



Illinois People's Action

Illinois People's Action (IPA) has received a total of \$195,000 since 2012 from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), including its most recent grant of \$30,000 during the [2020-2021 grants cycle](#).

CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 2020-2021 GRANTEES			
Diocese	Grantee	Issue Area	Grant
Diocese of Peoria	Illinois People's Action	Environmental Justice	30,000.00

The Illinois People's Action published a tweet in 2021 advocating for abortion, indicating that the organization itself is ideologically connected to the fight for abortion. In addition to this, IPA is a member of the pro-abortion People's Action Institute, participated in the pro-abortion, pro-LGBTQ ONE People's Action event, and its executive director, Don Carlson, is on the board of directors of the ONE People's Campaign.

On [May 26, 2021](#), IPA retweeted a message that suggests that pro-lifers do not consider the mother of a preborn child with equal dignity to the growing infant in the womb.



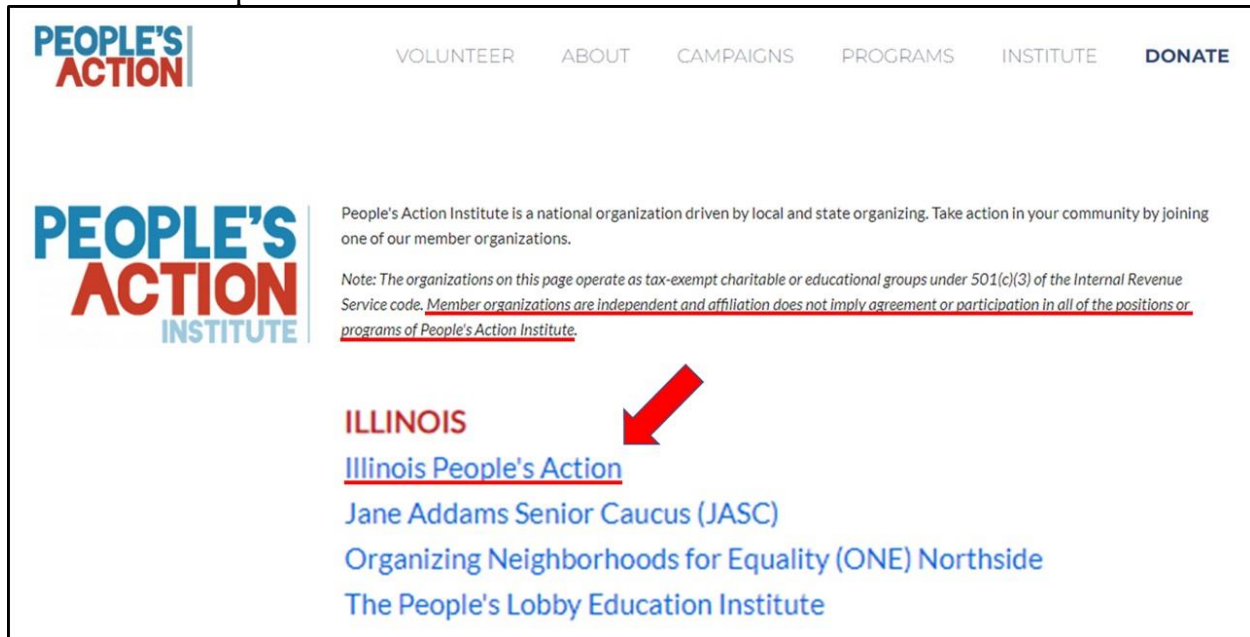
While this lone tweet doesn't prove anything, necessarily, it does suggest a pro-abortion mindset from the organization. And given the relationship IPA has with the People's Action Institute, it makes sense.

The CCHD absolutely forbids organizations from membership in organizations acting against Catholic teaching. In an [FAQ on the USCCB website](#), the CCHD directly answers the question about whether grantees may be members of coalitions that oppose Catholic teachings. In answer, the CCHD firmly stated, "CCHD will not fund groups that are knowingly members of coalitions that have as part of their organizational purpose or coalition agenda, positions or actions that contradict fundamental Catholic moral and social teaching."

What about participation in coalitions for a good purpose, like better wages or housing, that include groups acting against Catholic values on other issues?

