

THE MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES

PLATFORM

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ABOUT US

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

We demand **economic justice for all** and a reconstruction of the economy to ensure Black communities have collective ownership, not merely access. This includes:

1. A progressive restructuring of tax codes at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure a radical and sustainable redistribution of wealth.
2. Federal and state job programs that specifically target the most economically marginalized Black people, and compensation for those involved in the care economy. Job programs must provide a living wage and encourage support for local workers centers, unions, and Black-owned businesses which are accountable to the community.
3. A right to restored land, clean air, clean water and housing, and an end to the exploitative privatization of natural resources — including land and water. We seek democratic control over how resources are preserved, used and distributed and do so while honoring and respecting the rights of our Indigenous family.
4. The right for workers to organize in public and private sectors especially in “On Demand Economy” jobs.
5. Restore the Glass-Steagall Act to break up the large banks, and call for the National Credit Union Administration and the US Department of the Treasury to change policies and practices around regulation, reporting and consolidation to allow for the continuation and creation of black banks, small and community development credit unions, insurance companies and other financial institutions.
6. An end to the Trans-Pacific Partnership and a renegotiation of all trade agreements to prioritize the interests of workers and communities.
7. Through tax incentives, loans and other government directed resources, support the development of cooperative or social economy networks to help facilitate trade across and in Black communities globally. All aid in the form of grants, loans or contracts to help facilitate this must go to Black led or Black supported networks and organizations as defined by the communities.
8. Financial support of Black alternative institutions including policy that subsidizes and offers low-interest, interest-free or federally guaranteed low-interest loans to promote the development of cooperatives (food, residential, etc.), land trusts and culturally responsive health infrastructures that serve the collective needs of our communities.
9. Protections for workers in industries that are not appropriately regulated including domestic workers, farm workers, and tipped workers, and for workers — many of whom are Black women and incarcerated people— who have been exploited and remain unprotected. This includes the immediate passage at the Federal and state level of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and extension of worker protections to incarcerated people.

A Progressive Restructuring of All Tax Codes at the Local, State, and Federal Levels to Ensure a Radical and Sustainable Redistribution of Wealth

What is the problem?

- There is a desperate need to replace the current practice of collecting revenue in regressive ways with a more just system for collecting taxes.
- Across the United States, there are major political obstacles to raising any kind of revenue, along with a false perception of who pays and how this has changed over time.
- As with most injustices in our economic and political systems, regressive taxation has hit Black people, low-income people, and people of color the hardest.
- Many municipalities have increasingly decreased the use of progressive taxation and instead resorted to privatization and new fees and higher sales taxes in order to maintain bare-boned public infrastructure with minimal social support. . As a result, residents are being forced to pay more for public services like trash collection, access to water, sewage, public property maintenance, and parking meters.
- Across the country, low-income people, disproportionately Black and other people of color, pay proportionally more in state and local taxes than the wealthy: In the ten states with the most regressive tax structures, the poorest fifth pay up to seven times as much in state and local taxes and fees as

average Black family. Tax breaks for homeowners, retirement savings, employer-sponsored health insurance, and capital gains contribute to widening this gap.

- When states are not shifting the cost of public services onto poorer residents, they cut services all together, which affects poorer communities the most. Many municipalities, oftentimes with majority Black populations, have increased public school class sizes, shortened school days, closed vital city offices, reduced public transportation, reduced affordable housing assistance, cut essential health care programs, and eliminated public sector jobs.
- As the wealthiest Americans and powerful corporations continue to evade their fair share of taxes, many public services, programs and initiatives that could increase racial and economic justice go underfunded or unfunded.

What does this solution do?

- Progressive taxes on income to raise revenue more equitably:
 - Raise marginal tax rates for high earners, specifically the top percentile (the top 1% have seen their effective tax rate reduced to around 20 percent, down from 90 percent in the 1960s). Begin by raising the top marginal rate first to 50 percent and then gradually up to 80 percent.
 - Remove income caps on payroll taxes that fund social security and unemployment insurance.
 - Raise corporate income taxes, especially on large corporations and end tax deferral for foreign income of multinational corporations.
- Taxes on wealth to reduce the wealth inequality:
 - Increase taxes on capital to the point where they are higher than taxes on labor, as wealth inequality is greater than income inequality. Specifically:
 - Increase capital gains tax
 - Create anti-speculation tax on property transfers
 - Increase estate tax
 - Have states shift to an income-sensitized property tax that focuses on homes above a certain threshold and second homes
 - Impose a wealth tax (on tangible and financial assets)
- Remove harmful tax breaks and tax undesirable activities instead:
 - Taxing "bads" not "goods": shift from sales taxes to taxing externalities such as environmental damage, and make this approach income-sensitized to hold low-income people harmless.
 - Create a financial transaction tax on the trading of stocks, bonds, derivatives and currencies.
 - Assess and eliminate tax expenditures such as mortgage reduction for homes sold above a specified price threshold, health insurance exemption, investment-based retirement accounts, etc., and instead support wealth-building by households who don't yet hold such assets.
 - Make low-wage employer pay penalty fees or levy a payroll tax rate proportional to wage disparity.
 - Expand the earned income tax credit.
 - Provide a universal child tax credit.
 - Create mechanisms for sharing tax revenues between neighboring localities to reduce tax flight and segregation.

