



## Policy Pack III.IV

**POLICING - REPARATIONS - ENDING VOTER SUPPRESSION**

# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

**June 8, 2020**

For George Floyd. For Breonna Taylor. For Tony McDade. For Ahmaud Arbery. For every Black life taken by white supremacy.

Because Black Lives Matter.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Table of Contents

Note from the Team	1
Leading Organizations	2
Defunding	3
Statutory Reform	5
Reparations	10
Voter Suppression	11
Take Action	20





# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Note from the Team

We are asking ourselves where to start, what to do, when will it be enough. We are processing pain and trauma that is renewed each time we Say Their Names. We are taking to the frontlines to protest against police brutality and make unequivocally clear: Black Lives Matter.

Now, we are taking control of the legislative process.

We know the barriers we are up against. We know we are navigating police brutality that was born from Jim Crow segregation that was born from slavery that was born from the very roots of white supremacy.

We know we are navigating a political climate that was born from voter roll purges and voter ID laws that were born from poll taxes and literacy tests that were born from Constitutionally ordained disenfranchisement.

We see the mountain but we refuse to yield our power to it. We are going to name and recognize that our political system was not built for much of our Platform community, particularly the young, Black, Brown, AAPI, immigrant, indigenous, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, nonbinary, gender-nonconforming, people with disabilities, leaders we serve.

So we are going to reclaim it. We are going to continue intentionally working for systemic change that counts people in, rather than negotiates them out to score political points and protect inherited power. We are going to show up at the ballot box and every day after to build a system worth engaging in—one in which promises are kept, people are heard, and policy change is written by the people whose lives it will change.

We are going to address the horrors of police brutality while also addressing the policies and practices that give it power. We are going to demand justice for Tony McDade, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and every Black person whose lives have been taken by white supremacy. And we are going to work like hell for it.

To our Black community members: We are here to amplify your leadership and power in every and any way that we can, without putting the burden of education and change on your shoulders.

In solidarity,  
The Platform Team

**Before you proceed into the following pages, please note that the content may be triggering and painful.**



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Leading Organizations

**Black Women's Blueprint** works to place Black women and girls' lives as well as their particular struggles squarely within the context of the larger racial justice concerns of Black communities, and are committed to building movements where gender matters in broader social justice organizing so that all members of their communities gain social, political and economic equity. [blackwomensblueprint.org](http://blackwomensblueprint.org)

**Black Lives Matter** was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer. Their mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. By combating and countering acts of violence, creating space for Black imagination and innovation, and centering Black joy, they are winning immediate improvements in their lives. [blacklivesmatter.com](http://blacklivesmatter.com)

**BYP100 (Black Youth Project 100)** is building a Black politic through a Black, queer, feminist lens. Their work is generally centered on ending systems of anti-Blackness and emphasizing the urgency of protecting folks living on the margins of the margins, including women, girls, femmes, and the gamut of LGBTQ folk. They approach their work through relational organizing, grassroots organizing, fundraising, public policy debate, electoral organizing, digital content creation, political education, and consciousness raising. [byp100.org](http://byp100.org)

**Campaign Zero** is singularly dedicated to eliminating police violence and established a comprehensive platform of research-based policy solutions to end police brutality in America. [joincampaignzero.org/](http://joincampaignzero.org/)

**Color Of Change** designs campaigns and strategies powerful enough to fight racism and injustice—in politics and culture, in the workplace and the economy, in criminal justice and community life, and wherever they exist—to change both the written and unwritten rules of society. They mobilize their members to end practices and systems that unfairly hold Black people back, and champion solutions that move us all forward. [colorofchange.org](http://colorofchange.org)

**NAACP Youth & College Division** informs youth of the problems affecting African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities; to advance the economic, education, social and political status of African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities and their harmonious cooperation with other peoples; to stimulate an appreciation of the African Diaspora and other people of color's contribution to civilization; and to develop an intelligent, effective youth leadership. [naacp.org/youth-college](http://naacp.org/youth-college)

**National Action Network** was founded in 1991 by Reverend Al Sharpton, NAN works within the spirit and tradition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to promote a modern civil rights agenda that includes the fight for one standard of justice, decency and equal opportunities for all people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, citizenship, criminal record, economic status, gender, gender expression, or sexuality. [nationalactionnetwork.net](http://nationalactionnetwork.net)

**The Movement for Black Lives (M4BL)** seeks to reach millions, mobilize hundreds of thousands, and organize tens of thousands, so that Black political power is a force able to influence national and local agendas in the direction of their Vision for Black Lives. [m4bl.org](http://m4bl.org)

**The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights** is a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States. Through advocacy and outreach to targeted constituencies, The Leadership Conference works toward the goal of a more open and just society – an America as good as its ideals. [civilrights.org](http://civilrights.org)



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Defunding

*“We call on localities and elected officials across the country to divest resources away from policing in local budgets and reallocate those resources to the healthcare, housing and education our people deserve. More officers, guns, jails and prisons are not a solution to longstanding problems of racial disparities, injustice and police violence. We demand police free schools across the country and an end to the use of police officers in public universities. All public Institutions designed to serve the people, must cut ties with the police in the interest of public safety.”—The Movement For Black Lives <sup>1</sup>*

As doctoral candidate Philip V. McHarris and Movement for Black Lives strategist Thenjiwe McHarris make clear, **regulations are not enough**. In their New York Times piece, “No More Money for the Police” they highlight that the Minneapolis Police Department had all of the “right” programs—from de-escalation and implicit bias training to programs to identify problematic officers early on—but those programs did not save George Floyd.<sup>2</sup>

That is because police departments were built to preserve white supremacy, slavery, and social control over Black and Brown people. In fact, today’s concept of police departments was first instituted in the 1800s and often out of existing efforts to catch runaway slaves.<sup>3</sup> A century later, these police departments saw significant budgetary increases after President Bill Clinton signed the 1994 crime bill,<sup>4</sup> which was passed to control “superpredators” as then-First Lady Hillary Clinton called Black youth.

### “We keep us safe”

In order to end police violence, it is necessary to end the cycle of criminalization and address the roots by investing in community welfare. This doesn’t just mean addressing a city-wide police department, it means addressing criminalization where it starts: in schools. In 2016, an investigation found that New York City, Chicago, and Miami-Dade public schools employed more school resource officers (school cops) than school counselors,<sup>5</sup> choosing to criminalize rather than support their students, to no benefit to the school environment.

Studies have found that schools with more mental health providers, see lower suspension and disciplinary rates as well as higher attendance, academic achievement, career preparation, and graduation rates.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, there is no evidence to show a positive relationship between school resource officers and school safety. Instead, school resource officers are found to negatively impact the school environment, including alienating students.<sup>7</sup>

Applying this truth to the larger policing complex, The Movement for Black Lives calls for the dollars historically allocated to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant, the Community Oriented Policing Services, and Victims of Crime Act program to instead be directed toward “education, employment and restorative justice services in Black communities most impacted by the mass incarceration and crime.”<sup>8</sup>

### **To do this, they call on:**

- Congress to “amend the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005, change the formula based awards to end the mandated support of police departments, and make explicit that community based crime prevention (restorative justice) and long term safety strategies (youth employment and educational programs) are permissible grantees for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program.”
- The Department of Justice to prioritize granting Community Oriented Policing Services dollars to “community based organizations focusing on restorative justice, employment and education.”



