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SEIU Launches Largest Field Campaign in Union's History for 2012 Election

SEIU Members and Volunteers Will Target Communities of Color, Working Families and Union Households to Win Presidential and Down-Ballot Races

Washington, DC – The Service Employee's International Union (SEIU), the nation's fastest growing union with 2.1 million members, today is launching the largest and most-targeted political field campaign in the union's 91-year history to re-elect President Obama and win other key elections in eight battleground states.

The union will be targeting union and non-union members—with an emphasis on African American and Latino communities, younger voters, union households and other working people—on an unprecedented scale. By Election Day, the SEIU field campaign intends to connect with voters by making 13 million phone calls, knocking on more than 3 million doors and holding more than 1 million conversations across the country, with the majority of the work focused in Colorado, Florida, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin.

“Our boots-on-the-ground effort will be bold and targeted,” said Eliseo Medina, SEIU International Secretary Treasurer. “Far too much is at stake this election cycle. We are using our human and capital resources to stand by candidates who will stand up for working people and not return the country to failed policies of the past. We know our communities can make a difference when they go to the polls.”

The field campaign is part of SEIU's broad political program, which includes aggressive paid and volunteer GOTV efforts; large-scale civic engagement initiatives with community partners in the African American and Latino communities; major paid media campaigns; and coordinated voter education and voter protection programs to inform people of their rights. The political program's goal is to elect candidates who support working people and the 99% agenda: create good jobs here at home, rebuild an economy where everyone pays their fair share, invest in healthcare and other services for those in need and create a fair pathway to citizenship for every immigrant worker.

The launch of the SEIU field program comes on the heels of a joint SEIU/Priorities USA Action \$4 million Spanish-language TV and radio ad campaign in Colorado, Florida and Nevada. An ad released yesterday as part of that campaign features Mitt Romney's anti-immigrant rhetoric while a round of ads released last week highlights Latinos' reactions to Romney's own words on jobs and other key issues.

To view ads launched Monday, visit: <http://action.seiu.org/page/content/06152012/>

To view ads launched last week, visit: <http://action.seiu.org/page/content/06092012/>

SEIU member Jackie McElroy, a CNA from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, said, "Politics dominates the lives we lead as working people. But, Mitt Romney doesn't stand with working people. Romney is playing politics at the expense of our families and our communities. We cannot afford to have Mitt Romney voted into the White House so we have to make sure he doesn't win this election"

Beginning this week, rank and file SEIU members like Jackie McElroy will take time off their jobs and train to become member political organizers (MPOs) who will reach out to fellow union members as well as the general public, with a specific focus on African Americans, Latinos, union households and other working people. Over the coming months, nearly 732 SEIU members will become member organizers. The field program also includes a robust volunteer recruitment program with more than 100,000 union and non-union members volunteering to help reelect President Obama.

"We are going full force on this get out the vote effort because we cannot allow the voices of working people to be drowned out by corporations and elected officials beholden to the interests of the elite," said Gerry Hudson, SEIU international executive vice president. "Mitt Romney and other extremist candidates have made clear that their vision is an America where the rich get more of the nation's wealth, and the rest of us face cuts in critical services such as education and health care. Working people literally can't afford Romney's agenda."

"Our goal is to not only win the election, but to win with a mandate for decision makers to enact policies that benefit working families," said Brandon Davis, SEIU national political director. "The extreme, far-right agenda to suppress votes, scapegoat public workers, deny women access to health care, refuse to consider a fair pathway to citizenship, and otherwise drown out the voices of working people is not consistent with the nation's core values. The best way to ensure that all workers are valued and respected and that our communities and families thrive is to communicate what's at stake and get out the vote."

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With 2.1 million members in Canada, the United States and Puerto Rico, SEIU is the fastest-growing union in the Americas. Focused on uniting workers in healthcare, public services and property services, SEIU members are winning better wages, healthcare and more secure jobs for our communities, while uniting their strength with their counterparts around the world to help ensure that workers—not just corporations and CEOs—benefit from today's global economy. www.seiu.org