Federal Action:

- Through a participatory process guided by the principle of racial and economic equity – create a federal working group or commission to propose a full scale overhaul on tax policy that increases racial and economic equity.
- Develop and pass omnibus tax reform legislation in accordance with racial equity goals.
- Expand progressivity of federal income taxes by creating more tax brackets and substantially increasing the marginal tax rate, thus producing a wider spread in rates between the lowest and highest brackets.
- Eliminate all corporate loopholes and raise corporate income tax rates on large corporations
- Create a wealth tax, eliminate capital gains tax breaks, and raise a tax on financial transactions.
- Shift tax expenditures to help build the wealth of households of color.

State Action:

- Each state should create a working group or commission through a participatory process guided by the principle of racial and economic equity, propose full-scale tax reform consistent with racial & economic equity goals through that working group, and then create and implement appropriate legislation.
- Implement progressive income taxes in every state and redistribute the revenue as needed to municipalities

- Eliminate all corporate loopholes at state level, including single sales factor.
- Create a tax on wealth.
- Reduce sales and gross receipts taxes and shift these toward luxury taxes and taxes on extractive and polluting industries.
- Expand Earned Income Tax Credits.

Local Action:

- Ensure that property taxes and other local taxes are income sensitized.
- Eliminate corporate tax breaks at the city level, particularly Tax Increment Financing and Business Improvement Districts.
- Implement progressive municipal income taxes.
- Apply conservation pricing on utilities so lower-income households pay a lower rate and bulk or excessive users — such as commercial and industry — pay higher rates.
- Charge different rates of property tax for residential, second home, and commercial and industrial properties with higher rates for higher value land, such as a “mansion tax.” Impose an anti-speculation tax on property transfers.
- Provide fixed-dollar exemptions rather than percentage-based exemptions and implement “circuit breakers” for property taxpayers below a certain income level.
- Ally with community organizations to exert political pressure on large tax-exempt institutions to forge Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements.

How does this solution address the specific needs of some of the most marginalized Black people?

- Tax policy is so regressive that these solutions will particularly benefit the lowest income families, which are disproportionately single Black women with children, both in terms of increased income and improved access to public services.
- More equitable, redistributive tax policy will help reduce the racial wealth and income gap.

Resources:

- [Progressive Policies for Raising Municipal Revenue \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://localprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Municipal-Revenue_CPD_040815.pdf\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://localprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Municipal-Revenue_CPD_040815.pdf)
- [Who Pays: A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All Fifty States \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.itep.org/whopays/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.itep.org/whopays/)

Authors & Contributors of this Policy Overview

- Anja Rudiger, National Economic & Social Rights Initiative
- Cathy Albisa, National Economic & Social Rights Initiative
- Karl Kumodzi, Black Youth Project 100, Blackbird

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A Federal and State Jobs Program that Specifically Targets the Most Economically Marginalized Black People - Such As Those Who Are Queer, Trans, Femmes, Cash Poor, Working Class, Formerly Incarcerated, and Disabled - Funds a Living Wage, and Encourages Support For Local Workers Centers, Unions, and Black Owned Cooperative Businesses

What is the problem?

- For nearly 70 years, Black people have had two times the unemployment rate of white people in the U.S — even when the economy is strong. During tough economic times, Black unemployment is in the double digits, with some cities and states reaching into the mid 20's. As part of a comprehensive reparations package, we need to develop and pass a policy that would create millions of federally funded jobs that specifically target Black workers. Since the private sector has proven it is unable to employ Black workers at the scale needed, we must demand the federal government step in and fulfill this role.

- Through globalization and outsourcing, many of the traditional labor opportunities that once provided subsistence for Black laborers have diminished, leaving thousands of Black people unemployed.
- The unemployment gap between Black and white people appears to have emerged in the 1940s, as unionization and protections for workers began to expand.
- The widest gaps, when Black unemployment was as much as 2.77 times that of white unemployment, came in the late 1980s, as the manufacturing sectors that employed disproportionate shares of Black people thrived.
- In the U.S. Black people are the last to be hired in a good economy, and when there's a downturn, they're the first to be released.

What does this solution do?

- Support economic empowerment in low-income Black communities, by introducing and implementing cooperative institutions throughout urban and rural Black communities.
- Focus on past and present legislation that supports community economic development to generate employment in Black communities.
- Encourage sustained collaboration between government, private sector and community organizations and contain community based accountability monitoring, forcing them to be responsive to low-income Black communities.

Federal Action:

- We should develop and pass a \$2 to \$4 trillion policy that would both create government jobs for Black workers, and subsidize businesses to hire Black workers. The main targets of this effort would be the Congress, President, and Chairman of the Federal Reserve. This would have to be both a legislative campaign to move members of Congress, and direct public pressure campaign to get the President and Federal Chairman to act.
- Pass legislation that moves formerly incarcerated people into a protected class and makes it illegal for public or private employers to discriminate against workers with a criminal background.
- Remove barriers to employment by passing Ban the Box legislation on a federal level for both public and private employers.

State Action:

- States could pass legislation giving tax credits to businesses for hiring Black workers.

Local Action:

- Similar to the state, there would be no complementary local policy for this proposal. Local groups should focus on getting their congressional representatives and senators to support the federal policy.

