

BLACK IN NEW JERSEY

2024-2025 ACTION AGENDA

>3:1 BLACK TO WHITE INFANT MORTALITY
2ND HIGHEST DISPARITY IN U.S.

59% INCARCERATED PEOPLE DENIED
THE VOTE WHO ARE BLACK
(VS 15% POPULATION)

29:1 BLACK TO WHITE KIDS LOCKED UP
HIGHEST DISPARITY IN U.S.

12:1 BLACK TO WHITE ADULTS INCARCERATED
HIGHEST DISPARITY IN U.S.

5:1 BLACK TO WHITE LIKELIHOOD
OF FACING POLICE FORCE

SIXTH MOST SEGREGATED STATE
IN THE NATION FOR BLACK STUDENTS

76% VS **40%** BLACK HOMEOWNERSHIP
WHITE HOMEOWNERSHIP **40%** LATINA/O HOMEOWNERSHIP

\$109,100 VS **\$65,400** BLACK HOUSEHOLDS
WHITE HOUSEHOLD INCOME **\$70,200** LATINA/O HOUSEHOLDS

\$322,500 VS **\$17,700** BLACK FAMILIES
WHITE FAMILY MEDIAN NET WEALTH **\$26,100** LATINA/O FAMILIES



BLACK IN NEW JERSEY

2024/2025 AGENDA

TO MAKE

**BLACK LIVES
REALLY MATTER**

IN NEW JERSEY

We know that Black Lives Matter.

But New Jersey's policies and practices don't always reflect that essential truth.

From the lasting effects of the pandemic on Black communities, to deep residential segregation, to persistent police violence against Black people, to remaining obstacles to the vote, and to some of America's worst disparities in wealth, health and criminal justice, New Jersey's foundation is cracked by structural racism.

Now is the time to repair these cracks and build a new foundation.

Stand with us to build a New Jersey that honors Black lives by supporting the following action agenda:

To Close the Racial Wealth Gap

- Expanded Homeownership
- Equitable Financial Returns from Homeownership
- Baby Bonds
- Affordable and Inclusive Higher Education

To Transform the Youth Justice System

- Youth Prison Closure & Investment in Community-Based System of Care for Youth
- Minimum Age of 14 for Prosecution of Youth

To Keep Communities Safe

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

To Ensure Democracy for All

- Freedom to Vote for People in Prison
- Same-Day Voter Registration
- Jury Service for People with Criminal Convictions
- Strong New Jersey John Lewis Voting Rights Act
- Lower the Voting Age in Local Elections

To Repair the Harm of Divestment from New Jersey's Black Communities

- Reparations Agenda for New Jersey
- State-Based Reparations Task Force

TO CLOSE THE RACIAL WEALTH GAP

- **Expanded Homeownership.** Strengthen New Jersey's existing homeownership programs and launch new initiatives to meet the specific needs of Black families and reduce racial disparities
- **Equitable Financial Returns from Homeownership.** Ensure that Black families have equitable opportunities to build wealth through homeownership by ensuring fair lending, reducing foreclosures and supporting programs to help Black families build, maintain and protect home equity wealth
- **Baby Bonds.** Create and fully fund a baby bonds program that is progressively designed to provide the greatest support to children of color from low-wealth households
- **Affordable and Inclusive Higher Education.** Remove financial barriers to college by expanding higher education investments and undoing student debt burden, and increase education access by ensuring colleges meet the needs of our increasingly diverse state

TO TRANSFORM THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM

- **Youth Prison Closure & Investment in Community-Based System of Care for Youth.** Close New Jersey's three youth prisons and invest \$100 million in front-end youth services and programs to keep kids out of the system, including expansion of the programming implemented by the Restorative and Transformative Justice for Youths and Communities Pilot program bill (A4663/S2924)
- **Minimum Age of 14 for Prosecution of Youth.** Advance S1319 to establish a minimum age of 14 for juvenile delinquency in accordance with international standards

TO KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE

- **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
 - Ban and criminalize use of police chokeholds (A870/S1494)
 - Advance measures that reduce racial disparities in police car stops
 - End law enforcement qualified immunity
 - Create strong municipal civilian complaint review boards (A3441/S1551)
 - Reduce police enforcement of non-serious offenses, particularly for youth
 - Continue participation on Independent Monitoring Team for Newark Police Consent Decree

TO KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE (continued)

Investments in Community-Based Public Safety Options. Rethink policing by investing in community-based approaches to public safety that will decrease law enforcement's footprint

- Develop mental health first responder and crisis intervention systems that rely on highly trained professionals other than police to address certain crises
- Reinvest dollars into community-based services that empower communities – like violence intervention programs, schools, hospitals, libraries and parks

TO ENSURE DEMOCRACY FOR ALL

- **Freedom to 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 (A925/S1193)
- **Jury Service for People with Criminal Convictions.** Expand jury service to include people with criminal convictions (A834/S292)
- **Strong New Jersey John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act.** Pass strong version of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New Jersey (A904/S2352)
- **Lowering the Voting Age to 16 in New Jersey.** Make our democracy more inclusive, representative and dynamic by allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local elections

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

- **Develop Reparations Agenda for New Jersey.** Through the two-year NJ Reparations Council, study and repair New Jersey's history of slavery and structural racism and propose bold, strategic policies to repair the harm
- **Reparations Task Force.** Establish a state-based reparations task force through legislation