



COMMUNITY FREEDOM PARTY  
PLATFORM



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## PREAMBLE

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### *Philosophy*

The Community Freedom Party is founded on the principle that, in a representative democracy such as prevails in the United States, every citizen and recognized branch of citizenry has a self-evident right to have their social, economic and political interests represented in the body politic. That such representation, if deemed to be true representation, of necessity must be steadfast, unremitting, and void of corruption. That such representation, if deemed to be true representation, must be measured in the gradual improvement in the circumstances of those represented. That such representation, if deemed to be true representation, of necessity cannot be divided in pursuit of serving alien interests – id est, a public servant cannot effectively serve two masters.

### *Mission*

It is the mission of the Community Freedom Party to represent, safeguard and advance the social, economic and political interests of the African-American community in the United States. We believe that doing so will not only benefit this community, but will also improve the welfare and competitiveness of the United States and result in a stronger, more prosperous and, it is verily hoped, more benevolent nation for all U.S. citizens.

### *Constituencies*

The Community Freedom Party has only one constituency: the African-American community. All actions will be undertaken in light of this consideration. The Community Freedom Party is not opposed to working constructively with other groups and individuals or forming collaborative relationships and coalitions to

promote the welfare of all Americans. African Americans are a proud component of America's social fabric and care just as much about America's prosperity as other citizens and recognized groups. However, the Community Freedom Party believes it would be derelict if it or its members ever supported, engaged in, promoted or condoned any activity, measure, law, etc. that did not benefit the African-American community or serve its interests.

### *Scope*

The Community Freedom Party is first and foremost a local political party. We believe that we can have the most positive impact by fighting for and advancing local policies and activities that further the social, economic, and political interests of the African-American community. As such, one of our top priorities is fielding talented and honest leaders for local and state offices who will strongly advocate for policies and actions beneficial to black Americans without hesitancy, interruption or blush.

In fighting for the advancement of the interests of the African-American community, the Community Freedom Party will endeavor, as far as practical, not to harm the welfare of other recognized groups of citizens and work for the betterment of such groups when and where appropriate. To advance our agenda without regard to the harm it could impose on other groups would only repeat the injustices visited on the African-American community in recent and prior decades.

While we recognize the importance of politics at the local level, we are also aware that politics at the national level often reverberate locally. We therefore believe it is the responsibility of the Community Freedom Party and its members to be cognizant of and put ourselves in a position to press for national policies beneficial to African Americans while strongly opposing those detrimental to their concerns.

## *Causes and Justifications*

It is necessary and proper at this stage to enumerate some of the causes which compel the establishment of the Community Freedom Party. As mentioned above, true representation is steadfast, unremitting, void of corruption, improves the condition of those represented, and is indivisible.

Heretofore, African Americans have rarely benefited from true representation in the United States government at any level. This despite, for more than a century, giving their allegiance and votes to one or the other of America's dominant political parties which have professed to represent their interests. In witness to this assertion, let the following facts be submitted – these facts, though significant, represent but a small percentage of past and more recent instances when black Americans have failed to receive proper political representation:

- \* In the contested 1877 U.S. presidential election, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes won as a result of a political compromise. In return for the support of Democrats, Republicans, despite receiving a substantial amount of support and votes from African Americans, agreed to withdraw federal troops who were responsible for protecting the lives of black Americans in the southern United States. State and local segregation statutes and a campaign of violence against African Americans followed. In the subsequent decades, African Americans in the southern United States were prohibited from voting, segregated in private and public accommodations, and victimized by lynchings and other forms of brutality.
- \* In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson and his cabinet segregated government offices. Curtains were installed to separate black and white clerical workers, separate basement toilets were constructed for black

Americans, and black supervisors were demoted to ensure that no African American supervised a white employee.

- \* In the 1920s, the Indianapolis school board moved the location of an all-white high school to an exclusive white community. The school board then refused to allow the vacated high school, which was near white neighborhoods, to be used by the city's African-American population. Instead, it built a new high school for black students that was far from the white communities and was near a glue factory and city dump.
- \* In the period spanning from the 1920s to the 1940s, St. Louis' local planning commission made zoning decisions that designated land for industrial development, including development that created pollution hazards, if it was in or adjacent to neighborhoods with substantial African-American populations. Moreover, the planning commission allowed taverns, liquor stores, and nightclubs to open in African-American neighborhoods but prohibited such establishments as zoning violations in white neighborhoods. The planning commission's decision to limit blacks to a few neighborhoods also resulted in crowded living conditions for African-American families.
- \* The Public Works Administration (PWA) – created by Title II of the National Industry Recovery Act of 1933 – was established shortly after President Franklin D. Roosevelt assumed office. The objective of the PWA was to alleviate a national housing shortage while creating jobs in construction. Of the PWA's forty-seven housing projects, 17 were assigned to African Americans, six were segregated by building, and the rest were for whites only. Unlike most of the African-American designated housing projects, PWA projects for white families often included a community center, playgrounds, and green space.

- \* The Roosevelt administration also created the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) in 1933. To help households at risk of default during the Great Depression, it purchased existing mortgages that were subject to imminent foreclosure and issued new amortized mortgages with repayment schedules of up to fifteen years. Moreover, HOLC created color-coded maps of every metropolitan area in the country. The purpose of these maps was to assign a risk of foreclosure to various neighborhoods: the safest neighborhoods were colored green and the riskiest were red. A neighborhood earned a red color if black Americans lived in it, even if it was a middle-class neighborhood. These government endorsed redlined maps not only made it extremely difficult for blacks to obtain mortgages, they also helped reinforce the false perception of African Americans as poor financial risks because of their race.
- \* In 1934, Congress and President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which made it possible for many middle-class families to purchase homes for the first time by insuring bank mortgages that covered 80 percent of purchase prices, had terms of 20 years and were fully amortized. But the FHA refused to guarantee home mortgages for African Americans, regardless of credit worthiness. Such policies led to the exclusion of many qualified blacks from homeownership, one of the biggest contributors to wealth creation in the United States.
- \* In the early 20th century, the city government of Austin, Texas built a segregated housing project for African Americans on land obtained by condemning Emancipation Park, the site of an annual festival celebrating African Americans' freedom from slavery. This occurred despite the park being owned by a neighborhood association, protests by local residents, and the availability of other suitable public land.