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Defunding (cont'd)

A great deal of this divestment work also needs to happen at the city level, where local legislators control budgetary allocations to law enforcement. Since George Floyd's death:

Minneapolis Council Members Jeremiah Ellison stated, "We are going to dismantle the Minneapolis Police Department. And when we're done, we're not simply gonna glue it back together. We are going to dramatically rethink how we approach public safety and emergency response. It's really past due."<sup>9</sup> Ellison is joined by a majority of his colleagues, including the Council President Lisa Bender, in calls for dismantling. It is important to recognize that city activists were on the record in a 2018 city-wide report calling for a dismantling of the police department, while their movement for change started even earlier.<sup>10</sup> This moment and this reimagining of public safety did not just occur, activists worked for it.

In Los Angeles, activists have mobilized for years for a "People's Budget," in order to divert police funding into housing, healthcare, green building, and other community-oriented programs. This week, LA Mayor Eric Garcetti announced he will not raise the police department's budget, though he had previously planned to raise it by 7 percent—meaning the police department would have been on the receiving end of 54 percent of the city's funds. The city will also find and allocate \$250 million to jobs, health, education, and "healing," particularly for historically underserved and disenfranchised communities. To contextualize this move, videos of LAPD assaulting protestors with batons and other force circulated the internet the same week.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, People's Budget activists call for less than 6 percent of the total funding to be allocated to law enforcement, so there is still a very long way to go.<sup>12</sup>

In Washington, DC City Council Member-elect Janeese Lewis George won her election, amidst curfews and protests. Lewis George campaigned on a platform of demilitarizing the police and reallocating part of the police department's budget to social services and violence prevention programs. She faced significant backlash and attack ads because of this policy approach, but still she won. In the month prior, DC Mayor Muriel Boswer unveiled her 2021 budget proposal, which includes \$45 million more in funding for the police department.<sup>13</sup>

DC is collecting public testimony on the budget until June 16. Testimony can be submitted by:

- Calling the Committee's GoogleVoice number at (202) 350-1362. These voicemails will be transcribed, shared with Council members and Committee staff, and uploaded to the Committee's [website](#);
- Emailing any written testimony to [judiciary\[at\]dccouncil.us](mailto:judiciary[at]dccouncil.us);
- Uploading a 3-minute video of your testimony to the Committee's [Dropbox folder](#);
- Click here to upload your file (this link works for mobile or desktop devices).



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Statutory Reform

On Monday, June 1, 446 organizations signed onto The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights' letter demanding Congress pass swift federal statutory reforms to end police brutality. Signatories include ACLU, BLACK LIVES MATTER, Color of Change, NAACP, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc, Campaign Zero, and In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda.

The following are the 8 proposals enumerated in the letter. The legislation included below each section is not necessarily supported by Platform, or the signatories but are listed to highlight existing policies.

**We include these proposals to highlight the national conversation taking place and underscore moves that can be taken for accountability. These are not included to minimize or detract from the defund effort.**

In 2019 alone, police shot and killed 1,004 people.<sup>14</sup> But even this number does not tell the full story of police brutality in the United States. It does not account for the people, like George Floyd, who were murdered by force but not by gun; the people, like Ahmaud Arbery, whose life was stolen by vigilantes propped up by law enforcement; or the people, like Sandra Bland, whose futures were ahead of them when they were instead found dead in their jail cell.

To address this, the following reforms have been proposed:

1. Require a federal standard that use of force be reserved for only when necessary as a last resort after exhausting reasonable options, and incentivize states to implement this standard; require the use of de-escalation techniques, and the duty to intervene; ban the use of force as a punitive measure or means of retaliation against individuals who only verbally confront officers, or against individuals who pose a danger only to themselves; and require all officers to accurately report all uses of force;

### The Context:

According to a 2015 report by Amnesty International, every state and DC in the union fails to meet international standards on lethal use of force by law enforcement officers. While US law unsurprisingly holds its law enforcement to a lower standard, 13 states failed even to meet that.<sup>15</sup>

Currently, the prevailing standard of when officers can use lethal force is the "objective reasonableness standard," which grants broad authority to use deadly force as a first resort, even when de-escalation is possible. This standard was established in the 1989 Supreme Court case *Graham v. Connor*, which ruled "the 'reasonableness' of an officer's use of force must be judged through the perspective of a 'reasonable officer on the scene' and must take into account the fact that 'officers are forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force necessary in a particular situation.'" <sup>16</sup>

The evidence proves this is not the safest standard for anyone involved. In 2012, the Seattle Police department was required to change its standard to necessity and a monitoring team found a 60 percent decrease in use of force as well as a neutral, if not decline, impact on the risk to officers.<sup>17</sup>

### Police Exercising Absolute Care With Everyone (PEACE) Act

Introduced by Representative Ro Khanna (D-CA-17)  
26 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would "change the use of force to be a last resort, rather than a first resort, and require officers to employ de-escalation techniques."



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Statutory Reform (cont'd)

“In 2009, the [Dallas Police Department] received 147 excessive force complaints and made 74,000 arrests. Within three years, arrests were down to 61,000, and within five years excessive force complaints were down to 53. As the number of excessive force complaints and arrests declined, so did the city’s murder rate, which reached its lowest point in more than 80 years in 2014.”<sup>18</sup> Then- Dallas police chief, David Brown (now head of Chicago PD) assumed his role at the head of Dallas’ department in 2010 and attributed the decline, in part, to an emphasis on de-escalation.<sup>19</sup>

### Preventing Tragedies Between Police and Communities Act

Introduced by Representative Gwen Moore (D-WI-4)  
9 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would require state or local governments receiving funding under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program to train law enforcement officers on de-escalation techniques and require law enforcement to use such techniques.

If they fail to comply, their funding may be reduced.

### National Police Misuse of Force Investigation Board Act

Bill announced June 3, 2020—More information to come  
Introduced by Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN-5)  
Co-Led by Representatives Ayanna Pressley (D-MA-7) and Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)

If passed, this legislation would:

- Establish a federal agency responsible for investigating all nationwide deaths occurring in police custody, officer-involved shootings and uses of force that result in severe bodily injury;
- Grant the new agency authority to conduct unbiased, independent investigations and issue determinations of responsibility and recommendations for reform that will prevent future violence;
- Allow those findings to be admissible in court;
- Prevent federal funding for law enforcement activities and equipment if a police department fails to take meaningful action on the Board’s policy and reform recommendations.

### Bill to Criminalize Police Violence Against Protesters

Bill announced June 3, 2020—More information to come  
Introduced by Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN-5)

If passed, this legislation would make it a federal crime for law enforcement to kill or cause bodily harm to a civilian during the response to a protest.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Statutory Reform (cont'd)

2. Prohibit all maneuvers that restrict the flow of blood or oxygen to the brain, including neck holds, chokeholds, and similar excessive force, deeming the use of such force a federal civil rights violation.

