**Proposal: Convening the Progressive Infrastructure**

Moving America in a progressive direction requires a broad infrastructure. We must support not only the individual building blocks necessary for an ecosystem of change, but the ecosystem itself. The DA has taken the critical first step in this work by mapping the progressive infrastructure. The next step is to understand the relationships between the members of this network and how they can best work together to move America forward. To this end, we ask the DA to consider convening the leaders of the organizations on the Progressive Infrastructure Map.

At a 1-2 day convening, leaders can be asked to think strategically about the needs of the progressive infrastructure as a whole, through exercises that take them out of their own boxes. They can be inspired by visioning goals for the field, and encouraged to explore collaborative opportunities. DA partners who choose to attend can participate in actually shaping the field through these conversations. Most of all, DA staff would be in a position to better understand these relationships so as to help move the field forward; the work of the Nathan Cumming Foundation with the Jewish social justice community ([Visioning Justice, 2008](http://www.nathancummings.org/jewish/vj_final_0428.pdf)) could be one model.

**DA Definition of the Progressive Infrastructure Map**

The 2012-2014 Investment Recommendations will concentrate our collective energy on a smaller number of organizations that provide the tools to the broader, essential infrastructure that is moving America in a more progressive direction. But we know that this Aligned Network cannot do it all themselves, so we are encouraging support for all of the organizations we have recommended in the past and many others that form the infrastructure that develops progressive content, distributes it in innovative ways to engage key constituencies in a constant conversation at the local, state and national level….

Our focus is on continuing to build the foundation for sustainable and long term progress.  We understand that elections are a critical element to that, but our hallmark in the broader funding community is that we understand that progress requires more than investing in the ephemeral cycles of elections.  We understand that progress is only possible through long term commitments of support to the building blocks for an ecosystem of change.  Many of the capacities we’ve seeded are now represented on the Progressive Infrastructure Map, but we still understand their key role in our shared effort to keep America moving forward.