How does this solution address the specific needs of some of the most marginalized Black people?

- There would be special provisions in the jobs program that would have strict benchmarks for hiring Black trans people, queer people, women, formerly incarcerated people, disabled people, and other target populations that have extremely high disproportionate rates of unemployment.

Model Legislation

- There is currently no model policy for this proposal, although the stimulus bill President Obama passed in 2009 had provisions in it that could be used as a model. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), and Economic Policy Institute would be the two organizations most capable of helping to develop such a policy.

Organizations Currently Working on Policy:

- The Center for Community Change (CCC is working on similar policy, but not one targeting Black workers, or to the scale that is needed)
- The Workers Center for Racial Justice

Authors & Contributors of this Policy Overview

- Steven Pitts, National Black Workers Center
- Richard Wallace, Workers Center for Racial Justice
- DeAngelo Bester, Workers Center for Racial Justice

A Right to Restored Land, Clean Air, Clean Water and Housing

The Movement for Black Lives respects, supports, and stands in full solidarity with the rights of Indigenous peoples to the lands currently known as the United States. We make the following demands within a broader context of respect for Indigenous sovereignty.

What is the problem?

- Nearly three decades ago, a [United Church of Christ \(UCC\) study](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.csu.edu/cerc/researchreports/documents/ToxicWasteandRace-TOXICWASTESANDRACE.pdf) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.csu.edu/cerc/researchreports/documents/ToxicWasteandRace-TOXICWASTESANDRACE.pdf>) on environmental inequities found that Black people were more likely to live near hazardous waste than white people. Today, we still see the effects and continuation of environmental racism, which is largely a result of our dispossession and lack of control over land, resources, and decision making abilities in our communities. As a result, our communities are exposed to lead arsenic, dioxins, mercury and other carcinogenic and morphogenetic toxins causing harm to current and future generations (including disproportionately high asthma rates). Additionally, our lack of control and the poisoning of land has resulted in drastic decrease of and lack of security around farmable land (both urban and rural) to feed, house and sustain our communities.

The following details more issues relating to environmental racism:

- Environmental harms heavily impact Black communities. Historically, Black people have been most vulnerable to predatory corporate practices that lead to siting of landfills, incinerators, and a variety of industries that pollute the land, air and water, leading to high rates of cancers, chronic diseases and breathing conditions.
- Inconsistent application of environmental regulations, laws, and policies, expose communities of color to greater risks. This is especially visible in response to environmental and climate disasters (numerous examples in the Gulf South after hurricanes, chemical explosions in Texas, chemical spills that pollute water and land, etc). In Warren County, North Carolina, birthplace of the environmental justice movement, it took 25 years after the dumping (1978) before the PCB poisoned soil was remediated (2003).
- This vulnerability to pollution is reflected in the ways in which Black people, working class, low income people and communities of color are disproportionately vulnerable to cancer alleys, brownfields, polluted air, toxic soils and poisoned waters.
- We see examples in communities such as the Bronx in New York where they experience heavy flow of trucks to distribute food to more affluent communities, leaving Bronx residents with higher asthma rates, increased pollution, toxic soil and lack of access to good food options.

Following are more problems related to water, healthy food and farming:

- Inferior and insufficient access to quality, nutrient-dense foods including fresh produce and whole grains (the intention behind these inequities is called "food apartheid" for the racialized separate and unequal access to quality, healthy food).
- Displacement from farmland through violent removal and foreclosure, [discriminate access to farmer assistance programs](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.thenation.com/article/losing-ground/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.thenation.com/article/losing-ground/>), predatory lending, and housing foreclosures.
- Lack of access to clean water and increasing privatization of water.
- Black farmers have been and continue to be blatantly discriminated against. According to Black Farmers Agriculturalist Association, "In a 15 year period, 1982-1997, 42 percent of Black family farmers were put out of business in this country." Discrimination and land theft has not ceased, unfortunately.
- According to statistics of the Census of Agriculture, Black farmers owned more land in 1920 than they do today.
- Consider [Pigford vs. Glickman](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.huffingtonpost.com/news/black-farmers-settlement/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.huffingtonpost.com/news/black-farmers-settlement/>) — a class action lawsuit in which years of racial discrimination and targeted disenfranchisement of Black farmers by the USDA was cited. Black farmers and producers were intentionally denied loans and access to benefits through various USDA programs resulting in the loss of significant Black-owned land and wealth — 300,000 acres in North Carolina alone resulting in \$1.2 billion in assets from 1981 to 1996, according to Gary Grant, the president of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalist Association. The settlement for the most part awarded \$50,000 to Black farmers, mainly those who managed to navigate a highly problematic claims process. Many Black farmers died before a settlement was ever reached and the generations of discrimination and anti-blackness that farmers endured at the hands of the state via the USDA has created severe economic consequences and emotional traumas that have never been undone.

What are the solutions?

- End the dumping of toxic wastes in poor and Black communities, poor, working class and communities of color.
- Close down waste burners.

- Ensure public access to safe, clean water for housing, drinking and food production
- Use public resources — funds and land — to implement fair development, prioritizing community-based cooperative entities governed by traditionally excluded communities and community members.

