

WE HAVE A LOT TO LOSE

SOLUTIONS TO ADVANCE BLACK
FAMILIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

WASHINGTON, D.C.
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114TH CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS OFFICERS

HON. KAREN BASS
SECOND VICE CHAIR

HON. CEDRIC RICHMOND
CHAIR

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON
FIRST VICE CHAIR

HON. BRENDA LAWRENCE
SECRETARY

HON. GWEN MOORE
WHIP

HON. ANTHONY BROWN
PARLIAMENTARIAN

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR. MI – '65

HON. JOHN LEWIS, GA – '87

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, DC – '91

HON. MAXINE WATERS, CA – '91

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR., GA – '93

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN, SC – '93

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS, FL – '93

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, TX – '93

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH, IL – '93

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT, VA – '93

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON, MS – '93

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE, TX – '95

HON. ELIJAH CUMMINGS, MD – '96

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS, IL – '97

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS, NY – '98

HON. BARBARA LEE, CA – '98

HON. WILLIAM LACY CLAY, JR., MO – '01

HON. DAVID SCOTT, GA – '03

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, NC – '04

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER II, MO – '05

HON. AL GREEN, TX – '05

HON. GWEN MOORE, WI – '05

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE, NY – '07

HON. KEITH ELLISON, MN – '07

HON. HANK JOHNSON, GA – '07

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON, IN – '08

HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE, OH – '08

HON. KAREN BASS, CA – '11

HON. CEDRIC RICHMOND, LA – '11

HON. TERRI SEWELL, AL – '11

HON. FREDERICA WILSON, FL – '11

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR., NJ – '12

HON. JOYCE BEATTY, OH – '13

HON. HAKEEM JEFFRIES, NY – '13

HON. MARC VEASEY, TX – '13

HON. ROBIN KELLY, IL – '13

HON. CORY BOOKER, NJ – '13

HON. ALMA ADAMS, NC – '14

HON. BRENDA LAWRENCE, MI – '15

HON. MIA LOVE, UT – '15

HON. STACEY PLASKETT, VI – '15

HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, NJ – '15

HON. DWIGHT EVANS, PA – '16

HON. KAMALA D. HARRIS, CA – '17

HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER, DE – '17

HON. ANTHONY BROWN, MD – '17

HON. VAL DEMINGS, FL – '17

HON. AL LAWSON, FL – '17

HON. A. DONALD MCEACHIN, VA – '17

HONORING

The Congressional Black Caucus 115th Congress



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the course of the 2016 Presidential election, time and time again, then-candidate Donald Trump asked the Black community at-large one question: “What do you have to lose?” The inquiry presupposed that the experience of all African Americans is so destitute that we have no reason to fear a Trump Administration. In fact, President Trump declared some African-American communities are worse than war zones, demonstrating a lack of understanding of both constituencies.

The election has come and gone and the time for campaign rallies is over. Now, President Trump represents all Americans and must govern this nation for the good of all Americans, whether they are Black or White, rich or poor, conservative or liberal. So, as the Conscience of the Congress and voice of 78 million Americans and 17 million African Americans, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) is obliged to answer President Trump’s question. The answer – African Americans have a great deal to lose under the Trump Administration and we have lost a lot already in a little more than the first 50 days.

African Americans continue to face racism and discrimination that result in disparities across a wide range of issues, from equal access to a quality education, to police brutality and voter suppression. However, to consider the state of Black America without historical context denies the origins of the problems that continue to plague our communities, as well as the centuries-long battle to bring our people to this point. We stand on the shoulders of our ancestors, people who built this country and its wealth while toiling, fighting, and dying for our collective freedom. To deny our history or surrender in the struggle for a more perfect union would dishonor their sacrifice. That is something we simply will not do.

So we honor this opportunity to enlighten President Trump on the history and diversity of African Americans and offer bold policy solutions to advance our communities, and all Americans, in the 21st century. The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to strengthen voter protections and reform the criminal justice system from end-to-end. We call on this Administration to address the expanding wealth and income gaps between the rich and the poor in this country and strengthen the ladders that lift millions of Americans out of poverty. We call on the Trump Administration to commit to basic principles of humanity and decency, mainly that every child should have access to a high-quality education and every life deserves affordable, quality health care. The

CBC calls on this Administration to improve the circumstances of the American worker and prepare our nation's workforce for the challenges of the future. We call on the Trump Administration to guarantee that every American has equal access to clean air, water, and soil. Finally, we call on the Trump Administration to address the unique challenges in Rural America and help revitalize these oft forgotten communities.

If President Trump is sincere in his interest in advancing the Black community, this document should be the guiding post of his Administration.

The Founding Members of the
Congressional Black Caucus

Representative Shirley A. Chisholm
Representative William L. Clay, Sr.
Representative George W. Collins
Representative John Conyers, Jr.
Representative Ronald V. Dellums
Representative Charles C. Diggs, Jr.
Representative Augustus F. Hawkins
Representative Ralph H. Metcalfe
Representative Parren J. Mitchell
Representative Robert N.C. Nix, Sr.
Representative Charles B. Rangel
Representative Louis Stokes
D.C. Delegate Walter E. Fauntroy

*“Black people have no
permanent friends, no
permanent enemies...just
permanent interests,”
Congressman William L.
Clay Sr.*



HISTORY

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

Black Americans have toiled, fought, and died for this country since the 17th century. European settlers first brought Africans to this country as slaves in 1619. Black Americans have been struggling ever since to gain the fullest measure of their citizenship, but have made innumerable contributions to the country along the way. From Crispus Attucks being the first American to give his life in the Boston Massacre, to President Barack Obama restoring this nation's economy in the shadow of an historic financial crisis, we have sacrificed and worked alongside all other Americans to make this country great.

Slaves literally built this country, including the United States Capitol and the White House. The uncompensated labor of millions of slaves established the wealth of White America, unjust profits that have never been repaid. Slaves were often subject to deplorable, dehumanizing conditions. Africans were packed into slave ships like cargo, with millions perishing during the Middle Passage. Black women were often raped by their slave owners, and the children that resulted from these rapes, like all children born to slaves, were born enslaved. In addition, both Black men and women were beaten and whipped into submission. Finally, slave Patrols and Night Watches, precursors to modern day police departments, were established to control slaves.

Once they arrived to the New World, slaves were auctioned off like cattle. Most slaves were not allowed to read, write, have legal rights to their children or even marry – and they certainly could not vote. In addition, slaves were sold and resold many times, which resulted in the separation of families. Despite all of this, slaves did form families, even “fictive kin,” to support each other under the crushing weight of their enslavement.

RECONSTRUCTION

Once Black Americans were emancipated, and the Civil War ended, the Reconstruction Era began, and the first Black politicians were elected to Congress. These Members of Congress worked alongside their White counterparts to establish a set of rights for Black Americans. The Reconstruction Era was driven by efforts to affirmatively provide for former slaves, including the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1866, the KKK Act of 1871, and the Civil Rights Act of 1875. The progress in Washington would

have had little effect in the Southern states without the support of the federal government and the military. The Reconstruction Era, and the gains that former slaves enjoyed under it, ended when the last federal troops withdrew from the South. By vastly reducing the federal government's role in supporting the large community of millions of recently freed Black Americans, this ushered in a new dark period of state-sanctioned segregation, terrorism, and neglect.

Uneven gains followed after the end of Reconstruction. A few Black Americans established solid economic foundations, but many others experienced extreme poverty. This was because Black Americans were shut out from education, health care, and access to capital, as well as other resources needed to build wealth. The few pockets of Black wealth that did develop were few and far between. One community in Tulsa, Oklahoma, known as Black Wall Street, was destroyed during a race riot started by Whites.

In the earliest part of the twentieth century, Black Americans made incremental gains in education, the military, health care, the arts, athletics, and business. However, the persistent challenge of accessing the basic needs of American life ensured that Black people were frozen out of most of the advantages the 20th century would bring. After fighting for their country in World War I, Black Americans returned home to face the same economic, social, and political injustices across the United States that tortured them when they left.

THE GREAT MIGRATION

During the 1920s, Black Americans began a mass exodus from the Southern States to the North and Midwest in a quest to find better living conditions. Known as "The Great Migration," this shift would become the largest internal transition of any group in American history. Black Americans' transition to the North forced the other regions of the United States to recognize the injustices of the South. It also transformed the social and political dynamics of every city Black Americans retreated to for decades to come.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The onset of the Great Depression further motivated the migration of Black Americans from the South to the North and West. It was impossible for Black Americans to find jobs in the South that paid a livable wage due to the declining agriculture industry. Black Americans around

the country endured the greatest hardships as a result of the Great Depression. Typically, Black Americans were the “last hired and the first fired.” Unemployment for Black Americans during the Great Depression reached well over 50 percent, which was more than double the unemployment rate for Whites.

NEW DEAL

New Deal agencies were established to focus on providing relief and recovery to those most impacted by the country’s dismal financial state. However, all of the New Deal organizations failed to protect Blacks from discriminatory practices or provide quality assistance. Black Americans often referred to the New Deal as the “raw deal” because they were rarely granted the benefits associated with the programs. Black Americans did not gain access to the services offered by the New Deal Agencies until years later. Despite the limited assistance provided, Black Americans developed their own strategies to survive the Great Depression. In many urban and rural communities, Blacks began to create their own social welfare programs through childcare networks, community gardens and markets, and rent assistance programs. National Civil Rights organizations also focused their efforts on addressing the economic plight of Black Americans. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League (NUL) formed the Joint Committee on National Recovery, which focused on exposing the inequities that existed within the New Deal agencies and programs that disproportionately neglected Black Americans.

WORLD WAR II

For many Black Americans, World War II provided an opportunity to serve in the United States military and escape the poverty resulting from the Great Depression. Black Americans joined the military in large numbers only to find that the issues of segregation and racial injustice were just as prevalent within the Armed Forces. Each military branch had segregated training processes and assignments designated for Black soldiers. As the first Black Air Force unit, the Tuskegee Airmen were one of the most successful groups of military aviators during World War II. Collectively, they flew over 200 missions without being shot down by enemy fire. As the war ended, these men came home only to find their country unwilling to give them the basic rights as American citizens and veterans of war.

After World War II, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill, was enacted to provide veterans with benefits establishing military hospitals, educational stipends, and low-interest home mortgages. G.I. beneficiaries were given the opportunity to achieve economic progress as the country was also recovering from the Great Depression. However, Black veterans were not afforded many of the benefits offered by the G.I. Bill that contributed to wealth development and economic sustainability. Black veterans only received the college assistance offered by the G.I. Bill, and would not be granted full benefits for years to come. The G.I. Bill contributed greatly to the establishment of the American middle class. However, the exclusion of Black American veterans in many of those benefits further amplified a disproportionate wealth gap that still exists today.

JIM CROW

One hundred years after the Emancipation Proclamation, the stain of slavery had a lasting impact on race relations within the United States, especially in the South. “Separate but equal” was the law of the land, and Black Americans still did not have equal access to opportunity. In the South, Black Codes and Jim Crow laws were used as a tool of oppression. The plight of Black Americans in many parts of the country was still unknown. The Civil Rights Movement not only exposed the perilous discrimination endured by Black Americans, but also the varying levels of systematic disenfranchisement, which had gone unnoticed and ignored by the rest of the country and the United States government. The civil protections granted to all Americans by the United States Constitution were not bestowed upon Black Americans equally.

CIVIL RIGHTS

The Civil Rights movement, beginning with the Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision of 1954, began to redefine the country’s segregationist practices by mandating schools become integrated. The desegregation of schools sparked an activist movement to desegregate every aspect of public life. During this time, prominent Black leaders began to lead the fight toward justice and equality. Through bus boycotts, sit-ins, and peaceful protests, these leaders were able to galvanize thousands of Black Americans and ultimately spark the involvement of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson in advocating for civil rights legislation. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination of any form based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin.

The struggle to achieve the full yield of citizenship continues to this day. Black Americans still struggle for equitable economic, educational, health and civic outcomes. The CBC advocates for the issues that impact the everyday lives of Black Americans and ultimately every American throughout the United States.

HISTORY OF THE CBC

Since its establishment in 1971, the CBC has consistently been the voice for African Americans and other vulnerable communities in Congress and has been committed to utilizing the full constitutional power, statutory authority, and financial resources of the United States Government to ensure that everyone in the country has an opportunity to achieve their version of the American Dream.

THE CBC THEN

During the late 1960s, U.S. Representative Charles Diggs (D-Mich.) created the Democracy Select Committee (DSC) in an effort to bring Black members of Congress together. Diggs observed that he and other African-American members of Congress often felt isolated because of their small numbers in Congress and wanted to provide them with a forum to discuss common challenges and political interests.

“The sooner we get organized for group action, the more effective we can become,” Diggs said.

The DSC was an informal group that held irregular meetings and had no independent staff or budget but that changed a few years later. As a result of court-ordered redistricting, the number of African-American members of Congress rose from nine to 13, the largest ever at the time, and members of the DSC decided at the beginning of the 92nd Congress (1971-1973) that a more formal group was needed.

“The thrust of our elections was that many Black people around America who had been ... unrepresented, now felt that the nine Black members of the House owed them the obligation of also affording them representation in the House,” U.S. Representative Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) said. “In addition to representing our individual districts, we had to assume the onerous burden of acting as congressman-at-large for unrepresented people around America.”

The CBC was established in 1971 by 13 founding members – U.S. Representatives Charles Diggs, Jr., Augustus Hawkins, Charles Rangel, Shirley Chisolm, William Lacy Clay, Louis Stokes, George Collins, John Conyers,

Ronald Dellums, Ralph Metcalfe, Parren Mitchell, Robert N.C. Nix, and Rev. Walter Fauntroy, District of Columbia Delegate to Congress.

THE CBC NOW

This Congress, the CBC's membership includes an historic 49 Members – 47 in the United States House of Representatives, including one Republican, and 2 in the United States Senate. CBC districts are as diverse as the populations they serve. Some districts are rural, while others are urban. Some members represent majority-minority districts, while others do not. The remaining 25 percent live in small metropolitan areas and rural communities. Collectively, the CBC represents 78 million Americans who are 24 percent of the total U.S. population, and 17 million African Americans, 41 percent of the total U.S. African-American population. In this capacity, the CBC represents almost a fourth of the House Democratic Caucus. In November 2016, U.S. Representative Cedric L. Richmond (D-La.) was elected chairman of the CBC for the 115th Congress, making him the 25th chairman of the Caucus and the youngest member of Congress to hold the position.

CBC members serve at the highest levels of Congress, from House leadership to full committee and subcommittee Ranking Members. U.S. Representative James E. Clyburn (D-S.C.) serves as the Assistant Democratic Leader in the House, six CBC members serve as Ranking Members on full House committees, and 31 CBC members serve as Ranking Members on House and Senate subcommittees.

MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NIXON

Shortly after the CBC was established, its battle with President Nixon began. After President Nixon refused to meet with the group, Caucus members decided to boycott the 1971 State of the Union Address, which made national headlines.

“We now refuse to be part of your audience,” U.S. Representative William Lacy Clay, Sr. (D-Mo.) wrote to President Nixon on behalf of the Caucus, explaining that President Nixon's refusal to meet with the Caucus was evidence that the Administration wasn't interested in helping the African-American community.

The CBC's public battle with President Nixon yielded results. President Nixon eventually agreed to a March 1971 meeting with the Caucus. During the meeting, the CBC presented President Nixon with 61 recommendations to

eradicate racism, provide quality housing for African-American families, and promote the full engagement of African Americans in government.

“Our people are no longer asking for equality as a rhetorical promise,” Diggs said. “They are demanding from the national Administration, and from elected officials without regard to party affiliation, the only kind of equality that ultimately has any real meaning—equality of results.”

