

NH Democracy Defenders Action Guide

The New Hampshire Democracy Defenders, consists of progressive organizations across New Hampshire, including: New Hampshire Youth Movement, Rights & Democracy, 350 NH, Black Lives Matter Nashua, Black Lives Matter Seacoast, Never Again Action NH, NH Progressive Coalition, American Friends Service Committee (NH), Granite State Interfaith Action Fund, Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), and Frontline.

As a coalition, we are prepared to leverage the power of the people in response to the outcome of the 2020 election to protect the democratic process, grow our movement, and move NH closer to a livable future with good jobs, education, and healthcare for all.

PLEASE NOTE: These materials are intended for NH Democracy Defenders leaders, not the general public. This document should be **kept internal to NH Democracy Defenders leaders only (i.e those leading or holding roles in actions, and members & staff of coalition organizations).**

The purpose of this guide is to inform leaders across the state of critical information about what to expect and what we will do. It includes information about: the political context of this moment, post-election-day scenarios, and a unified strategy, including the following:

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[The Social Media Toolkit can be found here](#)

[The abridged version of this guide can be found here](#)

Overview + Political Context

We know this election year is very different from most. While the country battles a pandemic, widespread unemployment, and economic collapse, the very integrity of our elections is also at stake. For the past 40+ years, the right has sown distrust in the electoral process and sought to actively suppress voting across the country. Their attempts to undermine democracy, combined with heightened political tension of the Trump era, places the 2020 election in a precarious situation that is ripe for the right, and Trump, to undermine the voting process and the election results themselves in a desperate attempt to cling to power despite the will of the people.

In the face of national hardship, and despite the right's voter suppression, early voting turnout has broken records across the country, and turnout in general is expected to be record breaking. Now, more than ever, the people are demanding their voices be heard in deciding the leadership of this country. On November 3rd, the votes will begin to be counted. **It is up to us to be leaders in this moment and, in the event of a desperate power grab, demand every vote be counted and democratically elected leaders be sworn into office in a peaceful transition of power.**

Our strategy is to:

1. Create confidence, clarity, and enthusiasm in the election and vote-counting process.
2. Mobilize and escalate to fight back against attempts to halt the counting of mail-in ballots and to ensure the next administration is chosen by the people.
3. Demand institutions, leaders, officials go on record committing to defend the voice of the people if Trump attempts to cling to power.

Principles

1. **We are a diverse, intergenerational movement to guarantee that every vote is counted and that the legitimate outcome of the election is respected.** We come from all walks of life, but are united around the belief that we must push our country to live up to its promise and potential.
2. **Only we, the people, have the power to ensure that every vote is counted.** No one institution, party, or leader alone can ensure the legitimacy of this election. By showing up and bringing our friends, family, and neighbors into this fight, we can make sure America's next president is democratically chosen by the people of this country and that public officials do everything in their power to ensure a fair outcome.

3. **We are nonviolent because we need to win.** Our success depends largely on our numbers and strategy. Violence is the tool our opponents use to spread fear and distract from our message. We refuse to be provoked into violence or deterred by it, and we also refuse to give our opposition any appearance of legitimacy in responding to us with violence; instead, we will remain focused on our collective goal and message and take care of each other as we engage in nonviolent struggle. When we encounter people in public who we disagree with or who oppose us, we will acknowledge their humanity and treat them accordingly, even when they refuse to do the same for us.

[Find additional principles in a Statement of Unity here.](#)

Scenarios

We predict one of four possible scenarios resulting after election day. The table below outlines these scenarios, their likelihood, what might happen immediately following election day, and our planned response and top-line messages. While these scenarios are likely, no one can be certain what will happen. As the post-election scenario develops, all updates and strategic shifts [will be communicated through the NH Democracy Defenders Slack](#). **It is critical to success that all leaders are well informed of the situation and the corresponding strategy.**

These scenarios are informed by research and planning conducted by NHYM and leaders of the broader national Movement—like People’s Action, Center for Popular Democracy, Sunrise, Dream Defenders, and the Movement for Black Lives. NH Democracy Defenders accepts these scenarios as reasonably likely, and agrees that we need to prepare ourselves to address any and all such scenarios. As a whole, the national Movement is aligned in anticipating these possible outcomes and the corresponding response.