Federal Action:

- Reauthorization of funds to build affordable housing for all.
- Strict enforcement of environmental protection standards.
- Eliminate all debt for Black farmers.
- Halt all foreclosures on Black farm land.
- Enforce policies and regulations consistently.
- Increase funding for renewable energy infrastructure (wind, solar, etc.).
- Commit to the comprehensive goal of fair development and require states meet standards of fair development to receive pass-through funding.
- In a coordinated way, review all tax credits, insurance systems and budgets concerning various elements of development (e.g., housing, schools, community, highways, etc.) and align around the goal of fair development with an emphasis on community land trusts, cooperatives and community control.

State Action:

- Stop transporting and placement of toxic waste dumps in poor and black communities.
- Clean water available for all, without restriction based on inability to pay, with strict penalties for corporations which ignore the law.
- End discriminatory credit policies by financial institutions in order to enable access to housing and farmable land.

Local Action:

- Facilitating access and funding for community land trusts, food co-ops and food hubs (regional aggregation, marketing and distribution) for Black farmers
- Community led research studies to obtain accurate information on the impacts of land-air-water contamination on their health and quality of life.
- Local governance — Community involvement in decisions that impact all aspects of life, including housing, transportation, food, development, etc.
- (Translocal action) organizing across geography and issue area, sharing strategies, building a stronger movement for change.

How does this solution address the specific needs of some of the most marginalized Black people?

- Black, poor, and trans people of color are disproportionately affected by lack of access to affordable housing, clean water, air and access to (and control over) healthy food.

Model Legislation

- [Baltimore Fair Development Standards](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/unitedworkers/pages/72/attachments/original/1463437323/MPCResolutio1463437323) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/unitedworkers/pages/72/attachments/original/1463437323/MPCResolutio1463437323>) (pending)
- [H.R. 4727, National Comprehensive Housing Act](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/house-bill/4727/titles) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/house-bill/4727/titles>), introduced by Congressman Ronald Dellums (D-CA) in the 100th and 101st U.S. Congress (1988 and 1989).
- [Cooperation Jackson Just Transition Plan](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.cooperationjackson.org/blog/2015/11/10/the-jackson-just-transition-plan) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.cooperationjackson.org/blog/2015/11/10/the-jackson-just-transition-plan>)

Resources:

- [We Are Mother Earth's Red Line](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://ggjalliance.org/we-are-mother-earths-red-line) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://ggjalliance.org/we-are-mother-earths-red-line>)
- [The Vermont Declaration of Human Rights](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.nesri.org/sites/default/files/Vermont_Declaration_of_Human_Rights.pdf) (https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.nesri.org/sites/default/files/Vermont_Declaration_of_Human_Rights.pdf) (2012) is a comprehensive human rights charter that articulates goals of fair development..

- For initial information on a human rights budget to support fair development, visit <http://www.nesri.org/programs/the-peoples-budget-campaign-in-vermont>; also see [this animated short video \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRe2LNyS934\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRe2LNyS934) on human rights budgeting.
- [The Vancouver Action Plan: 64 Recommendations for National Action \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://habitat.igc.org/vancouver/vp-intr.htm\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://habitat.igc.org/vancouver/vp-intr.htm)
- Both Cleveland, OH, and Springfield, MA, have initiatives that focus on supporting cooperative business development through a so-called anchor institutions strategy. In Cleveland, Evergreen Cooperatives was launched in 2008 by a working group of Cleveland-based institutions (including the Cleveland Foundation, the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, Case Western Reserve University, and the municipal government). The focus is on creating living wage jobs in six low-income neighborhoods known as Greater University Circle. An initiative in Springfield has pulled in a model grant for worker cooperatives that are being developed with guidance from local anchors.
- [Gulf South Rising 2015 Strategy Document \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.gulfsouthrising.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Gulf-South-Rising-2015-SD-2.pdf\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.gulfsouthrising.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Gulf-South-Rising-2015-SD-2.pdf)

Organizations Currently Working on Policy or These Issues:

- We understand this section is by no means exhaustive, but it is important to give some examples of the work:
- [We The People of Detroit \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://wethepeopleofdetroit.com/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://wethepeopleofdetroit.com/)'s Wage Love Campaign
- Wage Love campaign for water access in Detroit
- [National Black Food and Justice Alliance \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.blackfoodjustice.org/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.blackfoodjustice.org/)
- Federation of Southern Cooperatives
- [Land Loss Prevention Project \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.landloss.org/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.landloss.org/)
- National Economic and Social Rights Initiative
- [Cooperation Jackson \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.cooperationjackson.org/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.cooperationjackson.org/)
- BYP100

Authors & Contributors of this Policy Overview

- Dara Cooper, National Black Food & Justice Alliance
- Beatriz Beckford, National Black Food & Justice Alliance
- Rose Brewer, PhD, University of Minnesota
- Andrea Ritchie, Soros Justice Fellow
- Cathy Albisa, National Economic & Social Rights Initiative
- Ife Kilimanjaro
- Toussaint Losier, Chicago Anti-Eviction Campaign

[DOWNLOAD PDF \(HTTPS://WEB.ARCHIVE.ORG/WEB/20191018155140/HTTPS://POLICY.M4BL.ORG/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2016/07/RESTORED-LAND-AIR-WATER-POLICY-BRIEF.PDF\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://policy.m4bl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/RESTORED-LAND-AIR-WATER-POLICY-BRIEF.PDF)

An End to the Exploitative Privatization of Natural Resources — Including Land and Water. We Seek Democratic Control Over How Resources are Preserved, Used and Distributed

The Movement for Black Lives respects, supports, and stands in full solidarity with the rights of Indigenous peoples to the lands currently known as the United States. We make the following demands within a broader context of respect for Indigenous sovereignty.