Press coverage of the meeting and the events leading up to it helped introduce the CBC to the nation. A few years later, in 1973, members of the CBC would be among the first in Congress to call for President Nixon’s impeachment.

“Even though we think first of those we were directly elected to serve, we cannot, in good conscience, think only of them—for what affects one Black community, one poor community, one urban community, affects all,” the CBC wrote to Nixon in 1971.

It is this sentiment that reflects the CBC’s role as the “Conscience of the Congress,” a role that the Caucus began to play at its founding and a role the Caucus still plays today. The CBC continues to be one of the most influential assemblies within the United States Congress, with the power to engage and transform the lives of generations of Americans.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

In 2008, then U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-Ill.) was elected President of the United States, making him the first and only African American, and thus, the first and only member of the CBC to be elected to the nation’s highest office.

SOLUTIONS

SOLUTIONS FOR THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY

The CBC has always been committed to actions infused with moral clarity and a desire to honestly and forthrightly represent the interests of our constituents, the African-American community, and all Americans.

Members have always been at the forefront of issues such as economic security and empowerment, community development, education, justice and civil rights, criminal justice reform, and labor and employment.

Our collective efforts have echoed throughout Congress for decades, and together, we will continue to stand for the many Americans who expect the Caucus to be sound and principled leaders dedicated to progress.

Accordingly, we highlight the following problems across several facets of Black life and offer bold solutions to advance Black families in the 21st century.



VOTING RIGHTS

The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to recognize the persistent discrimination against African Americans throughout this nation's troubled history and employ policies and practices to restore these communities.

THE PROBLEMS

African Americans fought and died for access to the ballot. A century after the passage of the 15th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which granted all men the right to vote, African Americans largely remained disenfranchised. Both societal and institutional barriers, from lynchings to poll taxes, thwarted Black civic participation. In March 1965, a group of civil rights leaders gathered to peacefully protest for voting rights in Selma, Alabama. Their peaceful protest was met with violence and many were injured, including a young John Lewis, a proud member of the Congressional Black Caucus who has served in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1987.

Ultimately, their courage, and that of countless others, led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965. The VRA prohibits discrimination on the basis of race and bans voting practices and procedures that discriminate against minority voters. A critical oversight element of the VRA, Section 5, requires federal approval before certain jurisdictions change their voting laws. This “preclearance” is based on a formula that determines jurisdictions with a history of discriminatory treatment of minority voters. Additionally, under the law, the Department of Justice (DOJ) plays a major enforcement role by monitoring elections to ensure they are conducted fairly. The Voting Rights Act is the hallmark of the civil rights movement and finally made good on a century long promise that all men, and now women, have the right to vote.

Unfortunately, the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* invalidated the preclearance formula, with the majority of the Court arguing that it was based on outdated data. Thus, 2016 was the first presidential election in 50 years without the full force of the Voting Rights Act. There was a well-founded fear of the impact of the *Shelby County* ruling, particularly in the face of a well-orchestrated suppression campaign targeted at minority voters. Without any federal oversight, 14 states enacted new voting restrictions ranging from strict photo identification requirements, to early voting cutbacks and

registration restrictions. This was part of a broader movement to curtail voting rights, which began after the 2010 election, when state lawmakers nationwide started introducing hundreds of harsh measures making it harder to vote. Six of the 16 states that have passed voter ID laws since 2010 have a documented history of discriminating against minority voters. All but one of those laws was put in place after *Shelby County*.

In the absence of the full protections of the Voting Rights Act, African Americans are particularly vulnerable. In fact, immediately following *Shelby County*, North Carolina, a state previously covered as a preclearance jurisdiction, passed a voting law that shortened the early-voting period and completely eliminated same-day registration. African Americans historically utilize these provisions more than White voters. Additionally, the North Carolina law included a photo identification mandate. African Americans are far less likely to have a photo ID. In July 2016, the 4th Circuit struck down North Carolina's law, calling it "the most restrictive voting law North Carolina has seen since the era of Jim Crow." What's worse, the court determined that Republican lawmakers had targeted "African Americans with almost surgical precision."

While North Carolina was the most obvious example of African American voter disenfranchisement, it is not the only one. In fact, states where minority turnout has increased since the previous presidential election were more likely to pass restrictive voting laws. These laws were substantially more likely to be introduced in states with larger African-American populations and higher minority turnout, as well as in states where both minority and low-income turnout recently increased. For example, the NACCP Legal Defense Fund is currently challenging Alabama's voter ID law, which is estimated to have disenfranchised 250,000 voters—most of them African American.

These targeted attacks on the voting rights of African Americans appear to be having the intended effect of driving down voter turnout. A 2014 Government Accountability Office study found that turnout dropped among both young people and African Americans in Kansas and Tennessee after new voter ID requirements took effect in 2012. Wisconsin, one of the states in last year's election with voting restrictions in place for the first time, saw voter turnout hit a 20-year low as many poor and Black residents stayed home. To make matters worse, Attorney General Sessions has already taken actions to reverse important policies of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice that were intended to protect minority voting rights.

THE SOLUTIONS

The CBC supports policies that ensure a more perfect union by expanding, not restricting, access to the ballot for all Americans.

- **Restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act.** The actions taken by several states to restrict access to the ballot in the wake of the *Shelby County* decision only highlights the importance of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. It is the heart of this landmark civil rights legislation and it must be restored as an appropriate check on states that would otherwise disenfranchise minority voters. Additionally, the Department of Justice should aggressively enforce the remaining provisions of the Voting Rights Act and vigorously defend the law against constitutional challenges.
- **Challenge attempts to disenfranchise voters.** The Department of Justice is responsible for enforcing the law of the land, including the United States Constitution. Specifically, the Attorney General has a duty to defend the constitutionally protected rights of all Americans in a court of law. Attempts on the state level to block access to the ballot must be swiftly met with the full weight of the Department of Justice and its resources. To start, Attorney General Sessions should reverse the DOJ's position in *Texas NAACP v. Steen*.
- **End modern-day poll taxes.** Voter identification laws are a solution in search of a problem. Countless studies show instances of credible voter fraud are so small they represent less than a 1 percent of the millions of ballots cast. Yet states requiring voter identification place an undue burden on eligible voters, particularly low-income individuals who lack the means to easily obtain a state identification card. Voter identification laws have been employed both historically and recently with the stated intent to disenfranchise minority voters and they serve as an undemocratic barrier to the ballot.
- **Incentivize automatic voter registration, online registration, same-day registration, and expand the use of absentee ballots.** Instead of enacting needless policies that limit voter access, states should modernize their election registration and administration to make it easier for voters to cast their ballot. The federal government should play a proactive role by challenging laws that create barriers to the constitutionally protected right to vote and creating incentives to help states bring their voter registration and election administration into the 21st Century. This is particularly important to elderly, disabled, and

student voters. Additionally, the Department of Justice should aggressively enforce the voter registration requirements of the Help America Vote Act.

- **Restore the voting rights of ex-offenders.** More than 6 million Americans are unable to vote because of a past criminal conviction. Of that population, almost 5 million are living and working in our communities without the full rights of their citizenship. Restoring the voting rights of ex-offenders will bring them into the full fold of civic engagement and encourage their participation as productive members of our society.
- **Fully fund and staff the Civil Rights Division and the Election Assistance Commission.** The federal government should continue to play an active role of ensuring the fair and open administration of elections by oversight and guidance. The Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice needs adequate funding to effectively enforce existing voting laws and prevent discriminatory practices. The Election Assistance Commission provides useful best practices and federal funding to help states develop cutting edge technology to modernize elections. This mission is increasingly important to our democracy in the wake of Russia's apparent interference in the 2016 Presidential election.
- **Make Election Day a mandatory federal holiday.** The federal government should encourage the democratic principle of civic engagement. Designating Election Day as a federal holiday would celebrate our democracy and make it easier for Americans to participate in our political process.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to recognize the persistent discrimination against African Americans throughout this nation's troubled history and employ policies and practices to restore these communities.

THE PROBLEMS

In 1971, President Nixon declared a War on Drugs, which he labeled as "public enemy number one in the United States." At the time of this declaration, America's prisons and jails held fewer than 200,000 people. Today that number sits at over 2,000,000. The United States incarcerates 25 percent of the world's prisoners, but we have only 5 percent of the world's population. The burdens of this failed war have fallen overwhelmingly on African-American communities. African Americans make up 13 percent of the United States population, but account for 35 percent of jail inmates and 37 percent of prison inmates. African-American males are incarcerated at more than six times the rate of White males, and African-American females are incarcerated at more than double the rate of White females. African-American men receive five to ten percent longer prison sentences than White men for the same crimes.

These disparities can largely be attributed to a combination of continuing economic dislocation in many communities, coupled with overly aggressive policing tactics, funneling more of those residents into the criminal justice system. In 2014, African-American adults accounted for just 14 percent of those who used drugs, but close to a third of those arrested for drug possession. Although African Americans and Whites use drugs at similar rates, African Americans are significantly more likely to be arrested. This disproportionate enforcement of drug laws in a nation in which racial groups use drugs at the same rate can only be explained by the fact that race has played an inappropriate role in law enforcement priorities and tactics. The data clearly demonstrates that the law is simply not being applied equally. It is worth noting that in the face of the 1980's crack epidemic in Black communities, the public policy response was incarceration. However, in the face of the current opioid epidemic in predominately White communities, public officials on both sides of the aisle banded together to pass landmark legislation to provide drug treatment assistance.

Once in court, judges are tougher on African-American drug offenders every step of the way. For instance, nearly half of the counties in Florida sentence African Americans convicted of felony drug possession to more than double the time of Whites, even when their backgrounds are the same. This is the reason why, nationwide, African Americans are nearly six times more likely than White people to be in prison for drug possession. John Ehrlichman, counsel and Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs under President Nixon, has admitted that the War on Drugs was an effort to vilify African-American leaders and disrupt African-American communities.

In recent years, leaders on both sides of the aisle have found common ground on the need to reform our broken criminal justice system. Stakeholders from the ACLU to the Koch Institute recognize the crisis of over-criminalization in this country and the need for immediate action. Both the House and Senate made strides towards the passage of bipartisan criminal justice reform legislation in the 114th Congress, but ultimately, a bill never made it to the President. One of the most ardent opponents to bipartisan criminal justice reform efforts during that Congress was recently confirmed as Attorney General of the United States, a fact that does not inspire hope in those fighting to address this obviously harmful and race-based status quo.

President Trump has dubbed himself the “Law and Order President” and committed to tried-and-failed policies for the sake of being tough on crime. America spends \$80 billion every year on incarceration. This taxpayer money would be better spent on the front end of the criminal justice system to prevent crimes from occurring in the first place.

THE SOLUTIONS

The CBC supports end-to-end reform of our criminal justice system, including policing reform, prisoner reentry support, and every facet in between.

- **Build the bonds between police and the communities they serve through comprehensive policing reform.** No American should be afraid to call the police for fear of becoming victimized by the very people sent to protect them. Unfortunately, for far too many African Americans, this is exactly the reality they face. The relationships between African-American communities and their police departments across the nation have hovered in a state of constant volatility for generations. These tensions have grown in recent years following the

high-profile shootings of unarmed Black men and women at the hands of police, many of which have been recorded for the world to see. To add insult to an unbearable injury, few officers are held accountable for their actions. Despite the fact that the majority of law enforcement officers perform their duties professionally – and we value their service– the specter of discriminatory profiling and abuse of power has contaminated the relationship between the police and minority communities.

- **End racial profiling.** Every American has a constitutional right to equal protection under the law, but African Americans and others face discriminatory profiling. President Trump’s recent immigration executive orders are deeply concerning to minority communities at home and abroad. Prohibiting racial profiling would heal the communal rifts caused by racial, ethnic, and religious profiling and restore public confidence in the criminal justice system at-large.
- **Maintain federal supervision of state and local police departments.** The Department of Justice must hold state and local police departments accountable through oversight, investigations, and consent decrees. Attorney General Sessions should commit to using the full force of the law and resources available to him to raise the standard of policing practices and provide independent federal investigations whenever and wherever justice requires.
- **Increase the funding for and the eligible uses of the COPS and Byrne JAG programs.** To help build the bridges between police and communities, the federal government should increase funding for training in de-escalation tactics, proper use of force, implicit bias, and cultural, ethnic, and racial sensitivity. Additional funding should also be available for mandatory body cameras.
- **Invest in community-oriented policing.** Instead of focusing on crime and punishment in reaction to crimes, law enforcement personnel should focus on working with communities to solve problems and prevent crimes in the first place. Police departments need a major federal investment to hire more officers specifically dedicated to building relationships with community leaders in churches, schools, and local businesses.
- **Increase law enforcement diversity.** Police departments should be representative of the communities they serve. The Federal Bureau of Investigation should commit to increasing diversity

- among its force and the federal government should provide incentives for police departments to hire more diverse officers.
- **Require additional training for police departments utilizing military equipment, including the use of force during peaceful protests.** Under the 1033 program, state and local police departments have received billions of dollars in excess military equipment, making the civilian law enforcement community increasingly militarized. While police departments should be well-equipped to face any threat, the use of military-grade equipment in the face of political protests may chill the constitutional rights of all Americans to peaceably assemble. The 1033 program should require additional training to ensure police departments understand the appropriate use of military equipment.
 - **Require data collection and reporting.** Data collection sheds a light on the interactions between police and the communities they serve – from searches and arrests to police shootings and allegations of misconduct. Police departments should receive the training and resources needed to collect and report these interactions to the Department of Justice.
- **Reduce the nation’s gun violence.** There is a crisis of gun violence in America. Each year, on average, almost 12,000 Americans are murdered by a gun. Black men are 14 times more likely to be shot and killed with a gun than White men. The proliferation of guns across the nation exacerbates the tension between police and the communities they serve because law enforcement officers increasingly expect the presence of a gun when they interact with the public.
 - **Strengthen and Expand universal background checks.** More than 20 years ago, the Brady Act was enacted to help keep firearms out of the hands of criminals and other prohibited people. Since that time, universal background checks have blocked more than 3 million gun sales. However, loopholes in the law require immediate action. The background check requirement only applies to licensed gun dealers. Moreover, if the Federal Bureau of Investigation does not respond to a background check within three business days, licensed dealers can complete a gun sale anyway, unless otherwise prohibited by local law. This “Charleston loophole,” which put 2,892 guns in the wrong hands in 2015, also allowed Dylann Roof to purchase a handgun and murder nine Black people praying in a house of worship. These

dangerous loopholes must be closed to prevent guns from falling into the wrong hands.

- **Ban high-capacity firearms.** Police are increasingly outgunned by criminals. High-capacity ammunition magazines, which make it easier for mass shooters to kill large numbers of innocent victims before reloading, should be banned.
- **End the “Cradle to Prison Pipeline” and reform the Juvenile Justice System.** Far too often, schools are using the criminal justice system to handle routine disciplinary issues. The use of policies and procedures that criminalize minor student misbehavior has effects that extend far beyond school walls. When a student is suspended or expelled, they are far more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system. This rush to criminalize is particularly harmful to African-American students, who represent 16 percent of the student population, yet constitute 27 percent of students referred to law enforcement and 31 percent of students arrested. We must do everything we can to ensure that involving our youth in the criminal justice system is a last resort, not a routine first response.
 - **Invest in prevention and intervention.** State and local governments need additional funding to reform their juvenile justice systems. Specifically, resources are needed to develop and implement evidence-based practices that prevent juvenile delinquency and gang activity. Schools also need access to more resources and best practices to employ mitigation strategies within an educational setting.
 - **Strengthen protections for youth in the justice system.** The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 recognized the importance of providing special care for juveniles in the criminal justice system. This law should be strengthened to provide additional protections for youth, such as prohibiting solitary confinement and preventing detention for minor offenses like truancy. The Youth PROMISE Act would provide much-needed reforms to the juvenile justice system and respond to youth violence through coordinated prevention and intervention.
 - **Establish a National Commission on the Status of Black Men and Boys within the White House.** Black men and boys face unique hardships that result in disparities across a range of areas, from criminal justice to education and employment. A

national commission should study the challenges facing Black men and boys and make recommendations accordingly.