**The Context:**

Six years before George Floyd uttered “I can’t breathe” as his final words, so too did Eric Garner. Eric Garner’s killer, former Officer Daniel Pantaleo walked free. As of 2013, a Justice Department survey found that of “police departments that serve more than 1 million people, 43 percent allow a neck restraint of some kind.”<sup>20</sup> Following Garner’s death, pressure to change ramped up, but legislative action was limited. This is evidenced by the Minnesota Police Department’s continued use of neck restraints. In the last 5 years, Minnesota officers have used neck restraints at least 237 times and in 16 percent of incidents involving chokeholds, subjects were left unconscious.<sup>21</sup>

**Eric Garner Excessive Use of Force Prevention Act**

Introduced by Representative Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY-8)  
34 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would prohibit use of the chokehold under federal civil rights law.

3. Prohibit racial profiling, and require robust data collection on police-community encounters and law enforcement activities. Data should capture all demographic categories and be disaggregated;

**The Context:**

As we were reminded this election cycle, racial profiling is entrenched in policing practices across the country. In 2015, former New York City Mayor Bloomberg said, “Ninety-five percent of murders- murderers and murder victims fit one M.O. You can just take the description, Xerox it, and pass it out to all the cops. They are male, minorities, 16-25. That’s true in New York, that’s true in virtually every city.”<sup>22</sup> This gave way to violent stop-and-frisk and the heightened criminalization of young, Black and Brown men.

Because of this deeply-rooted racism, a 2018 Bureau of Justice Statistics report found:<sup>23</sup>

- In both traffic and street stops, police were more likely to stop Black residents than white or Hispanic residents;
- Black and Hispanic residents were more likely to have multiple police interactions than white residents;
- Black and Hispanic residents faced double the amount of threats or use of force in police-initiated interactions than white residents.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Statutory Reform (cont'd)

### End Racial /End Racial and Religious Profiling Act

Introduced by Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18) and Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)  
69 Cosponsors (All Democrats) in the House and 26 Cosponsors (All Democrats) in the Senate

If passed, this legislation would:

- Prohibit racial profiling, enforceable by declaratory or injunctive relief;
- Mandate training on racial profiling issues as part of Federal law enforcement training, the collection of data on all routine or spontaneous investigatory activities that is to be submitted through a standardized form to the Department of Justice;
- Authorize the Justice Department to provide grants for the development and implementation of best policing practices, such as early warning systems, technology integration, and other management protocols that discourage profiling;
- Require the Attorney General to provide periodic reports to assess the nature of any ongoing discriminatory profiling practices.

#### 4. Eliminate federal programs that provide military equipment to law enforcement;

##### **The Context:**

Currently, a Pentagon-run program transfers military weaponry to local law enforcement departments. Initially created in the 1990s in order to “offload surplus military equipment and aid police departments during the war on drugs,” it expanded following September 11. Following Michael Brown’s death at the hands of police, this practice came under scrutiny.<sup>24</sup>

In 2015, then-President Obama instituted restrictions on the program, resulting in the return of 126 tracked armored vehicles, 138 grenade launchers and 1,623 bayonets. Trump ended the restrictions in 2017.<sup>25</sup>

### Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act

Introduced by Representative Henry “Hank” Johnson (D-GA-4)  
72 Cosponsors (1 Republican, 1 Libertarian)

If passed, this legislation would direct the Secretary of Defense to limit the transfer of personal property to Federal and State agencies.

### Amending the Insurrection Act

Bill announced June 3, 2020—More information to come  
Introduced by Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN-5)  
Co-Led by Representatives Mark Pocan (D-WI-2) and Pramila Jayapal (D-WA-7)

If passed, this legislation would amend the Insurrection Act to prevent the president from deploying the military domestically without Congressional consent.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Statutory Reform (cont'd)

### 5. Prohibit the use of no-knock warrants, especially for drug searches;

**The Context:**<sup>26</sup>

A no-knock warrant issued by a judge allows law enforcement to enter property without first announcing themselves and the reasons for their presence. Breonna Taylor’s death was preceded by such a warrant. To get this type of warrant, officers have to demonstrate that a “knock-and-announce” raid wouldn’t work either because it would allow the suspect to get a weapon or because it would allow a suspect to destroy evidence. The War on Drugs popularized these types of raids and while there have been efforts to curb them, roughly 20,000 are conducted each year.

Of these, the ACLU analyzed 818 SWAT incidents and found at least seven civilian deaths—including two cases in which the suspect was deemed to have committed suicide to avoid being taken by the police—and forty-six civilian injuries. It remains unclear, according to the study, whether any of these incidents resulted in investigation or discipline.”

### 6. Change the 18 U.S.C. Sec. 242 mens rea requirement from willfulness to recklessness, permitting prosecutors to successfully hold law enforcement accountable for the deprivation of civil rights and civil liberties;

**The Context:**

Despite the Department of Justice’s authority to conduct criminal civil rights investigations, the likelihood of conviction is restricted by the “problematically high” “willfulness” standard of proof required.<sup>27</sup>

#### Police Accountability Act

Introduced by Representative Henry “Hank” Johnson (D-GA-4)  
16 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would establish a new criminal offense for conduct by certain state or local law enforcement officers in the line of duty that constitutes murder or manslaughter.

While the “Police Accountability Act” does not change the standard, it does create a new path of accountability so that civil rights investigations are not the only option.<sup>28</sup>

### 7. Develop a national public database that would cover all police agencies in the United States and its territories, similar to the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards;

**The Context:**

Too few victims of police brutality names’ are said. Too few officers are held publicly accountable for misconduct. While tens of thousands of officers are investigated each year for serious misconduct, little notice is given.<sup>29</sup> In part, because there is no public database.

This is particularly dangerous given that after law enforcement officers are fired for misconduct, many are rehired within their own departments or in other cities across the country.<sup>30</sup> Not only does this reduce accountability, it authorizes that misconduct to go back into the streets and cause harm to other civilians.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Statutory Reform (cont'd)

8. End the qualified immunity doctrine that prevents police from being held legally accountable when they break the law. To overcome the defense of qualified immunity, require that a victim must show that law enforcement violated “clearly established” law by pointing to a case arising in the same context and involving the same conduct.

### The Context:

Qualified immunity protects government officials from lawsuits alleging that they violated an individual’s rights, unless that individual can demonstrate a violation of a “clearly established” statutory or constitutional right.<sup>31</sup>

In 1967, a Supreme Court ruling gave rise to qualified immunity with the “rationale of protecting law enforcement officials from frivolous lawsuits and financial liability in cases where they acted in good faith in unclear legal situations.” This was a sharp departure from the Civil Rights Act of 1871, which permitted individuals to sue state and local officials for violating their rights.<sup>32</sup>

Now, with qualified immunity, police cannot be held liable unless the person whose civil rights they violated can identify an exact case in the same jurisdiction in which the courts ruled a constitutional violation. This creates a near-impossible chance for justice and a pressure to stay silent.