What is the problem?

- Because land is treated as a commodity, a minority of wealthy corporations and families disproportionately owns land in the U.S. and the resources on top of it. 60 percent of land is privately owned, with the wealthiest half-a-percent owning 35.6 percent of this land and the wealthiest 10 percent owning

only serves to perpetuate disproportionately high rates of Black poverty and landlessness.

- There are next to no laws that ensure land is used to meet human needs in an equitable way; rather, the vast majority of laws protect and enhance profit making for owners who are wealthy and mostly White.
 - Through the legal construct of private land ownership (which grants landowners a great deal of leeway to determine the use of land), land and landed resources are used primarily to derive profits for owners.
 - Unable to think outside a market fundamentalist approach to maintaining and growing the local economy, local governments offer up public money and land to private investors to “create jobs” and develop and redevelop our housing, schools and, in general, our communities, with few restrictions.
 - The vast majority of publicly owned land gets redistributed to the highest bidder, feeding speculation. Land acquired by governments through tax foreclosures are auctioned, while land owned to meet community needs, such as public housing, schools and parks are increasingly sold off. Over 300,000 public housing units have been lost since 1990.
 - Public credits (through government-backed insurance and the tax code) protect investments in the development of land from losses, allowing private owners to benefit from the profits while socializing losses.
 - Land use planning and zoning only organize uses (for instance, for commercial and residential purposes), even reinforcing segregation by separating classes of residential uses. Inclusionary zoning laws are important, but don't go far enough: setting aside land for middle income families, but too often nothing for families living on the lowest and fixed incomes).
 - Increasingly public decisions around planning and the distribution of public land and money for economic development is being consolidated and outsourced to non-transparent private entities (see LA for example).
- The end results for families living in poverty – disproportionately Black and female – are economic dislocation (living far from jobs, grocery stores, and other life essentials), incomprehensible trade-offs of life's essentials and/or the constant threat of displacement.

What does this solution do?

- Fair Development makes it a clear and comprehensive policy goal of meeting the human needs of all community members through the equitable distribution of the benefits of development, which takes precedence over market imperatives.
- It considers in a coordinated way the location, investment and infrastructure needed to secure work with dignity, clean water, food security, access to healthcare, education and basic housing, and a healthy environment for all community members without exception.
- It ensures public land, money and credit are used to meet first and foremost the greatest unmet needs within and across communities.
- It prevents forced displacement and curbs speculation due to development, while putting control in the hands of the intended beneficiaries of development, particularly through prioritizing implementation of development through alternative, community-based ownership entities.
- Decisions at all stages of development – planning, implementation and monitoring and enforcement – are made accountable and transparent to the people who are most impacted by them through deepening participatory public processes supported by outreach and education, particularly to historically excluded community members

Federal Action:

- Commit to the comprehensive goal of fair development.
- In a coordinated way, review all tax credits, insurance systems and budgets concerning various elements of development (e.g., housing, schools, community, highways, and so on) and align around the goal of fair development with an emphasis on community land trusts, cooperatives and community control.
- Require states meet standards of fair development to receive pass-through funding.

State Action:

- Commit to goal of fair development.
- Use local government plans to create a comprehensive plan for fair development across the state and support statewide and regional coordination.
- Align state tax policy and budgets around goal of fair development, ensuring the greatest equitable distribution of resources across local communities within the state, with an emphasis on community land trusts, cooperatives and community control. .
- Facilitate monitoring and enforcement of fair development practices and standards, providing a user-friendly way for community members to hold their local governments accountable to their human needs and rights.

Local Action:

- Commit to goal of fair development.

- Offer training and supportive programs for the organization of cooperative and community-based entities, such as cooperative businesses and community land trusts capable of implementing development and providing means for shared ownership of land, housing and businesses, particularly by traditionally excluded communities and community members.
- Use city resources – funds and land – to implement fair development, prioritizing community-based cooperative entities governed by traditionally excluded communities and community members.
- Claim resources for the public by enforcing and streamlining laws on “abandoned” property and using tools like public land banks, while involving occupants in future development rather than displacing them.

How does this solution address the specific needs of some of the most marginalized Black people?

- Instead of development that displaces poor Black communities, this solution puts resources in the control of these communities to meet their own needs.
- The central focus of this solution is to meet the needs of the most marginalized first. Details of legislation will be key to making this a reality.