Reform the Corrections System. Legislation like the Safe, Accountable, Fair, and Effective (SAFE) Justice Act would boldly reform the federal corrections system using the lessons learned on the state level.

- **Eliminate federal mandatory minimum sentencing requirements.** Mandatory minimum sentencing requirements often impose sentences that are not appropriate for the facts and culpability of individual cases. Federal prosecutors should have greater discretion to consider the specific factors of each case and respond accordingly. Non-violent drug offenders should have increased access to treatment programs instead of incarceration. This approach is both fiscally responsible and morally just.
- **Ensure true sentencing parity among crack and cocaine offenses.** Prior to the passage of the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010, the sentencing disparity between offenses for crack cocaine and powder cocaine was 100:1. This means people faced longer sentences for crack cocaine offenses than for offenses involving the same amount of powder cocaine, which disproportionately impacted African Americans. The Fair Sentencing Act, which reduced this ratio to 18:1, should be made retroactive to provide reduced sentences for offenders who faced this discriminatory sentencing.
- **Deprioritize non-violent drug offenders.** President Obama used his executive power to grant clemency to more than 1000 people. Additionally, as a part of Attorney General Eric Holder's Smart on Crime Initiative, the Justice Department instructed federal prosecutors to charge and lock up fewer low-level drug offenders. The Trump Administration should follow this model.
- **Develop and implement best practices for the use of solitary confinement.** Federal, state and local prisons have vastly expanded the use of solitary confinement in recent years. Under this practice, inmates are kept isolated for as many as 23 hours a day, often for years on end. A commission should study the use of solitary confinement and provide best practices that ensure both prisoner safety and humane treatment.
- **End the use of private prisons.** In 2010, the two largest private prison companies alone received nearly \$3 billion dollars in revenue, and their top executives each received annual compensation packages worth well over \$3 million. Despite the considerable taxpayer cost, private prisons are less safe than publicly operated facilities and offer fewer rehabilitative services. This is due in large part to the fact that private prisons hire less

experienced staff in order to keep costs down. The corrections system should actually help correct inmate behavior by investing in their rehabilitation and reform.

- **Permanently authorize and fully fund the Second Chance Act.** The struggle to find and keep a job upon release is a crucial element of the reentry process. It is an important part of becoming a productive member of the community and assists in developing personal responsibility and gaining independence and self-reliance. Studies have shown that former prisoners who are able to secure a job, ideally at higher than the minimum wage, within two months after their release are much more likely to successfully avoid recidivism. However, African-American offenders released from prisons face additional barriers to employment upon reentry. White applicants with a criminal history are half as likely to receive a call back from potential employers as applicants with no criminal record. Black applicants with a criminal record are three times less likely to receive a call back. In addition, incarceration depresses the total earnings of African-American males by 9 percent compared to only 2 percent for White males. The Second Chance Act helps reduce recidivism by providing grant funding to help improve the reentry process.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to address the widening gap between the rich and the poor in this nation and create equal access to economic opportunities for all Americans.

THE PROBLEMS

The racial wealth gap is widening. To gain wealth comparable to White high school dropouts, Blacks have to have completed high school and some college. This means that Black Americans need to invest more resources and time to achieve the same results as White citizens that have not had to make the same level of investment.

Additionally, there are fewer intergenerational wealth transfers in Black households. Recent research has demonstrated that White families enjoy greater access to gifts and inheritances than Black Americans. This tends to create a self-reinforcing trend of wealth accumulation, educational attainment, debt reduction and capital formation by White households. Over history, White families have accumulated more wealth via relatively unfettered access to financial services such as loans and mortgages, educational opportunities, and homeownership.

Black families have been subject to familial separation in slavery, peonage, and mass incarceration and have been intentionally frozen out of capital, housing and educational markets absent federal action and regulation. On top of this, Black families have disproportionately been impacted by uneven access to the legal system and its protections, which impairs contract formation as well as the practice of criminal justice. Black college students that lack family wealth take on significant student loan debt at elevated debt service levels, and this condition can put them at a competitive disadvantage to those of their colleagues that did not incur debt to acquire the same college education.

Black Americans have levels of net worth that are 1/10th the net worth of White Americans. Black Americans have only 8 percent of their wealth in businesses. Research shows that Black entrepreneurs have higher wealth levels and higher levels of wealth mobility than Black non-entrepreneurs. The lack of wealth makes it harder to start and maintain a business. According to data from various reports, including from the Census Bureau, the Federal Reserve Survey of Small Business Finance, and the Kauffman Foundation, Black-owned

businesses are more reliant on their own investments in their businesses because access to capital from external sources is too difficult to obtain. A 2015 CFPB report found that 15 percent of Black Americans are “credit invisible,” meaning that they have no or a limited credit history. Black Americans have higher levels of student debt on average. 40 percent of Black Americans between 25 and 55 hold student loan debt and Black Americans have higher levels of these debt loads, holding an average of \$43,725 in student debt compared to an average of \$31,367 for Whites.

THE SOLUTIONS

The CBC supports policies that address historic economic disparities and create opportunities to lift all Americans out of poverty and into the middle-class and beyond.

- **Do not Cut Taxes for the Super Rich.** The House Republican tax plan from fall 2016, a model for Republicans’ desired tax reductions for the wealthy, would cut about \$3 trillion in revenue from the U.S. Treasury over a decade. Once phased in, this will be a huge tax cut for the wealthy. The top 1 percent will receive 99.6 percent of the benefit according to an analysis by the non-partisan Tax Policy Center. The recently introduced American Health Care Act is also a massive taxpayer subsidy to the wealthiest Americans, cutting their tax burden by \$600 billion over 10 years. These resources would be better spent investing in jobs, education, and skills training.
 - **This plan will pay for tax cuts for billionaires on the back of service cuts for programs critical to the poor and middle class families.** This tax cut for the rich, at a time of increasing wealth and income inequality, is appalling. The government should be investing in jobs programs, reasonable bank regulation, education, and health care to ensure economic vitality into the next century, not *more* tax cuts for the rich and less regulation of Wall Street. We tried those options in the 2000’s and all we got was a financial crash as thanks for it.
 - The reported tax proposals on the table would increase the debt while giving more handouts to the super wealthy.
 - On top of this, proposed eliminations of the estate and gift would ensure that dynastic wealth passes without tax to the children and grandchildren of the wealthiest American

families. These are not acceptable outcomes in an economy in which inequality is growing every year.

- **Adopt a fairer tax code that asks the richest of the rich to pay their fair share to meet the needs of the nations.** Instead of robbing the poor to give a bailout to the rich, the Administration should champion comprehensive tax reform that makes our tax code more progressive and fair. For example, expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit would strengthen the social safety net of millions of Americans and bolster pathways out of poverty.
- **Implement the Congressional Black Caucus's 10-20-30 Formula Across All Agencies.** This bold initiative requires federal agencies to commit 10 percent of their budgets to the 485 counties where 20 percent or more of the population has been living below the poverty line for the last 30 years. This investment has a broad impact on historically distressed communities. In 2009, these counties were represented in Congress by 43 Democrats and 84 Republicans. The President's Fiscal Year 2018 budget request proposes drastic domestic spending cuts to programs upon which these communities rely, such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. That makes targeted investments in these communities all the more essential. Additionally, the Trump Administration should establish a federal interagency task force to coordinate poverty alleviation efforts.
- **Address Food Insecurity by Combatting Food Deserts.** Thousands of communities across the country, both urban and rural, lack access to healthy, affordable food. More than 30 million Americans live more than a mile from the nearest grocery store. Providing funding for food banks and nutritional training improves the health of the community. Additionally, the presence of a grocery store can stimulate local economies by creating jobs and anchoring complementary retail stores. Ultimately, combatting food insecurity improves the health and financial well-being of communities at large.
- **Support and Expand Small Business and Entrepreneurial Opportunities.**
 - **Increase the Minority Business Administration Budget.** The MBDA has operated with a budget under \$40 million for many

years. If the Administration is serious about boosting investments in minority owned businesses, it could study ways to expand support for this agency that helps minority firms compete in a rapidly changing marketplace. Unfortunately, the President's Fiscal Year 2018 budget request completely eliminates funding for the MBDA, the only federal agency solely tasked with supporting minority businesses.

- **Increase the Small Business Administration's Budget and Increase the Goals of Serving Small and Disadvantaged Businesses.** The SBA's focus on boosting opportunity for small firms via capital, counseling and contracting programming could use an increase in resources to expand its service delivery systems and deepen its partnerships with relevant technical assistance providers such as Small Business Development Centers. Black entrepreneurs are ready to expand into new markets at home and abroad if supported with sufficient resources.
 - **Expand the SBA 7(j) Microloan Program.** The SBA's Microloan program provides loans up to \$50,000 to help small businesses start up or grow their firms. These loans could be utilized for working capital, inventory or supplies, furniture or fixtures and machinery or equipment.
 - **Make the Community Advantage Program at the SBA permanent.** This initiative to leverage the SBA's 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program by partnering with CDFI lenders should be made permanent and expanded to increase loans to Black small business borrowers.
- **Require Census Bureau, MBDA and Small Business Administration and Federal Reserve System to Perform Annual Minority Small Business Census.** This would provide sorely needed data on an ongoing basis to inform policymaking and business planning efforts nationwide.
- **Require the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to Accelerate its Rulemaking to Implement Dodd-Frank Act Section 1071 to ensure that financial institutions record data on race and gender or business loan applicants.** Section 1071 of the Dodd-Frank Act requires financial institutions to collect and report information regarding credit applications by women owned and minority owned small business in order to help facilitate the enforcement of fair lending laws and better pinpoint various firm level and community development needs. This will

be a critical data pool that can be utilized as a basis for a variety of business planning and policy analysis purposes.

- **Forgive A Percentage of Student Loan Debt for Entrepreneurs.** This will provide a strong incentive to start and grow businesses, increase hiring and improve local tax bases while increasing investment and spending capacity amongst would be investors and entrepreneurs.
 - **Support Alternative Metrics of Creditworthiness.** Traditional credit rating methodologies do not take into account the unique economic issues faced by Black Americans who continue to suffer from the vestiges of slavery, peonage and mass incarceration. In addition, recent research has shown that some of the data inputs into some of these algorithms may themselves contain implicit bias that tends to discriminate against Black borrowers. The White House should support policy innovations that would provide incentives for lenders to assess mobile phone data, timely bill payments, social media network data and other inputs not related to traditional credit scoring models in order to promote increased lending to Black entrepreneurs.
 - **Promote Crowdfunding as A Method for Acquiring Patient Capital.** Title III of the JOBS Act of 2012 expanded the universe of Americans that can invest in small business equity, providing a more patient form of capital for entrepreneurs while concurrently providing a high yielding investment opportunity for interested individuals. The White House should explore how to best support the use of the crowdfunding platforms via innovative policies that are informed by the challenges faced by Black entrepreneurs.
- **Support a 21st Century Community Development and FinTech Initiative.**
 - **Build and strengthen “middle neighborhoods” across the country.** Middle neighborhoods are neglected communities in between growth and decline. These areas are generally more racially diverse with affordable housing and an acceptable quality of life. However, they are vulnerable to decline without additional support. A comprehensive approach of rehabilitation and investment protects these valuable assets from unnecessary blight and creates middle class opportunities.
 - **Dramatically Increase the CDFI Fund Budget.** The Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, housed at the U.S. Treasury, supports the work of mission driven lenders

that focus their activities in very low income communities. An investment in the CDFI Fund is an investment in lending to firms and individuals that reside in communities that can benefit tremendously from increased access to capital. These funds are leveraged to promote greater economic activity which boosts local tax bases and serves to increase investments in other important community priorities. The White House should call for a massive budgetary increase for the CDFI Fund, instead of its wrong-headed proposal to eliminate the majority of the programs it administers.

- **Make The New Markets Tax Credit Permanent.** 85 percent of New Markets Tax Credit recipients' investments were made in low income or very low income neighborhoods, according to a 2016 study. Thanks to the NMTC program more than \$20 Billion has been invested in these neighborhoods, a major feat given the uncertainty that program participants have faced in years past as Congress has failed to make this proven economic development engine permanent.
 - **Create a Small and Disadvantaged Community Development Entity Category of NMTC Applicants.** Over time, the New Markets Tax Credit program has proven its effectiveness at boosting investment in underserved areas. That being said, the entities that are responsible for facilitating these investments tend to be repeat beneficiaries and tend to be connected to larger institutions with larger balance sheets and staff for application and compliance purposes. The White House should support a new classification of Community Development Entity (CDE) that takes the size of the CDE applicant into account when determining whether to make a credit allocation. This simple change could boost the number of successful applications from smaller CDEs, which would likely boost the investments made by minority owned and small investors, helping to provide a greater on-ramp for CDEs that may be at a competitive disadvantage in the current iteration of the NMTC program.
- **Require the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) to condition FinTech Charter conferral on applicants' demonstrated compliance with truth in lending, equal credit access and Community Reinvestment Act like rules.** The

OCC is exploring granting charters to non-bank financial technology firms, which will grant these firms national operating privileges. Firms should be required to exhibit best practices of fair lending and non-discrimination in order to successfully achieve the benefits that a federal OCC charter confers. Black business owners should be protected against unfair, abusive or deceptive practices when they seek online loans.

- **Set Aside 5 Percent of Annual Settlement Fees with Financial Bad Actors for a 21st Century Technology Investment Fund for CDFIs.** This small provision would go a long way to helping mission based lenders that help underserved local economies make needed investments in game changing technology to modernize their service delivery systems, reduce costs, boost regulatory compliance and improve customer service.
- **Reauthorize, Reform, and Reinvest through the Community Development Block Grant.** The CDBG program supports local and state governments with funds for neighborhood revitalization, housing rehabilitation, and economic development. This program was critical to local communities in the wake of the Great Recession and still plays a particularly important role in distressed communities. Despite Housing and Urban Development Secretary Carson's stated support of the program, the President's Fiscal Year 18 budget has completely eliminated funding for this program.
- **Ensure equal access to homeownership opportunities.**
 - **Protect funding at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.** The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) plays a critical role in promoting quality housing for every American, regardless of race, color, creed, or national origin. For example, the Affirmatively Further Fair Housing Rule requires HUD, and any entities involved in the administration of housing or community development programs to take proactive steps to support residential integration to reverse the historic effects of segregation. The Administration should impose strong federal regulations and clear guidance to housing providers prohibiting discrimination. These protections are particularly important for Americans using housing choice vouchers and other assistance programs. Unfortunately, the President's \$6 billion cut in HUD funding will mean fewer resources to enforce this and other critical missions of the agency.

- **Reauthorize and Reform the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).** The National Flood Insurance Program provides affordable insurance to property owners. This essential program fills a gap in the market that would otherwise leave homeowners and small businesses vulnerable to financial ruin in the face of a natural disaster. The NFIP will expire in September, but as soon as April, many Americans will experience a flood insurance premium increase as the NFIP attempts to pay nearly \$25 billion in debt largely caused by Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy. Congress must act to put the NFIP on a path toward sustainability to ensure the affordability of flood insurance and fair access to home ownership.



