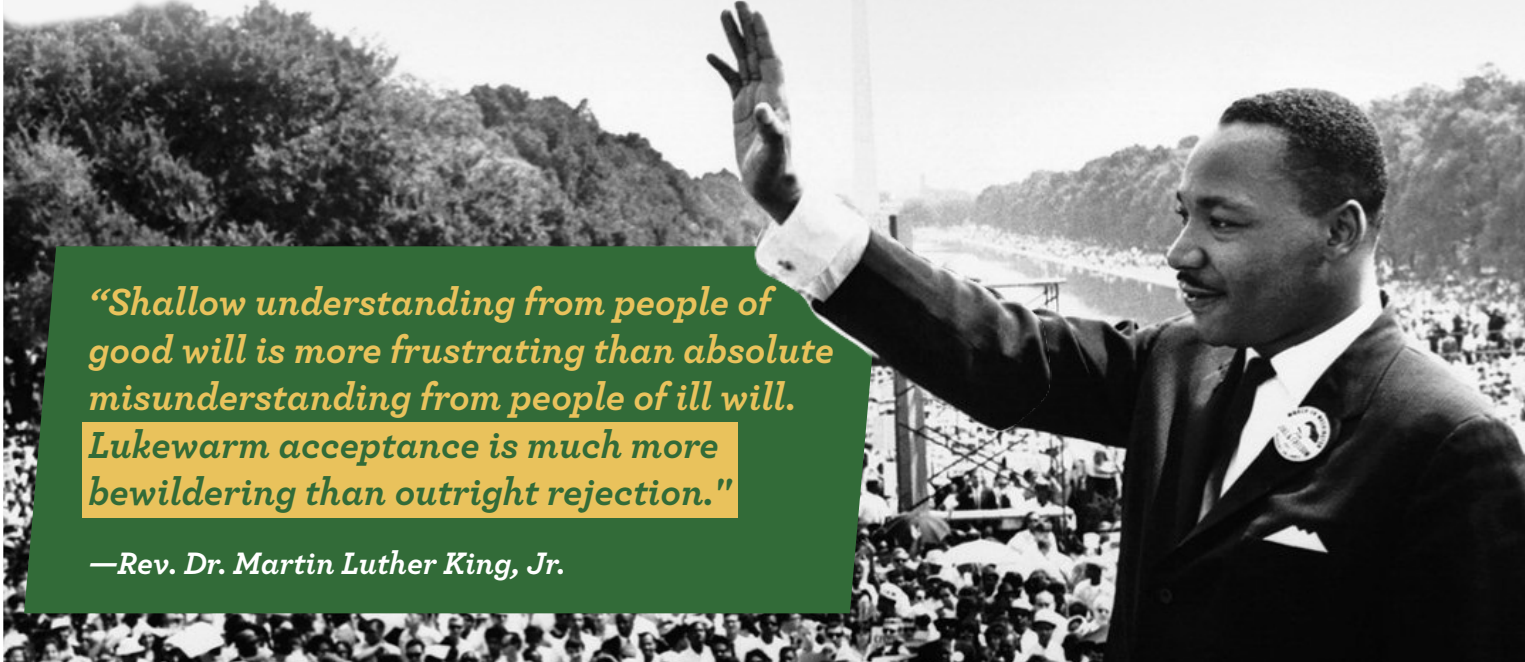


# TAKE A FIRM STANCE AGAINST RACISM

## Advancement Project National Office Reflects on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail"



*"Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will.*

*Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection."*

—Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Rooted in the great human rights struggles for equality and justice, Advancement Project National Office exists to fulfill America's promise of a caring, inclusive and just democracy.**

**Much like Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, "Letter from Birmingham Jail," we take a firm stance against racism and its fierce legacy in America. Dr. King did so by directly challenging people of "genuine goodwill" in his letter, putting the vulnerability of Black and Brown pain on full display and urging that it no longer be denied by those of "shallow understanding."**

Advancement Project National Office challenges the systems that uphold racist dynamics in America, such as our injustice system, by building power at the local level.

- We use innovative tools and strategies to strengthen social movements and achieve high impact policy change.
- We envision a future where people of color are free – where they can thrive, be safe and exercise power.
- We are driven by the genius of ordinary people and their movements.
- We believe that a world where racism no longer exists and justice is radically transformed is possible.



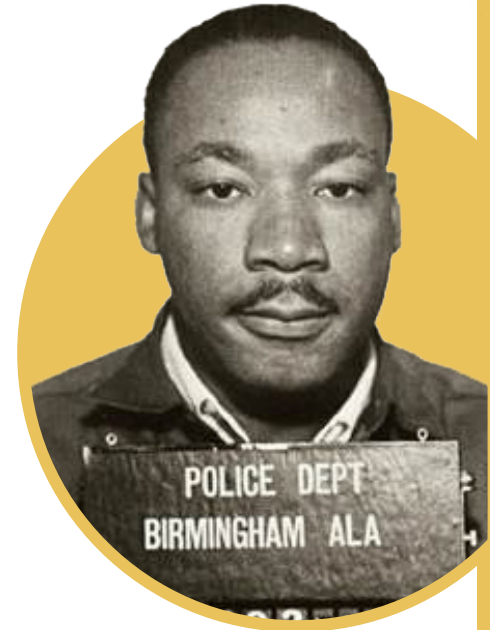
# What does that look like?

Our organization recognizes the historically racist nature of the American criminal legal system and its disproportionate impact on low-income communities of color. We know that modern day mass incarceration represents the largely uninterrupted outgrowth of policies and laws starting with the legalized slavery that built the United States of America, continuing to reconstruction era Black codes, and followed by the debt peonage and convict leasing that replaced it. Similarly, Jim Crow laws grew into the Drug War, broken windows policing, stop and frisk, and Rockefeller Drug laws. The impacts of these policies, codes, and laws were and are far-reaching, as Dr. King underscored and foreshadowed in his 1963 letter.

The steady expansion of the carceral state and its overlap with capitalist enterprises (including obscenely high charges for phone calls while incarcerated, unaffordable fees for electronic monitoring, and the broad spectrum of commercial supplies sold to the state for those it cages) make up the prison industrial complex, which we at Advancement Project National Office work to dismantle each and every day.

Whether it is the creation and selective enforcement of trespassing, vagrancy, and panhandling laws or the disparities in traffic stops and mandatory sentencing for drug cases, the legal system's systematic criminalization of Black and Brown communities reflects our nation's most pernicious strains of racism and plays an integral part of maintaining white supremacy in the United States.

**As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we are honored to do this work, building on the legacies of greats such as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**



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