Model Legislation

- [Baltimore Fair Development Standards](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedworkers/pages/72/attachments/original/1463437323/MPCResoluti1463437323) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedworkers/pages/72/attachments/original/1463437323/MPCResoluti1463437323>), pending
- [H.R. 4727](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/house-bill/4727/titles) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/house-bill/4727/titles>), National Comprehensive Housing Act, introduced by Congressman Ronald Dellums (D-CA) in the 100th and 101st U.S. Congress (1988 and 1989)

Resources:

- The Vermont Declaration of Human Rights, 2012, is a comprehensive human rights charter that articulates goals of fair development, http://www.nesri.org/sites/default/files/Vermont_Declaration_of_Human_Rights.pdf.
- Baltimore Housing Roundtable's Community + Land + Trust: Tools for Development without Displacement (2016), focuses on jobs and housing, while uplifting many of the basic ingredients at the local level of fair development: <http://www.baltimorehousingroundtable.org/publications>.
- For initial information on a human rights budget to support fair development, visit <http://www.nesri.org/programs/the-peoples-budget-campaign-in-vermont>; also see this animated short video on human rights budgeting: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pre2LNyS934>.
- Comprehensive recommendations from the Vancouver Plan of Action, Habitat: UN Conference on Human Settlements, June 1976, available at <http://habitat.igc.org/vancouver/vp-intr.htm>.
- Both Cleveland, OH, and Springfield, MA, have initiatives that focus on supporting cooperative business development through a so-called anchor institutions strategy. In Cleveland, Evergreen Cooperatives was launched in 2008 by a working group of Cleveland-based institutions (including the Cleveland Foundation, the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, Case Western Reserve University, and the municipal government). The focus is on creating living wage jobs in six low-income neighborhoods known as Greater University Circle. An initiative in Springfield has pulled in a model grant for worker cooperatives that are being developed with guidance from local anchors.

Organizations Currently Working on Policy:

- Cooperation Jackson, Miss.
- Baltimore Housing Roundtable
- National Economic and Social Rights Initiative

Authors & Contributors of this Policy Overview

- Cathy Albisa, National Economic and Social Rights Initiative

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The Right For Working People to Organize in Public and Private Sectors, Especially in “On Demand Economy” Jobs

Research and history show that one of the surest ways for Black folks to climb out of poverty is through joining together in union. In theory, the right to organize is protected by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), but in practice the NLRA falls short of many things. In order to build power for Black people and Black communities in the long term, an expanded and enforced right to join together and negotiate collectively is arguably the most fundamental demand that we must make and win.

- Right-to-work laws prohibit unions from collecting dues from members, essentially dampening the power of unions of working people to effectively operate.
- Multi-billion dollar corporations such as Uber and Lyft are profiting in the on-demand economy and exploiting working people by avoiding the core responsibilities that companies have to workers.
- The way the NLRA is interpreted and enforced, does little to deter firms from abusing working people who try to organize.
- The laws that are currently on the books are also poorly enforced.

What does this solution do?

- Allows all working people the freedom to join together to negotiate for a fair return on their work .
- Allows mandated payroll deduction.
- Prohibits states from passing "right-to-work" laws and repeals all existing right-to-work laws.

Federal action:

- Target: U.S. Congress, large employers of Black workers (i.e. Walmart, McDonalds) and industry actors in sectors with dense Black employment (i.e. National Restaurant Association, National Retail Federation)
- This demand must be fought for both at the federal level, because the NLRA — which governs who has the right to organize and who doesn't — is a federal law that preempts most state and local efforts at securing the right to organize, as well as within the national footprint of targeted employers and industry actors.
- In addition, to ensure that Black people and others who are traditionally excluded are included in NLRA protections, the legal framework of bargaining must expand far beyond the NLRA to support a climate for fair negotiations and to build our shared power.
- "Since it is sometimes cheaper for employers to violate the law than to obey it, it is necessary to put a greater cost on violators of the law. In theory, the NLRA protects the human rights of workers, but in practice it is set up in an unenforceable way. Section 7 needs to be enforced in a way where it is not advantageous for employers to break the rules." [1]
- Misclassification of workers must be fixed. Misclassification results when employers intentionally classifies (or re-classifies) the people who work for them as independent contractors to avoid responsibility or liability for basic legal, employment and civil rights protections.

State Action:

- Most state-level reforms to protect and expand the right of people to come together to negotiate collectively are pre-empted by the NLRA. Jobs With Justice is exploring a local policy initiative that would fine large employers who refuse to offer family sustaining jobs and allow working people to collectively negotiate with the state over how to allocate the proceeds. [2] They define this as a new approach to bargaining.

How does this solution address the specific needs of some of the most marginalized Black people?

Model Legislation

- [Employee Free Choice Act \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/house-bill/1409\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/house-bill/1409) (https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/house-bill/1409)failed)
- [Employee Empowerment Act \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.jwj.org/fired-for-organizing-theres-a-new-bill-for-that\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.jwj.org/fired-for-organizing-theres-a-new-bill-for-that) (addresses some of this, but not all)
- [WAGE Act \(https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.aflcio.org/Blog/Political-Action-Legislation/Introducing-the-WAGE-Act-to-Strengthen-the-Rights-of-Working-People\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.aflcio.org/Blog/Political-Action-Legislation/Introducing-the-WAGE-Act-to-Strengthen-the-Rights-of-Working-People)

Organizations Currently Working on Policy:

- AFL-CIO
- Service Employees International Union
- National Employment Law Project

- Erica Smiley, Jobs With Justice
- Steven Pitts, National Black Workers Center
- DeAngelo Bester, Workers Center For Racial Justice
- Karl Kumodzi, Blackbird, Black Youth Project 100