EDUCATION

The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to ensure every man, woman, and child has equal access to a quality education.

THE PROBLEMS

In *Brown v. Board of Education*, Chief Justice Warren professed, “it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education.” Today, Justice Warren’s words are as true as ever. Education is increasingly linked to social mobility and the best pathway out of poverty. While the disparity in educational achievement between minority and White students has closed since the integration of the public school system, the institution remains largely separate and unequal. Indeed, it is the most unequal among all industrialized countries.

The nation's investment in public school facilities falls short by \$46 billion annually, leaving many school children to be educated in buildings in dire need of repair. Minority students have unequal access to educational resources, largely due to the discrepancy in funding levels between school districts. Districts that serve the largest concentrations of minority students receive 15 percent less funding per student than districts serving the fewest students of color.

Racial disparities in the discipline of African American children begin early and zero tolerance policies disproportionately impact minority students. Black students only represent 19 percent of preschoolers, but they account for 42 percent of students suspended once and almost half of preschoolers suspended more than once. These suspensions have lasting effects on overall performance. Black students, particularly Black boys, are more likely to be needlessly placed in special education classes. In high school, only 57 percent of Black students have access to advanced courses, compared to 81 percent of Asian-American students and 71 percent of White students. As of 2015, the high school graduation rate of White students was 93.3 percent and the percentage of the White population with a college degree was 36.2 percent, compared to 87 percent and 22.5 percent, respectively, for African Americans. While more Black students are enrolling in colleges and universities than ever, only 41 percent of Black students earn a bachelor’s degree within 6 years, compared to 63 percent for their White counterparts. Income inequality is

increasing the educational divide between the rich and the poor, creating cycle of poverty that will last for generations without meaningful reforms.

“Smart poor kids are less likely to graduate from college now than dumb rich kids. That’s not because of the schools, that’s because of all the advantages that are available to rich kids.”— Robert Putnam, Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy at Harvard Kennedy School

THE SOLUTIONS

The CBC supports major investments in the public school system to ensure all Americans have equal access to a quality education as well as specific policies that combat historic racial disparities.

- **Provide universal, high quality preschool to all children.** Early education lays a critical foundation for later achievements. Children who are unprepared for kindergarten struggle to catch up. The high cost of quality pre-school puts it out of reach for many families. Providing publicly-funded preschool will help close the achievement gap by giving every child a head start.
- **Provide federal funding for K-12 education in lieu of property taxes.** Funding public schools with property taxes exacerbates the inequality among school resources. Communities with higher property values have more resources, while low-income communities lack the tax revenue to provide quality education. Federal funding will help level the playing field and prevent a child’s zip code from dictating their access to a quality education.
- **Increase after school programs and mentorship opportunities.** The federal government should provide additional support to public schools to develop proactive programming that not only prevents youth from dropping out of school, but also improves the educational experience through mentorship and extracurricular opportunities.
- **Support Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).** More than 150 years ago, the first HBCU was established to train freed slaves with no other means of accessing an education in a segregated society. Since that time, HBCUs have produced countless Black leaders and continue to play an important role in advancing the Black community.
 - Providing level funding for HBCUs in the Fiscal Year 2018 is an inadequate commitment. To truly support these institutions while

expanding educational opportunities, the Administration should provide two years of tuition-free education at HBCUs.

- Additionally, an aspirational goal should be set to award HBCUs 5 percent of the total federal grant, internship, and cooperative agreement funding and 10 percent of the total federal contract funding awarded to colleges and universities, which would nearly double federal support for HBCUs.
- The HBCU Capital Financing Program provides low-cost financing or refinancing for infrastructure improvements. To help rebuild these historic institutions, the statutory authority of the program should be increased to meet the needs of HBCUs.
- **Expand and increase Pell Grant funding.** Pell Grants provide much-needed funding to undergraduate students in financial need. Increasing the maximum Pell Grant, overall funding for the program, as well as greater flexibility and year-round availability will offer more students access to a college degree.
- **Address college affordability.** The skyrocketing costs of higher education make it increasingly difficult for students to matriculate through colleges and universities. Those who do are saddled with an unsustainable amount of debt. Lowering student loan interest rates and expanding loan forgiveness program would ease this financial burden.
- **Increase Title II Funding.** One of the challenges of the public education system is the dearth of quality teachers and principals. To address this issue and ultimately improve student achievement, Title II funding should be increased, which will provide more grants to state and local educational agencies to recruit, retain, and develop quality educators.
- **Provide tax incentives for school infrastructure investment.** Educational infrastructure investments put Americans to work building modern, safe schools that provide children with a world-class educational experience. The tax credit financing model has been utilized by many, even President Donald Trump, to rehabilitate buildings for use. A similar approach could be employed to rehabilitate the aging public school infrastructure.

WORKFORCE

The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to strengthen protections and improve opportunities for all American workers, while investing in a 21st Century workforce.

THE PROBLEMS

The wage gap between similarly-situated Black and White workers has grown worse over the last 40 years. Several factors have contributed to the Black-White wage gap, from a declining manufacturing sector to the disparate impact of state budget cuts. However, studies show that discrimination undoubtedly plays a significant role, specifically in the case of African-American men. Studies also show that the wage gap persists despite educational attainment and has actually widened the most among college graduates. The wage gap is particularly problematic for Black women. In 2015, women working full-time were still only paid 80 cents for every dollar made by their male counterparts. The gender pay gap is far worse for women of color, with African-American women only earning 60 percent of that earned by their White male colleagues.

Job creation is critical to the socio-economic success of all communities, but particularly communities of color, which have been plagued by economic inequities for generations. For example, White Americans typically experience a 6 percent unemployment rate, a level the African-American community has not enjoyed in the past four decades. The Black unemployment rate is consistently twice as high as the White unemployment rate. African Americans have been historically overrepresented in the public sector and, thus, have been disproportionately harmed by state and local budget cuts in the wake of the Great Recession. Unfortunately, even in good economic times, African Americans face higher unemployment rates compared to their White counterparts. Education alone cannot resolve this issue, as African Americans are more likely to be unemployed compared to their White counterparts at all levels of educational attainment.

Young adults hold immense potential as they transition from adolescence and dependence to adulthood and self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, young African Americans also struggle under the lack of economic opportunities. Disconnected youth are teenagers and young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who lack a connection to either the education system or labor force. The rate of disconnected youth is highest among African-American youth at 21.6

percent. In nine metro areas, at least 25 percent of Black youth are disconnected from school and work. Disconnected youth not only face their own economic difficulties, but also pose an economic cost to taxpayers, with one estimate as high as \$1.56 trillion for the lifetime of disconnected youth. It is worth noting that it is cheaper to prevent disconnection in the first place through quality preschool and K-12 education.

The American workforce stands at a pivotal moment in our nation's history. More and more Americans are struggling to make ends meet on stagnant wages. Labor protections like minimum wage and overtime pay have severely eroded over the years. Ironically, workers are producing more for less. Net productivity rose 73.4 percent from 1973 to 2015, but the hourly pay adjusted for inflation only rose 11.1 percent in the same time period. Under trickle-down economics, significant gains at the top have not made their way into the pockets of the average American worker.

There is also a growing concern that the ever-expanding role of artificial intelligence and automation will disrupt the livelihood of millions of Americans. As technological advancements transform our society, many American workers may find their human capital replaced by computer capital. A 2013 study concluded that almost half of American jobs have a high risk of automation. The American workforce needs policies that restore the American Dream today and into the future.

THE SOLUTIONS

The CBC supports policies that put more money into the pockets of all hardworking Americans, address the unique challenges of African-American workers, and advances the American workforce in the 21st Century.

- **Strengthen workplace protections.**
 - **Raise the minimum wage.** The federal minimum wage has remained stagnant at \$7.25 per hour since 2009, with a full-time worker earning just \$15,080 per year. Raising the minimum wage would help lift millions of families out of poverty by putting billions of dollars into the pockets of hardworking Americans. African Americans would directly benefit from an increase because people of color represent a disproportionate share of workers earning minimum wage. Additionally, the tipped minimum wage should be phased-out to eliminate the two-tiered

minimum and subminimum wage scheme. The American tipping practice is a remnant of slavery, as railway companies and restaurants fought to retain the practice to avoid paying newly freed slaves. The restaurant industry has the highest proportion of workers earning a rate at or below the minimum wage. Given that tipped workers depend upon their customers to earn a living, it is no surprise that the restaurant industry produces the largest number of sexual harassment claims. Raising the minimum wage and eliminating the tipped wage would help millions of workers, including African Americans, struggling to make ends meet.

- **Finally ensure equal pay for equal work.** More than fifty years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, women are still not paid the same as men for doing the same work. This wage gap exacerbates the economic plight of Black families, as Black women are the head of 68 percent of Black households. For these families, it is critically important that the federal government take action to ensure equal pay for equal work. Women should have a right to fully recover damages for pay discrimination based on gender, workers who share salary information should be free from employer retaliation, and the federal government should collect data about wage discrimination to track progress on efforts to close the wage gap.
- **Expand overtime protections.** The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) protects workers from excessive work hours by incentivizing a limited workweek. These overtime protections require that certain workers receive at least 1.5 times their regular wage for each hour worked in excess of 40 hours in one week. The rule is tailored to protect the most vulnerable workers. Overtime protections do not apply to high-paid workers with control over their duties. Unfortunately, the overtime salary threshold is not adjusted for inflation and has only been raised once since 1975. Thus, over time, the protection has eroded in the face of inaction. In 1975, 65 percent of all salaried workers were covered by overtime protections. By 2013, that number struck to just 11 percent. The Obama Administration's expanded overtime rule would have directly benefited 12.5 million workers, including 1.5 million African-American workers. Expanding the rule recommits our promise to American workers that a hard day's work will yield a fair day's pay.

- **Expand Economic Opportunities.**
 - **Invest in federal programs that create employment opportunities in high-unemployment communities.** The jobs crisis in the African-American community warrants a federal response that provides direct public sector employment, couples job training with job placement, and creates an incentive for the private sector to hire the long-term unemployed. The federal government should provide grants to local governments to hire unemployed workers to complete community-oriented projects. This increases employment opportunities for African Americans while adding value to local communities. Additionally, the federal government should address the jobs crisis in the African-American community by coupling job-training programs with aggressive job placement initiatives. African Americans are less likely to be employed compared to equally qualified White and Latino workers. While job-training programs may help Black workers attain the hard and soft skills they need to succeed, the pervasive nature of discrimination and prejudice in this country necessitates job placement and recruiting efforts that connect qualified workers with suitable employment opportunities. Lastly, the federal government should provide an incentive to private sector employers who hire the chronically unemployed. Each of these initiatives would help negate the historical unemployment crisis in the African-American community.
 - **Provide summer jobs and year-round training to at-risk youth.** Summer youth employment programs provide much-needed resources to improve the lives of at-risk youth, including seasonal job placement and year-round development training. These initiatives have a proven track record of reducing crime and improving academic achievement. In fact, one study found that Chicago's summer youth program reduced violent crime among participants by 43 percent over 16 months. Given that state and local governments traditionally struggle with funding these programs, the federal government should play a more consistent role in supporting local efforts. Existing programs should be expanded to incorporate national service projects as well as mentorship opportunities. Investing in at-risk youth now will ultimately increase our nation's productivity and increase economic opportunities for generations to come.

- **Ban the box.** Nearly one third of all Americans have a criminal record that will be reported in a standard background check. More importantly, 90 percent of employers use background checks in the employment process. As a result, millions of hardworking Americans struggle to secure employment. This issue is particularly pervasive in communities of color that have been subjected to over-policing for decades. To avoid discrimination based on criminal history, the federal government should support fair hiring practices that have already been championed by more than a hundred cities, counties, and states. Specifically, the “ban the box” initiative removes questions related to criminal history from applications and delays criminal background checks until later in the hiring process. This preserves employers’ ability to inquire into criminal history while ensuring that employment candidates are judged based on their merits.
- **Prepare the American workforce for the 21st Century and beyond.** If technology will be the wave of the future, we must ensure that wave does not crash over the American worker. Instead, we need policies that ensure the gains of technological advancement are broadly shared. Greater investment should be made in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) at all levels of education. Public schools must train students in coding, computer science, and general digital literacy. Workforce development programs must be expanded to include high-tech manufacturing to help retrain displaced workers.



HEALTH CARE

The CBC, as the Conscience of the Congress, calls on the Trump Administration to ensure universal healthcare coverage for all Americans and abandon efforts to disrupt the current healthcare system as we know it.

THE PROBLEMS

The Affordable Care Act has been a tremendous tool for expanding healthcare to African-American individuals and families. Under the Affordable Care Act, 60 percent of African Americans qualified for Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, or premium subsidies to purchase insurance on the exchanges set up by the law. According to a brief prepared by the Department of Health and Human Services during the Obama Administration, 70 percent of African Americans shopping on the exchanges found coverage for less than \$100 per month. 7.8 million African Americans gained access to preventative services without co-pays or deductibles. More than 500,000 young African Americans who would otherwise have been uninsured are covered under their parents’ plans. In the first full year after the implementation of the ACA, the uninsured rate among African Americans fell from 24.1 percent to 16.1 percent.

Medicaid, which provides health insurance to low-income individuals, is a critical program on which millions of African Americans rely. Though African Americans make up only 13 percent of the American population, they account for 19 percent of those covered by Medicaid. In many states, particularly in the South, the percentage of Black Medicaid enrollees is much higher. For example, African Americans make up 57 percent of Medicaid enrollees in Mississippi, 52 percent in Louisiana, 51 percent in Georgia, 48 percent in Maryland, 45 percent in South Carolina, 40 percent in Delaware and Virginia, and 39 percent in Alabama. Tens of millions of Americans have gained coverage under the ACA Medicaid expansion, but African Americans have especially benefitted. African-American participation in Medicaid among childless adults increased by 20 percent in states that expanded the program – more than any other racial group.

Despite this progress, much work remains to be done. The uninsured rate for nonelderly African Americans stands at 12 percent, four percentage points higher than the uninsured rate for White Americans. 30 percent of uninsured

adults who fall into the “coverage gap” created by states’ failure to expand Medicaid – those whose income is too high to qualify for Medicaid but not high enough to qualify for premium subsidies – are African American.

Unfortunately, the Republican plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act would undo much of the progress that has been achieved. Under this proposal, in 2020, the federal government would cut federal funding for the Medicaid expansion drastically. The plan would also transform Medicaid from an open-ended program to a per capita cap program. This would dramatically decrease federal funding for Medicaid, forcing states to either cover the gap or ration care. Given the relatively high share of Medicaid enrollees who are African American, it is clear that this plan would devastate African-American communities.

According to the CBO, the bill would reduce payments to disproportionate share hospitals – hospitals that treat high proportions of uninsured patients – even while the number of uninsured Americans is expected to skyrocket. Given the amount of African Americans who were uninsured prior to the Affordable Care Act – and the relatively high uninsured rate even now – overburdened disproportionate share hospitals would be incredibly damaging for Black communities and families.

The Republican plan would also eliminate federal funding for Planned Parenthood. Restricting access to women’s health services, contraception, and abortion would impact African-American women, who make up one third of women who utilize these services in the United States. The CBO estimates that the bill would cut federal funding for Planned Parenthood by \$178 million in 2017 alone. Altogether, repealing the Affordable Care Act without an adequate replacement would be devastating to the Black community.

THE SOLUTIONS

In this case, the solution is simple – The Congressional Black Caucus opposes any effort to cut and cap Medicaid and risk the health coverage of millions of African Americans and millions more Americans.

- **Abandon plans to eliminate the Medicaid expansion and to transform Medicaid into a per capita cap program.** Instead of rationing Medicaid, efforts should be made to expand Medicaid coverage to provide healthcare for Americans caught in the coverage gap, 30 percent of whom are African American.