- \* During the 1940s, the Los Angeles city government began a process of spot rezoning for commercial and industrial facilities in the African-American community of South Central. Consequently, automobile junkyards became common in the area. In 1947, a black pastor in Los Angeles protested a rezoning of property adjacent to his church for industrial use. The Los Angeles City Council's planning committee chairman responded, "Why don't you people buy a church somewhere else?"
- \* In 1944, the G.I. Bill was adopted to support American soldiers returning from war. Benefits of the law included low-interest loans to start a business, low-cost mortgages, and dedicated payments of tuition and living expenses to attend college or vocational school. Even though over a million black soldiers served admirably during World War II as well as in America's previous armed conflicts, many were denied the wealth-building opportunities offered by the G.I. Bill. For example, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) arbitrarily denied educational benefits to some African Americans and frequently restricted African Americans to education and training for lower-level jobs. In some instances, local benefit administrators refused to process applications to four-year colleges for blacks, directing them to apply to vocational schools instead. When the original G.I. Bill ended in July 1956, nearly 8 million World War II veterans had received education or training allowing them to become doctors, accountants, electricians, plumbers and other professionals and 4.3 million home loans worth \$33 billion had been granted. Most black veterans were excluded from these benefits.
- \* The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives passed the 1949 Housing Act, which allowed local housing authorities to continue to design and

build separate public housing projects for blacks and whites or to segregate blacks and whites within projects. With funds from the act, segregated high-rise projects were constructed nationwide, including the Robert Taylor and Cabrini Green Homes in Chicago, Rosen Homes and Schuylkill Falls in Philadelphia, Van Dyke Houses in New York City, and the Pruitt-Igoe towers in St. Louis. By the 1980s and 1990s, these high-rise buildings became centers of extreme racial and economic segregation, inadequate public services, poverty, unemployment, violent crime, inadequate maintenance, bug infestation, excessive mold, and heating and plumbing problems. Furthermore, by the 1980s, due in large part to enacted public policies, blacks were disproportionately locked in impoverished areas (In 1980, only 7 percent of all poor whites lived in extreme poverty areas in the five largest central cities; 39 percent of poor blacks resided in these areas).

- \* During the 1950s, about a dozen states passed state constitutional amendments that required a local referendum before building a low-income family public housing project. Middle-class white communities then systematically vetoed proposals for public housing, excluding African Americans from these communities.
- \* During the 1950s and 1960s, state and local governments, with federal support, designed interstate highway routes that destroyed African-American communities and shifted blacks away from downtown business districts and the white neighborhoods that were usually near them. In 1956, the Florida State Road Department routed I-95 to clear African Americans from an area adjacent to downtown. An alternative route was rejected, even though it would have led to only small population removal. When the highway was completed, it had reduced

a community of 40,000 African Americans to 8,000. In 1962, with funds from the federal government, Detroit's city government began to demolish African-American neighborhoods to open up land for a Chrysler automobile manufacturing plant and the Chrysler Expressway (I-75) leading to the plant. This happened despite warnings from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that the expressway would displace 3,480 African-American families.

- \* During most of the 20th century, federal and state governments enacted policies which kept black incomes and wages low, partially contributing to a black-white wealth gap that continues to the present day. For instance, during its first year in office, the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration established the National Recovery Administration (NRA), which, in part, established industry minimum wages. However, the NRA excluded coverage for many occupations dominated by black Americans. In 1935, President Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act, which protected the bargaining rights of unions – even those that denied blacks membership, restricted blacks to lower-paid jobs, or used their collective bargaining to force companies to fire African Americans (It should be noted that some unions, such as the United Auto Workers, did allow African Americans to become members). Additionally, the construction trades continued to deny membership for African Americans during the home and highway construction booms of the late 1940s to early 1960s; this resulted in black workers not sharing in the substantial income gains that blue-collar workers received during this period in war production and suburbanization. It wasn't until 1964 that the National Labor Relations Board refused to certify whites-only unions; however, another decade still passed before African Americans were admitted to most AFL craft unions and, even then, seniority rules

meant it would take many years after that for them to achieve income parity with whites. By this time, racial income inequality in the United States was firmly established.

- \* In 1963, land-grant Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were left out of the Research Facilities Act of 1963 and other facilities programs. As a result, many 1862 land-grant universities have earned a top-tier “Research I” designation, while no HBCUs have received this designation.
- \* In 1971, the Chicago Housing Authority identified land for new housing complexes that would have African-American tenants and included some predominantly white areas. Unlike the high-rises the agency had built to concentrate public housing in black neighborhoods, the new complexes would be low-rise scattered housing. Democratic mayor Richard J. Daley rejected the proposal, saying that public housing should not go where it was not accepted.
- \* A study conducted in 1973 by the Department of Housing and Urban Development found a systematic pattern of property overassessment in lower-income African-American neighborhoods with corresponding underassessment in white middle-class neighborhoods. For instance, in Baltimore, the property tax burden in the white middle-class community of Guilford was one-ninth that of African-American East Baltimore. In Chicago, the burden in white middle-class Norwood was one-half that of African-American Woodlawn. These higher property taxes were a factor in the deterioration of some black neighborhoods. After taxes, some families had less money for maintenance. Moreover, unfair tax assessments resulted in some African Americans losing their homes because, in some instances, speculators were allowed to pay off

delinquent tax liabilities, seize the properties, evict the owners, and resell the houses at profit.

- \* In 1975, when Maryland proposed a rail line to connect suburban Anne Arundel County and downtown Baltimore, residents of the suburban county pressured their political leaders to oppose the plan even though the rail line would have connected African Americans in Baltimore with job opportunities in the suburbs. A review by Johns Hopkins University researchers concluded that the residents of Anne Arundel County believed the rail line would enable poor, inner-city blacks to travel to the suburbs and commit crimes. Forty years later, in 2015, Maryland's governor canceled a proposed rail link to Baltimore's west-side black neighborhood, claiming that the money was needed for highway improvements.
- \* During the mid- to late-20th century, African Americans in Miami eligible for public housing were assigned to distinct projects while eligible white residents were given vouchers for rentals of private apartments to subsidize their dispersal throughout the community. It wasn't until 1998 that civil rights groups won a requirement that vouchers also be offered to African Americans.
- \* In 1978, residents of the rural black community of Triana, Alabama were found to be contaminated with DDT and PCB. Some of the residents had the highest levels of DDT ever recorded. However, the federal government did not act until 5 years later and only after the Triana mayor filed a class-action lawsuit.
- \* In 1984, *Dallas Morning News* reported that the nation's nearly ten million public housing tenants were almost always segregated by race and that every predominantly white-occupied project had facilities,

amenities, services and maintenance that were superior to what was found in predominantly black-occupied public housing complexes.