CCHD encourages groups to work across geographical, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological lines to overcome poverty and advance the common good. However, CCHD will not fund groups that are knowingly members of coalitions that have as part of their organizational purpose or coalition agenda, positions or actions that contradict fundamental Catholic moral and social teaching (e.g. promotion or support of abortion, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, racism, as well as the use of the death penalty punitive measures toward immigrants, etc.). Prohibited activities include participation in or endorsing actions that promote legislation, and ballot initiatives (including voter guides and other written materials) that contradict Catholic moral or social teaching.

Despite this, IPA is a dues-paying [member of the People's Action Institute](#). While there is a disclaimer on the People's Action Institute membership page saying, "*Member organizations are independent and affiliation does not imply agreement or participation in all of the positions or programs of People's Action Institute,*" this does not exempt IPA from the CCHD's guideline specifically forbidding membership. The fact that IPA is a dues-paying member makes this formal relationship even more serious.



The screenshot shows the People's Action Institute website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for VOLUNTEER, ABOUT, CAMPAIGNS, PROGRAMS, INSTITUTE, and DONATE. Below the navigation, the People's Action Institute logo is displayed on the left. To the right of the logo, there is a text block that reads: "People's Action Institute is a national organization driven by local and state organizing. Take action in your community by joining one of our member organizations." Below this text, there is a note: "Note: The organizations on this page operate as tax-exempt charitable or educational groups under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code. Member organizations are independent and affiliation does not imply agreement or participation in all of the positions or programs of People's Action Institute." Below the note, there is a section titled "ILLINOIS" with a red arrow pointing to the "Illinois People's Action" link. Below this link, there are three other links: "Jane Addams Senior Caucus (JASC)", "Organizing Neighborhoods for Equality (ONE) Northside", and "The People's Lobby Education Institute".


On page 9 of [PIA's 2019 tax form 990](#), organizational members of People's Action Institute pay annual dues to the organization.

efile Public Visual Render		ObjectId: 001 - Submission: 2015-01-16		TIN: 20-5478191	
990 Form Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service		Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except private foundation). Do not enter social security numbers on this form as it may be made public. ▶ Go to www.irs.gov/Form990 for instructions and the latest information.			OMB No. 1545-0047 2019 Open to Public Inspection
A For the 2019 calendar year, or tax year beginning 01-01-2019, and ending 12-31-2019					
B Check if applicable: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Address change <input type="checkbox"/> Name change <input type="checkbox"/> Initial return <input type="checkbox"/> Final return/terminated <input type="checkbox"/> Amended return <input type="checkbox"/> Application pending		C Name of organization <u>PEOPLE'S ACTION INSTITUTE</u>		D Employer identification number 36-2755109	
		Doing business as		E Telephone number (312) 243-3035	
		Number and street (or P.O. box if mail is not delivered to street address) Room/suite 1130 N MILWAUKEE AVE			
		City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code CHICAGO, IL 60642		G Gross receipts \$ 7,549,903	
m Service Revenue	2a REGISTRATION FEES	Business Code 611710	94,261	94,261	
	b AFFILIATE DUES	611430	76,450	76,450	
	c CONSULTING FEES	611710	24,717	24,717	
	d OTHER INCOME	611710	12,500	12,500	

Additionally, in 2019 IPA's executive director, Don Carlson, was on the board of directors for People's Action Institute. [IPA's About page](#) indicates that Don Carlson has been the executive director of IPA since 1996, and has serves on the board of IPA's "national affiliate, People's Action Institute."

Illinois People's Action Home About Our Work Take Action In the News Contact

Staff

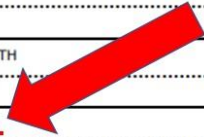


Don Carlson
Executive Director. Founding staff IPA 1996 - present

Don Carlson has over 43 years of community organizing experience, including founding staff and executive director of IPA (1996- present), Philadelphia (Regional Council Neighborhood Organizations, 1989-1996) and Iowa (Des Moines CCI; Director 1985-1989, Staff Organizer 1980-1985). Responsibilities include oversight of all IPA staff and organizing campaigns, leadership development, and organizational development and fundraising. In this capacity, he provides leadership training to IPA member congregations and affiliates and organizing and grant fundraising technical assistance to IPA member groups and issue coalition groups across central Illinois. He has served on the Board of Directors for our national affiliate, People's Action Institute.

The People's Action Institute [tax form 990 referenced above](#) indicates that in 2019, Carlson was on the board of directors, which would have been during the time IPA was receiving CCHD funding.