- **Oppose efforts to upend the healthcare system and increase premiums.** Reckless disruption of the healthcare system without an adequate safety net is morally unconscionable. This will inevitably affect Black families disproportionately.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to guarantee the most basic rights of clean air, water, and soil to every American.

THE PROBLEMS

Race has been the greatest contributing factor in the location of hazardous waste sites. The correlation between race and the location of hazardous waste facilities has been long recognized. A 1983 Government Accountability Office study found that 75 percent of hazardous waste landfills in eight southeastern states were located in predominantly poor and minority communities. A 1987 study found that 40 percent of the entire nation's hazardous waste landfill capacity is centralized in predominantly Black zip codes. As a result, the places where minorities work, live, and learn are significantly compromised by air, water, land, soil, noise, and light pollutants.

Environmental justice efforts have highlighted the fact that minority communities and low-income areas are disproportionately impacted by hazardous facilities and waste sites. Black Americans and other minorities are predisposed to health issues directly linked to environmental and toxic waste. These communities are unjustly plagued with related illnesses such as asthma, cancer, and learning disabilities. Limited access to quality healthcare further exacerbates the dangers of exposure to environmental toxins.

Environmental degradation also includes the deterioration of infrastructure, often resulting in pipeline failures and contaminated water supplies. The most recent example of this occurred in Flint, Michigan, a majority African-American community 70 miles north of Detroit. Almost half of Flint residents live below the poverty line and the median household income is \$24,862. In 2014, it was revealed that the city stopped using the water supply from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department and began to use the Flint River as the city's main water source. The Flint River had previously been deemed poor quality because of its corrosiveness. Residents were exposed to harmful levels of lead and fecal coliform bacteria and a study revealed that the number of children with elevated levels of lead in their blood system nearly doubled. State and local officials compromised the health of Flint residents in an effort to save money, a testament to the dangers of running a government like a business.

THE SOLUTIONS

The CBC supports policies that ensure all Americans have access to a clean and healthy environment.

- **Protect the Environmental Protection Agency.** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plays a critical role in enforcing the laws that ensure Americans have clean air, water, and soil. The EPA needs significant resources to effectively monitor the actions of private operators and ensure they comply with basic public safeguards. Protecting the EPA ultimately protects the communities that are disproportionately affected by environmental ruin. The Administration must commit to robust funding for this vital agency instead of gutting its funding, as is proposed in the President's FY 2018 budget blueprint.
- **Rebuild our nation's aging infrastructure.** Cities all around the country are facing a crisis of aging infrastructure. State and local governments need additional support to repair water pipelines and wastewater networks. The federal government should play a greater role in this effort and increase funding through programs like the EPA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. This federal-state partnership provides grants to states in need of pipeline repair and water treatment and protection.

RURAL AMERICA

The CBC calls on the Trump Administration to revitalize rural America.

THE PROBLEMS

The definition of Rural America is as diverse as its population. These communities range from unincorporated areas, to rural towns inhabited by fewer than 2,500, to nonmetropolitan areas with as many as 49,999 residents. Rural America is home to 46.2 million Americans, which represents 14 percent of the United States population.

In 2014, while the United States' poverty rate was estimated at 15.5 percent, rural communities faced a rate of 18.1 percent. For minorities in Rural America, the reality is far worse. Rural African Americans have the highest poverty rate of 33.8 percent, while rural White Americans have the lowest rate of 15 percent. To make matters worse, rural communities account for the vast majority of chronically poor communities across the nation. Rural economies primarily depend upon the agriculture industry and produce average annual earning 15 percent less than urban areas. Rural communities often lack critical infrastructure, from utilities and broadband, to schools and healthcare facilities. All of these factors contribute to the population decline in Rural America, which drains talent and exacerbates the state of Rural America.

THE SOLUTIONS

The CBC supports policies that provide long-awaited resources to help bridge the gap between Rural America and the rest of the nation.

- **Invest in Rural Health Facilities.** Aged infrastructure and the dearth of medical professionals in rural areas compound existing health disparities for African Americans living in these communities. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development program offers loans and grants to support essential healthcare facilities. The Department of Health and Human Services Office of Rural Health Policy funds a nonprofit network to facilitate medical staff placements in rural hospitals and clinics. Additional funding for both of these initiatives would help alleviate the rural health care crisis.

- **Invest in Rural Housing.** Americans living in rural communities often face substandard conditions with inadequate heating and plumbing systems, as well as little protection in the event of natural disasters. The federal government should provide more loans and grants to help rural families build adequate homes and gain access to basic utilities.
- **Invest in Rural Education.** Rural school districts are underfunded and understaffed. The federal government should increase grant funding through the Department of Education's Rural Education Achievement Program as well as directly to Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Funding should also be provided for specialized instructors to provide STEM education and advanced placement courses.
- **Invest in Rural Infrastructure.** Aged or non-existent roadways and limited public transportation options make it difficult to travel in and around rural communities. Residents still have limited broadband access, making it difficult to even virtually connect to the rest of the world. Rural America needs a major investment in infrastructure to improve bring these communities into the 21st Century.
- **Invest in Rural Energy.** Rural America often faces higher rates for reliable electricity. There is an immense opportunity for these communities to lead the country in a clean energy revolution. The Departments of Energy and Commerce should work with business leaders, local officials, and electric cooperatives to promote this effort.
- **Invest in Rural Nutrition.** Rural communities struggle to access healthy and affordable food. Several agencies provide financial assistance to construct grocery stores, support rural farmers markets, and expand existing food distribution. USDA Food and Nutrition Service administers federal nutrition assistance programs including the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), as well as food programs in schools. Increasing federal resources to each of these initiatives would help end hunger and obesity in rural communities and across the country.
- **Invest in Rural Emergency Preparedness.** Due to remoteness, communications issues, and resource limitations, first responders lack the necessary capabilities to plan, prepare, and respond to emergencies. Communities often operate with a volunteer workforce and have outdated and minimally-equipped response vehicles. Rural America desperately needs resources to prepare for the next disaster and ensure a swift response.



CBC LEGISLATION

VOTING RIGHTS

The CBC has worked to ensure that all American citizens, regardless of their race, income or location, can participate in this great democracy.

- Voter Empowerment Act of 2015 (H.R. 12)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. John Lewis (D-GA-5)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) to require states to make available websites for online voter registration. Authorizes automated voter registration of certain individuals and establishes other initiatives to promote voter registration, such as same-day registration and voter registration of individuals under 18 years of age.

- Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015 (H.R. 2867)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to allow a representative official of an Indian tribe, with authorization from the governing body of the tribe, to request one or more polling places to be located on tribal lands.

- Same Day Registration Act of 2015 (H.R. 3276)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN-5)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require states with a voter registration requirement to make same-day voter registration available at the polling place on the date of election itself (or on the day of voting under early voting).

- Redistricting and Voter Protection Act of 2015 (H.R. 934)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Al Green (D-TX-9)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires a state that enacts a congressional redistricting plan prior to the next decennial census and apportionment of representatives

to obtain a declaratory judgment or preclearance from the Attorney General that such plan does not have the purpose or effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color or in contravention of the guarantees of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

- Election Infrastructure and Security Promotion Act of 2016 (H.R. 6073)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. “Hank,” Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires the Department of Homeland Security to designate voting systems used in the United States as critical infrastructure and publish a comprehensive plan to protect the electoral process from threats, including cyber-terrorism.

- Election Integrity Act (H.R. 6072)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill limits the purchase of new voting systems that do not provide voter-verified paper ballots; establishes protocols for verifiable manual audits; and creates guidelines for the publication of voter purge lists and a process for individuals to appeal.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, JOBS, AND FAIRNESS

The CBC has supported numerous policies aimed at increasing investment, incomes and sustainable wealth creation in underserved communities.

- Tax Benefit for Homeownership Clarification Act (H.R. 6492)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN-5)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to reduce the limitation on the mortgage interest

deduction for the acquisition indebtedness of certain taxpayers. (Acquisition indebtedness is indebtedness that: (1) is incurred in acquiring, constructing, or substantially improving any qualified residence of the taxpayer; and (2) is secured by such residence. It also includes refinancing of the debt in certain situations.)

- Small Business Startup Savings Account Act of 2016 (H.R. 5783)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to provide for tax-preferred Small Business Start-up Savings Accounts to pay for trade or business expenses, including the purchase of equipment or facilities, marketing, training, incorporation, and accounting fees. The bill allows annual nondeductible contributions to such accounts of up to \$10,000, subject to a \$150,000 limit on total contributions to the account and adjustments for inflation after 2017.

- Workforce Development Tax Credit Act of 2015 (H.R. 1781)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL-7)
 - Bill Summary: Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow a business-related tax credit for: (1) 50 percent of wages (up to \$2,000) paid to an apprenticeship employee during an apprenticeship period, and (2) 40 percent of wages (up to \$6,000) paid to such an employee during a post-apprenticeship period.

- The Ending Homelessness Act of 2016 (H.R. 4888)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA-43)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to make additional FY 2017-FY 2021 appropriations available for: (1) emergency relief grants to address the unmet needs of homeless populations in jurisdictions with the highest need, (2)

rental assistance under the United States Housing Act of 1937 for persons and households who are homeless, and (3) homeless outreach and coordination services.

- The Comprehensive Consumer Credit Reporting Reform Act (H.R. 5282)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA-43)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Fair Credit Reporting Act to revise requirements for reinvestigations of disputed information by a consumer reporting agency, establishing a new right to appeal, free of charge, completed disputes adverse to the consumer.

- Emerging Business Encouragement Act (H.R. 2234)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. André Carson (D-IN-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Small Business Act to direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration (SBA), for each industry category for which the Administrator established a size standard, to establish procedures, by rule, for designating a small business in that industry category as an Emerging Business Enterprise (EBE).

- Veterans Pensions Protection Act of 2016 (H.R. 4994)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-FL-20)
 - Bill Summary: This bill exempts the following payments from annual income determinations with respect to pensions for veterans and surviving spouses and children of veterans: (1) reimbursements, including insurance settlement payments, for medical expenses related to an accident, theft, loss, or casualty, up to the costs of medical care provided to the victim of such event; and (2) payments for pain and suffering, including insurance settlement payments and general damages awarded by a court related to an accident,

theft, loss, or casualty loss up to an amount determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs on a case-by-case basis.

- Fair Chance Act (H.R. 3470)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill prohibits federal agencies and federal contractors from requesting that applicants for employment disclose criminal history record information before receiving a conditional offer (an offer of employment conditioned upon the results of a criminal history inquiry). The bill sets forth positions to which such prohibition shall not apply, such as positions for which prior consideration of criminal history record information is otherwise required by law, positions with law enforcement and national security duties, and positions requiring access to classified information.

- Pay Equity for All Act of 2016 (H.R. 6030)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to make it an unlawful practice for an employer to: screen prospective employees based on their previous wages or salary histories; seek the previous wages or salary history of any prospective employee from any current or former employer of such employee; or discharge or in any other manner retaliate against any current or prospective employee because the employee opposed any act or practice made unlawful by the Act, or made or is about to make a complaint relating to any such act or practice, or testified or is about to testify, assist, or participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding relating to any such act or practice.

- Promoting National Service and Reducing Unemployment Act (H.R. 4821)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)
 - Bill Summary: This bill provides FY2016 supplemental appropriations to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) for: Operating Expenses, Salaries and Expenses, and the Office of Inspector General. The CNCS must: (1) use the funds to increase the number of national service positions approved under the National and Community Service Act of 1990, and (2) give preference to programs which propose to use full-time national service positions.

- SCORE for Small Business Act of 2016 (H.R. 4788)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Small Business Act, with respect to the SCORE program (Service Corps of Retired Executives), to: reauthorize the program for FY 2017-FY 2018; require the Small Business Administration to award a grant to the SCORE Association (or any successor group) to manage the SCORE program; modify program requirements with respect to the role of participating volunteers, program plans and goals, and reporting; and outline privacy requirements pertaining to the disclosure of information of businesses assisted under such program.

- Veteran Small Business Tax Credit Act of 2015 (H.R. 4039)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill allows a new business-related tax credit for the start-up expenses of a veteran-owned small business. The allowable amount of such credit is 15 percent of start-up expenditures that do not exceed \$80,000. The credit is allowed to any individual (or the

surviving spouse of such individual) who: (1) has served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, and (2) has not been discharged or released from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions.

- Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act (H.R. 333)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Sanford Bishop, Jr. (D-GA-2)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends federal military retired pay provisions to: (1) permit veterans with a service-connected disability of less than 50 percent to concurrently receive both retired pay and disability compensation; (2) eliminate provisions requiring a phase-in between January 1, 2004, and December 31, 2013, of concurrent receipt of retired pay and disability compensation; (3) eliminate a phase-in of concurrent receipt of retired pay and disability compensation for disabled veterans determined to be individually unemployable; and (4) require a limited reduction in retired pay for qualified disability retirees with less than 20 years of retirement-creditable service.

- Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 2150)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (FLSA) to increase the federal minimum wage for employees to: (1) \$8.00 an hour on January 1, 2016, or, if later, on the first day of the third month after enactment of this Act; (2) \$9.00 an hour after one year; (3) \$10.00 an hour after two years; (4) \$11.00 an hour after three years; (5) \$12.00 an hour after four years; and (6) the amount the Department of Labor determines (based on increases in the median hourly wage of all employees) after five years, and annually thereafter.

- Local Hire Act of 2016 (H.R. 4005)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA-37)
 - Bill Summary: This bill authorizes a state to establish local hiring bid specifications or consider the hiring of local workers in the evaluation of bids and proposals for federal-aid highway projects. The recipients of federal assistance are likewise authorized to establish such specifications or consider local hiring in the evaluation of bids and proposals for public transportation projects.

- Territorial Economic Growth and Recovery Act of 2016 (H.R. 5163)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Stacey Plaskett (D-VI)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to repeal the limitation on the amount of distilled spirits excise taxes covered over (paid into) to the treasuries of the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

- Service Members Financial Planning Assistance Act of 2016 (H.R. 6493)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Marc Veasey (D-TX-33)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, effective as of January 1, 2018, to require the department concerned (Department of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Homeland Security, or Commerce) to ensure that certain members of the uniformed services who will be eligible to make an election of lump sum payment of certain military retired pay have access to retirement planning assistance with a certified financial planner, at no cost, by December 30, 2017, to help weigh the potential benefits and drawbacks of making such election and of selecting a particular payment percentage.

- Improving Contract Procurement for Small Businesses through More Accurate Reporting Act of 2016 (H.R. 4330)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-9)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Small Business Act to require the Small Business Administration to report to the President and Congress an analysis of the number and dollar amount of prime contracts awarded by federal agencies each fiscal year to small business concerns.

- Community Bank Capital Clarification Act (H.R. 2987)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-NY-5)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Financial Stability Act of 2010 with respect to: minimum leverage capital requirements and minimum risk-based capital requirements for depository institution holding companies; mandatory deductions from actual capital in the calculation of such minimum capital requirements for certain investments by such institutions, especially in financial subsidiaries; and the exemption from such capital deductions for the debt or equity instruments issued by certain smaller institutions.

- Disaster Assistance Recoupment Fairness Act of 2015 (H.R. 797)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-NY-5)
 - Bill Summary: This bill authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to waive a debt owed to the United States related to federal assistance provided under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to individuals and households in relation to a major disaster declared by the President on or after January 1, 2011, if such assistance was distributed based on an error by FEMA, there was no fault on behalf of the debtor, and the collection of the debt would be against

equity and good conscience, unless the debt that involves fraud, the presentation of a false claim, or misrepresentation by the debtor or any party having an interest in the claim.