[1] Compa, Lance. www.dol.gov/dol/ilab/public/programs/nao/LanceCompa.htm

[2] <http://portside.org/2015-10-26/fining-mcwalmart-charging-employers-social-costs-poverty-wages>
 (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://portside.org/2015-10-26/fining-mcwalmart-charging-employers-social-costs-poverty-wages>)

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Restore the Glass-Steagall Act to Break Up the Large Banks, and Call For the National Credit Union Administration and the US Department of the Treasury to Change Policies and Practices Around Regulation, Reporting and Stopping Consolidation to Allow For the Continuation and Creation of Small Black Collectively Owned and Community Development Credit Unions, Insurance Companies, and Other Financial Institutions

POLICY BRIEF COMING SOON

An End to the Trans-Pacific Partnership and a Renegotiation of All Trade Agreements to Prioritize the Interests of Workers and Communities

What is the problem?

- Global trade policy, strongly supported by the U.S., is structured almost exclusively around the needs of capital, rather than people. So trade barriers are lowered through changes in tariffs to ensure easier flow of capital and goods or regulations that protect local economies, workers or the environment are often weakened to address the needs of an international competitor in a market.
- Workers in the global economy and the environment are both at best secondary considerations in global trade agreements. Wages are pulled down internationally by the trade scheme and labor standards are weak with little protection for unionization.
- The rules for trade determine who benefits or suffers losses in the global economy, often privileging some countries, companies or sectors over others. For example, rules such as those governing intellectual property rights enrich some, while depriving groups of people of even fundamental needs such as essential medicines because it puts costs out of reach.
- Existing trade agreements also tend to increase inequality providing greater mobility for those with high-paying jobs but not those with low-paying jobs who cannot easily travel to new locations for higher pay.
- While low-wage workers face barriers and costs to mobility, the increasing ease of mobility of capital leads to a race to the bottom where capital follows the lowest wage levels and worst working conditions. – and low wage workers with barriers and costs to mobility.
- The TPP, like most free trade policies, will destroy economic opportunity for Black people and the working class.
- The TPP will decrease access to health care and exacerbate an already exploding health crisis facing Black people and poor people throughout the world.
- The TPP will grant corporations control over the online platforms essential to the Black Lives Matter Movement
- The TPP will allow corporations to avoid domestic courts and challenge economic and social reforms won by the Black Lives Matter Movement in a corporate-driven foreign tribunal.

What does this solution do?

- Trade agreements have successfully standardized how products, such as automobiles, are made. This power to create standards should be utilized to ensure the human rights of people here and around the world, beginning with the rights and needs of Black people everywhere because our

- Higher labor standards and wage minimums as a condition of participating in free trade;
- Protection for the ability to organize and unionize, including across borders
- Stringent environmental standards
- Racial equity standards in the sectors covered
- Transparency in all trade agreements so the public is fully aware of all of an agreements' components at every stage of the treaty development process
- An effective enforcement scheme that would penalize and exclude companies, and countries where appropriate, when worker rights and environmental standards are violated. Enforcement shall including standing for those impacted by violations of the agreement to challenge the company or country at issue.

Federal Action:

- Call on the Executive Branch and Congress calling for renegotiation of agreements including but not limited to, FTAA, CAFTA, and NAFTA and a call for renegotiation the terms of TPP prior to any ratification by the United States.

State Action:

- Call on state legislatures to demand federal action renegotiating treaties according to the goals described above.

Local Action:

- Call on City Councils and Mayors to demand federal action renegotiating treaties according to the goals described above.

How does this solution address the specific needs of some of the most marginalized Black people?

- Black people have been forced into the lowest wage work available, when they have been afforded work at all. By transforming the trade framework, Black people will enjoy higher wages and dignified conditions of work, as well as be afforded some protection against environmental injustice, which disproportionately sickens Black communities.

Resources:

- <http://www.aflcio.org/content/download/158221/3936941/TPPandworkersofcolor-Updated.pdf>
(<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.aflcio.org/content/download/158221/3936941/TPPandworkersofcolor-Updated.pdf>),
- <http://www.aflcio.org/Issues/Trade/Trans-Pacific-Partnership-Free-Trade-Agreement-TPP/Report-on-the-Impacts-of-the-Trans-Pacific-Partnership>
(<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.aflcio.org/Issues/Trade/Trans-Pacific-Partnership-Free-Trade-Agreement-TPP/Report-on-the-Impacts-of-the-Trans-Pacific-Partnership>)
- What does the Trans-Pacific Partnership Mean for Black People, Rachel Glimmer (Ebony) See: <http://www.eyony.com/news-views/what-does-the-trans-pacific-partnership-mean-for-black-people-503#axzz4Der6qMZ9>

Organizations Currently Working on Policy:

- Global Exchange
- AFL-CIO

Authors & Contributors of this Policy Overview

- Cathy Albisa, National Economic & Social Rights Initiative
- Marbre Stahly Butts, Center for Popular Democracy
- Patrick Mason, Ph.D., Florida State University, National Economic & Social Rights Initiative

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Through Tax Incentives, Loans and Other Government Directed Resources, Support the Development of Cooperative or Social Economy Networks to Help Facilitate Trade Across and in Black Communities Globally

Financial Support of Black Alternative Institutions Including Policy That Subsidizes and Offers Low-Interest, Interest-Free or Federally Guaranteed Low-Interest Loans to Promote the Development of Cooperatives (Food, Residential, etc.), Land Trusts and Culturally Responsive Health Infrastructures That Serve the Collective Needs of Our Communities

What is the problem?