### Ending Qualified Immunity Act

Introduced by Justin Amash (L-MI-3) and Ayanna Pressley (D-MA-7)  
17 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would:

- Amend Section 1983 to explicitly state that the qualified immunity doctrine invented by the Supreme Court does NOT provide police officers that brutalize or otherwise violate civil rights with defense or immunity from civil liability for their actions;
- Clarify Congress’ original intent for Section 1983 and note the history and necessity of this protection.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Statutory Reform (cont'd)

### More Legislation

#### Cooling Off Period Elimination Act

Introduced by Representative Henry “Hank” Johnson (D-GA-4)  
25 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would make state or local law enforcement agencies ineligible to receive federal funds from a Department of Justice law enforcement grant program if they have a “cooling off period in effect.”

A cooling-off period means there is a period of time after an officer-involved shooting in which investigators cannot speak to the office

#### The Grand Jury Act

Introduced by Representative Henry “Hank” Johnson (D-GA-4)  
36 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would:

- Require state and local law enforcement receiving Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant funding comply with specific requirements following an officer-involved use of deadly force;
- Of those requirements, one is that the governor must appoint a special prosecutor to present evidence before a judge to determine whether probable cause exists to criminally charge the law enforcement officer. The hearing must be open to the public.

#### Federal Relief Fund

Bill announced June 3, 2020—More information to come  
Introduced by Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN-5)

If passed, this legislation would create an emergency relief fund that cities and businesses can apply to in order to receive grants in order to rebuild after social and civil rights crises.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Reparations

During the 1960s, protestors were heard saying, “This is my 40 acres...I'll be back for the mule.”<sup>33</sup>

After the Civil War ended and slavery was abolished (except in the case of punishment for a crime—an important distinction considering modern exploitation of prison labor), General William T. Sherman promised formerly enslaved people acres of redistributed land and help securing a mule as compensation. But much like most of America’s promises, it was never realized.

Instead, Jim Crow laws began to take shape, making economic opportunities, social equality, and political engagement nearly impossible for Black people. Though segregation was finally outlawed on paper, its impact was already so entrenched in every facet of life that its legacy gives way to modern inequities and systems of oppression—including the police and prison systems.

In an effort to make amends for injustices endured and compensate Black individuals with a modern “40-acres-and-a-mule,” various forms of reparations have been proposed. Now, members of Congress are mobilizing to consider how to turn those proposals into tangible actions.

### **H.R.40 - Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act**

Introduced by Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18) and Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)  
127 Cosponsors (All Democrats) in the House and 16 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

If passed, this bill would establish a commission to examine slavery and discrimination in the colonies and the United States from 1619 to the present and recommend appropriate remedies.

### **Urging the establishment of a United States Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation**

Bill announced June 4, 2020—More information to come  
Introduced by Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)

If passed, this resolution would establish the first United States Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) to examine the effects of slavery, institutional racism, and discrimination against people of color, and how our history impacts laws and policies today.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression

At many of the protests and in much of the media discussion, there have been calls to “go vote” in order to put an end to this injustice. We agree, we need to vote in November, and every election that follows to ensure we have a say in who represents us, and who does not get that privilege.

That said, it is not enough to yell, “just go vote,” louder than the next person. It is not possible to “just go vote” when there are intentional and systemic barriers to voting. When there are intentional and systemic barriers that purposefully silence Black people—particularly young, transgender, immigrant, indigenous Black people; Black people with disabilities; and Black people with felony convictions—in politics.

### **Voter ID Requirements**

Under a facade of protecting voter fraud, states have raced to implement voter identification laws. The catch? Voter fraud is nearly non-existent, while the harm from voter ID laws, in 36 states, is very real.<sup>34</sup> Not only does the practice of over-hyping voter fraud harm voter confidence in the electoral system, it reinforces the creation of unjust barriers for historically disenfranchised communities to overcome:

#### *Gender Identity*

There are a number of reasons why a transgender individual might not have updated their ID to reflect their gender identity. Poll workers may use the difference in one's gender presentation from the gender marker on their identification as a reason to deny a ballot. While this is not grounds to deny a ballot, because as long as the voter data matches an acceptable form of ID (i.e. the name and address), the individual has the right to vote. Yet, the hostility, time, and bigotry may be so difficult to overcome that the individual may be discouraged from even showing up to vote.

#### *Young People*

While *Symm v. United States* affirmed the right of students to vote from their school address, despite the opposition's best effort, there are still complications of procuring the proper identification. In Texas, for example, a voter is permitted to use a gun-permit but not a student ID at the polls.<sup>35</sup>

#### *Low Socio-Economic Status and Homelessness*

Identification comes with a price tag. According to a study by the Government Accountability Office, direct costs to obtain proper identification can range from \$14.50 to \$58.50.<sup>36</sup> While every state affirms a homeless individual's right to establish residency even if they just cite where they often stay, whether that be a shelter or a park, that does not mean it is a streamlined process. The time and money required to obtain a form of identification might be too high for people who need to focus on putting food in their stomachs or clothes on their backs.

#### *Indigenous people*

For many indigenous people, particularly people living on reservations, valid forms of identification are difficult to obtain. This is in part because reservations might not have traditional street addresses, which has both prevented indigenous people from applying and has led to the rejection of their applications. If that wasn't explicit enough, states often reject tribal IDs as a valid form of identification.<sup>37</sup>



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### America Votes Act

Included in H.R.1: For the People Act  
Introduced by Representative Rick Larsen (D-WA-2)  
59 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would:

- Permit an individual required to present identification as a condition of voting in a federal election to meet the requirement by presenting a sworn written statement attesting to the individual's identification and that he or she is registered to vote in the election. An individual desiring to vote by mail may submit such a statement with the ballot;
- Require states with an identification requirement to:
  - Prepare a preprinted version of the statement which includes a blank space for an individual to provide a name and signature;
  - Make copies of the preprinted version available at polling places;
  - Include a copy of the preprinted version with each ballot transmitted to an individual who desires to vote by mail;
  - Include the use of a sworn written statement in voting information posted at polling places;
  - A state is prohibited from requiring an individual who presents or submits such a sworn written statement to cast a provisional ballot in the election.

This bill does not apply to first-time voters registering by mail.

### Cuts to Early Voting

When there are fewer options to vote in advance or absentee, poll lines get longer and the time it takes to vote—from finding a parking spot to casting the ballot—can drag on far too long.

For hourly wage-earners, many of whom already make less than the cost of living requires, missing work to vote is not an option. They could be fired for missing a shift or lose necessary pay because they had to stand in line for an excessive amount of time.

The long line also poses a problem at poll-closing time. If you are in line when the polls close, you maintain the right to vote; yet, reality does not always mirror policy. Voters may be turned away by misinformed or ill-intentioned poll workers or leave themselves if they believe they will not make it into the booth in time.