- Preserving Capital Access and Mortgage Liquidity Act of 2015 (H.R. 2473)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay, Jr. (D-MO-1)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Federal Home Loan Bank Act to redefine "community financial institution" to include either a federal or state credit union.

- Expanding Penalty Free Withdrawal Act of 2016 (H.R. 4972)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to expand the exceptions that permit penalty-free distributions to unemployed individuals from retirement plans. The 10 percent additional tax on early distributions from retirement plans does not apply to an individual after separation from employment if: (1) the individual has received federal or state unemployment compensation for 26 consecutive weeks or, if less, the maximum period available under state law, and (2) the distributions are made during the year or the succeeding year in which the compensation is paid.

- Homeowner Foreclosure Reduction Act of 2016 (S. 3426)
 - Bill Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)
 - Bill Summary: This bill provides nonprofit organizations and local governments with the opportunity to match a bid with respect to the sale of certain non-performing loans by the Government-sponsored enterprises and the Federal Housing Administration, and for other purposes.

- Scale-up Manufacturing Investment Company Act of 2015 (S. 1934)
 - Bill Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to require the Small Business Administration (SBA) to establish a scale-up manufacturing investment company (SUMIC) program under which it shall provide leverage to participating investment funds (PIFs) to support debt and equity investments in qualifying manufacturing projects of specified small and emerging manufacturers.

- Stop Debt Collection Abuse Act of 2015 (S. 2255)
 - Bill Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act to redefine: (1) "debt" to include any obligation or alleged obligation of a consumer to pay a loan, an overpayment, a fine, penalty, a fee, or other money to a federal agency and that is at least 180 days past due; and (2) "debt collector" to include any person who regularly collects debts owed or allegedly owed to a federal agency.

- Young Americans Financial Literacy Act (H.R 1866)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. André Carson (D-IN-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill will establish a grant program to develop and implement financial literacy programs for young people ages 8 to 24 and it incentivizes the development of partnerships between institutions of higher education, local educational agencies, non-profit organizations, and financial institutions to develop programs aimed at young Americans in different phases of their life. This bill promotes the development of evidence-based instructional material that is geared towards targeted groups and addresses unique life

situations, including student loans, credit card misuse, and other financial transactions of young Americans.

- Hire For a Second Chance Act of 2016 (H.R. 4840)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill expands the Work Opportunity Tax Credit for employers to incentivize the hiring of ex-offenders. It also makes the Work for Opportunity Tax Credit permanent.

- The Ensuring Diverse Leadership Act of 2017(H.R. 485)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill seeks to remedy the gender, racial, and ethnic disparities amongst the leadership of the twelve Federal Reserve Banks in the Federal Reserve System by requiring at least one gender diverse candidate and one racial or ethnically diverse candidate to be interviewed during the search for a new President of a Federal Reserve Bank. Modeled after the National Football League’s “Rooney Rule,” this bill utilizes proven diversity hiring techniques from the private sector and applies it to an institution in desperate need of an injection of diverse leadership.

- A bill to lower the annual mortgage insurance premium for new homebuyers of Federal Housing Administration insured mortgages. (H.R. 1321)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Anthony Brown (D-MD-4)
 - Bill Summary: This would make homeownership more affordable for 750,000 to 850,000 borrowers in 2017, and make homeownership possible for an additional 30,000 to 40,000 homebuyers.

- Improving Corporate Governance Through Diversity Act of 2017 (H.R. 970)

- Bill Sponsor: Rep. Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY-05)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires large federal contractors and public companies to release data on the diversity of their boards of directors and senior management teams.
- Infrastructure Workforce Development Resolution (H. Res. 159)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY-05)
 - Bill Summary: This resolution expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that any infrastructure spending bill enacted during the 115th Congress should include robust workforce development programs that recruit and train individuals from communities with high unemployment rates.
- Arbitration Fairness Act of 2017 (H.R. 1374)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill eliminates the use of pre-dispute arbitration clauses in employment, consumer, and civil rights cases.
- Data Broker Accountability and Transparency Act (H.R. 4516)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill prohibits data brokers from obtaining or disclosing personal information of an individual by making a false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation.
- APPS Act (H.R. 4517)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill boosts consumer privacy on mobile devices by requiring app developers to maintain privacy

policies, obtain consent from consumers before collecting data, and securely maintain the data that they collect.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE, POLICING REFORM, AND GUN SAFETY

The CBC continues its decades long leadership to create a more just and equitable approach to policing and the administration of our criminal justice system.

- Sensenbrenner-Scott SAFE Justice Reinvestment Act of 2015 (H.R. 2944)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI-5)
 - Bill Cosponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill improves public safety, accountability, transparency, and respect for federalism in Federal criminal law by applying the findings of the bipartisan Over-Criminalization Task Force and evidence-based reforms already made by some States, and reinvesting the resulting savings from doing so in additional evidence-based criminal justice strategies that are proven to reduce recidivism and crime, and the burden of the criminal justice system on the taxpayer.

- Recidivism Reduction Act (H.R. 2806)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. André Carson (D-IN-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends title XVI (Supplemental Security Income for Aged, Blind, and Disabled) (SSI) of the Social Security Act (SSAct) to require the reinstatement upon release of an otherwise eligible disabled inmate for SSI benefits which were terminated because of the inmate's incarceration in a jail, prison, penal institution, or correctional facility for a period of 12 or more consecutive months. It also requires automatic reinstatement of the benefit eligibility under SSAct title XVI upon discharge or release of an individual who has become an inmate of a jail,

prison, penal institution, or correctional facility, without the need to reapply for the benefits, if the period of sentence to the institution does not exceed 90 days.

- End Racial Profiling Act of 2015 (H.R. 1933)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI-13)
 - Bill Summary: This bill prohibits any law enforcement agent or agency from engaging in racial profiling, grants the United States or an individual injured by racial profiling the right to obtain declaratory or injunctive relief, and requires federal law enforcement agencies to maintain adequate policies and procedures to eliminate racial profiling and to cease existing practices that permit racial profiling.

- Gun Violence Reduction Resources Act of 2016 (H.R. 4316)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
 - Bill Summary: This bill authorizes the Department of Justice to hire 200 additional agents and investigators for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

- Excessive Use of Force Prevention Act of 2015(H.R. 2052)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY- 8)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the federal criminal code to include the application of any pressure to the throat or windpipe which may prevent or hinder breathing or reduce intake of air within the meaning of "punishment, pain, or penalty" for purposes of the federal prohibition against deprivation of rights under color of law.

- Youth PROMISE Act (H.R. 2197)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to establish a PROMISE Advisory Panel to assist the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in: (1) assessing and developing standards and evidence-based and promising

practices to prevent juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity, and (2) collecting data in designated geographic areas to assess the needs and existing resources for juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention.

- Private Prison Information Act of 2015 (H.R. 2470)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
 - Bill Summary: This bill subjects records relating to the operation of and prisoners in a prison or other correctional or detention facility that is owned or operated by a nongovernmental entity, state, or local government and that incarcerates or detains federal prisoners pursuant to a contract or agreement with a federal agency to the Freedom of Information Act in the same manner as records maintained by a federal agency operating a federal prison or detention facility.

- Forensic Science and Standards Act of 2016 (H.R. 5795)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: This bill establishes a National Forensic Science Research Initiative to improve, expand, and coordinate federal research in forensic sciences. The bill establishes a National Forensic Science Coordinating Office to coordinate with relevant federal agencies in the development of: (1) a unified federal research strategy; and (2) any necessary programs, policies, and budgets to support implementation of the research strategy.

- Safer Neighborhoods Gun Buyback Act of 2015 (H.R. 4278)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Donald Payne, Jr. (D-NJ-10)
 - Bill Summary: This bill authorizes the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to make grants to states, local governments, or gun dealers to conduct gun buyback programs. The BJA may distribute smart prepaid

cards for use by a state, local government, or gun dealer to compensate individuals who dispose of firearms.

- Hadiya Pendleton and Nyasia Pryor-Yard Gun Trafficking and Crime Prevention Act (H.R. 5080)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL-1)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the federal criminal code to make trafficking in firearms a crime. Specifically, it prohibits, with respect to two or more firearms, the following: transfer to or receipt by a prohibited person or a person who plans a subsequent transfer that results in unlawful use, possession, or disposition of such firearms; providing false statements in connection with the purchase, receipt, or acquisition of such firearms; and directing, promoting, or facilitating such prohibited conduct. A person who commits or conspires to commit a gun trafficking offense is subject to a prison term of up to 20 years (or 25 years if such person also acted as an organizer).

- Preventing Tragedies Between Police and Communities Act of 2016 (H.R. 5221)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires a state or local government that receives funding under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program to train law enforcement officers on de-escalation techniques. The Department of Justice (DOJ) may reduce by up to 20 percent the JAG allocation of a state or local government that fails to comply.

- Protecting Communities and Police Act of 2015 (H.R. 2326)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay, Jr. (D-MO-1)
 - Bill Summary: This bill directs the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Defense Logistics Agency, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) to jointly appoint a task force to determine the appropriateness of

the use of certain military equipment by state and local law enforcement agencies.

- Effective Assistance of Counsel in the Digital Era Act of 2016 (H.R. 4324)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY- 8)
 - Bill Summary: This bill prohibits any person acting under the authority of the United States from monitoring any electronic communication by a prisoner in a Bureau of Prisons correctional facility if such communication is subject to attorney-client privilege. This does not apply to any communications the Department of Justice has reason to believe pose a threat to national security.

- Laquan McDonald Camera Act of 2016 (H.R. 6486)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL-1)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires, as a condition on the receipt of Federal funds, that States require law enforcement agencies to have in effect a policy regarding the use of body-worn cameras and dashboard cameras.

- Second Chance for Ex-Offenders Act of 2016 (H.R. 6499)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill permits the expungement of records of certain nonviolent criminal offenses.

- End For Profit Prisons Act (H.R. 6113)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill restricts the authority of the Attorney General to enter into contracts for Federal correctional facilities and community confinement facilities, and for other purposes.

- Equal Justice Under Law Act of 2016 (S. 3144)
 - Bill Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)

- Bill Summary: This bill states that an indigent individual facing criminal prosecution or juvenile delinquency in a state court is entitled to the effective assistance of counsel, as guaranteed by the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments, at the state's expense.
- Stop Online Ammunition Sales Act (H.R. 2283)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill would require federally licensed ammunitions dealers to confirm the identity of individuals who arrange to purchase ammunition over the Internet by verifying a photo ID in-person. It also requires ammunition vendors to report any sales of more than 1,000 rounds within five consecutive days to the U.S. attorney general if the person purchasing ammunition is not a licensed dealer.
- End For-Profit Prisons Act of 2016 (H.R. 6113)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires the Bureau of Prisons and U.S. Marshals Service to end its contracts with for-profit confinement facilities, and make critical changes to the re-entry process for individuals who have been released from federal prisons.
- Tiffany Joslyn Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program Reauthorization Act (H.R. 68)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to: (1) expand the juvenile accountability block grant program with respect to programs for the prevention of bullying to also include intervention programs, and (2) authorize appropriations for such grant programs for FY2016-FY2020. This bill also encourages the use of best practices for all activities under such grant programs.

- Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act (H.R. 2875)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI-13)
 - Bill Summary: The bill takes a comprehensive approach to addressing the issue of police accountability and building trust between police departments and their communities by providing incentives for local police organizations to voluntarily adopt performance-based standards to ensure that incidents of misconduct will be minimized through appropriate management, training and oversight protocols and that if such incidents do occur, that they will be properly investigated.

- Effective and Humane Treatment of Youth Act (Kalief's Law) (H.R. 47)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
 - Bill Summary: This bill abolishes solitary confinement for juveniles and younger adults, and ensures a protected right to a speedy trial and regular detention hearing by prohibiting lengthy periods of detention and delay; represents a comprehensive and humane improvement to the criminal justice system for young people.

- Federal Prison Bureau Nonviolent Offender Relief Act (H.R. 64)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
 - Bill Summary: This bill provides an alternative release date for nonviolent offenders who have attained the age of 45 and have not had disciplinary infractions, and allows for restoration of good time credits.

- Supporting Youth Opportunity and Preventing Delinquency Act (H.R. 5963)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Carlos Curbelo (R-FL-26)
 - Bill Cosponsor: Rep. Robert "Bobby" Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill reauthorizes the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) of 1974 to help states

and local communities better serve at-risk youth and juvenile offenders

- Justice Safety Valve Act (H.R. 706)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill gives federal judges the ability to impose sentences below mandatory minimums in appropriate cases based upon mitigating factors.

- Fair Sentencing Clarification Act (H.R. 1252)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill would allow all offenders, regardless of when they were arrested or convicted, to receive the benefit of the changes that Congress made in 2010 when it passed the Fair Sentencing Act.

- Recidivism Clarification Act (H.R. 1254)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill would address the excessive, severe, and irrational mandatory consecutive penalties that are added onto existing mandatory minimums in certain federal drug cases, a practice commonly known as “stacking.”

- Fairness in Cocaine Sentencing Act (H.R. 1255)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill would go further than the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 and provide true 1-to-1 sentencing equality in terms of penalties for crack and powder cocaine offenses.

- Federal Benefits Fairness and Restoration Act of 2016 (H.R. 6163)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to

repeal the denial of assistance and benefits for certain drug-related convictions.

- Grand Jury Reform Act (H.R. 429)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires the appointment of a special prosecutor to conduct an independent investigation and present the results to a judge in a probable cause hearing, open to the public, whenever a police officer kills an individual while acting in the line of duty.

- Police Accountability Act (H.R. 1102)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill expands DOJ's authority to investigate wrongdoing by police by making it a federal crime for police officers to commit murder and manslaughter.

- Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act (H.R. 1232)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill limits the transfer of DOD's 1033 excess personal property program to local and state law enforcement agencies

- Airport Security Act (H.R. 2767)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill prohibits certain individuals from possessing a firearm in an airport.

HEALTHCARE

The CBC continues to lead in efforts to eliminate the disparity in healthcare outcomes for those in underserved communities.

- Rural Hospital Enhancement and Long Term Health Act of 2016 (H.R. 5133)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Cresent Hardy (R-NV-4)
 - Bill Cosponsor: Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bipartisan legislation would protect vital services in rural American by reauthorizing the State Office of Rural Health program and increasing the maximum grant award for hospitals under the United States Department of Agriculture's Community Facilities Grant Program. The bill would also require the Department of Health and Human Services to submit an annual report to Congress on the state of our nation's rural health service.

- Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2016 (H.R. 5475)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL-2)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Public Health Service Act and the Social Security Act to expand the collection and analysis of data in programs of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The bill sets forth provisions regarding cultural competence in federal healthcare programs and services, including provisions establishing the Robert T. Matsui Center for Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Health Care. HHS must engage in activities regarding health workforce diversity, including: (1) establishing a working group and a technical clearinghouse; (2) awarding grants to academic institutions; (3) establishing a health and health care disparities education program; and (4) providing for scholarships, student loan repayment and loan forgiveness, and research fellowships.

- Prescription Drug Affordability Act (H.R. 3513)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends titles XVIII (Medicare) and XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act to modify provisions related to the affordability of prescription drugs under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

- Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2016 (H.R.2646)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA-18)
 - Bill Cosponsors: Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-FL-20) and Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: This bill creates the position of Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders to take over the responsibilities of the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Mental health programs are extended and training regarding mental health is expanded.

