National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

organizing & training
case study

Legislative Battles

Garden State Equality

SITUATION

When high-priority legislative battles require intensive grassroots lobby campaigns, Task Force organizers work alongside statewide LGBT groups. In 2006, three Task Force organizers joined efforts with Garden State Equality (GSE) – New Jersey's statewide LGBT group working to advance marriage equality — to pass marriage equality legislation.

STRATEGY/SOLUTION

From start to finish, our team worked hand-in-hand with GSE to draft and implement a first-ever statewide field plan. In collaboration with other national and statewide partners, our organizers took key roles in managing a unprecedented and aggressive field plan that generated over 12,000 postcards and 2,000 phone calls from New Jersey voters to their legislators. The team also organized 47 house parties across the state, which were critical for launching the 10-day field effort.

RESULT

While the New Jersey legislature fell short of passing a marriage equality bill, the legislature passed the strongest civil unions bill in the nation, and the momentum created from this historic campaign has set the long-term stage for marriage equality legislation to pass.

In just four weeks, the number of pro-marriage-equality legislators went from 6 to 24, including key legislative leaders previously opposed to the issue.