### Early Voting Act

Included in H.R.1: For the People Act  
Introduced by Representative Rick Larsen (D-WA-2)

If passed, this legislation would:

- Require a 15-day early voting period preceding the date of the election when individuals may vote in federal elections, in the same manner as voting is allowed on Election Day;
- Require early voting polling places to comply with certain requirements, including access to public transportation.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### Felony Status Restrictions

In 2016 there were approximately 6.1 million people denied the right to vote because of felony disenfranchisement laws. In a criminal "justice" system rooted in racism, those laws disproportionately impact people of color. In particular, "Black Americans of voting age are more than four times more likely to lose their voting rights than the rest of the adult population, with one of every 13 Black adults disenfranchised nationally."<sup>38</sup>

In only 2 states—Maine and Vermont—are there no legal restrictions prohibiting individuals with a felony conviction from voting.<sup>39</sup>

In 18 states—Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Utah—and DC, voting rights are automatically restored upon release from prison.<sup>40</sup>

In 2 states—California and Connecticut—voting rights are restored after release from prison and completion of parole, but while on probation.<sup>41</sup>

In 21 states—Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Virginia—voting rights are only restored after prison sentences, parole, and probation are complete.<sup>42</sup>

In 7 states—Alaska, Alabama, Delaware, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Wyoming—voting rights are only restored under certain conditions. For example, in Wyoming, only a person convicted for the first-time of a non-violent felony offense is eligible to vote if they submit a written request upon completion of sentence, including probation and parole.<sup>43</sup>

In 1 state—Iowa—persons convicted of a felony offense are permanently disenfranchised.<sup>44</sup>

### Democracy Restoration Act

Introduced by Representative Jerry Nadler (D-NY-10) and Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)  
44 Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 23 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

If passed, this bill would require voting rights be restored for people with felony convictions in all states if they are not serving a sentence at the time of the election. It would also prohibit federal funding from being allocated to the construction or improvement of a "correctional" facility if individuals in that jurisdiction are not notified of their voting rights upon release.

### The Next Step Act

Introduced by Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ-12) & Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)  
2 Cosponsors in the House (Democrats) and 1 Cosponsor in the Senate (Democrat)

Among its many provisions, if passed, this legislation would require voting rights be restored for people with felony convictions in all states if they are not serving a sentence at the time of the election.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### Polling Accessibility

#### *Disability Accessibility*

A study conducted by the General Accountability Office found that only 40 percent of polling places surveyed "fully accommodated people with disabilities" in the 2016 election.<sup>45</sup> The barriers to accessibility might include locations down a flight of stairs without elevators, broken audio machines, booths too narrow for a wheelchair, lack of curbside voting options, limited parking and/or difficult paths from parking to the location.

#### **Disability Voting Rights Act**

Introduced by Representative Mary Gay Scanlon (D-PA-5)  
3 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this bill would:

- Implement measures to increase access for individuals with disabilities to request, by mail and electronically, voter registration and absentee ballot applications;
- Mandate that polling places, including the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas of each polling facility, are accessible to individuals with disabilities;
- Authorize individuals with disabilities to use absentee registration procedures and to vote by absentee ballot in elections for Federal office;
- Ensure that any valid voter registration and absentee ballot applications from an individual with a disability are processed if received at least 30 days before an election.

#### **Accessible Voting Act**

Introduced by Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) and Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)  
6 Cosponsors (All Democrats)

If passed, this bill would:

- Establish the Office of Accessibility within the Election Assistance Commission to support and oversee state efforts;
- Provide up-to-date voting information and resources, through accessible websites, to ensure voters know how to register to vote, cast an absentee ballot and find help if their right to vote is challenged;
- Expand the number of options to cast a ballot in federal elections so voters with disabilities can utilize the voting option most accessible for them;
- Create a national resource center on accessible voting to conduct cultural competency trainings for election officials and poll workers;
- Increase grants to states to improve accessibility when registering to vote, voting by absentee ballot and casting a ballot in person.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### *Language Accessibility*

The Voting Rights Act outlined legal requirements to make voting accessible for non-English or English-as-a-Second-Language voters. It mandates that jurisdictions accommodate (providing translated version of all election information, from website content to the actual ballot) languages only in which "the number of United States citizens of voting age is a single language group within the jurisdiction: is more than 10,000, or is more than five percent of all voting age citizens, or on an Indian reservation, exceeds five percent of all reservation residents; and the illiteracy rate of the group is higher than the national illiteracy rate."<sup>46</sup> This only leaves a third of the voting-age population covered by language-accessibility.<sup>47</sup>

### **Registration Barriers**

Despite lagging behind other countries in voter registration, states continue to develop new barriers to registration. In Ohio, the voting-age population lost the right to register the day of the election. Same-day registration permits eligible individuals to vote even if they were unable to meet the deadline to submit their registration.<sup>48</sup> In some states, the deadline to register could be as many as 30 days before the election.<sup>49</sup>

Efforts to impede registration do not stop with deadlines. In 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against proof-of-citizenship requirements in order to register for federal elections; however, it did not prohibit states from requiring proof for state elections. While Alabama and Georgia passed proof-of-citizenship laws, they have not implemented them due to the complications of federal vs. state voter registration. Arizona, however, requires eligible individuals to register separately for state and federal elections and includes the proof-of-citizenship requirements. Just this year, a federal judge struck down Kansas' law requiring proof.<sup>50</sup>

In 2013, North Carolina also attacked student voting rights with the introduction of state Senate Bill 667—which would prevent parents from claiming their children as dependents for tax deductions if the children register to vote in their college communities.<sup>51</sup>

### **New Deal for New Americans Act**

Introduced by Representative Grace Meng (D-NY-6) and Senator Edward Markey (D-MA)  
41 Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 1 Cosponsor in the Senate (Democrat)

Among its many provisions, if passed, this legislation would automatically register newly naturalized citizens to vote.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### Help Students Vote Act

Key Provisions Included in H.R.1: For the People Act  
Introduced by Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi in the House and Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) in the Senate  
6 Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 4 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would:

- Require institutes of higher education make a “good faith effort to distribute voter registration forms to each of their students at least twice a year;”
- Allocate grants to institutes of higher education that greatly exceed the federal base level of distributing registration forms;
- Allow civil actions against institutions of higher education that violate the requirements

### **Voter Purges**

In 2013, the Supreme Court overturned the provision in the Voting Rights Act that required jurisdictions with histories of racial discrimination to receive authorized approval before changing their election laws and procedures. As a result of the ruling, states heightened the effort to clean their voter rolls of voters under the claim of updating their systems. While voter purges did exist before the 2013 ruling, the rate of purges in jurisdictions subject to Voting Rights Act oversight exceeded those in other jurisdictions.

While the voter purging processes in some states were overturned, the Supreme Court upheld Ohio's process. Ohio removes individuals who have died or moved from the voter roll. As part of the process, the state sends a notice to registered voters who have not voted in two years and they are required to respond. If they do not respond and do not vote at any point within the next four years, they are taken off the roll.

Once again, North Carolina did not even attempt to mask its voter suppression of young students of color. In 2013, 56 student voters, all Black, from historically Black university Elizabeth City State University, were purged from the voting rolls on the grounds they were not properly registered at their campus address.<sup>52</sup>



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### DC Statehood

*Note: While obtaining more political autonomy is important for all U.S. territories, efforts within other territories, namely Puerto Rico, are split between statehood and independence. It is for the residents of each territory to self-determine their path to enfranchisement, not for us to prescribe.*

In the context of history, DC residents only just started to receive partial and incremental voting rights:<sup>53</sup>

- 1963: The 23rd Amendment permitted DC residents to vote for President and Vice President of the United States;
- 1967: DC residents could elect a school board 1970: DC gained a non-voting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives;
- 1973: Congress passed the Home Rule Act, allowing for more self-determination. However, under the Act, Congress retains authority over DC's budget and still reviews all legislation passed by the Council while the President appoints DC's judges;
- 1974: DC residents voted in favor of the Home Rule Act and elected a Mayor, Council, and Advisory Board.

