

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 11, 2022

Contact: [media@youthingov.org](mailto:media@youthingov.org)

310.909.4789



## YOUTH ORGANIZERS AND ORGANIZATIONS CALL FOR INCREASED REPRESENTATION OF YOUNG AMERICANS IN GOVERNMENT AFTER HISTORIC YOUTH TURNOUT IN 2022 MIDTERMS

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—Representing over three million young people, the 100+ youth-led and youth-serving organizations behind the [YouthInGov coalition](#) are calling for increased representation of Young Americans across the federal government.

Founded after the 2020 election, YouthInGov has been actively pushing for increased representation of young Americans (ages 18 and under). [The YouthInGov proposal calls for the creation of an Office of Young Americans and a Young Americans Advisory Council as well as empowering youth in existing positions.](#)

Over the last 20 months, the coalition has drafted an Executive Order, met with multiple departments/agencies in the Biden-Harris administration, and worked with allies in Congress. The coalition worked with the Future Forum Congressional Caucus to secure [language in the House-passed FY23 appropriations report](#) to support the creation of an Office of Young Americans and conducting a federal youth inclusion assessment.

Early results of the 2022 midterms indicate [historic youth voter turnout](#), and President Biden has already acknowledged the crucial role of young voters in [his press conference on November 9th](#) when he thanked the young people of the nation for once again voting in historic numbers.

“Even as votes are still being counted and the control of Congress remains unresolved, one thing is clear: young voters showed up to the polls in historic numbers. Similar to 2018 and 2020, young voters were THE deciding factors in many close races. As the generations that have shaped the current political environment through the social movements we have led and our high voter turnout rates, we have more than earned our seat at the decision making table,” said **Eve Levenson, YouthInGov Co-Founder and Lead Organizer**. “We have more than earned our seat at the decision-making table. While we have been pleased by the productive conversations we have had so far with the Administration and are thankful for our allies in Congress, there is also a sense of urgency. The time is NOW to make concrete and substantial changes to ensure Young Americans are not only looked to as stakeholders but viewed as partners in policymaking and governing. The youth movement is unified behind this proposal and we are eager to continue to work with Congressional and Administration allies.”

“Young people showed up in record numbers during these midterm elections — pushing Democrats across the finish line in multiple tough races. It is becoming more and more evident that we must give our youth a larger voice in government to solve the issues that will affect their generation the most. I’m incredibly proud of this historic turnout and look forward to continuing our work with partner organizations to advance our initiatives,” said **Representative Darren Sotro (FL-09), Executive Director of [Future Forum Congressional Caucus](#)**.

Representatives from numerous organizations in the coalition released the following statements in response to the preliminary youth vote numbers:

“In the 2022 midterms, Gen Z used our voices to influence election outcomes up and down the ballot. As the present and future of the United States, we are putting in the work to advocate for the issues that we care about -- from showing up to the polls to organizing in our hyper local communities across the nation. With the

increase of youth civic engagement, we deserve to have meaningful representation at the federal level,” said **Ava Mateo, [18 by Vote](#) Executive Director.**

“Across races, places and parties, millions of young people voted to protect our families and our futures. Trump Republicans engaged in a criminal conspiracy to overthrow the will of the people and then ran in the very elections they seek to eliminate, but young voters overcame their barriers to make our voices heard. The 2022 midterm election shows the immense power young voters hold and it’s time we have a real seat at the table. Looking forward to 2023, we will continue advocating for the Office of Young Americans and an Advisory Council of Young Americans to better represent our values,” said **Nick Guthman, [Blue Future](#) Co-President.**

“We have all seen mass acknowledgment nationally of the power of the Gen-Z voting block in this midterm election cycle, but what we must also acknowledge is the fact that campaigns & organizations across the country are staffed by young Americans who believe in fighting for freedom and progress. Many campaigns that had wildly successful elections had them not just because young people voted for what we believe in— but because young people organized around causes and candidates that invoked passion and strength. Our voices matter just as much as our votes and it is critical to the future of this nation that they continue to be heard. Clearly, when our elders and leadership listen— we’ve proven we can be extremely effective in moving this country forward” said **Olivia Julianna, [Gen-Z For Change](#) Director of Politics & Government Affairs.**

