

# BILL OF RIGHTS

## 1. **We have the right to safe and decent housing.**

As the cost of housing rises and the amount of affordable homes dwindles, we deserve access to safe and decent housing. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers give local municipalities the authority to establish rent control measures
- State lawmakers limit to 100 the amount of homes rich, corporate landlords can buy
- Rent control
- Protection for community investment funds, ensuring they benefit communities in need

## 2. **We have the right to suitable living wages and respect in the workplace.**

Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers increase the minimum wage to \$20 per hour, with annual adjustments calculated by the Commissioner of Labor
- Dignity and respect as workers, and, as such, demand:
  - State lawmakers abolish at-will employment and require employers to have a fair reason to terminate workers
  - State lawmakers guarantee a one-hour lunch break for every six hours of work
  - State lawmakers repeal the ban on collective bargaining

## 3. **We have the right to safe drinking water.**

Therefore, we demand:

- Access to clean drinking water and statewide remediation of our water systems contaminated by PFAS. As such, we demand:
  - State lawmakers prioritize the eradication of PFAS contamination in our state's water systems
  - State lawmakers ban the manufacturing, use and distribution of PFAS and PFAS-containing products within North Carolina
  - State lawmakers hold corporations responsible for contamination both ethically and financially

- State lawmakers and agencies require — not encourage — systems to utilize the bipartisan infrastructure funding (BIL) funding to remediate and reduce PFAS
- State lawmakers encourage county officials to restructure municipal water systems to consider residents who utilize well water in their county; they often are left out of remediation plans and projects

#### **4. We have the right to a clean and healthy environment.**

We deserve a clean and healthy environment beneficial to all North Carolinians. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers prioritize legislation that adheres to the goals of the state's clean energy plan
- State lawmakers prioritize their constituents — as rather than corporate greed — and reject proposals resulting in higher utility costs and increased development of unclean energy sources such as gas
- State lawmakers to allocate proper funding to environmental agencies in need of additional personnel so they can operate as designed and ensure the necessary protection of our communities

#### **5. We deserve the right to adequate and accessible healthcare.**

We deserve the right to accessible and adequate health care in North Carolina. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers provide opportunities for North Carolinians to access adequate, efficient, equitable and accessible health care under a single-payer system in which everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status, receives the same benefits
- State lawmakers restore the right for persons to choose to have children, not have children and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities
- State lawmakers require our healthcare systems to ensure they are staffing their facilities with providers who prioritize dignity and respect both during and after pregnancy and childbirth and provide the best care possible regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, disability or socioeconomic status

- State lawmakers create an avenue providing comprehensive mental health services, including early intervention, ongoing treatment and addressing stigma
- State lawmakers create an avenue for culturally comprehensive health care that addresses physical, social, linguistic and mental needs to improve health outcomes

## **6. We have the right to an effective, diverse, equitable and inclusive education.**

As of May 23, 2024, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors voted to defund DEI initiatives on UNC system campuses. We have the right to an equitable and inclusive education experience. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers consider how such decisions impact HBCU campuses within the UNC system. Those institutions will be directly affected by the changes, especially regarding structural administrative changes. HBCUs already are critically underfunded. Eliminating another source of income could present operational challenges for the historic campuses
- State lawmakers consider how defunding of DEI could cause a snowball effect that connects to a history of alienating HBCUs and create an elimination of critical curriculum that educates students on the history of critical events in America (i.e., critical race theory). The assumption that colleges and universities produce liberal dreamers instead of conservative leaders creates a gap in progress and abandons critical thinking
- State lawmakers recognize DEI's importance for ensuring that all North Carolinians are treated fairly and are able to have ethically sound experiences when interfacing with various entities in our state
- State lawmakers proactively introduce legislation protecting the critical nature and existence of DEI within education, workplaces, business operations, governing bodies and the like
- State lawmakers advocate for guaranteed Title I funding to protect free and reduced-priced meals at public schools and other supplements for its undersourced students
- State lawmakers advocate for guaranteed Title VI protection (for matters pertaining to civil rights)

**7. We have the right to have our children receive the best education possible.**

We have the right for our children to receive a quality education. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers prioritize public school funding to ensure that families and their children are able to access quality public education in our state
- State lawmakers prioritize children having a safe and healthy learning environment, and an institution that is adequately resourced and staffed
- State lawmakers prioritize fair wages for our educators to ensure they are properly supported as one of our state's most valuable resources
- State lawmakers cease using discriminatory suspension and other disciplinary actions within our public schools; our Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islander children typically are the first ones impacted by those actions
- State lawmakers recognize that students, as well as teachers, deserve the right to educational materials and experiences that reflect their lived experiences

**8. We have the right to free and fair elections.**

We have the right to democracy. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers consider automatic voter registration as seen in Colorado, Delaware, Washington, D.C., Massachusetts and many other states.
- State lawmakers ensure an elections are fully funded, enabling boards of elections to conduct them without hindrance
- State lawmakers establish an independent citizens redistricting commission and prioritize our right to have district lines drawn in a way that reflects the complexity and nuance of our own communities, affording the agency to elect the candidates of our choosing because our political power is not diluted
- State lawmakers prioritize the right for all North Carolinians to cast their ballot without hindrance

**9. We have the right for all of our communities to be protected, regardless of immigration status.**

We have the right to protect all communities in North Carolina. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers refrain from introducing legislation that creates a throughline between our law enforcement and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- State lawmakers consider advocating for our federal government to mirror systems such as the expression of interest (EOI) system that allows immigrants to take advantage of various pathways to citizenship
- State lawmakers protect sanctuary cities

**10. We have the right to provide opportunities for redemption for our justice-impacted North Carolinians, especially those now serving life without parole.**

Our justice-impacted communities have the right to take advantage of opportunities for redemption. Therefore, we demand:

- State lawmakers recognize our right to have our families reconciled through the act of restorative justice when our loved ones have served time and there are mitigating circumstances for their release
- State lawmakers recognize that justice-impacted communities have the right to be treated as humans versus being reduced to zoo animals caged for life
- State lawmakers recognize we are salvageable, valuable and redeemable
- State lawmakers offer fair judicial review to those serving lifetime prison sentences without the option for parole; that would enable judges to review mitigating circumstances and either alter the sentence or recommend parole