The work to achieve full and equal voting rights and representation for DC residents is far from over, and for a city whose population is predominantly Black, this is no surprise. Currently, over 700,000 people in Washington, DC experience taxation without representation (you may recall: we had a whole tea-in-the-harbor thing about this a few years ago). While DC residents are represented by shadow-Senator Paul Strauss and Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton in Congress, neither Strauss nor Norton are permitted final votes on legislation. Thereby, DC residents don't have a say on the legislation that passes or fails, though their lives are forever impacted by it.

If that weren't enough, the federal government can also exert greater law enforcement authority over the district. On Monday, June 1, 25 minutes before DC's curfew set in—established in response to the protests over the police killings of Tony McDade, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor—federal law enforcement officers set upon peaceful protestors with tear gas. All in an effort to give Donald Trump a photo opp. Trump's ability to take such forceful action is furthered by DC's lack of statehood. While he threatened to “dominate” states around the country, he did not have to wait before terrorizing DC: “We're doing it in Washington, in DC, we're going to do something that people haven't seen before. But we're going to have total domination.”<sup>54</sup>

### Washington, D.C. Admission Act

Introduced by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)  
223 Cosponsors (All Democrats) in the House, 35 Cosponsors (All Democrats) in the Senate

If passed, this legislation would admit DC as a state in the Union.

**Getting it done:** Recognizing that the game of politics has been left to those who can afford to play by the rules, the 51 for 51 launched to declare “Game Over.” This campaign is calling for a filibuster-proof process to grant DC statehood. 51 for 51 is simply demanding a simple majority (51 votes) be sufficient to pass statehood legislation in the Senate. If the Senate Majority Leader can confirm judges with just 51 votes, DC residents should be able to obtain all their rights and privileges with 51 votes.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### More Legislation

#### For the People Act

It passed the House

Introduced by Representative John Sarbanes (D-MD-3) and Senator Tom Udall (D-NM)  
236 Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 46 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

Among its many provisions, if passed, this comprehensive democracy reform legislation would:

- Establish automatic voter registration across the country;
- Ensure individuals who completed their felony sentences have their full rights restored;
- Expand early voting;
- Simplify absentee voting; Modernize the U.S. voting system

#### Voter Empowerment Act

Introduced by Representative John Lewis (D-GA-5) and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)  
8 Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 8 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

If passed, this legislation would:

- Require states to allow online voter registration, establish automatic voter registration, permit same day voter registration, and accept voter registration applications from individuals under age 18;
- Prohibit interference with voter registration or voting;
- Require paper ballots and manual counting for recounts and audits;
- Require states to allow early voting and voting by mail without additional conditions;
- Make grants to states for poll worker recruitment and training;
- Prohibit certain political activities by a state's chief state election administration official;
- Make grants for conducting risk-limiting audits of the results of elections;
- Permanently reauthorize the Election Assistance Commission.

#### Voting Rights Amendment Act

It passed the House

Introduced by Representative Terri Sewell (D-AL-7) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT)  
229 Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 46 Cosponsors in the Senate (45 Democrats, 1 Republican)

If passed, this legislation would establish new criteria for determining which states and political subdivisions must obtain preclearance before changes to voting practices in these areas may take effect. (Preclearance is the process of receiving preapproval from the Department of Justice or the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia before making legal changes that would affect voting rights.)



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Ending Voter Suppression (cont'd)

### For the People Act

It passed the House

Introduced by Representative John Sarbanes (D-MD-3) and Senator Tom Udall (D-NM)  
236 Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 46 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

Among its many provisions, if passed, this comprehensive democracy reform legislation would:

- Establish automatic voter registration across the country;
- Ensure individuals who completed their felony sentences have their full rights restored;
- Expand early voting;
- Simplify absentee voting; Modernize the U.S. voting system

### Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act

Introduced by Representative Susan Davis (D-CA-53) and Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)20  
Cosponsors in the House (All Democrats) and 15 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

If passed, this bill would prevent states from restricting who can vote by mail beyond setting deadlines for requesting and returning ballots.

### Native American Voting Rights Act

Introduced by Representative Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM-3) and Senator Tom Udall (D-NM)97  
Cosponsors in the House (1 Republican) and 17 Cosponsors in the Senate (All Democrats)

If passed, this bill would:

- Expand the types of facilities that can be used as voter registration agencies;
- Increase polling site accessibility;
- Provide enforcement power to citizens and attorneys general;
- Require approval for actions like moving a polling place;
- Validate certain tribal identification for voting or registering;
- Expand requirements for bilingual voting accessibility;
- Establish a Native American voting task force grant program for the purpose of increasing voter outreach, education, registration, turnout, and accessibility for Native American communities.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Take Action

In the text below, you'll find some examples of tactics for taking actions. For more details, check out the [Our Voices 2020 Campaign Action Guide](#).

### Create a Petition

Here's what you can include in your Petition:

- Identify which decision maker(s) you are targeting;
- Petitions should be about three paragraphs long and to the point;
- Explain who you are and why the decision makers should listen. Are you students in their school? Are you their constituents who can vote to keep them in or out of office? Grab their attention right away by letting them know you are someone they need to listen to;
- Highlight why you care. People love human stories and connections, so in a few sentences explain why you are motivated to do something about this;
- Make your ask and be specific in your demand. Name what you want the decision makers to do and ensure it is something to which you can hold them accountable;
- Bring it back to the decision maker. You made clear why you care and what change you want to see, now let them know why they should care and be compelled to act. Does it impact a large number of their constituents? How so? Is the problem in conflict with one of their stated values?;
- Reiterate your demand and close it with a catchy, memorable line.

### Call Your Decisionmaker/ Host a Phone-Bank

The more personal the more powerful, so we caution against using a script. Instead, here's a framework of what to include:

- Introduce yourself, where you're a constituent from, and why you're calling (generally- i.e. I'm dedicated to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_);
- A sentence on why you care;
- A statistic to back up your claim;
- The consequences of that statistic;
- State clearly what you want the lawmaker to do;
- Make a final emotional appeal;
- Thank them for their time (if it feels appropriate).

Quick tips on how to host a phonebank:

- Be sure to advertise this to your community;
- Create a database of phone numbers for your local/state/federal lawmakers or school administrators;
- Create a script for participants to use if they need support;
- Provide talking points about your issue for your participants to use if they need support;
- If you want to host a virtual phone-banking, set up a video call and play some light music in the background; set goals for each person to reach in terms of call numbers; encourage people to share how their calls are going.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Take Action (cont'd)

### Write A Letter/ Host a Letter-Writing Campaign

How to write a letter: Write a letter to your lawmakers calling on them to take action. A handwritten-personal note can go a long way because lawmakers are not just figureheads, they impact the realities that YOU live. And who better to give voice to those realities than you? This letter is a chance for lawmakers to learn from you, in your own words. We want to affirm, you do not owe anyone what is in your heart and mind. Only share what you feel comfortable sharing.

The content of what to include is similar to your petition, but this letter should be as individualized as possible. The reason hand-written letters are powerful is because they're personal, so keep this personal. Why do YOU care?