“Gen Z is on its way to becoming the largest voting bloc, and it’s clear that they’re wielding this power at the ballot box and beyond. This is especially true for young women. They’re doing politics their own way and care about issues more than candidates and even parties. They are ready and willing to ask the tough questions from those in power. This election should be an eye opener. Young people are passionate and motivated - and now, we need to harness that energy into further action. This administration can play an integral role in this by making a federal investment in young people and creating an Office of Young Americans. Gen Z is powerful, and they deserve a seat at the table,” said **Sara Guillermo, [IGNITE](#) CEO.**

“These midterm results confirmed what those of us who organize with Gen Z already knew: there is a bright future for the progressive movement and all those fighting for democracy, human rights and social justice. The youth voice doesn’t stop at the ballot box, we need them in legislative offices to help move policy into the future. At such a critical time in our country’s history it’s inspiring to see the overwhelming majority of young people stand up to defend our democracy and to reject far-right extremism, white nationalism and antisemitism,” said **Erin Beiner, [J Street U](#) Director.**

“As youth voter turnout delivers race-shifting results for the third election cycle in a row, Millennial and Gen-Z political power is undeniable. Young voters single handedly helped avoid the predicted red wave by rejecting extremism in favor of democracy and commonsense solutions to the issues that will affect the future of our nation. Gun violence is one of those motivating issues. The pathway to victory for candidates running in 2024 is to make bold commitments—like passing an assault weapons ban, raising the age to buy a firearm and requiring background checks for every gun he sale. Young people deserve for political institutions to prioritize their agenda, and they are willing to run for office to seize power if politicians can’t deliver these life-saving protections”, said **Lamia El-Sadek, [March For Our Lives](#) Executive Director.**

“Young voters turned out to stop extremist Republicans from taking power in this year’s midterms at higher rates than any other generation. At NextGen America, we could not be more proud of our work across the nation this cycle to register, engage, and turn out young voters. The power we just showed in this election proves that the youth vote is a reliable voting bloc that deserves a seat at every table in the country — especially at the federal level,” said **Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, [NextGen America](#) President.**

“On Tuesday Gen Z turned out in record numbers, dispelling condescending myths that ‘young people don’t vote.’ As young Americans, we are fully aware that we are the biggest stakeholders in our nation’s and our planet’s future. The composition of the federal government should reflect this reality. The White House and Congress must work expeditiously to make the YouthInGov Coalition’s recommendations a reality,” said **Sam Weinberg, [Path to Progress](#) Executive Director.**

“Two elections in a row, young people proved that we are a vital voting bloc that can and will be the bedrock of the Democratic Party. Youth turnout helped the Democrats defy political gravity. And still, these victories happened despite mass under-investment in us. Imagine what the margins would be if politicians actually fought for us. And if we had more young people represented in government, speaking directly to our generation. The lesson learned this cycle is that our leaders must take Gen Z seriously if they want to win,” said **Varshini Prakash**, [Sunrise Movement](#) Executive Director.

“After the Parkland shooting, young people consistently organized throughout the state of Florida and nationwide, as we hoped for a better future. Four years later, we elected our first member of Congress to represent our generation and turned out in record numbers to tell legislators that enough is enough. Gen-Z has faced the burdens of a multitude of policy failures- we are immigrants, experience racism, homelessness, rampant rates of gun violence, the brutal effects of climate change, and have been stripped of our body autonomy to have the choice of building the future we want. This midterms we took our power back and showed the world that we will be the generation that does not stand idly by in the face of oppression. As our futures are on the line, it is time for the administration to bring us to the table,” said **Isabella D’Alacio**, [Team ENOUGH](#) Executive Council Member.

“Since its inception, The Next 50 has supported next-generation candidates. In many battleground races, we were first to join the fight because we believe in the power of young people. Young voters have elevated a historic number of young leaders into office and it is now time for young Americans to have a partner in the White House,” said **Zak Malamed**, [The Next 50](#) Executive Director.

“Young people show up. We were pivotal to delivering major victories and protect key seats across the country, and voted for Democrats by significant margins in the 2022 midterms. We understand what is on the line and what it will take for us to continue moving the key issues we care about like winning a path to citizenship for millions, continuing to tackle the climate crisis, and securing a progressive economy that centers working people. Young people have always been on the precipice of leading mass movements, and Gen Z understands our political power at the voting booths. We need fresh leadership to reflect the needs and priorities in the way only young people can deliver,” said **Michelle Ming**, [United We Dream](#) Political Director.