- \* In the mid-1980s, the U.S. Congress passed and President Ronald Reagan signed the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986. Under this law, federal sentencing rules for the possession and sale of cocaine distinguished between cocaine prepared as crack and cocaine in powder form, even though there are no physiological differences in effect between the two forms of cocaine. However, a major difference between crack cocaine and powder cocaine was that African Americans were more likely to use crack cocaine and white drug users were more likely to use powder cocaine. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act required that a person sentenced for possession with intent to distribute 5 grams of crack cocaine received the same sentence as someone who possessed 500 grams of powder cocaine. After passage of the act, virtually all federal cocaine prosecutions were against African Americans charged with the possession or sale of crack cocaine. Despite the disproportionate racial impact of the law, which was noted by the U.S. Sentencing Commission in 1995, the federal government did not move to address the disparity until almost 25 years later when Congress passed the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010. However, even this law failed to entirely remove the disparity (the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 required that a person in possession of crack cocaine receives the same sentence as someone who possesses 18 times as much powder cocaine).
- \* In 1987, United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice (CRJ) published a report, "Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States", that showed that race was the single most important factor in determining where toxic waste facilities were located in the United States, and the

locations of these facilities was the intentional result of local, state and federal land-use policies. Presently, more than 30 years after this report, there is still a documented pattern of disproportionate distributions of hazards and unwanted land uses in minority and low-income communities.

- \* In Portland, redlining and other discriminatory housing policies restricted African Americans to the Albina district, in the city's northeast section. By 1960, 80% of the city's black community resided in that area. In the ensuing years, city government sanctioned urban renewal projects, including a new highway and a hospital expansion, razed the homes of nearly 200 families, most of which were black. By the 2000s, public and private investment didn't benefit black families in the Albina district but displaced them. Between 2000 and 2010, 10,000 African Americans were displaced and the area's black population fell to 15%.
- \* In 1991, a federal court case took place involving Warren County, North Carolina, which at the time had a population that was 50% black and 50% white. The county had three existing landfills, all in African-American areas. When a new landfill was proposed for a white area, residents protested and county officials decided not to issue a permit. When another was proposed in an African-American neighborhood, county officials ignored residents' protests and approved the landfill. A federal judge upheld the county's decision after finding that there was a discriminatory impact but no explicit racial intent.
- \* Beginning in the late 1990s, federally regulated financial institutions began engaging in "reverse redlining": excessive promoting of exploitative loans in black communities. During this period, banks,

thrift institutions, and mortgage companies created subprime loans for borrowers who had a higher risk of default. These subprime loans had conditions that made repayment difficult, including high closing costs and repayment penalties and low initial teaser interest rates that rose substantially after borrowers were locked in. Additionally, mortgage broker compensation included incentives to pressure borrowers into accepting subprime mortgages without brokers disclosing the possible consequences. Research has revealed that low-income blacks were more than twice as likely as low-income whites to be given subprime loans and higher income blacks were approximately three times as likely as higher income whites to have received them. In fact, according to affidavits submitted during a lawsuit, bank supervisors at one institution instructed their marketing staffs to target solicitation to heavily African-American neighborhoods because residents there wouldn't realize they were being exploited. By 2006, African-American mortgage recipients had subprime loans at three times the rate as white ones even though, by this time, 61 percent of all borrowers with subprime loans would have qualified for conventional financing with lower rates. The Federal Reserve and state regulatory agencies had access to data concerning these discriminatory lending practices, but they failed to respond. When a substantial number of subprime mortgages went into default during the 2008 financial collapse, many residents in lower middle-class and middle-class African-American neighborhoods had their homes foreclosed. A significant number of those forced into foreclosure experienced homelessness or became apartment renters in less stable, higher-poverty neighborhoods. The neighborhoods they left behind also suffered due to a decrease in tax revenue and the



blight of foreclosed and abandoned buildings, which sometimes led to an increase in drug dealing and other crimes.

- \* Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans in August 2005. Almost half the city's population – approximately 250,000 people – were displaced because of the storm. The displaced were overwhelmingly black as were those who died as a result of the hurricane. In its aftermath, some politicians and developers seemed to treat Hurricane Katrina more as an economic opportunity than a humanitarian disaster. Rather than work with those displaced to help them return to their homes while also improving their neighborhoods, FEMA vouchers offered one-way tickets out, sending people to Houston, Baton Rouge, Minnesota, and other cities, rather than sponsoring their return home. As of 2015, New Orleans had 100,000 fewer black residents than in 2000. Moreover, multiple levels of government failed to address the needs of black residents still in the city. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the Louisiana State Legislature voted to take over the New Orleans school district and fire all 4,600 teachers – 71 percent of the teachers were African Americans earning middle-class incomes. The federal and Louisiana state governments also created the Road Home program to help rebuild New Orleans. However, the money was disbursed based on the appraised value of a home rather than the cost of rebuilding, even though a home in a white community was typically appraised at a far higher price than the same home in a black community. Consequently, many black residents received far less money than was needed to properly repair their homes. Five years later, a federal judge sided with black homeowners in a racial discrimination lawsuit against the program. But by then officials had already spent more than 98 percent of the \$13 billion that the federal government had committed to Road

Home. Ten years after Hurricane Katrina, in 2015, black residents of New Orleans were less likely to be working than when the storm hit, blacks were more likely to be living in poverty, black household incomes (adjusted for inflation) had fallen, the black population had dramatically declined, and the earnings gap between black and white city residents had grown.

- \* State legislatures have purposely underfunded Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) for decades, with billions of dollars in state funding that should have gone to these schools diverted by state lawmakers for other purposes. An investigation by Tennessee state budget officials found that Tennessee State University, an HBCU, has been underfunded by \$544 million dating back to 1950. One study from the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities found that, between 2010 and 2012, more than half of the nation's HBCUs failed to receive their full funding.
- \* In 2011, Flint, Michigan, a majority-black city, declared a financial emergency and was placed under the control of an Emergency Manager by Michigan's governor. While still under the control of the Emergency Manager, Flint's city government decided in 2013 to cut costs by temporarily pumping water from the Flint River until a new water pipeline from Lake Huron was built. Previously, Flint had sourced treated water from Detroit. Despite initial concerns from Flint's residents and the Flint River's history as an unofficial depository for industry waste, raw sewage, agricultural and urban runoff, and toxics from landfills, officials assured the people of Flint that the water from the Flint River was safe to drink. After the water source switch to the Flint River was completed in April 2014, residents started complaining