Scenario	Likelihood	How It Might Look	How We Respond	Top-line Message
Trump contests election results	Very likely	On election night, Trump holds early lead from in-person voting. With many absentee ballots uncounted, Trump hastily claims victory and seeks to undermine the process of counting the remaining votes—which will	Mobilize at the State House in Concord on the 4th with the demand “Count Every Vote”. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If NH has been called, this in solidarity with other states.• If there are problems in NH, we will call on the Secretary of State to count every vote.• If it’s clear Biden has won NH, we will call on Governor Sununu and other institutions to validate the legitimacy of the NH results.	“Count every vote” This country is based on the principles and process of democracy—the democratic process must be followed. Every vote must be counted, in NH and across the country. “Trump is

		likely favor Biden and narrow Trump's initial lead, potentially leading to a Biden win once they are counted. States may stop counting votes, invalidate votes, or bring cases to the courts.		desperate" Trump is weak and powerless against the people. He is cheating in a desperate attempt to retain power.
Trump wins the Electoral College, but loses popular vote	Less likely	Similar to 2016, Trump loses the popular vote (potentially by millions), but wins the Electoral College votes of key states, leading him to win the election through the Electoral College.	Mobilize for continuous days of protest, strikes, boycotts, and other nonviolent actions to publicly deny the legitimacy of Trump and call for his resignation (similar to Puerto Rico against Governor Rossello). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target politicians to dismantle the electoral college system. Shut down business as usual until Trump resigns. 	"Resign now" The people, not the electoral college, should determine who becomes our President. We are calling for the resignation of Trump and the abolition of the electoral college.
Clear Biden victory	Less likely	On election night, or soon after, Biden is the undisputable winner. Trump concedes the race, but some of his supporters may not accept that.	If Biden clearly wins, the right will have the choice to back Trump in his attempt to maintain power or concede to the democratic process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will likely result in increased fracturing in the Republican party, we should utilize that polarization to bring more people into our movement. Even if Trump himself concedes, we may need to mobilize against those unwilling to accept that result. In a clear Biden victory, we must also demand that Biden be bold and fight hard for the change we need. We must immediately begin pushing him and holding him accountable to his promises.	"Our work doesn't end here. Fight with us" Make it clear WHO won this election for Biden (BIPOC, young people, etc.) and that we will continue pushing him on our issues when he takes office.
Clear Trump victory	Less likely	On election night, or soon after, Trump is the undisputable	Respond with direct action, and unique messaging, to channel the inevitable public outcry to grow our movement to	While Trump and his enablers have won the election, we've built a

		winner. Biden concedes the race.	fight back in the next four years.	multi-racial cross-class movement across NH and the nation that will continue to show up in the streets and keep pushing for a livable future with good jobs, healthcare and education for all.
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Structure

November 7 is a statewide day of action, in which thousands of people will take direct action across New Hampshire in a coordinated effort to support the national Movement to demand every vote be counted and democratically elected leaders be sworn in. The structure of this day of action is designed to empower any person in NH, regardless of experience, to lead an action in their community. Through this guide and its resources, any ally in this movement has what they need to plan and lead an action.

Distribution

November 7 is a *distributed* day of action across New Hampshire. This means that actions will happen throughout the state—from small towns, to the biggest cities—in a variety of formats—from street corner visibility, to massive protests—all coordinated in goal, strategy, targets, and messaging. Every action, no matter its size or location, is powerful.

Action leaders throughout the state will plan actions in their communities that take on their own unique styles and variations of tactics, while remaining aligned with the goal, strategy, targets, and messaging of this coalition.

Distribution makes our actions more powerful by bringing them home to our communities and directly engaging our neighbors. Disciplined alignment makes the statewide response more powerful by sending a clear, unified message to be right targets.

Leadership

Action leaders should look for leadership from leaders of the NH Democracy Defenders. These leaders have been identified by the coalition members and will identify themselves to you once you are plugged in as an Action Leader.

Updates, changes, and other important information will be communicated to all Action Leaders through the [NH Democracy Defenders Slack](#) or directly to individuals through Slack.

Resources

Action Leaders should use these resources to help with planning and executing their actions:

- [Action Planning Template](#): This is a template to assist with planning all the aspects of your action. Some parts of it are already filled out with the specific details of these actions.
- [Social Media Toolkit](#): This is a toolkit for messaging your action through social media. It has extensive guidelines, suggestions, and examples of good messaging.
- [Action Guide 2-Pager](#): This is a shorter version of this guide to quickly get role leaders the most important information.