(A) Name and title	(B) Average hours per week (list any hours for related organizations below dotted line)	(C) Position (do not check more than one box, unless person is both an officer and a director/trustee)						(D) Reportable compensation from the organization (W-2/1099-MISC)	(E) Reportable compensation from related organizations (W-2/1099-MISC)	(F) Estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations
		Individual trustee or director	Institutional Trustee	Officer	Key employee	Highest compensated employee	Former			
(1) AFUA ATTA-MENSAH BOARD MEMBER & PRESIDENT	3.00	X		X				0	0	0
(2) ROBERT KRAIG BOARD MEMBER & TREASURER	3.00	X		X				0	0	0
(3) JORDAN ESTEVAO BOARD MEMBER & SECRETARY	3.00	X		X				0	0	0
(4) PHYLLIS SALOWE-KAYE BOARD MEMBER	1.00	X						0	0	0
(5) HEATHER BOOTH BOARD MEMBER	1.00	X						0	0	0
(6) <u>DON CARLSON</u> <u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	1.00	X						0	0	0
(7) BRUCE GOTTSCHALL BOARD MEMBER	1.00	X						0	0	0



As far back as 2012, the People's Action Institute has been advocating for abortion and birth control. In [May of 2012](#), PAI posted an image of Socialist Bernie Sanders and his cry "we're not going back" regarding women's access to birth control and abortion. PAI said, in regard to Sanders' message, "Click LIKE & SHARE if you agree with Bernie Sanders - 'we are not going back'!"

People's Action Institute
May 15, 2012 · 🌐

Click LIKE & SHARE if you agree with Bernie Sanders - 'we are not going back'!

👍 369 25 Comments 304 Shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

View 16 previous comments

Lauren Daniel
I agree with some of these statements.
Like 10y

Casey Edward
Cool we can just kill babies when ever and where ever... come on... here's an idea: don't want kids, don't bump uglies. There's plenty of people that have been born into this world whom we could live out, but you can't just kill them... how's this any ... See more
Like 10y

In [September of 2018](#), PAI posted a call to have Bret Kavanaugh voted down as a candidate for the Supreme Court saying, "We won't go back to a world without safe, legal abortion."

PEOPLE'S ACTION

IN 2017, KAVANAUGH WORKED TO BLOCK ACCESS TO SAFE, LEGAL ABORTION, AND HAS ALSO RULED AGAINST ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL.

#kavaNAH

People's Action Institute
September 6, 2018 · 🌐

We won't go back to a world without safe, legal abortion. We refuse to sacrifice the lives of our loved ones to right-wing extremism. Call 844-766-2707 NOW to be connected to your Senator. Tell them to vote NO on #KavaNAH. #WhatsAtStake #SaveSCOTUS

👍 10 5 Shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

In March of 2019, PAI published its "[Healthcare For All Platform](#)," which demanded that all attempts to obstruct access to abortion be stopped, completely.

OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN CRISIS

Our current healthcare system is driven by profit and governed by insurance and pharmaceutical companies, rather than by the people. In calling for **Improved Medicare for All** we are fighting to shift power from corporations and the 1 percent (insurance & drug corporations), move health care resources into the public sphere (and people into public coverage), increase community control, and combat exclusion on the basis of race, gender, citizenship status, age, and ability. We must directly counter the racialized vilification of public programs and challenge narrative frameworks that view anyone as undeserving of care. And we must move towards the realization of the sovereign treaty right to health care for American Indians. Fighting for universal health care allows us to put corporate power, immigrant exclusion, and racial and gender inequity at the center of the debate.

HEALTHCARE IS A HUMAN RIGHT & A PUBLIC GOOD

We will know we have won when health care is:

- ✓ For health, not profit
- ✓ Simple, universal, and available
- ✓ Fully resourced
- ✓ Equitable across race, gender, ability, and region
- ✓ Delivered by health care workers who are fairly and fully compensated for their labor
- ✓ Inclusive and comprehensive (including medicines, medical equipment, vision/dental/hearing care, reproductive care, mental health care, harm reduction and treatment for substance misuse, preventive care, and long-term care and home care)

PROTECTING EXISTING FEDERAL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND FUNDING