about the repulsive taste, odor and color of the tap water from their homes. Rather than taking their concerns seriously, state and city officials assured them that the water was safe. Flint's Emergency Manager overruled a vote in March 2015 to reconnect to Detroit's water; he argued that "Flint water today is safe by all Environmental Protection Agency and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality standards, and the city is working daily to improve its quality." A spokesman for Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality said in July 2015 that "anyone who is concerned about lead in the drinking water in Flint can relax." However, an independent study by Virginia Tech researchers in September 2015 revealed that at least 25% of Flint Households had levels of lead above the federally designated safe level of 15 ppb and that, in some homes, lead levels were at 13,200 ppb. Moreover, a Flint Pediatrician reported that the incidence of elevated blood-levels in children citywide had nearly doubled since 2014 and nearly tripled in certain neighborhoods (nearly 9,000 Flint children were supplied lead-contaminated water for 18 months). Despite complaints from Flint residents about the safety of their drinking water starting in May 2014, they were not reconnected to Detroit's water source until October 2015. Speaking about the situation in Flint, Virginia Tech's head researcher commented, "It was the injustice of it all and that the very agencies that are paid to protect these residents from lead in water, knew or should've known after June at the very, very latest of this year (2015), that federal law was not being followed in Flint, and that these children and residents were not being protected."

- \* In 2013, the mayor of Chicago closed 50 public schools with low enrollment to save money. To his credit, the mayor said residents would have a say in turning former schools into facilities that would benefit

surrounding neighborhoods. Four years later, however, two-thirds of the buildings were still vacant. Many of these vacant schools were concentrated in poor, black neighborhoods on Chicago's West and South sides. City officials instead sold empty schools on the more affluent North side of the city or in gentrifying communities. The \$24 million from these sales was placed in a capital fund used to build and expand schools that disproportionately serve white, middle-class families.

- \* Along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, in the River Parishes of Louisiana, is an 85-mile stretch of land containing over 150 petrochemical plants and refineries. This area has a large population of African Americans, and it accounts for 25% of the petrochemical production in the United States. Due to the abnormally high risk of cancer for those living in the region, the area has been nicknamed "Cancer Alley". Despite the well-documented pollution and cancer-risk in the region, the state government continues to issue permits for industrial plants to be built near these already pollution-burdened black communities. Seven large new petrochemical facilities and expansions have been approved for places in the river corridor since 2015 and more projects are awaiting approval. Although proposals for each new plant promise economic stimulation and job creation, only a small percentage of full-time industry jobs are filled by local residents who bear the brunt of the pollution burden.
- \* Between 2000 and 2020, Oakland's black population – which for decades had endured disinvestment in their neighborhoods – declined from 35% to 23.8% partly as a result of government policies that failed to protect African Americans from displacement as investment poured into the city and the construction of expensive housing units outpaced the supply of

affordable housing. In 2014, Oakland launched the West Oakland Specific Plan with the goal of adding hundreds of market-rate units. Such policies did very little, if anything, to protect Oakland residents from displacement. A residential development that was approved by the Oakland Planning Commission in 2021 planned to add 222 market-rate units (in 2021, the average rent in Oakland was \$2,830) but only 16 low-income units. Some reports indicate that some of Oakland's displaced black residents have ended up in outlying cities and neighborhoods with few social services and other resources, leading to new concentrations of racial and economic segregation and poverty in the region.

As mentioned above, one way to measure the adequacy of political representation is the improvement in the circumstances of those represented. African Americans have had the lowest median household income in the United States for the past fifty years. As of 2019, median white household income is approximately \$75,000, while median black household income is about \$46,000. Moreover, median white household wealth is about \$188,000, and median black household wealth is about \$24,000. Approximately 48 percent of African-American families have lived in poor neighborhoods over at least two generations, compared to 7 percent of white families. In other words, if a child grows up in a poor neighborhood, moving to a middle-class area is typical for white Americans but rare for African Americans.

African Americans are also significantly more likely to reside near sources of air pollution and a greater distance from air quality monitoring sites, and they are more likely to live in a neighborhood in close proximity to a Superfund toxic waste site. Nationwide, black children have dangerous and irreversible lead-in-blood levels at twice the rate of white children. African-American women are three times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than white women, and the African-American infant mortality rate is twice the rate for white infants. African-

Americans are more likely to die from cancer and heart disease than whites, and, across many chronic illnesses, blacks are more likely to die compared to other racial and ethnic groups. The schools with the lowest funding in the country disproportionately serve black students and other students of color. Nationwide, majority-nonwhite districts get approximately \$23 billion less in funding every year than majority-white districts, despite having the same number of students. Research has also shown that neighborhoods with higher proportions of black residents have fewer supermarkets and longer distances to supermarkets than those with higher proportions of white residents and, controlling for income-level, black census tracts have fewer supermarkets than the census tracts of any other racial/ethnic group.

An oft-cited adage proclaims that “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”. The fact is that the processes and systems African Americans depend on to achieve political, economic and social results have long been broken and a fix is long past due. We don’t claim that proper political representation is the answer to all the pertinent questions facing the black community in America. And we recognize that, despite the political and economic obstacles, African Americans have had many notable accomplishments which testify to their singular creativity, intelligence and talent. But just as one cannot and should not expect a malnourished individual to easily scale a mountain, one cannot and should not expect a community starved of their due political fruits to rise to the true heights of their potential. With this in mind, the Community Freedom Party will work to achieve the policies outlined in the subsequent sections of this platform and any other policies deemed necessary to improve the well-being of the African-American community.

## HOUSING

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### *Economic Revitalization without Displacement*

Economic revitalization can benefit neighborhood residents by lowering poverty rates, providing residents with increased public amenities, lowering crime and improving employment opportunities and educational attainment. However, economic revitalization often results in increasing rents and property taxes that force lower-income and moderate-income households out of improving neighborhoods into neighborhoods with fewer resources, high unemployment rates and poor public-school performance, denying them the benefits of economic investment they are often promised.

All Americans deserve to share equally in the opportunities that their hard work affords them to enjoy. The Community Freedom Party (CFP) supports and will fight for neighborhood economic investment and development without displacement. We believe that public and private investment in communities, especially black communities, should not displace residents from their neighborhoods against their will. CFP therefore supports the following policies:

- **Increased Investment in Underfunded Neighborhoods:** CFP believes that all neighborhoods – especially black neighborhoods which have suffered decades of disinvestment – deserve safe green spaces, economic development that aligns with its residents’ goals, convenient access to public transportation that connects residents with employment and recreational opportunities, properly lighted and well-kept streets and walkways, and the repair of vacant buildings and dilapidated infrastructure. CFP will work to ensure that all neighborhoods receive the public and private funding and attention necessary to meet these needs. This will help to

raise the living standards of those who dare to envision a better life for themselves and their families.