- National Nurse Act of 2015 (H.R. 379)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: Amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to designate the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health within the Office of the Surgeon General. Includes among the duties of this position: (1) providing leadership and coordination of Public Health Service nursing professional affairs for the Office of the Surgeon General and other agencies of the Public Health Service, (2) conducting outreach and education, and (3) providing guidance and leadership for activities that will increase public safety and emergency preparedness.

- Physician Assistant Higher Education Modernization Act of 2015 (H.R. 3944)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA-37)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends title IV (Student Assistance) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to assist qualified individuals in receiving the education and training needed to become a physician assistant. Students enrolled in physician assistant education programs are eligible for increased scholarship opportunities, increased unsubsidized loan limits, and loan forgiveness programs for those who serve in areas of national need upon graduation.

- Breaking Addiction Act of 2015 (H.R. 1988)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH-11)
 - Bill Summary: This bill directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide for waiver of the limitation on medical assistance to certain patients in an institution for mental diseases (IMD limitation) in order to permit medical assistance under title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act for the treatment of a substance use condition for a qualified individual in a community-based institution for mental diseases.

- Action for Dental Health Act (H.R. 539)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL-2)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize oral health promotion and disease prevention programs through FY 2020. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) may award grants or enter into contracts to obtain portable or mobile dental equipment and pay operational costs for the provision of free dental services to underserved populations.

- Recognizing Gun Violence As a Public Health Emergency Act (H.R. 224)

- Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL-2)
 - Bill Summary: Requires the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service to report annually to Congress on the effects of gun violence on public health and the status of actions taken to address those effects.
- Health IT Modernization for Underserved Communities Act of 2015 (H.R. 1345)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA-37)
 - Bill Summary: Amends title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act to extend to physician assistants eligibility for Medicaid electronic health record incentive payments, regardless of whether or not such physician assistants practice at a rural health center that is led by a physician assistant or in a federally qualified health center.
- Enhancing Minority and Women Representation in NIH Medical Research Act (H.R. 6224)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to require the National Institutes of Health (NIH), in assessing research priorities, to publish data on certain clinical research study populations. The NIH must foster collaboration among clinical research projects that use human subjects and that collect similar data to increase the number and diversity of subjects.
- Synthetic Drug Awareness Act of 2016 (H.R. 5020)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY- 8)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires the Surgeon General to report to Congress on the public health effects of the increased use since January 2010 by individuals who are 12 to 18 years old of drugs developed and manufactured to avoid control under the Controlled Substances Act (e.g.,

synthetic marijuana, also known as "spice," and synthetic amphetamines, also known as "bath salts").

- National Prostate Cancer Plan Act (H.R. 2730)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. G.K. Butterfield (D-NC-1)
 - Bill Summary: Establishes in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) the National Prostate Cancer Council on Screening, Early Detection, Assessment, and Monitoring of Prostate Cancer to: (1) develop and implement a strategic plan for the accelerated development of diagnostic tools for prostate cancer, (2) review the effectiveness of diagnostic tools for prostate cancer, (3) coordinate prostate cancer research and services across federal agencies, (4) evaluate all active federal prostate cancer programs, and (5) ensure the inclusion of men at high risk for prostate cancer in clinical, research, and service efforts.

- Healthy MOM Act (H.R. 2866)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Public Health Service Act and Internal Revenue Code to require health insurers, health insurance exchanges, and group health plans to offer a special enrollment period to pregnant women beginning when the pregnancy is reported to the issuer, exchange, or plan.

- Reducing Unexpected Deaths in Infants and Children Act of 2016 (H.R. 4571)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to award grants for: (1) improving state comprehensive death scene investigations for sudden unexplained infant death (SUID) and sudden unexplained

death in childhood (SUDC), (2) death scene investigation training specific to such deaths, (3) increasing the rate of comprehensive and standardized autopsies for such deaths, and (4) surveillance efforts on stillbirths.

- Advancing Hope Act of 2015 (H.R. 1537)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. G.K. Butterfield (D-NC-1)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to expand the priority review voucher program for rare pediatric diseases to include treatments for sickle cell disease and pediatric cancers.

- Ellie's Law (H.R. 6185)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-9)
 - Bill Summary: This bill provides for further comprehensive research at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke on ruptured intracranial aneurysms.

- Safer Prescribing of Controlled Substances Act (H.R. 3889)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-9)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Controlled Substances Act to direct the Drug Enforcement Administration, as a condition of granting or renewing the registration of a covered practitioner to dispense, or conduct research with, controlled substances in schedule II, III, IV, or V, to require such practitioner to complete training that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) determines meets the requirements of this bill. It defines a "covered practitioner" as a practitioner that is not a hospital, pharmacy, or veterinarian.

- Health Equity and Accountability Act (H.R. 5475)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL-02)
 - Bill Summary: This bill makes investments to diversify the health workforce pipeline and expand access to care in

underserved communities. It also creates empowerment zones and expands access to care in underserved communities. This bill studies the mental health disparities, and expands programming for minority mental health professionals. It invests in chronic, genetic and other diseases which have particular high rates in minority communities, such as: cancer, viral hepatitis, bone marrow failure, cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, and lung disease. This bill commissions studies on the disparate health impacts of environmental regulations on minority communities, and provides grants for community health improvement projects. This bill commissions studies on the disparate health impacts of environmental regulations on minority communities, and provides grants for community health improvement projects.

- “Transparent Environment in School Testing for Lead Act” or the “TEST for Lead Act” (H.R.4879)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Donald M. Payne, Jr. (D-NJ-10)
 - Bill Summary: While some school districts voluntarily test their drinking water for lead contamination, there is, surprisingly, no Federal requirement that schools test for lead regularly or to test for lead at all. The TEST for Lead Act addresses this water testing gap by requiring any state that receives funding from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), which provides federal funding for safe water programs, to assist public and charter schools in establishing programs to test for lead in drinking water. It also requires schools to promptly disclose the results if elevated lead levels are found.

- Donald Payne, Sr. Colorectal Cancer Detection (H.R.6275)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Donald M. Payne, Jr. (D-NJ-10)

- Bill Summary: The bill would place all FDA-approved blood-based screening tests on equal footing with available screening methods and authorize CMS reimbursement.
- The Enhancing Minority and Women Representation in NIH Medical Research Act
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH-3)
 - Bill Summary: would instruct the Director of the National Institutes of Health to collect additional data to better evaluate progress in reducing health disparities, encourage coordination between the Director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities and the Director of the Office of Research on Women’s Health to reduce health disparities, and ensure basic research projects better consider relevant biological variables between men and women.
- The Medicare for All Act (H.R. 676)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. John Conyers (D-MI-13)
 - Bill Summary: Would create a universal healthcare system that ensures everyone gets healthcare because everyone needs healthcare. It would cut costs on healthcare and return them to consumers.

POVERTY REDUCTION AND NUTRITION

The CBC supports lending a helping hand to those in communities that have struggled to achieve broadly shared economic growth.

- 10-20-30 Formula to Fight Persistent Poverty
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC-6)
 - Bill Summary: Requires 10% of funds made available in appropriations Acts in FY 2015-FY 2025 for specified accounts or activities to be allocated for assistance in persistent poverty counties. Defines "persistent poverty

counties" as any county with a poverty rate of at least 20%, as determined in each of the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates of the Bureau of the Census.

- Half in Ten Act of 2015 (H.R. 258)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)
 - Bill Summary: Establishes within the Department of Health and Human Services a Federal Interagency Working Group on Reducing Poverty, which shall develop a National Strategy to reduce the number of persons living in poverty in America in half within 10 years after release of the 2014 Census Report on Income and Poverty in the United States: 2013.

- Urban Progress Act of 2016 (H.R. 5671)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL-2)
 - Bill Summary: This bill expands economic opportunities, improve community policing, and promote common-sense gun violence prevention in underserved communities, and for other purposes.

- Pathways Out of Poverty Act of 2015 (H.R. 2721)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)
 - Bill Summary: Directs the Department of Education (ED) to allot matching grants to states and, through them, sub grants to local educational agencies (LEAs), childhood education program providers, or consortia of those entities to implement high-quality prekindergarten programs for children from low-income families. Allots grants to states based on each state's proportion of children who are age four and who are from families with incomes at or below 200% of the poverty level.

- Help our Neediest Families Act of 2016 (H.R. 6458)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Marc Veasey (D-TX-33)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends part A (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) (TANF) of title IV of the Social Security Act to prohibit a state to which a TANF grant is made from using any part of such grant for drug testing of TANF applicants or recipients.

- Farm to School Act of 2015 (H.R.1061)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE-1)
 - Bill Cosponsor: Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH-11)
 - Bill Summary: This bill would triple mandatory funding for the United States Department of Agriculture's Farm to School Grant program to meet the increasing demands on the program and fully include preschools, summer food service program sites, and after school programs. The bill would also increase access among tribal schools and improve participation among beginning, veteran, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

- Food Deserts Act (H.R. 483)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. André Carson (D-IN-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill establishes a Department of Agriculture program to provide grants to states for revolving funds to support the establishment and operation of grocery stores in underserved communities.

- Serve More Kids Act (H.R. 5699)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to make several changes to the Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) child nutrition programs. USDA must: (1) award equipment assistance grants to states for the school lunch and breakfast programs, (2) provide

commodity assistance to states for the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and (3) establish a pilot program for providing a third daily meal under the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

- Farmers Markets for Food Deserts Act of 2016 (H.R. 6343)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Marc Veasey (D-TX-33)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to exclude from gross income amounts received by the taxpayer from the sale of locally and regionally produced agricultural products to members of the general public at a fixed location (other than a retail store) in an underserved community. (Underserved communities are located in areas of concentrated poverty with limited access to fresh locally or regionally grown foods.)

- Closing the Meal Gap Act of 2016 (H.R. 5215)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to revise the requirements for calculating Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the food stamp program) benefits.

- Services for Ending Long-Term Homelessness Act (H.R. 161)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-FL-20)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to design national strategies and implement programs to address chronic homelessness.

- Homeless Veterans Legal Services Act (H.R. 6046)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to enter into partnerships with public or private entities to fund a portion of the legal services such entities

provide to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness related to housing, family law, income support, and criminal defense.

- Taxpayer Economic Hardship Protection Act of 2015 (H.R. 1979)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: The bill would ensure the IRS cannot issue levies, including wage garnishments, retirement account garnishments, or seizing of any property, against those who qualify as likely to experience economic hardship, defined as individuals with incomes at less than 250 percent of the federal poverty rate.

- Investing in Older Americans Act of 2016 (H.R. 4973)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: Create a work opportunity tax credit for employers to incentivize the hiring of older Americans that have been out of work for more than 26 weeks.

- Fair SHARE (Salary History Alternatives for Responsible Employment) Act (H.R.6293)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: Prohibits employers from requesting salary history as a condition of hiring a prospective employee.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The CBC believes that sustained and increased investment in educational and job training opportunities for all will yield a massive return for families and communities nationwide.

- America Competes Reauthorization Act of 2015 (H.R. 1898)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: Establishes, revises, and extend specified science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)

programs, as well as education, research, and training programs. Authorizes appropriations for FY 2016-FY 2020 for: (1) the National Science Foundation (NSF), (2) the Department of Energy (DOE) for activities of the Office of Science, and (3) the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E).

- Opening Doors for Youth Act of 2016 (H.R. 6117)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill provides at-risk and disconnected youth with subsidized summer and year-round employment and to assist local community partnerships in improving high school graduation and youth employment rates, and for other purposes.

- File Once FAFSA Act of 2016 (H.R. 5784)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Higher Education Act of 1965 to simplify the FAFSA requirements for dependent students.

- Pell Grant Restoration Act of 2015 (H.R. 3512)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends title IV (Student Assistance) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to restore a student's Pell Grant eligibility for any period of time during which the student qualified for, or would have qualified for, federal student loan forgiveness due to school closure, assertion of a defense against repayment, or institutional fraud or misconduct.

- Parent PLUS Loan Improvement Act of 2016 (H.R. 4661)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH-11)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends title IV (Student Assistance) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to modify the applicable terms and conditions with respect to Federal

Direct PLUS Loans to parent borrowers (i.e., parent PLUS loans). Specifically, it reduces the interest rate and eliminates the origination fee for a parent PLUS loan disbursed on or after July 1, 2016. The Department of Education must ensure, prior to disbursement, that a parent PLUS loan borrower receives counseling that includes comprehensive information on the terms, conditions, and responsibilities with respect to the loan. The bill makes a parent PLUS loan eligible for the income-contingent and income-based repayment plans. Additionally, it makes a consolidation loan that repays parent PLUS loan eligible for the income-based repayment plan.

- HBCU Capital Financing Improvement Act (H.R. 5530)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends title III (Institutional Aid) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to modify the HBCU Capital Financing Program. [The program guarantees low-cost private loans to historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to finance infrastructure repairs, maintenance, and construction.]

- Raising Accountability to Improve School Excellence Act (H.R. 6210)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI-14)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to: (1) require a charter school grant application to include additional information and assurances related to oversight of authorizing activity by a public chartering agency; and (2) expand grant selection criteria and priorities to include consideration of the number of times a state entity has applied for, and been denied, such a grant.

- Core Opportunity Resources for Equity and Excellence Act of 2015 (H.R. 193)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH-11)
 - Bill Summary: Amends the school improvement program under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to require states to adopt student achievement standards that lead to college and career readiness by high school graduation. Requires each state school improvement plan to ensure that the state's public school system enables students to meet those standards by providing them with fair and equitable access to the core resources for learning.

- Connected Transportation Research and Innovation Act of 2015 (H.R. 3458)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: This bill reauthorizes through FY 2021 highway research and development, including highway safety, technology and innovation deployment, training and education, and intelligent transportation systems.

- STEM Opportunities Act of 2015 (H.R. 467)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: Directs the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to provide federal science agencies with guidance on establishing specified policies to accommodate the needs of caregiver researchers who receive their research awards. Requires each federal science agency to annually collect and submit to the National Science Foundation (NSF) institution-level data on demographics, primary field, award type, review rating (as practicable), budget request, funding outcome, and awarded budget for all applications for merit-reviewed research and development grants to institutions of higher education (IHEs) and federal laboratories. Requires NSF to publish a statistical summary of that data.

- Early Pell Promise Act (H.R. 4415)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI-14)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize the Department of Education to carry out a program of grants to state educational agencies under which a student who is in eighth grade and is eligible for a free or reduced price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act may be provided a commitment to receive a Federal Pell Grant early in the student's academic career.

- Lead-Free Students Act (H.R. 6525)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to require a local education agency, as a condition of receiving ESEA funds, to require a student to undergo blood lead-level testing prior to enrolling in an elementary school for the first time.

- Engineering Biology Research and Development Act of 2015 (H.R. 591)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: Directs the President to implement a National Engineering Biology Research and Development Program to advance societal well-being, national security, and economic productivity and competitiveness.

- Student Disciplinary Fairness Act of 2015 (H.R. 2797)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Cedric Richmond (D-LA-2)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to establish an Office of School and Discipline Policy within the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Office must collect and publish data on the arrests or incarceration of juvenile students for violations of school rules or policies. It must also

collaborate with states and local governments to expand alternatives to juvenile detention and incarceration.

- Student Loan Fairness Act of 2016 (H.R. 5487)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA-37)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends title IV (Student Assistance) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) to establish a 10/10 Loan Repayment Plan that allows borrowers of Federal Family Education Loans (FFELs) and Direct Loans (DLs) to limit their monthly payments on such loans to one-twelfth of 10% of the amount by which their adjusted gross incomes and that of their spouses (if applicable) exceed 150% of the federal poverty level.

- Ending Corporal Punishment in Schools Act of 2015 (H.R. 2268)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-FL-20)
 - Bill Summary: Amends the General Education Provisions Act to prohibit the Department of Education (ED) from providing education funding to any educational agency or institution that allows school personnel to inflict corporal punishment upon a student as a form of punishment or to modify undesirable behavior.

