



The Opportunity Agenda

Building the National Will to Expand Opportunity in America

LATINO FAMILIES FOR HEALTHCARE AND OPPORTUNITY **COLOR'S Campaign to Defeat Amendment 48**

Colorado is one of seventeen states that allow for “initiated constitutional amendments”—amendments to the state constitution that come about through the initiative process. Anti-abortion organizations have vowed to use this process every two years to try to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and they seized on the 2008 general election as an opportunity to present Coloradans with the most radical anti-abortion/anti-reproductive justice measure ever: Amendment 48, a.k.a. “The Personhood Amendment,” which defined as a “person...any human being from the moment of fertilization.”

The Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Justice (COLOR) was part of the state’s mainstream pro-choice coalition, but as time went on, it became clear that the coalition’s organizing and communications strategies for combating Amendment 48 diverged from COLOR’s priorities in significant ways, especially around developing messages that would resonate with Latino/a voters. COLOR decided to build a parallel campaign: Latino Families for Healthcare and Opportunity.

COLOR’s challenge was to figure out how best to communicate a “No on 48” message for voters who did not prioritize abortion rights. They commissioned a poll of 604 likely Latino voters and learned that the strongest messages emphasized three themes: (1) Amendment 48 goes too far; (2) Amendment 48 does not respect the decisions of other families; and (3) Amendment 48 puts women’s health at risk. COLOR also learned that talking about Amendment 48 together with Amendment 46, an anti-affirmative action amendment, made voters more likely to vote “no” on *both issues*. Based on this research, Latino Families adopted the tagline, “Vote No On Amendments 48 and 46: They go too far and threaten our families and our future” and a campaign quote that would serve as the cornerstone of their messaging strategy: “Even if I would not have an abortion myself, I respect and support other families’ decision to do what is right for them.”

Throughout the early fall COLOR recruited campaign volunteers and held community forums and trainings. They worked hard to reinforce old alliances and build new ones with labor unions and progressive organizations. The linchpin of COLOR’s campaign strategy was door-knocking and canvassing. In the final weeks leading up to the election, COLOR and its partners distributed 50,000 pieces of Latino Families literature and 175,000 coalition pieces carrying COLOR’s message. A Latino Families ad played during peak drive time on several Spanish radio stations and a print ad, prepared in both English and Spanish, was placed in several newspapers.

In addition to helping to defeat Amendment 48 by a huge margin of victory (73% voted “no”), COLOR’s Latino Families for Healthcare and Opportunity Campaign brought in new supporters and volunteers and enhanced the organization’s stature and influence among both its constituents and its allies.