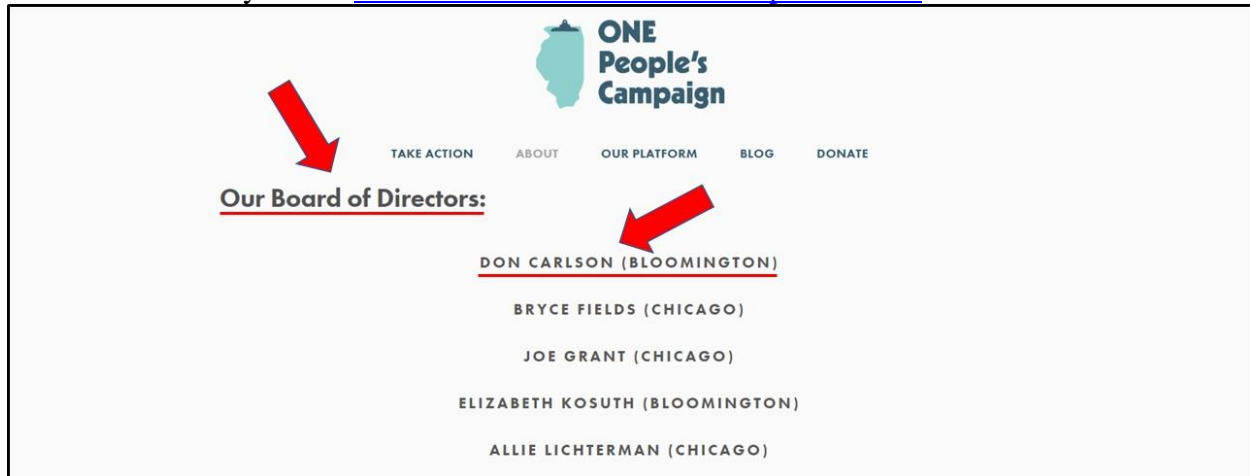
- We must prevent the repeal or replacement of the Affordable Care Act, in part or in full, both in Congress and the court system.
- We must prevent budget cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, the Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Social Security, and fight for full funding of these vital programs as core components of our established health care infrastructure.
- We must stop all attempts to prevent vulnerable communities and populations from accessing federally funded health care through changes to eligibility requirements, such as citizenship status, or covered services, particularly reproductive health care and access to abortion.

On [June 24, 2022](#), the very day the Supreme Court ruled to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, People's Action issued a press release calling the landmark ruling a "direct assault on our people's freedom to make decisions about what's best for them." People's Action then vowed to "fight back," saying:

"Access to abortion care is central to protecting our bodily autonomy, health care, privacy, and freedom. Anti-abortion legislation is not pro-life: it's pro-white supremacy and anti-democratic.

“We need to defend our democracy and protect our people. **At People’s Action, we’re leading an organizing revival** to build a government for us and led by us, the multiracial, poor and working class. **This ruling only fuels our righteous rage and determination to fight back.**”

In addition to having served on the Board of Directors of the People's Action Institute, Don Carlson is currently on the [Board of Directors for ONE People's Action](#).



In fact, Don Carlson was one of the [founding board members](#) of the ONE People's Campaign.



ONE People's Campaign is with Jennifer Carrillo and 11 others.

September 17, 2018 · 🌐




Our inaugural board and political committees met in Bourbonnais, IL yesterday to chart our work in the November midterms and next year's municipal elections in Chicago and Bloomington. We began the day talking about the rise of white nationalism and the effects of the neoliberal agenda. In the middle of the day, we wrestled with questions like: what should our relationship be to the existing political parties? What do we want our endorsement to mean? We finished with a solid action plan to build electoral power in Chicago and Bloomington through the upcoming election cycles! Stay tuned for canvassing and other events we'll be hosting!



On [June 28, 2022](#), Carlson signed a ONE People's Campaign letter calling on people to "Fight Dobbs" saying, "**We know we will find new ways to care for each other and ensure access to abortion.**" The letter also says:

"We need people in office who will protect access to safe, free, legal abortions no matter where the person lives. We need legislators who will be particularly attuned to making sure poor women, transmen and gender nonconforming people, immigrant women, women of color **and all people who need an abortion can access one.**"

The letter was also signed by [Dawn Dannenbring, IPA's "Lead Organizer"](#) and the only other employee listed on IPA's website. Here is the letter in full:



TAKE ACTION ABOUT OUR PLATFORM BLOG DONATE

Fight Dobbs - Vote!