Communication

For planning and strategic coordination: The main platform for communication is Slack. [Join the NH Democracy Defenders Slack here!](#) Slack can be used in your web browser, or as an app on your computer or phone. **Only action leaders or people in action roles should be added to Slack. Only add people you know and trust.**

Communication during your action: We highly recommend using Signal to communicate securely during your action. [Download Signal here!](#) Make a group chat with all people in action roles to communicate quickly and securely.

Messaging

Topline Narrative Frame:

Most of us believe that everyone counts, no matter our race, accent, financial worth, or zip code. This year has tested us like no other—our health, our livelihoods, and our humanity. Through it all, we've counted on one another to care for our loved ones, make ends meet, and make a better future. Now, we count on us to be voters and raise our voices to swear in a new government elected by, and for, us.

After abusing the office of the presidency for nearly four years to enrich himself and his friends at our expense, Trump is trying to bully and cheat his way through an election he knows he's losing. He and his enablers hope that by sowing doubt, amplifying cynicism, and dividing us based on what we look like or where we come from, they can stop us from coming together as voters. But, they've got another thing coming.

From big cities to suburbs to small towns, we are Americans from all walks of life uniting across our differences to deliver our voices and votes for an America where everyone counts. Just as generations past came together to demand women's suffrage and civil rights, we count on us to make the future. We are building a country where our leaders act in our interests and where we have a basic level of respect and decency toward one another in and between our communities.

By turning out in record numbers across race and place today to demand local and state officials count every vote, we will deliver a future where we count on each other and where everyone counts, no exceptions.

[Consult the full messaging and social media toolkit here!](#)

NH Timeline

These dates and events may change depending on the scenario following election day. All updates and changes will be communicated [via Slack](#).

Date	Event
11/3 - Election Night	National organizations will host a call at 11 PM to debrief what we know at that time and give clarity on the direction moving forward.
11/4 - Rally for Democracy	Rally at the State House in Concord , NH to demand that all votes are counted in NH and throughout the country (more likely in solidarity with other states than solely or particularly in response to what's happening in NH). Start seeding the idea that as a prominent Republican governor, Sununu will have an important role to play in validating national election results if Trump refuses to concede to Biden. Recruit leaders for distributed actions on the 7th.
11/5 - Call: Plugging into Actions (6-7:30 PM)	Call to plug people into distributed action planning. Will share the distributed action guide and have different breakout rooms depending on which part of the state people are in. In the event that Biden has been declared winner and Trump is refusing to concede, call on Sununu to congratulate Biden on his victory.
11/7 - Day of Action	Day of action in NH and across the country . Messaging and actions to be determined based on the scenario. Actions confirmed in the following areas: Concord Manchester Keene Hanover Peterborough Dover Portsmouth

	Exeter Laconia Plymouth
11/8 - 11/22 - Rapid Response Organizing	We will need to continue to respond to events as needed. More planning will be needed as the situation develops. There will be major needs for training and absorption. Coalition leadership will likely have a retreat for longer term planning.

Tactics

The main tactic used in these actions will be mass protest in the form of rallies or marches — thousands of people turning out in public spaces with a unified message and demand.

This tactic of activating lots of people and physically turning out to disrupt 'business as usual' is intended to (1) assert public pressure on key targets with power to meet our demands, (2) bring this issue into the media and public consciousness, and (3) grow our movement by engaging the public in direct action.

Action leaders are encouraged to be creative in their action by incorporating art, songs and chants, speakers, and creative elements.

Here are resources to help:

[Action Planning Template](#)

- [Printable list of songs](#)
- [List of chants](#)
- [198 methods of Nonviolent Action](#)

Targets

Name	Position & Power	Scenario
Governor Chris Sununu	Chris Sununu (R) is the governor of NH. He must certify the electors that will reflect the results of the NH election in the	We will target Gov. Sununu in these possible scenarios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biden has clearly won NH, but Sununu has not certified the electors

	<p>Electoral College.</p> <p>He also holds social power as a republican politician. If republicans across the country are refusing to accept the results of the election, his position on the election can influence other republican governors and politicians.</p>	<p>to vote for him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biden has clearly won the country, but Trump has not conceded and Sununu has not affirmed Biden's victory
<p>Secretary of State Bill Gardener</p>	<p>Bill Gardner is the Secretary of State. He oversees all election and voting processes in New Hampshire. He has power over polling locations and operations, vote counting, and validating votes.</p>	<p>We will target SOS Gardener in these possible scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NH has stopped counting votes or the voting process is otherwise disrupted • NH is too close to call • Trump or Biden call for a NH recount

[See further notes here](#)