- **Rent and Property Tax Increase Caps:** CFP supports an annual cap on increases in rent and property taxes in designated lower-income and moderate-income communities, allowing residents to benefit from investment in their communities without being displaced. Rent caps would be paired with enforceable building standards and a ban on loopholes that allow landlords to remove apartments from rent control when a renter vacates the apartment. CFP also supports property assessment freezes where appropriate in designated lower-income and moderate-income communities to prevent displacement in improving neighborhoods.
- **Just-Cause Eviction Ordinances:** Such ordinances stipulate that a landlord cannot evict a renter unless there has been a specific violation of the lease. Just-cause eviction ordinances would apply to all rental leases, even month-to-month tenancies.
- **Tenant Anti-Harassment Laws:** These laws prohibit such behaviors by landlords as unreasonably slow repair timelines, frivolous eviction proceedings, and removing a tenant's possessions from an apartment. CFP also supports giving city attorneys civil enforcement powers when there is a pattern and practice of harassment by a given landlord or at a given property and also requiring landlords to mail or email updated "Tenant Right" notices to new tenants before move-in and to all tenants annually.
- **Application Fee, Move-in Fee, and Security Deposit Fee Caps:** These caps would restrict the amount that landlords may legally charge to prospective tenants submitting an application. In some localities, as demand for rental housing increases, some landlords charge exorbitant application fees to generate revenue from the leasing process and discourage applications from low- to moderate-income tenants.



- **Universal Right to Counsel Laws:** These laws grant eligible tenants facing eviction in court right to legal counsel. Eviction proceedings disproportionately target black people – especially black women – and a right to legal representation in housing court has been proven to help tenants win eviction cases and stay in their homes.
- **Building Demolition Regulations:** CFP supports building demolition regulations designed to restrict speculative development that doesn't align with a neighborhood's long-term goals.

### *Affordable Housing*

Housing affordability is an essential determinant of whether a family is able to achieve economic stability. Yet affordable housing is increasingly difficult to attain for many Americans. A substantial portion of people are finding it difficult to meet non-shelter related expenses and to build their savings and pay down their debt as housing costs outpace wages and income. Housing cost-burdened families are experiencing greater stress relating to food security, health care, retirement, transportation and overall social stability.

While this is taking place, the Federal government provides more than \$120 billion annually in tax benefits for homeownership that particularly benefits the wealthy, but it does not adequately address the increasing gaps in affordable housing. There are significant gaps in the supply of units that are affordable for households in the lower- and middle-income brackets and this is largely due to the inadequate production of affordable homes and apartments.

The Community Freedom Party calls for an increased production of affordable housing, especially on publicly owned land, including vacant sites, underutilized sites such as parking lots, and underused public land in proximity to public transportation with the adoption of necessary zoning changes where appropriate. CFP will also work for adoption of the following policies:

- **Changes to Existing Laws That Limit the Development of Affordable Housing:**

Where appropriate, CFP will advocate for changes to local zoning laws, growth caps, and density restrictions to spur the development of more affordable housing for lower- and middle-income families and higher density development in an increased number of areas.

- **Increased Funding for Community Land Trusts (CLT):** CLTs are non-profits that acquire, fix up and sell affordable housing to homeowners and renting families as a way to take land off the speculative market. CLTs own land – sometimes transferred from local governments – that it stewards to ensure the long-term affordability of the properties on the land. The CLT sells the buildings on the land, or the right to develop the land, to a homeowner or developer. By removing the cost of land, a CLT allows the units on the land to be sold or rented for more affordable prices. At the same time, resale price is limited, allowing only for a “fair return” to keep the units affordable.

- **Lease City-Owned Land for the Development of Affordable Housing:**

Municipalities that own land in their boundaries have a head start in creating new affordable units. The price of land accounts for a substantial amount of the cost of building new housing. Where appropriate, CFP supports leasing city-owned land to developers at a discount for the construction of affordable housing. The benefit of leasing rather than selling city-owned land is that the land remains within city control once the lease is over, which is one way to ensure that the land is used for the provision of affordable housing.

- **Support Policies That Naturally Bring Down the Price of Housing:** CFP will advocate for local housing policies that bring down housing prices overall, including reducing barriers to building a diverse housing stock in every neighborhood (e.g., allowing small apartment buildings by right in every neighborhood).

- **Limits on the Demolition of Affordable Housing:** CFP calls for laws banning the demolition of affordable or rent-controlled housing unless developers replace such housing with similar affordable and rent-controlled housing units and offer displaced renters first right of return at similar rents.
- **Passage of “Source-of-Income Laws”:** CFP calls for the passage of laws which ban landlords and real estate brokers from discriminating against people because they are using a housing voucher. Currently only about half of voucher holders are covered by source-of-income laws. There is also evidence that voucher discrimination is exacerbated for blacks. In a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, 80 percent of black voucher holders reported that landlords in low-poverty areas would not accept vouchers, compared with 57 percent of voucher holders from other racial groups. Housing vouchers help make housing affordable for lower-income individuals. But in many cities, large and small, voucher holders often encounter landlords who refuse to take them or find other ways to avoid renting to them, including falsely claiming that they have no available apartments. Research shows that housing vouchers help prevent homelessness and increase long-term health and economic outcomes of children in lower-income families. CFP also backs the research and implementation of policy innovations that can decrease the likelihood of discrimination, such as separating the rental application process from the income-verification process in rental housing applications. The voucher process should also be made more efficient for landlords to address their concerns about the program.
- **Increase Overall Funding for Housing Vouchers and the Monetary Amount of Individual Housing Vouchers:** CFP supports increasing the overall appropriation of funds for the federal housing voucher program. In 2015, approximately 1 million families had housing vouchers, but another 6 million families qualified but could not get one. CFP also calls for an increase in the dollar amount of housing vouchers.

Currently, the voucher amount is usually too small to allow for rentals in low-poverty areas. In 2010, few families using housing vouchers rented apartments in low-poverty neighborhoods; over half rented in neighborhoods where the poverty rate was 20 percent or more.