We were devastated, like many of you, when the Supreme Court, last Friday, overturned 50 years of a person's constitutionally protected right to bodily autonomy and choice over the decision to bear a child. This decision will disproportionately harm working class people of color.

We hope you are giving yourself time to feel all of the emotions that come with this decision — rage, grief, fear, sadness, hopelessness, disappointment, to name a few. As you create time to feel and process and grieve, we hope you can hold close to what the visionary organizer Mariame Kaba said, **"Let this radicalize you rather than lead you to despair."**

The religious right and corporate elites have run a 40-year strategy to take over government and control our country's highest institutions of power. They are using elected office to implement their agenda and using the tools of government to maintain the status quo, which isn't working for the vast majority of people, especially not women, people of color, queer and gender-queer folks, low-income and working class people. The decision to overturn Roe will lead to the criminalization of people who can get pregnant and people who care for their health. It will intensify economic injustice. It will erode LGBTQIA+ rights and increase attacks on trans people.

That is why we are building collective people power to hold elected officials accountable to the interests of our communities and to elect new leadership who will use the tools of government to make our lives tangibly better — making sure everyone has access to comprehensive healthcare, ensuring everyone has a safe roof over their heads, food on the table, time for pleasure and leisure with their loved ones, and bodily autonomy.

We will not go back. We know we will find new ways to care for each other and ensure access to abortion, just as we saw people care for one another at the beginning of the pandemic when mutual aid networks popped up around the country. If you are in a position to give, please donate to the [Midwest Access Coalition](#). Many of our neighboring states have outlawed or are about to outlaw abortions. Midwest Access Coalition will help people travel to Illinois to access a safe and legal abortion.

And we know we need to fight like hell to elect new leadership. Today is the last day to vote in the primary! That's why we endorsed:

1. **Rep. Litesa Wallace**, who is running for Congress in Central and NW IL (CD-17)
2. **Sen. Mike Simmons (#61)**, who is running for state senate on Chicago's far north side (SD-7)
3. **Hoan Huynh (#72)**, who is running for state representative on Chicago's north side (HD-13).

We need people in office who will protect access to safe, free, legal abortions no matter where the person lives. We need legislators who will be particularly attuned to making sure poor women, transmen and gender nonconforming people, immigrant women, women of color and all people who need an abortion can access one.

All the candidates we endorsed in the 2022 Democratic Primary are pro-choice, no exceptions. They believe in **providing supports to parents** — like affordable childcare, and increasing tax credits and direct payments for families with children. They support **affordable housing and universal access to physical and mental health care**. They support **building a new green economy that works for Black, Brown and working-class people while taking on the crisis of climate change**, which is a threat to all children's futures.

So please, go out and vote today. It is our last day to cast our ballots for these well qualified, visionary, leaders. When people who share our stories and experiences govern with us, everyone will be taken care of.


- If you are in Chicago and need to find your polling location, you can go to <https://www.chicagoelections.gov/en/your-voter-information.html>. You can also vote at any of the [50 early vote sites](#) throughout the city today as well from 6am-7pm.
- If you are in one of the MANY other cities and towns that make up our organization, google "[town/city] board of election" (eg. Bloomington Board of Elections) to find your local election authority and information on your polling place.

If you have any time to give today to help elect these candidates, reply to this email and I'll connect you to a phone bank or volunteer location site.

Onward to a brighter future,


Hannah Gelder, Director of Movement Politics

Jennifer Ritter, Executive Director

[Dawn Dannenbring, Central IL Organizer](#) 

Allie Lichterman, Board Member, Chicago

Joe Grant, Board Member, Chicago

[Don Carlson, Board Member, Bloomington](#) 

Elizabeth Kosuth, Board Member, Bloomington

Conclusion

The lone pro-abortion tweet published by Illinois People's Action clearly reflects the pro-abortion mindset of its principle staff, Don Carlson and Dawn Dannenbring. The fact that Carlson and Dannebring both signed the ONE People's Campaign letter calling for protected and unrestricted access to abortion constitutes direct action on the part of Illinois People's Action. Furthermore, the fact that IPA is a dues-paying member and has had board member representation on the People's Action Institute - an organization with a history of promoting abortion as far back as 2012 - there is no way IPA should have ever been considered for a CCHD grant, further exposing the lie that is the CCHD's "vigorous vetting process."