- To start the letter, address your lawmaker by title, i.e. "Dear Senator (name);"
- Then, introduce yourself to let them know they need to listen to you. Are you a voter and/or student in their district? Do you have other connections to the district? Let them know right away;
- If you and your peers/colleagues are writing your own letters, but sending them in together, let your lawmakers know you are part of a group. There is power in numbers;
- Next, tell them why you care—that's your story. Why do you show up and speak out on this issue? Why are you taking the time to write this letter?;
- 5. Once you capture their attention and make clear the time to introduce/pass/support/uplift your policy;
- Close by letting them know you plan to stay active on this issue until change is realized;
- Provide contact information so they can follow up with you (if you feel comfortable);
- Finally, when addressing the envelope, refer to the lawmaker as "The Honorable (name);"

Quick tips on how to host a letter-writing campaign:

- Be sure to advertise this to your community. Provide pens, paper, envelopes, and stamps (you can get stamps from a CVS or post office);
- Have a computer so your participants can easily look up where to send their letter. Provide talking points about your issue for your participants to use if they need support;
- If you want to host a virtual letter-writing party, set up a video call and play some light music in the background; before you start writing, have everyone introduce themselves, share what topic they are writing a letter about, who they are sending it to, and the change they want to see.

### Tweetstorm

Social media is where we learn and engage in the 21st century, so let's use it to our advantage. But we also know one tweet likely won't do the trick! Coordinate with peers, friends, community members, to get digital together.



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Take Action (cont'd)

### Tweetstorm

Start with a Twitter Chat. Here's how:

- Identify partner organizations and fellow tweeters to join you online during a designated hour-long time block;
- Create a hashtag so people can follow along. (accessibility note: be sure to capitalize each word in a # so people using screen readers for visual impairments can easily follow along—i.e. rather than #defundthepolice use #DefundThePolice);
- In advance of the hour, share question prompts for your partners and fellow tweeters to respond to when the chat begins;
- When the chat begins, space the roll out of each question prompt and label them (i.e. Q1: xyz? #). Participants should then respond (i.e A1: abc. #);
- At the end of the Twitter Chat, pull your lawmakers in. You can follow this mad-libs style prompt:

.@\_\_\_\_\_ (decisionmaker's twitter handle) ,  
\_\_\_\_\_ (outline the problem). Will you join  
us in the movement to \_\_\_\_\_ (explain what you want them  
to do)? #YourHashtag

### \*Virtually\* Meet With Your Lawmaker

*Before the meeting:* Determine what exactly you want your decision-maker to do—Adopt the “preponderance of the evidence” standard? Introduce new legislation?— and why. Then consider what issues your decision-maker are most passionate about and how does that connect back to your policy goal? Have they taken a stand on your issue before- was it favorable or in opposition- and how can you craft an argument that reflects their stance? What are their districts' priorities and how does this connect back to your policy goal?

*During the meeting:* You will have maybe 20 minutes with your decision-maker, so you want to use the time effectively. Be sure to introduce yourself and your connection to their district; talk about why you are passionate about this issue; share why this issue should matter to them; make your ask; have a conversation and be open to feedback and ask questions to better understand their stance; figure out next steps for action; leave them with a folder/document explaining your issue, what you would like them to do about it, and how they can get in touch with you.

### Write Policy

You- yes YOU- can write policy thanks to The Roosevelt Network. Your life is directly impacted by policy, so shouldn't you have direct access to impact policy? The answer is a big YES. And fortunately, The Roosevelt Network thinks so too. As they say, “Who writes the rules matter.” Read the Our Voices 2020 Action Guide for next steps!



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Sources

1. "Tuesday: Invest-Divest." Movement For Black Lives. Accessed June 2020. <https://m4bl.org/week-of-action/tuesday/>
2. Philip V. McHarris and Thenjiwe McHarris. "No More Money for the Police." The New York Times. May 30, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/30/opinion/george-floyd-police-funding.html>
3. Reuters. "U.S. Protesters Call to 'Defund the Police.' What Would That Look Like?" The New York Times. June 5, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/06/05/us/05reuters-minneapolis-police-defunding-explainer.html>
4. Reuters. "U.S. Protesters Call to 'Defund the Police.' What Would That Look Like?" The New York Times. June 5, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/06/05/us/05reuters-minneapolis-police-defunding-explainer.html>
5. Carmiah Townes. "There Are More Officers Than Counselors In The Largest Public School Districts." Think Progress. March 28, 2016. <https://archive.thinkprogress.org/there-are-more-officers-than-counselors-in-the-largest-public-school-districts-57af05880c25/>
6. Carmiah Townes. "There Are More Officers Than Counselors In The Largest Public School Districts." Think Progress. March 28, 2016. <https://archive.thinkprogress.org/there-are-more-officers-than-counselors-in-the-largest-public-school-districts-57af05880c25/>
7. Carmiah Townes. "There Are More Officers Than Counselors In The Largest Public School Districts." Think Progress. March 28, 2016. <https://archive.thinkprogress.org/there-are-more-officers-than-counselors-in-the-largest-public-school-districts-57af05880c25/>
8. A Reallocation of Funds at the Federal, State and Local Level From Policing and Incarceration (JAG, COPS, VOCA) to LongTerm Community Based Safety Strategies Such As Education, Local Restorative Justice Services, and Employment Programs." Movement For Black Lives. Accessed June 2020. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JFwAhIVsYn4YHBfgr2bZpB00zKm3lmy-/vie>
9. Jeremiah Ellison. @jeremiah4north. Twitter. June 4, 2020. <https://twitter.com/jeremiah4north/status/1268598536234508288>
10. Farah Stockman and John Eligon. "Cities Ask if It's Time to Defund Police and 'Reimagine' Public Safety." The New York Times. June 5, 2020 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/us/defund-police-floyd-protests.html>
11. James Queally and Cindy Chang. "LAPD chief expresses concern over videos of police violence during protests as calls mount for investigation." Los Angeles Times. June 5, 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-05/lapd-chief-concern-over-videos-of-police-violence-protests>
12. Zoie Matthew. "In a Dramatic Reversal, the L.A. City Budget Will Contain No New Funds for Police." Los Angeles Magazine. June 3, 2020. <https://www.lamag.com/citythinkblog/garcetti-agrees-to-reductions-in-lapds-share-of-city-funds/>
13. John Henry. "DC protesters call for changes to MPD's budget." WUSA 9. June 5, 2020. <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/dc/dc-police-budget-protest/65-b5d47403-9833-49f9-a489-45f71f0481a8>
14. "Deadly Force & Police Accountability.: Amnesty International. Accessed June 2020. <https://www.amnestyusa.org/issues/deadly-force-police-accountability/>
15. Oliver Laughland and Jamiles Lartey. "All 50 US states fail to meet global police use of force standards, report finds." The Guardian. June 18, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jun/18/us-states-police-use-of-force-standards-amnesty>
16. Celisa Calacal. "These two Supreme Court cases protect police who use excessive force." Salon. August 12, 2017. [https://www.salon.com/2017/08/12/these-two-supreme-court-cases-protect-police-who-use-excessive-force\\_partner/](https://www.salon.com/2017/08/12/these-two-supreme-court-cases-protect-police-who-use-excessive-force_partner/)
17. Release: Reps. Khanna, Clay Announce Landmark Police Brutality Bill to Raise Standards For the Use of Force." Khanna. August 9, 2019. <https://khanna.house.gov/media/press-releases/release-reps-khanna-clay-announce-landmark-police-brutality-bill-raise>
18. Drake Baer. "The Dallas Police Force Is Evidence That 'De-escalation' Policing Works." The Cut. July 8, 2016. <https://www.thecut.com/2016/07/deescalation-policing-works.html>
19. Drake Baer. "The Dallas Police Force Is Evidence That 'De-escalation' Policing Works." The Cut. July 8, 2016. <https://www.thecut.com/2016/07/deescalation-policing-works.html>
20. Summer Lin. "What are chokeholds and can police use them? It depends what kind and where you live." Miami Herald. June 3, 2020. <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/national/article243230871.html>
21. Summer Lin. "What are chokeholds and can police use them? It depends what kind and where you live." Miami Herald. June 3, 2020. <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/national/article243230871.html>
22. Eoin Higgins. "Bloomberg Said This of Murder Suspects in 2015: 'Just Take the Description, Xerox It, and Pass It Out to All the Cops. They Are Male, Minorities, 16-25.'" Common Dreams. February 11, 2020. <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/02/11/bloomberg-said-murder-suspects-2015-just-take-description-xerox-it-and-pass-it-out>
23. Alexi Jones. "Police stops are still marred by racial discrimination, new data shows." PPI. August 12, 2018. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2018/10/12/policing/>