- **Extending LIHTC Housing Affordability Requirements:** CFP supports legislation to extend the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) housing affordability requirements beyond the year 30 limit and make it permanent with appropriate adjustments for inflation.
- **Troubled Buildings Initiatives:** CFP supports such initiatives, which turn vacant and abandoned buildings and structures into affordable housing as well as affordable commercial leased buildings.

## EDUCATION

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### *Equal School Funding*

The Community Freedom Party believes that the current public school financing systems that exist across much of the United States are unconscionable, damage black communities, contradict America's professed values and must be drastically reformed as soon as feasible.

The present financing systems of public schools ensure that wealth disparities in communities carry over into education. How can a country profess to be a land of equal opportunity when the quality of public education is largely dependent on your zip code? By relying heavily on property taxes to fund schools, American school districts create funding gaps, which ultimately contribute to educational achievement gaps and income gaps. Wealthy districts end up with well-funded schools and lower-income areas have poorly funded schools. Current district sizes also distort funding levels. Predominantly white districts are typically smaller, yet still receive \$23 billion more than districts that are predominantly composed of students of color. This results from the tendency to draw district lines around small affluent islands of well-funded schools within larger less wealthy areas that serve mostly students of color. According to one study, school districts with the greatest concentrations of black, Latino or Native American students receive approximately \$1,800 less per student than districts educating the least students of color. In certain areas, this differential can be even greater. For instance, one analysis showed that some surrounding suburban counties outspent Chicago by more than \$10,000 per student. Additionally, there are reportedly almost 1,000 divisive school district borders nationwide – boundaries where schools have more students of color

and receive significantly less funding per pupil than those schools on the other side that serve mostly white students and have more financial resources.

CFP does not support or call for more equal school funding per pupil; we call for equal school funding per pupil, period. Education is too important to expect anything less. Research has shown that school districts with less funding tend to have lower educational achievement and graduation rates. Research has also shown that increased funding equity correlates with a decrease in crime, welfare, and incarceration along with an increase in wages. In the long run, investment in education saves money due to decreased spending on public health, the criminal justice system and welfare systems. In order to achieve equal school funding per student, the Community Freedom Party supports the following policy intervention:

- **Reform Public School Financing Systems to Achieve Equal School Funding Per Student:** To ensure equal funding per pupil, CFP calls for the reform of school funding systems that rely on property taxes as the major sources of funding. One possibility is widening the sales tax base or an approximate 0.75% - 1% increase in the sales tax rate, with revenues to be used to create equal funding in schools located in lower- and moderate-income school districts, especially those with very low property values. The increased funding could be used to update and maintain facilities and equipment for the 21st century, decrease class sizes, increase teacher salaries to attract more experienced and highly qualified educators for the public school system and provide them with ongoing professional development, provide intensive tutoring for struggling students, and make additional improvements that will improve outcomes for students, which ultimately saves states and tax payers money.

## *Early Child Development*

Research has shown that students who start the formal education experience sooner, even one year earlier than kindergarten, fare better long-term in their academic careers. Research has also demonstrated that children who attend all-day preschool are much better prepared for kindergarten than children who go to half-day programs. Finally, studies have shown that 74 percent of black children who attended an all-day preschool program were prepared to enter kindergarten, compared with 78 percent of white children, and 62 percent of Native American and Hispanic students. CFP advocates for the following policies where appropriate:

- **Universal Access to Pre-Kindergarten:** CFP supports a 0.5% - 1% increase in state sales taxes to help fund the establishment or expansion of pre-kindergarten scholarships for all lower- and moderate-income families. This is a small cost considering that high quality pre-kindergarten can have as much as an eight-to-one return on investment.
- **Early Child Development Workshops:** Although increased and equal school funding and access to high-quality pre-school are important for students' academic success, it remains true that a child's first and most important teachers are their parents or other primary caregivers. We cannot expect teachers to be miracle workers – a child's education is a partnership between teachers and parents, not to mention the wider community. However, parents are not always aware of the important early steps they can take to ensure that their children have the habits and educational foundation that will help them succeed in a subsequent school setting. CFP therefore supports locally available private and publicly funded workshops open to parents and expecting parents of all income levels that will help them learn methods and proven strategies to prepare their kids for academic excellence.

### *Additional Education Policies*

In addition to the educational policies delineated above, the Community Freedom Party will work toward implementing the following policies to improve educational attainment in the black community:

- **Increased Local Control of Educational Decision-making:** CFP calls for more local control and involvement in the school decision-making process (i.e., increased involvement by local school boards, principals, teachers and especially parents).

Families and educators in the black community have a right to have a more prominent say in what their children are taught, how they are instructed and the environment in which they learn. Family and community engagement has been demonstrated to be associated with reduced absenteeism, improved academic outcomes, and greater levels of trust between schools and families. Researchers have also found a positive relationship between family involvement and student outcomes across families of all races and socioeconomic and education levels. This included higher GPAs and standardized test scores, better attendance, improved behavior and better social skills.

- **Expansion of After-School Programs:** Most K-8 schools dismiss their students mid-afternoon, which is several hours before many parents stop working. Consequently, many parents must find daycare options, enroll their kids in costly after-school programs, or work fewer hours. These burdens often disproportionately affect working-class, single-parent and minority families. CFP therefore supports collaboration and partnerships between local governments, schools, non-profit organizations, corporations and other resources in the local community to provide optional after-school programming for elementary-aged students to better align with the schedules of working families and provide students with safe and enriching after-school experiences such as tutoring, mentoring, music, art, and sports. Where



appropriate and practical, such programming can be adapted to be made available during the summer when school is not in session.

• **Continuing Education Options for Adults:** As noted, CFP believes in the importance of an equally-funded and high quality education for children in the black community. However, it also recognizes that many African-American adults can also benefit from local government policies that value their continued education and career aspirations. A high school diploma is associated with an additional \$280,000 to \$350,000 in career earnings over those with less than a high school education. Moreover, associate's degree graduates earn on average \$400,000 more during their careers than those with just a high school diploma. Yet, partly because of America's unequal school financing systems and disinvestment in black communities, a nontrivial number of African-American adults don't have a high school diploma or the traditional academic abilities associated with it and only approximately 33 percent of African Americans have at least a two-year college degree. CFP believes that the best way to increase wages and income in the black community is to encourage black adults to advance their educations and professional training and to support them in those efforts. CFP calls for an ambitious public-private partnership between local governments, high schools, community colleges, local universities, businesses and non-profit organizations to reach out to interested adults in the black community, as well as other communities, to help them set up a plan and access resources to advance their educations, obtain an associate's or bachelor's degree, or achieve similar professional training and certification. CFP also calls for the increased availability of low-interest federal and state loans, modifications to the Federal Pell Grant program (e.g., allowing recipients to take one course at a time to decrease the burden on adult students) and greater provision of income-based repayment programs for adults who want to continue their educations and training.

