

2025 Spring Campaigns Council Report: We Power DC

Submitted on: April 1st

Leadership

List the members of your leadership and their roles. Identify any gaps in leadership positions.

Co-chair: Claire Mills

Co-chair: Matt Sehrsweeney

Comms circle lead: Harrison Pyros and (VACANT)

Research-Legislative circle leads: Kevin Wu, Trum DeFries, and Marli Kasdan

Member engagement circle lead: Claudia Davis and (VACANT)

Community engagement leads

- Wheat pasting coordinator: (VACANT)
- Canvassing coordinator: (VACANT)

Roster Count

Core <i>(active weekly or leadership)</i>	Involved <i>(active monthly/bimonthly)</i>	Orbital <i>(active for wide calls to action)</i>
~10-12	~25	~70(?)

Campaign Overview

Issue	Demand
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<p>What is the problem you are trying to address?</p> <p><i>Ex. Wards 7 and 8 in DC only have 3 grocery stores, creating a food desert.</i></p>	<p>What is the solution to that problem that this working group proposes?</p> <p><i>Ex. Establish a District government run grocery store in each Ward through Council legislation.</i></p>
<p>Pepco's high energy rates and unforgiving payment policies leave many residents in a cycle of late payments and under constant threat of shutoffs. Nearly a quarter of DC residents owe money to Pepco, and over 80% of low-income residents are consistently in utility debt. Even as residents face looming shutoffs and struggle to pay their bills, Pepco actively lobbies to raise rates.</p> <p>In a city with some of the country's most ambitious climate goals, Pepco has dragged its feet on the green energy transition. Not only has the corporate giant shown little ambition towards clean power sources, but it's also actively hindered pushes for residential solar adoption.</p>	<p>We Power DC is fighting for a power system that works for and is owned by the residents of the District of Columbia –one that works transparently and democratically to fight the climate crisis and meet everyone's needs regardless of their ability to pay.</p> <p>We Power DC is a coalition of community members and organizations fighting for public power in the District. We need public power to ensure we have a clean, affordable, and equitable energy system for every DC resident.</p>

Strategy and Tactics				
	Strategy	Tactics	Timeline	Marker of Success

	<i>What will you do to make your demand a reality in 2025?</i>	<i>What will that strategy look like as organizing tasks?</i>	<i>When do you plan to do these tactics?</i>	<i>How will you measure progress towards your demand through this strategy?</i>
Ex.	<p>1. Mobilize resident support</p> <p>2. Build legislative buy in</p>	<p>Canvass for signers on pledge in support; table at farmer's markets; attend events by other organizations to build coalition relationships</p> <p>Write an ANC resolution to be passed in Wards 7 and 8; write a research white paper outlining the need; meet with Ward 7 (and 8) Councilmembers</p>	<p>1 canvass a month, 1 tabling event a month, 5 organizers attending community meetings at least every other month</p> <p>White paper by end of spring; Summer ANC campaign; meeting requests in fall</p>	<p># of pledge signers</p> <p># of views on white paper # of ANC resolutions # of meetings with Councilmembers</p>
1	Build broad understanding amongst DC residents of the evils of Pepco and the investor owned utility model and the benefits of the public power alternative	<p>Door to door canvassing across all wards in DC to collect public power pledge signatures (and potentially additional asks)</p> <p>Wheat pasting across all wards</p> <p>Political education events</p>	<p>1 canvass per month</p> <p>1 wheat pasting event per month</p> <p>3 political education events throughout the year</p>	<p>500 new public power pledge signers</p> <p>Meaningful turnout for secondary asks (e.g. 150 comments on PSC docket for a rate case)</p>
2	Build a strong, well-researched case for public power in DC	Publish a white paper on the evils of pepco and municipalization in DC	White paper published by mid may	<p>500 page views for white paper</p> <p>1 instance of local</p>

				press coverage of white paper
3				
4	(if needed)			
5	(if needed)			

Learning		
	What is a barrier to achieving each strategy outlined above?	What could you do to address that barrier?
Ex.	<i>Low DSA member density in Wards 7 and 8</i>	<i>Attend other community organizations events to build relationships and trust; partner with DSA formations to host more DSA socials and events in these wards</i>
1	Capacity to organize and run successful ongoing canvassing and wheat pasting operations	Strengthen our ladder of engagement and leadership development practices to build up new leaders that can run each operation
2	Capacity and necessary skills and experience to write rigorous research brief	Effective onboarding, leadership, and coordination of research circle
3	Difficulty with penetrating local news ecosystem and broader local political consciousness to make a splash with the white paper	Start coordinating comms strategy early, establish press contacts, design effective comms package, plan event(s)

4	(if needed)	
5	(if needed)	

Celebrating our Wins		
	Highlight any wins so far in 2025, or end of 2024 not yet reported, for your formation.	Identify factors that made this win possible.
1	First draft of white paper is completed. This will be the foundational document to the campaign and is utilized to push for public power and the legal/financial mechanisms towards that goal.	Matt, Kevin, and others on the research team have worked consistently over the weeks doing research, constructing arguments, and compiling sources for this paper. This helps legitimize the campaign around tangible numbers and a plausible political pathway. Additionally, team members have worked their networks to have the white paper reviewed/edited by industry experts in the academic and utility spaces.
2	Completed 2 successful wheatpasting campaigns across Ward 1 and 4.	Co-chairs and member engagement teams have consistently worked the DSA newsletter, WPDC's own contacts, and formerly engaged individuals. Consistent 1v1 outreach and dedicated Slack channels have helped bring out crowds of 30+ to wheatpaste.
3	About doubled engaged members.	Same reasons as above, including uptick in communications across social media and website

		content.
4	Uptick in campaign recognition.	The campaign's materials and announcements are placed across social media and varying newsletters (DSA's Weekly Update, WPDC's Update, 730DC, etc). Additionally, local DC journalists have responded to tips and social media threads regarding Pepco bills and PUC changes that were glossed over in the past.
5	Newly designed graphics and website.	WPDC has 2 new graphics which we are using for wheatpasting and other visual materials (ex. thumbnails). Additionally, the website receives consistent (3-5) interest form responses as content is posted weekly on public power, Pepco's antics, and other news.