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Sources

24. Catie Edmondson. "Lawmakers Begin Bipartisan Push to Cut Off Police Access to Military-Style Gear." The New York Times. June 1, 2010. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/01/us/politics/police-military-gear.html>
25. Catie Edmondson. "Lawmakers Begin Bipartisan Push to Cut Off Police Access to Military-Style Gear." The New York Times. June 1, 2010. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/01/us/politics/police-military-gear.html>
26. Dara Lind. "Cops do 20,000 no-knock raids a year. Civilians often pay the price when they go wrong." Vox. May 15, 2015. <https://www.vox.com/2014/10/29/7083371/swat-no-knock-raids-police-killed-civilians-dangerous-work-drugs>
27. "Rep. Johnson reintroduces Police Accountability Act." Johnson. February 26, 2015. <https://hankjohnson.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/rep-johnson-reintroduces-police-accountability-act>
28. "Rep. Johnson reintroduces Police Accountability Act." Johnson. February 26, 2015. <https://hankjohnson.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/rep-johnson-reintroduces-police-accountability-act>
29. John Kelly and Mark Nichols. "Search the list of more than 30,000 police officers banned by 44 states." USA Today. October 14, 2019. <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/investigations/2019/04/24/biggest-collection-police-accountability-records-ever-assembled/2299127002/>
30. Sam Levin. "Why the officers fired for the George Floyd killing could ultimately get their jobs back." The Guardian. May 28, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/may/28/us-police-officers-fired-rehired-why>
31. "Qualified Immunity." Cornell Law: Legal Information Institute. Accessed June, 2020. [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/qualified\\_immunity](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/qualified_immunity)
32. Amir H. Ali and Emily Clark. "Qualified Immunity: Explained." The Appeal. June 20, 2019. <https://theappeal.org/qualified-immunity-explained/>
33. Lena Williams. "Blacks Press the Case for Reparations for Slavery." The New York Times. July 21, 1994. <https://www.nytimes.com/1994/07/21/us/blacks-press-the-case-for-reparations-for-slavery.html>
34. Wendy Underhil. "Voter Identification Requirements | Voter ID Laws." NCSL. February 24, 2020. <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.aspx>
35. Rebecca Leber. "In Texas, You Can Vote With a Concealed Handgun License—but not a Student ID." The New Republic. Oct. 20, 2014. <https://newrepublic.com/article/119900/texas-voter-id-allows-handgun-licenses-not-student-ids>
36. "Issues Related to State Voter Identification Laws." U.S. Government Accountability Office. Reissued Feb. 27, 2015. <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-14-634>
37. Peter Dunphy. "The State of Native American Voting Rights." The Brennan Center For Justice. March 13, 2019. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/state-native-american-voting-rights>
38. Christopher Uggen, Sarah Shannon, and Jeff Manza. "State-Level Estimates of Felon Disenfranchisement in the United States, 2010." The Sentencing Project. July 2012.
39. "Voting Rights for Ex-Offenders by State." Nonprofit VOTE. Updated March 28, 2020. <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/>
40. "Voting Rights for Ex-Offenders by State." Nonprofit VOTE. Updated March 28, 2020. <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/>
41. "Voting Rights for Ex-Offenders by State." Nonprofit VOTE. Updated March 28, 2020. <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/>
42. "Voting Rights for Ex-Offenders by State." Nonprofit VOTE. Updated March 28, 2020. <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/>
43. "Voting Rights for Ex-Offenders by State." Nonprofit VOTE. Updated March 28, 2020. <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/>
44. "Voting Rights for Ex-Offenders by State." Nonprofit VOTE. Updated March 28, 2020. <https://www.nonprofitvote.org/voting-in-your-state/special-circumstances/voting-as-an-ex-offender/>
45. Dena Bunis. "More Polling Places Accessible for People With Disabilities." AARP. June 14, 2018. <https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/government-elections/info-2018/election-disabilities-voting-options.html>
46. "About Language Minority Voting." The United States Department of Justice. Updated Feb. 26, 2018. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/about-language-minority-voting-rights>
47. Jen Fifield. "Yo Voté: Communities Scramble to Translate Ballots." Pew. Jun 28, 2017. <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/06/28/yo-vote-communities-scramble-to-translate-ballots>
48. Zachary Roth. "Court Upholds Ohio's Cuts to Early Voting, Same-Day Registration." NBC News. Aug. 23, 2016. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/elections/court-upholds-ohio-s-cuts-early-voting-same-day-registration-n636666>
49. "Voter Registration Deadlines." Vote.Org. Jan. 13, 2018. <https://www.vote.org/voter-registration-deadlines/>



# NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION

## Sources

50. Rebecca Beitsch. "‘Proof of Citizenship’ Voting Laws May Surge Under Trump." Pew. Nov. 16, 2017. <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/11/16/proof-of-citizenship-voting-laws-may-surge-under-trump>
51. Scott Keyes. "North Carolina Lawmakers Introduce Bill To Penalize Parents Of College Student Voters." ThinkProgress. April 4, 2013. <https://thinkprogress.org/north-carolina-lawmakers-introduce-bill-to-penalize-parents-of-college-student-voters-754a08e7f2f4/>
52. Ari Berman. "North Carolina Republicans Escalate Attack on Student Voting." The Nation. Aug. 20, 2013. <https://www.thenation.com/article/north-carolina-republicans-escalate-attack-student-voting/>
53. "D.C. Home Rule." Council of the District of Columbia. Accessed June 2020. <https://dccouncil.us/dc-home-rule/>
54. John Nichols. "D.C. Statehood Is the Answer to Trump’s Abuse of Washington." The Nation. June 3, 2020. <https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/dc-statehood-military-protests/>