- **Full-Funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities:** As a result of state and federal action, HBCUs have been underfunded for decades. CFP will work to make sure all eligible HBCUs receive not only the full amount of current funding they are entitled to but that they also receive restitution for the funding they were wrongly denied in the past. CFP will also advocate for additional funding to be used to repair and renovate HBCU facilities and buildings that have fallen into disrepair and increase their research and instructional capabilities. HBCUs deserve to be fully-funded. Even though they represent only 3 percent of four-year degree programs, they produce 27 percent of African-American STEM graduates, 30 percent of black doctorates in science and engineering, and half of all black public school teachers.

- **Make Higher Education More Affordable:** Affordable higher education is important not just for black students but for all students. However, access to affordable higher education is becoming more difficult for many students. The net price of public four-year colleges has more than doubled since 2000. Student loan debt tripled from \$360 billion in 2005 to \$1.5 trillion in 2021. CFP supports increasing the amount of maximum Federal Pell Grants by 30%. CFP also advocates for allowing community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees. The annual tuition costs of community colleges are often more than 50 percent less than at public four-year universities and more than 85 percent less than at private colleges.

- **Provide 1 Year of Free Vocational and Technical Education for Recent High School Graduates:** The Community Freedom Party encourages all African-American students who have the interest to pursue a two-year or four-year college education. However, for some black high school graduates, college is not a practical or even desirable next step. As a way to set these students on a career path that will still provide them with well-paying jobs and career advancement opportunities, CFP calls for 1 year of free vocational and technical education to train them, as well as

all other interested students, in the technical skills needed to fill jobs in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, construction and other sectors. These programs should begin in the fall after a student's high school senior year as an opt-in extension of their public education, be paired with internships, and developed and sustained in close partnership between local high schools, community colleges and regional core or growth industries.

## ECONOMY

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### *Property Development + Community Benefit Agreements*

Property development is important to the economic success of cities and other localities. Property investment and development creates jobs, helps attract businesses, and ultimately contributes to a city's fiscal stability. However, the Community Freedom Party believes that, when practical, property development should be made in collaboration with the neighborhoods and communities that will be most directly impacted by such development. This type of collaboration helps to ensure that property development not only increases a city's revenues but also increases the satisfaction of the city's population.

- **Publicly Supported Property Development:** CFP supports utilizing subsidies, grants, tax breaks and other public incentives to spur property development, including office parks, medical centers, retail space, apartment buildings, mixed-use buildings, research & development centers, production facilities, recreational centers, and other types of properties.
- **Community Benefit Agreements:** Where appropriate and to the furthest extent practical, CFP believes that property development decisions should be made in collaboration with impacted surrounding communities. CFP supports the creation of enforceable Community Benefit Agreements between property developers and impacted communities outlining the criteria developers would have to meet (e.g., green space, job training, traffic mitigation) in order to receive public subsidies.

## *Foster Innovation and Growth of Manufacturing Jobs*

Promoting economic innovation and revitalizing manufacturing is important to the expansion of state, regional and local economies. However, careful planning and collaboration in both the private and public sectors is vital to ensure that the economic opportunities are available to all workers. Too often, governments have worried about creating greater economic growth without making sure that minority workers also benefit from that growth.

Currently, unemployment and underemployment in many minority and lower-income areas is high, even though tens of thousands of well-paying jobs with career advancement potential – particularly in the advanced manufacturing sector – go unfulfilled. This presents a problem but also a great opportunity. The Community Freedom Party supports the following policies to foster economic innovation, create traditional and advanced manufacturing jobs, and link all workers with well-paying job opportunities:

- **Work to Attract Traditional Manufacturing:** The Community Freedom Party will work to recruit traditional, non-polluting manufacturers to locations that are within easy reach of black communities. CFP will work collaboratively with such manufacturers to enable them to hire from these communities and provide their residents with living-wages and career advancement opportunities. Where appropriate, CFP will also work with businesses to encourage re-shoring of their manufacturing facilities and provide them with financial assistance and tax incentives when necessary.
- **Promote Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing:** The Community Freedom Party supports not only recruiting traditional manufacturers that provide living-wages, but also promoting innovation and advanced technologies to grow new, competitive industries to foster local growth and employment. To accomplish this,

CFP will work to attract advanced manufacturers that will provide good wages for black and other employees and also increase investments in universities, colleges, and R&D centers. CFP will also support manufacturing incubators as well as other types of business incubators and encourage university-industry collaboration to promote development and implementation of new technologies for products and production.

- **Provide Innovation Vouchers:** These are grants of up to \$75,000 to small and medium-sized firms to enable them to access outside R&D resources.
- **Introduce and Expand Innovation Investment Programs:** These programs would provide tax incentives and funding to technology-oriented firms, universities (including HBCUs) and nonprofit research companies to encourage the growth of new companies, industries, products and jobs.
- **Increase Investment and Support for the Growth of Innovation Clusters:** CFP supports the continued investment in innovation clusters that support and build on a locality or region's existing economic core competencies (e.g., biotechnology, entertainment, healthcare, etc.). These clusters should be self-reinforcing, attracting new companies, federal and state funding, and other private and public investments. CFP will work to support collaboration between local university research programs and industrial enterprises, pairing that with investments in workforce development – particularly in the black community – scientific infrastructure, and entrepreneurship.
- **Local Zoning Policies to Preserve Industrial Space:** CFP supports using local zoning policies to preserve spaces for small manufacturers.
- **Encourage and Increase Investment for Regional Industry Workforce Training Partnerships:** CFP will establish or increase investment for industry partnerships that bring together multiple employers, labor organizations, community colleges,

universities, and training providers around core competency industries in a region to address the workforce needs of employers and provide workers, especially black and other minority workers, pathways to well-paying, family-sustaining employment opportunities. Because such partnerships focus on the needs of industries rather than single employers, they help achieve economies of scale in providing effective training and certification for multiple employers in an area.

