation, and strengthening the systems that make government work.

In 2025, we focused where power is closest to home: state and city elections, local courts, and public commissions. Through phone banks, postcard parties, tabling, and local mobilizations, elders showed up for candidates, policies, and institutions that safeguard freedoms.



Hands Off!

April protests against attacks on Social Security, Medicare, federal workers.



No Kings

June and October, hundreds of actions nationwide—no one is above the law.



Tesla Takedown

Maryland and Virginia rallies continued weekly throughout 2025.



Community Outreach

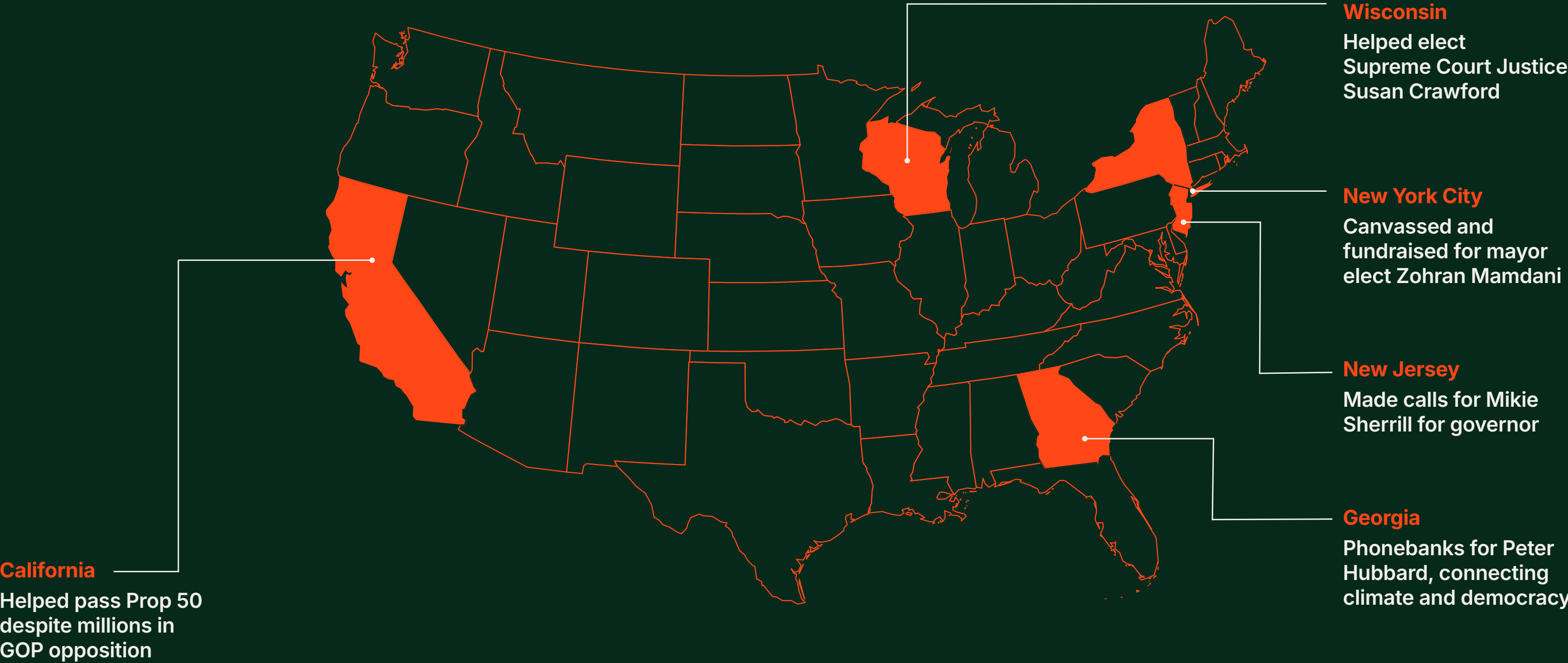
Tabled at concerts, festivals—from Neil Young’s tour stops to Earth Day fairs nationwide.

Election Victories

Third Actors won on the ground:

“ We believe at Third Act that we can make great efforts to renew our democracy and protect our climate by focusing on the importance of building coalitions, robust advocacy and action, and winning elections. We hope to be at the center of sparking a democracy revival through our civic engagement and storytelling.

