

BLACK IN NEW JERSEY

2021/2022 AGENDA

TO MAKE

BLACK LIVES REALLY MATTER

IN NEW JERSEY

The undeniable truth that Black Lives Matter is being tested everywhere in America.

From the ravaging of Black communities by the coronavirus pandemic, to persistent violence by police against Black people, to disparities in wealth, health and criminal justice, we are seeing our very foundation erupt into earthquakes from the deeply embedded cracks of structural racism.

This is true right here in New Jersey, where Black people face some of the worst racial disparities in America.

We must seize this urgent moment to repair these cracks of structural racism and build a new foundation.

Stand with us in holding all elected officials accountable to make **Black lives really matter in the Garden State** by supporting the following action agenda:

To close the racial wealth gap

- Baby Bonds
- Guaranteed Income
- Cancellation of Student Loan Debt
- Expanded Homeownership

To transform the youth justice system

- Youth Prison Closure & Investment in Kids
- Community-Based System of Care for Youth

To keep communities safe

- Culture of Accountable Policing
- Investments in Community-Based Public Safety Options

To ensure democracy for all

- Voting for People in Prison
- Same-Day Voter Registration
- Early Voting
- Racial Justice in Redistricting
- Right to Jury Service for People with Criminal Convictions
- Limited Police Presence at Voting Locations

To repair the harm of divestment from NJ's Black communities

- COVID-19 Racial Data
- Reparations Task Force

TO CLOSE THE RACIAL WEALTH GAP:

- **Baby Bonds.** Create and fully fund a universal baby bonds program that is progressively designed to provide the greatest support to children of color from low-wealth households (A1579/S768)
- **Guaranteed Income.** Develop and resource targeted guaranteed income pilot programs in northern, central and southern New Jersey urban communities
- **Cancel Student Loan Debt.** Cancel student loan debt and avoid future student debt with expansion of tuition-free college and increased state investments in higher education
- **Expand Homeownership.** Strengthen New Jersey's existing homeownership programs and launch new initiatives to meet the specific needs of Black families and reduce racial homeownership disparities

TO TRANSFORM THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM:

- **Close Youth Prisons, Invest in Kids.** Close New Jersey's three youth prisons and invest \$100 million into creating a lockbox fund for front-end youth services and programs
- **Implementation of a Community-Based System of Care for Youth.** Pass and sign the Restorative and Transformative Justice for Youths and Communities Pilot Program bill (A4663/S2924) to develop restorative justice hubs and enhanced reentry services for the young people being released from New Jersey's youth prisons in response to the COVID-19 crisis (Signed into law on August 11, 2021)

TO KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE:

- **Build a Culture of Accountable Policing.** Ensure that law enforcement is guided by policies and systems designed to build a culture of accountability that are created and implemented through engagement with community members:
 - First Amendment Directive to protect civilians' rights during police interactions (Issued by the Attorney General on December 7, 2021)
 - Limiting military-grade equipment available to local law enforcement agencies through the federal 1033 program
 - Banning and criminalizing police use of chokeholds (A1370/S265)
 - Ending law enforcement qualified immunity
 - Creating municipal civilian complaint review boards (A1515)
 - Reducing police enforcement of non-serious offenses, particularly for youth

TO KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE: (continued)

- **Invest in Community-Based Public Safety Options.** Rethink policing by investing in community-based approaches to public safety that will decrease law enforcement's footprint:
 - Developing mental health first responder and crisis intervention systems that rely on highly trained professionals other than police to address certain crises
 - Reinvesting dollars into community-based services that empower communities—like schools, hospitals, libraries and parks
 - Funding restorative justice programs and services

TO ENSURE DEMOCRACY FOR ALL:

- **Free the Vote for People in Prison.** Restore the right to vote to incarcerated people
- **Same-Day Voter Registration.** Enact same-day voter registration, including on Election Day (A1966/S247)
- **Early Voting.** Enact comprehensive early voting using e-poll books (A4830/S3203) (Signed into law on March 30, 2021)
- **Racial Justice in Redistricting.** Guarantee that New Jersey's racial makeup is effectively represented in the redistricting process
- **Right to Jury Service for People with Criminal Convictions.** Restore the right to serve on a jury for people with criminal convictions
- **Limited Police Presence at Voting Locations.** Ensure voters can cast their ballot without fear by limiting police presence at voting locations except for emergency response (A4655/S2923) (Signed into law on January 18, 2022)

TO REPAIR THE HARM OF DIVESTMENT FROM NEW JERSEY'S BLACK COMMUNITIES:

- **Produce COVID-19 Racial Data.** Ensure the Department of Health maintains and regularly updates COVID-19 impact data by race, ethnicity and other key demographics at the municipal and county levels (in compliance with P.L.2020, c.28) (Municipal data released and updated in 2021 to ensure compliance)
- **Establish Reparative Justice.** Create the New Jersey Reparations Task Force (A938/S386)