“Despite being consistently told that young people do not vote, Gen Z turned out in huge numbers during the midterms. Young people are overwhelmingly pro-democracy, and Gen Z showed that we are excited and ready to take part in shaping what we want our future to look like. Voters between the ages of 18-29 were the deciding factor in dozens of races across the country, and that has everything to do with youth-led organizations and coalitions that spent countless days, weeks, and months working to reach every single young voter we could. Gen Z made our voices heard during these midterm elections, just like we did in 2018 and 2020, and will continue to do for 2024 and beyond. “Youth participation in government is critical to ensuring that everyone’s voices are represented — initiatives like YouthInGov will bring young people inside government and begin to give them the influence to enact positive change for our generation,” said **Santiago Mayer**, [Voters of Tomorrow](#) Executive Director.

“Young people showed up for this election and there is no denying their impact. Young voters ages 18-29 played a decisive role in tight races across the nation, further highlighting the importance of engaging young Americans and advancing the priorities of the nation’s largest and youngest constituency. Young voters deserve a seat at the table and it is time President Biden elevates our voice in a structural way that formalizes roles within the Administration as outlined in our coalition’s [demands](#). Young people must be included throughout our government - at every level of office and in this Administration,” said **Kristin McGuire**, [Young Invincibles](#) Executive Director.

“This midterm election is testament to the power of young voters to elect climate justice champions and fight back against politicians who continue to contribute to the destruction of our planet. Young people organized and showed up in this election to vote for our futures, and it’s time for young people to have a seat at the decision making table in the government that we helped create,” said **Zanagee Artis**, [Zero Hour](#) Executive Director.

###

### **About YouthInGov Proposal**

1) Create an Office of Young Americans (OYA) within the Executive Office of the President (EOP) that is led by a Director of Young Americans who sits at the Domestic Policy Council (DPC) and works with the National Security Council (NSC) and National Economic Council (NEC). Within the OYA, create an inter-agency working group co-chaired by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Director of the Office of Public Engagement (OPE)

2) Empower youth in existing administration positions by devoting a staffer within the Presidential Personnel Office (PPO) to hiring Young Americans; pursuing a study overseen by the inter-agency working group and OMB + OPE Directors to identify the best methods to assist agencies in equitably including Young Americans; and requiring the head of each agency to evaluate opportunities to increase coordination, communication, and engagement with community-based organizations focused on young people.

3) Create an Advisory Council of Young Americans composed of representatives from organizations who explicitly engage in activities closely related to Young Americans.

Read the Executive Order: [www.youthingov.org/eo](http://www.youthingov.org/eo)

**About the YouthInGov Coalition:** Coalition members of YouthInGov include: 18by Vote, 350.org, AMP Global Youth, Alliance for Youth Action, Alliance for Peacebuilding, American Conservation Coalition, Association of Young Americans, Blue Future, Bridge USA, CLASP, College Democrats of America, Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute, CWLA, Civics Unplugged, Climate Cardinals, Creative Reaction Lab, Earthday.org, Earth Guardians, Extinction Rebellion, Encode Justice, Future Coalition, GA Youth Justice Coalition, GenUP, Generation Ratify, Georgia Youth Organizers, High School Democrats of America, IGNITE National, Inclusive America, JStreet U, Junior State of America, Launch PAC, March For Our Lives, NAACP Youth and College, NAACP Y&C, National Action Network Youth and College Division, National Children's Campaign, National Crittenton, National Youth Employment Coalition, NextGen America, NextGen Chamber of Commerce, Our Turn, One Million of Us, One Up Action, Opportunity Youth United, Our Climate, Pay Our Interns, Planned Parenthood Generation Action Fund, Path to Progress, Plus Peace, Plus1Vote, Policy Initiatives Institute, Redefy, Revolution Coalition Network, Rise, SafeBAE, Search for Common Ground, Student Basic Needs Coalition, Student Debt Crisis, Student Voice, Sunrise Movement, The Greater Good Initiative, Team ENOUGH, The Next 50, The Sadie Collective, Think of Us, TurnUP Activism, United We Dream, Voters of Tomorrow, Women in Politics, Y'22, Youth Activism Project, Youth Climate Action Team Inc, Youth Jobs Connect, Young Democrats of America, Young Invincibles, Zero Hour, and more.

To learn more about Youth in Gov, please visit [www.youthingov.org](http://www.youthingov.org).