- Computer Science for All Act of 2016 (H.R. 6095)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)
 - Bill Summary: This bill will authorize the Secretary of Education to carry out a program to increase access to prekindergarten through grade 12 computer science education.

- United States Virgin Islands College Access Act of 2015 (H.R.4191)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Stacey Plaskett (D-VI)
 - Bill Summary: This bill directs the U.S. Virgin Islands to use federal funds authorized by this Act to award grants to public four-year institutions of higher education (IHEs)

located in the states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, or Guam to cover the difference between the in-state and out-of-state tuition and fees for students who have: (1) been domiciled in the Virgin Islands for at least the 12 months preceding their enrollment in the IHE; and (2) received on or after January 1, 2013, a secondary school diploma or its equivalent while domiciled there.

- Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act (H.R. 5574)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 to specify that an unlawful employment practice is established when the complaining party demonstrates that age or participation in investigations, proceedings, or litigation under such Act was a motivating factor for any unlawful employment practice, even though other factors also motivated the practice (thereby allowing what are commonly known as "mixed motive" claims).

- Jobs, On-the-Job ‘Earn While You Learn’ Training, and Apprenticeships for African-American Young Men Act (H.R. 6021)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires the Department of Labor to request labor unions, general contractors, and businesses that will rebuild infrastructure, transportation systems, technology and computer networks, and energy distribution systems to actively recruit, hire, and provide on-the-job training to African American men ages 18 to 39 through existing jobs, apprenticeships, and "earn while you learn" programs. Labor must help coordinate such recruitment.

- Funding for Student Scholarships for the 1890s Land-Grant African-American Colleges and Universities Act (H.R. 6020)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. David Scott (D-GA-13)

- Bill Summary: This bill amends the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to establish and provide funding for a grant program within the Department of Agriculture (USDA) for scholarships for students at 1890 land-grant colleges and universities (historically black colleges and universities established under the Second Morrill Act of 1890). USDA may award the scholarships to students who: (1) are seeking to attend such a college or university, and (2) intend to pursue a career in the food and agricultural sciences.
- Rights for Transportation Security Officers Act of 2016 (H.R. 4488)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-MS-2)
 - Bill Summary: This bill repeals: (1) provisions authorizing the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to establish a human resources management system for some or all of its organizational units, and (2) the authority granted to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to establish or modify a personnel management system for TSA employees engaged in airport security screening
- The Rehabilitation of Historic Schools Act of 2017 (H.R. 922)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Dwight Evans (D-PA-02)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow rehabilitation expenditures for public school buildings to qualify for rehabilitation credit.
- Transition-to-Success Mentoring Act (HR 647)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. André Carson (D-IN-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill would award grants to eligible entities to expand school based mentoring programs for at-risk middle school students. Through this program, students will develop and execute a plan for academic

progress with the assistance of a school faculty member or volunteer from the community.

- Today's American Dream Act (H.R. 1084)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL-02)
 - Bill Summary: This bill establishes a Department of Labor job training program for seniors; expands WOTC; establishes a small business tax credit for hiring interns; establishes a tax credit for for-profit business financial literacy programming; and invests in STEM education and promotes entrepreneurship apprenticeships. It also establishes SBA grants for investments in underserved communities to address retail redlining; expands first time homebuyer tax credits; establishes an SBA direct lending program; and promotes crop diversity and access to fresh produce in food deserts by amending crop insurance provisions. This bill establishes a DOC pilot program to fund local incubators and expands the NMTC. This bill establishes a DOC pilot program to fund local incubators and expands the NMTC. It commissions a study on the uninsured, increases access to dental care, and relaxes rules on rural hospitals and rural community health centers to expand access to care.

- The Urban Progress Act (H.R. 5671)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robin Kelly (D-IL-02)
 - Bill Summary: This bill expands Section 8 access; makes permanent WOTC for certain individuals; expands SNAP; and promotes summer job programs. It also makes common sense criminal justice reforms via youth penalty expungement and youth prisoner mentoring programs, as well as expanding COPs grants to include HBCUs as eligible recipients to diversify the law enforcement officer pipeline.

- Student Support Act (H.R. 2375)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require the Department of Education to make matching grants of at least \$1 million to states for allocation to local educational agencies (LEAs) so that additional school-based mental health and student service providers may be hired, thereby reducing the student-to-provider ratios in elementary and secondary schools to specified minimum levels recommended by the leading counseling, guidance, and mental health organizations.

- Real Education for Healthy Youth (H.R. 1706)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to award competitive grants for: (1) comprehensive sex education for adolescents; (2) comprehensive sex education provided by institutions of higher education; and (3) training faculty and staff to teach comprehensive sex education to elementary and secondary school students.

- The 21st Century STEM for Girls and Underrepresented Minorities Act
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH-3)
 - Bill Summary: would authorize funding to school districts to carry out activities designed to better engage girls and underrepresented minorities in STEM. Allowable activities under the legislation include: improving professional development for teachers and other school personnel; strengthening outreach to parents; providing mentoring and tutoring programs; improving access to afterschool and summer programs that provide additional enrichment opportunities in STEM; and providing academic advice and assistance in high school course selection that encourages

girls and underrepresented minorities to take advanced STEM classes.

- Engineering Biology R&D Act (H.R. 591)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: Would establish a National Engineering Biology Research and Development Program to support and coordinate Federal R&D in engineering biology.

- STEM Opportunities Act (H.R. 467)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: The bill attempts to systematically address the full suite of issues facing both female and minority STEM researchers, from work-life balance policies, to campus climate, to better data collection, to recruitment and retention practices.

- America Competes Act (H.R. 1898)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX-30)
 - Bill Summary: The bill seeks to ensure that Congress provides the thoughtful guidance and necessary funding to key federal research programs to maintain continued American leadership in science and innovation.

- Equity and Inclusion Enforcement Act (H.R. 5260)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: Restores a private right of action to file disparate impact claims under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

- America’s College Promise Act (H.R. 2962)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: Would make two years of community college free and provide an affordable pathway to a four-year college degree for low-income students.

- Pay Stub Disclosure Act (H.R. 4376)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)
 - Bill Summary: Requires employers to provide pay stubs to their employees – making it much easier for a woman to detect when she is being paid less than a man who is doing her same job.

- Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Fairness and Simplification Act of 2017 (H.R. 1393)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill protects employers and their employees who travel for work for short periods of time by providing a 30-day safe harbor from nonresident state personal income tax requirements.

- Inclusive Campuses Act (H.R. 6164)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill authorizes the use of title III funds for the establishment of LGBTQ resource centers at HBCUs.

- The Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act or the Jobs For All Act (H.R. 1000)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. John Conyers (D-MI-13)
 - Bill Summary: Would tax Wall Street to rebuild Main Street and ensure economic opportunities are available for everyone in this country.

STRONG COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES

The CBC supports wrap around services that provide resources to communities and families as they confront challenging circumstances.

- Every Child Deserves a Family Act (H.R. 2449)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. John Lewis (D-GA-5)
 - Bill Summary: Prohibits adoption or foster care placement service entities that receive federal assistance (or that contract with entities receiving such assistance) from using the sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of a prospective adoptive or foster parent, or from using the sexual orientation or gender identity of the child, to: (1) deny a person the opportunity to become an adoptive or foster parent; (2) delay or deny the placement of a child for adoption or into foster care; or (3) require different or additional screenings or procedures for adoptive or foster placement decisions, including whether to seek the termination of birth parent rights or to make a child legally available for adoptive placement.

- Transition-to-Success Mentoring Act (H.R. 541)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. André Carson (D-IN-7)
 - Bill Summary: Establishes a transition-to-success mentoring program under part H of the ESEA requiring the Secretary of Education to award grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) or partnerships between LEAs and community-based nonprofit organizations to establish, expand, or provide technical support to school-based mentoring programs to assist at-risk students in transitioning from middle to high school.

- Federal Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Act (H.R. 5930)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-FL-24)
 - Bill Summary: This bill establishes within the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Office of the Staff Director the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys to make a systematic study of the conditions affecting Black men and boys in America.

- Helping Working Families Afford Child Care Act (H.R. 1780)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL-7)
 - Bill Summary: Amends the Internal Revenue Code, with respect to the tax credit for employment-related expenses incurred for the care of a taxpayer's dependent, to: (1) increase to \$110,000, the adjusted gross income threshold level above which such credit is incrementally reduced; (2) increase the dollar limit on the allowable amount of such credit; (3) allow an inflation adjustment to the threshold amount and the maximum credit amounts, beginning after 2016; and (4) make such credit refundable.

- Fair Chance for Youth Act of 2015 (H.R. 3156)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the federal criminal code to establish a process to expunge and seal certain youth criminal records. A youth is an individual who was arrested, prosecuted, or sentenced for a criminal offense committed at age 21 or young.

- Promise Neighborhoods Act of 2015 (H.R. 2882)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Donald Payne, Jr. (D-NJ-10)
 - Bill Summary: This bill directs the Department of Education (ED) to award competitive, matching Promise Neighborhood Partnership grants to nonprofit organizations that partner with a local educational agency to implement a comprehensive continuum of supports and

services that engage community partners in improving the academic achievement, health and social development, and college and career readiness of children who live in distressed neighborhoods with underperforming schools.

- Strengthening Child Welfare Response to Trafficking Act of 2015 (H.R. 469)

- Bill Sponsor: Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA-37)
- Bill Summary: Amends the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to condition eligibility to receive a state grant for child abuse or neglect prevention and treatment programs on inclusion in the state plan of a certification by the governor that the state has in effect and is enforcing a state law, or is operating a statewide program, that includes provisions and procedures to: identify and assess reports involving children who are sex trafficking victims (and which may also involve children who are victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons), train representatives of the state child protective services about identifying and assessing such children, and identify services and procedures for appropriate referral to address the needs of such children.

- Protecting Foster Youth Resources to Promote Self-Sufficiency Act (H.R. 5737)

- Bill Sponsor: Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL-7)
- Bill Summary: This bill amends titles II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) (OASDI) and XVI (Supplemental Security Income) (SSI) of the Social Security Act to prohibit a state or local government agency serving as representative payee for an eligible individual in foster care under state responsibility from using any OASDI or SSI benefits to reimburse the state for: foster care maintenance payments, or other payments made by the state or political subdivision of the state to cover any cost or expense for such an individual.

- Partnership Grants to Strengthen Families Affected by Parental Substance Abuse Act (H.R. 5473)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL-7)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends part B (Child and Family Services) of title IV of the Social Services Act to direct the Department of Health and Human Services to award regional and state partnership grants to address the substance use needs of families in the child welfare system.

- Julia Carson Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2015 (H.R. 3005)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL-7)
 - Bill Summary: Directs the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to award grants to states for an employment demonstration project involving a court- or state child support agency-supervised employment program for noncustodial parents who have barriers to employment and a history of nonpayment, so that they can pay their child support obligations.

- Reducing Obesity in Youth Act of 2016 (S. 3194)
 - Bill Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in coordination with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Administration for Children and Families, to award grants to promote healthy eating and physical activity among children under six years old in early care and education settings.

- 400 Years of African-American History Commission Act (H.R. 1242)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA-3)

- Bill Summary: Establishes a national commission to plan programs and activities in 2019 across the country to recognize the arrival and influence of Africans in America.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The CBC supports robust protections for communities from the actions of all entities that threaten the public health of those in underserved areas.

- Lead-Safe Housing for Kids Act of 2016 (H.R. 4694)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN-5)
 - Bill Summary: This bill directs the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to promulgate regulations to update the standards for lead-contaminated dust and lead-contaminated soil, in accordance with health-based standards.

- Coal Ash Landfill Safety Act (H.R. 4827)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Henry C. “Hank,” Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-4)
 - Bill Summary: This bill requires the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to review regulations for municipal solid waste landfills to determine if such regulations are, with the respect to the disposal of coal combustion residuals in such landfills, protective of health and the environment, and for other purposes.

- SAFER Pipelines Act of 2016 (H.R. 5630)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Natural Gas Act to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), before granting a certificate of public convenience and necessity for a proposed pipeline expansion project, to: conduct a full evidentiary hearing on the need for the expansion or a cumulative review of planned energy

infrastructure projects in the region of the proposed expansion; and consider matters that include existing capacity, renewable energy goals, and the ability to otherwise meet energy needs.

- Environmental Health Workforce Act of 2016 (H.R. 5543)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI-14)
 - Bill Summary: This bill prioritizes educating and training for existing and new environmental health professionals.

- TEST for Lead Act (S. 2776)
 - Bill Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Safe Drinking Water Act to condition the receipt of funds by a State for a drinking water treatment revolving loan fund on the State carrying out a program to test for lead in drinking water for schools.

- Superfund Polluter Pays Restoration Act of 2015 (S. 2400)
 - Bill Sponsor: Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)
 - Bill Summary: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to: (1) reinstate the Hazardous Substance Superfund financing rate beginning 60 days after enactment of this Act; (2) increase such rate from 9.7 cents to 15.8 cents per barrel of crude oil; (3) adjust for inflation in taxable years beginning after 2016 the \$3.5 billion Superfund threshold after which no tax is imposed; (4) reinstate and increase the rates of tax on taxable chemicals; and (5) modify the definition of "crude oil" to include any bitumen or bituminous mixture, any oil derived from such mixture (including oil derived from tar sands), and any oil derived from kerogen-bearing sources (including oil derived from oil shale).

- Bill Name/Number: To establish a Residence Star program (H.R. 3322)

- **Bill Sponsor:** Congressman G. K. Butterfield (D-NC-01)
- **Bill Summary:** This bill amends the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a Residence Star program within the Energy Star program to recognize owners of separate residential spaces who voluntarily achieve high levels of energy efficiency. Owners recognized under the program and certain other third parties may advertise: (1) estimates of the monetary and energy savings included in the most recent program audit for their spaces, and (2) the Residence Star brand.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The CBC firmly believes in the public security of the United States and supports efforts to protect vulnerable communities and of all Americans from potential threats. The CBC has always had a global presence, and continues to advocate for domestic and foreign issues.

- ICE Body Camera Act of 2017 (H.R. 1497)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-09)
 - Bill Summary: This legislation would require ICE agents to wear body cameras while engaging in field operations or removal proceedings.
- Cybersecurity Responsibility Act of 2017 (H.R. 1335)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-09)
 - Bill Summary: This legislation would require the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to adopt cybersecurity rules protecting communications networks from cyber-attacks.
- Protect Our Sanctuary Cities Act. (H.R. 1076)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-09)
 - Bill Summary: This bill would declare the Administration's executive restrictions on sanctuary cities null and void. It would prohibit funds from being used to enforce these provisions. It would also require the Department of Homeland Security to present a report to Congress within

30 days detailing how DHS can strengthen immigrant community trust in the Department.

- Freedom for Refugees Escaping Enmity (FREE) Act (H.R. 1075)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-09)
 - Bill Summary: The FREE Act would nullify the Administration's de facto Muslim ban executive order, prevent it from having had any legal effect, and take away the president's ability to pass similar bans in the future.

- The Haiti Emergency Relief Act (H.R. 1014)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY-09)
 - Bill Summary: This legislation would grant Temporary Protected Status to all Haitians in the United States since before November 4, 2016. It would be valid for 18 months.

- Relating to efforts to respond to the famine in South Sudan (H.Res.187)
 - Bill Sponsor: Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA-37)
 - Bill Summary: This resolution expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to increase emergency assistance to respond to the famine in South Sudan by providing food, nutritional assistance, and other essential services in an effort to contain widespread starvation.

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