Mike Johnson, Democracy Campaigns Manager



3

A photograph of a diverse group of people at an outdoor event. In the foreground, a woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a purple floral shirt, is clapping and smiling. To her left, an older man with a white beard and sunglasses, wearing a yellow shirt and a neon green vest, is also clapping. In the background, other people are visible, including a person in a rainbow-colored shirt taking a photo with a smartphone, and a person in a blue shirt and a yellow hat. The setting is outdoors with green trees and a building in the background.

A Year in Action



January

Wildfires raged across Los Angeles. We raised funds for mutual aid groups supporting those displaced.



February

Trained ~150 volunteer leaders in grassroots advocacy—how to influence state legislation through testimony, meetings, and lobby days.



March

Third Act Michigan launched. Solar Power 101 training kicked off.



April

Deepened partnership with Indivisible and MoveOn, co-hosting first Hands Off! protest. Susan Crawford won the Wisconsin Supreme Court.



May

Partnered with EnergySage to bring solar to more people. Lobby day in Sacramento with Make Polluters Pay coalition.



June

First No Kings protest—Third Actors took action nationwide. Delivered letter to L.L. Bean CEO about Citibank.



July

Media training with Bill McKibben and David Fenton.



August

Third Act New Jersey launched. Delivered petition with 40,000 signatures to Wells Fargo branches.



September

Sun Day: 500 events in 49 states, the largest show of support for clean energy on record.



October

Simplify Solar campaign kicked off with elders meeting municipal leaders about solar rules.



November

Third Act helped Zohran Mamdani, Mike Sherrill, Abigail Spanberger, and others win election victories, and helped push Prop 50 over the finish line in California.



December

Celebrated wins. Prepared for 2026 midterms, reasearched candidates and legislation.



Thought Leadership and Press Coverage

Our efforts were noticed. Our media coverage reached over 500,000 people, highlighting our in-person and digital organizing efforts and the power of clean energy. Our work was featured in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Mother Jones*, *Rolling Stone*, NPR, and elsewhere.

“Why Trump’s War on Solar Power Will Fail”

July, 2025

The New York Times

“4.6 Billion Years On, the Sun Is Having a Moment”

July, 2025

THE NEW YORKER

“Solar is Liberation”

July, 2025

RollingStone.com

“Rooftop Solar Is a Miracle. Why Are We Killing It With Red Tape?”

September, 2025

Mother Jones

“ In some places, Sun Day will be about fighting new gas pipelines,” McKibben said. “But everywhere it’s about making clear that this is no longer ‘alternative’ energy but instead the clear path forward. That is the greatest threat by far to the fossil fuel industry.

The Guardian

“ With Sun Day, [Bill] McKibben hopes to recapture the spirit of the first Earth Day, in 1970, the earliest wide-scale mobilization of the environmental movement, which helped catapult issues like pollution and conservation onto the national agenda. Like Earth Day, McKibben told me, Sun Day is meant to be “a giant potluck supper” for activists around the country: “We’ve set the date and the theme, and everyone’s bringing their own dish to the floor.”

The New York Times Magazine

What We Learned, Where We're Going





Looking back on 2025, some lessons emerge about organizing in elderhood for climate action and democratic renewal.

Connection First

Our relational organizing—building community first, then channeling that into campaigns—is our greatest strength. Working Groups that invested in relationship-building saw the highest retention and sustained action.

Local Wins Build Momentum

From stopping data centers to streamlining solar permitting, we proved local victories add up. When Third Actors engaged with city councils and utility commissions, they didn't just win policy changes—they showed what's possible and inspired other communities.

Experience is Power

The professional networks, institutional knowledge, and decades of civic engagement our members bring proved invaluable. When a retired EPA official joins the climate fight, when former executives leverage business relationships, when longtime community members testify at hearings—they bring credibility and connections that amplify impact.

Looking Toward 2026



The 2026 midterm elections loom. We're already researching candidates, planning campaigns, and preparing our base. But we're also thinking beyond election cycles—building sustained infrastructure for climate action and democratic participation.

We're expanding training programs, growing Working Groups, and deepening partnerships. We're deepening the work on all of our campaigns: holding bad banks accountable when they invest in fossil fuels, calling on local municipalities to make solar power more accessible through our Simplify Solar initiative, and halting the construction of water-guzzling data centers.

Join the Movement

Third Act is powered by people like you—elders who refuse to stand by while our democracy and planet face existential threats. Whether you can contribute financially, join a Working Group, or sign up for updates about upcoming actions, every form of engagement matters.

Make a donation and support our work to build community, protect the climate, and strengthen our democracy.

Get in Touch

Pam Murphy
Development Manager
donations@thirdact.org