The Ohio Unity Coalition is an affiliate of the national Unity Voter Empowerment Campaign covened by the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation

A coalition of faith, labor, civil and voter rights groups along with community activists launched the Stand Your Ground... Vote, 2012 Ohio Voter Empowerment Tour in Cincinnati this past weekend dispatching a mobile voter registration unit staffed by trained volunteers to various community events to help register new voters, verify voters' registration status, and provide citizens with non-partisan information about the upcoming election. "We registered over 100 new voters over the weekend,"says Petee Talley, convener of the Ohio Unity Coalition. "Thirtyvolunteers were trained on the process to register voters and looking up individual voter registration information to verify voter registration status. In addition to registering and verifying status, we are targeting voters who have moved or changed their names allowing them to update their registration."

Cincinnati is the first stop of a multi-city tour across Ohio. Other cities on the tour include: Dayton, Columbus, Youngstown, Akron, Cleveland, Lorain and Toledo. The mobile unit will remain in each city 7 to 10 days.

Election advocates estimate that as many as 1.3 million Ohio voters have been purged from the voter rolls since the last presidential election cycle. The Stand Your Ground... Vote, 2012 Ohio Voter Empowerment Tour is one of the many vehicles theOhio Unity Coalition will employ to educate voters and make sure eligible voters are prepared to fully participate in the fall 2012 election.

Unity Coalition partners include: Corinthian Baptist Church, The Cincinnati Labor Council, The Cincinnati Chapter of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute, The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, AFL-CIO, AMOS, AFSCME, Greater New Hope Baptist Church, United Pastors In Mission,

Youngstown Community Mobilization Coalition, Ohio Prince Hall Masons, Baptist Pastors Conference of Greater Cincinnati, and State Representative Alicia Reece.

Local leaders were excited to partner in this effort, stated Pastor KZ Smith of Corinthian Baptist Church. "Every person needs to be able to exercise their voice and their vote in this election." Pastor Smith continued, "If we do our part to educate and engage voters, we are empowering them to use the vote that many of us fought so hard to obtain. Our rights have been threatened by voter suppression tactics in recent years and this is our way to Stand Our Ground."

The Ohio Unity Coalition is an affiliate of the national Unity Voter Empowerment Campaign covened by the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (www.ncbcp.org). The Unity Campaign works nationally with APRI, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Cost of Freedom Project, Black Youth Vote, Black Women's Roundtable, and other groups to ensure that Black voters are prepared for the presidential election. For details about tour stops in Ohio or for more information about the Unity Coalition email ohiounitycoalition@att.net , text "unity12" to 69302, or call toll free at 1-888-614-0844.

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