- Over the past 50 years, Black urban communities have faced economic disinvestment, deindustrialization, suburban flight, redlining and a declining tax base. As a consequence, our communities have been ravaged by under and unemployment, poorly performing schools, gentrification, and growing inequality. Many residents of our communities are relegated to low wage, service sector work in jobs that offer few opportunities for workplace democracy and collective decision-making.
- A 2014 report from the Federal of Protestant Welfare Agencies found that cooperatives can play a crucial role in a broader campaign to fight poverty, joblessness, and income inequality, but are often hindered by the lack of available public and private funding sources. The report also found that these efforts are greatly aided by the existence of a cooperative support ecosystem, where government agencies, support organizations, cooperatives networks, and financing institutions that can offer resources, professional guidance, and technical assistance.
- In particular, alternative institutions tend to have trouble attracting private financing. Banks — the most common sources of private financing — are often reticent to fund cooperatives and other alternative institutions since they often lack the finances to support a loan application, have insufficient collateral, and collectivize risk in a manner that goes against the requirement of a personal guarantee.

What does this solution do?

- The U.S. should initiate executive action and congressional legislation to financially support the development of cooperatives, land trusts and other alternative institutions by expanding access to private financing, individual donations, and technical assistance.

Federal Action:

- Target: Legislative
- Process: Pass federal legislation to put in place a tax measure that gives individuals a deduction of 125 percent on federal income tax for investment in cooperatives; incentivize private bank funding to cooperatives and other alternative institutions through the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) and directly through Community Block Grants.

State Action:

- Target: Executive and Legislative
- Process: Pass Justice Reinvestment legislation that links the savings from increased prison construction and correctional confinement to the training and funding of cooperative development by returning prisoners, as in the Ex-Prisoners and Prisoners Organizing for Community Advancement's (EPOCA) "Jobs Not Jails" campaign in Boston; establish and fund a Public Bank that provides financing (i.e. no-insurance or unsecured loans) to cooperatives, with democratic allocation determined through robust community participation; and support cooperative development by offering funding to cooperative networks or coalitions for each new cooperative they create and additional funding for each job they create.

Local Action:

- Target: Executive and Legislative
- Process: Direct municipal procurement contracts to cooperatives; transfer city-owned land to Community Land Trusts with financing through Community Block Grants; provide municipal funding for technical assistance providers, as in New York City and in Madison, Wisconsin; Pass legislation providing capital for loan funds to support cooperative development, as in the *Investissement Quebec* in Quebec, Canada.

How does this solution address the specific needs of some of the most marginalized Black people?

- Formerly incarcerated people regularly face discrimination in employment and housing. Worker cooperatives and community land trusts would provide people with a range of job and housing opportunities while also ensuring their involvement in decision making.

Model Legislation

- [Massachusetts' Justice Reinvestment Act \(S.64/H.1429\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://malegislature.gov/Bills/189/House/H1429) (https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://malegislature.gov/Bills/189/House/H1429)

Resources:

<https://policy.m4bl.org/economic-justice/>

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- [Development Study for the Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative: A Model for Economic Transformation](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://colab.mit.edu/sites/default/files/MITCoLab_BCDI_Development_Study.pdf) (https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://colab.mit.edu/sites/default/files/MITCoLab_BCDI_Development_Study.pdf)
- [Worker Cooperatives for New York City: A Vision for Addressing Income Inequality](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://fpwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Worker-Cooperatives-for-NYC-A-Vision-for-Addressing-Income-Inequality.pdf) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://fpwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Worker-Cooperatives-for-NYC-A-Vision-for-Addressing-Income-Inequality.pdf>)
- [Justice Reinvestment Initiative](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.vera.org/project/justice-reinvestment-initiative?qt-projects_justice_reinvestment_in=9%22%20/l%20%22qt-projects_justice_reinvestment_in) (https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/http://www.vera.org/project/justice-reinvestment-initiative?qt-projects_justice_reinvestment_in=9%22%20/l%20%22qt-projects_justice_reinvestment_in)

Organizations Currently Working on Policy:

- Ujima Project
- Center for Economic Democracy
- Fund for Democratic Communities
- Southern Grassroots Economies Project
- Cooperation Jackson
- Highlander Research and Education Center
- S. Solidarity Economy Coalition

Authors & Contributors of this Policy Overview

- Toussaint Losier, Chicago Anti-Eviction Campaign

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Protections for Workers in Industries That Are Not Appropriately Regulated Including Domestic Workers, Farm Workers, and Tipped Workers, and For Workers — Many of Whom are Black Women and Incarcerated People— Who Have Been Exploited and Remain Unprotected. This Includes the Immediate Passage at the Federal and State Level of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and Extension of Worker Protections to Incarcerated People

POLICY BRIEF COMING SOON

[Glossary of Terms \(https://web/20191018155140/https://policy.m4bl.org/glossary/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20191018155140/https://policy.m4bl.org/glossary/)

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