• **Increase Investment in Apprenticeship Programs and Ensure These Programs are Adequately Targeted to Black and Other Minority Communities:** Apprenticeships combine paid-on-the-job training and related classroom instruction to obtain workplace-relevant knowledge and skills leading to an industry recognized credential. Many apprentices find employment after completing their programs, with average starting pay reaching as high as \$60,000 per year. CFP supports expanded grants for apprenticeship programs, tax incentives for companies hosting apprenticeships, and partnering with community and technical colleges in providing classroom instruction for apprentices and subsidizing financial aid for this instruction. CFP will also work hard to ensure that these apprenticeship programs are marketed to the black community and other minority communities and that they are flexible enough to ensure that workers with a variety of work schedules can take advantage of them. Additionally, CFP will advocate for funding for “pre-apprenticeship educational programs” that will ensure that those who wish to enter an apprenticeship program can obtain the academic foundation necessary to thrive in these programs.

### ***Support Increased Entrepreneurial Activity***

Business ownership is one avenue that can advance economic security for individuals and their families. Entrepreneurship is particularly relevant for the African-American community because owning a business is one of the best ways to build wealth. The growth of black entrepreneurship also benefits the American

economy as a whole since it creates jobs that help stimulate demand in the economy. However, black entrepreneurs face major obstacles to entrepreneurial success, including limited startup capital, limited managerial and industry expertise, operations in low-revenue industries, and discrimination in lender and consumer markets.

• **Increase Access to Startup and Growth Capital for Black Entrepreneurs:**

Businesses owned by people of color disproportionately lack access to venture capital and small business loans, which limits their ability to launch, expand and grow. One analysis has shown that 53% of black business owners who apply for financing are denied, compared to 25%, 35% and 39% of white, Asian American, and Latino or Hispanic business owners, respectively. Research from the Minority Business Development Agency in 2017 revealed that among high-sales firms (those with over \$500,000 in gross receipts), white owned businesses received loans that were worth more than double the amount lent to minority owned firms, on average (\$310,000 to \$149,000). A study from the National Community Reinvestment Coalition found that black and Hispanic men seeking small business loans faced more scrutiny and worse treatment from bank officers than less qualified white men. Having sufficient capital at the outset is highly correlated with a business' chance of survival. CFP will work with the public and private sectors to increase access to capital for black and other minority entrepreneurs. This includes advocating for \$850 million in additional business loans for black-owned businesses guaranteed by the Federal government. Furthermore, because some African Americans who are interested in starting their own businesses don't have much credit history, CFP supports investigating ways to increase black entrepreneurs' access to business loans by considering additional criteria that indicate sufficient loan-pay-back ability beyond credit history, such as recommendations and work history.



- **Build Business Incubators and Accelerators in Black Communities:** Incubators and accelerators are designed to address the networking, education and capital raising challenges faced by entrepreneurs. However, minority-owned firms represent a small percentage of the businesses supported by incubators and accelerators. CFP supports public and private partnerships and funding to build more business incubators and accelerators in black communities to provide entrepreneurial mentoring and high-quality resources to black entrepreneurs. The incubators would provide black startups with affordable office and workspace, networking events, and access to investors and coaching in business plan development, pitching, raising capital, accounting, finance, marketing/branding, and legal support. The accelerators would provide black entrepreneurs with access to mentoring, networking, and other resources needed to move their companies forward, increase their revenues, and expand their businesses.

- **Increased Federal and State Funding for HBCU-Affiliated Incubators and Accelerators:** CFP supports increased state and federal funding for business incubators and accelerators affiliated with HBCUs so that these institutions can provide their students and recent graduates with the early-stage resources, mentoring and small seed capital needed to launch their businesses.

- **Connect Black Entrepreneurs with Mentoring and Business Learning Opportunities:** CFP will work with non-profits, local community colleges, universities and businesses to connect black entrepreneurs with mentorship and business education programs to further their knowledge of how to successfully run and expand their businesses.

- **Provide Black Children with Early Exposure to Entrepreneurship:** Encouraging youth, especially black children, to think about starting a business and what is involved in such an endeavor not only has educational benefits (e.g., critical thinking, research and problem solving) but can also help connect youth to their

communities. CFP calls for collaboration among the public, private and non-profit sectors to establish entrepreneurship programs for black and other minority children in partnership with local public schools, businesses and community institutions.

### *Additional Economic Policies*

- **Promote and Increase Government Procurement Opportunities for Black-Owned Businesses:** Local, state and the federal government spend billions of dollars per year hiring contractors for goods and services, but most of those contracts go to white-owned businesses. The Community Freedom Party supports providing substantially greater access for black-owned businesses seeking to supply goods and services to the local, state and federal government. Specifically, CFP calls for awarding at least 22% of all city, state and federal contracts to black-owned businesses. CFP also supports lowering barriers that have historically favored big contractors, which are usually not owned by minorities (e.g., using group purchasing agreements to provide smaller minority-owned firms with more leverage).
- **Increase Funding for State and Federal Agencies Supporting Minority Owned Businesses:** CFP supports increasing funding for agencies that work to help minority-owned firms excel, such as the Minority Business Development Agency.
- **Enact Policies and Support Activities That Help Existing Small Businesses Grow:** Small businesses are the backbones of local economies. They provide jobs to residents and patronize local and regional businesses for their supply needs. A local economy that has a strong small business community is also less susceptible to economic shocks when big corporations shut down their operations. CFP supports working with small business leaders to enact public policies that enable small businesses to expand their markets and create more jobs, including making

business regulations and codes less onerous, removing unnecessary barriers to starting a business, and providing subsidized loans for small companies that are expanding.

- **Promote the Growth of Well-Paying Jobs in the Service Sector:** In addition to working to grow jobs in the advanced manufacturing sector, CFP will also support policies that promote the growth of secure and well-paying jobs in the service sector, especially employment in information technology, healthcare, financial services, telecommunications, and professional services.

- **Infrastructure and Transportation Investments that Improve Worker Mobility:** CFP supports investments in infrastructure and transit systems that make it easier for workers – especially minority workers – in metropolitan areas to reach employment centers in their regions.

- **Expand the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit:** According to a 2019 report, on average, two-income families paid 11% of their income for child care, and in single-parent homes, 36% of parent income goes to child care. Moreover, 61% of women with at least one child under the age of six reported caretaking as the reason they experienced joblessness, and 75% of postsecondary students with children who dropped out of school say that child care would have helped them achieve their degree. Such statistics indicate that child care is an important economic issue. The Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) helps working parents with the cost of work-related child care expenses. CFP supports expanding the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit to cover 75% - 80% of the cost of child care for lower-income and working class families. This would have a positive impact on the American economy, educational attainment and the earning power of families in the United States.

## NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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### *Public Safety*

Public safety is one of the key parameters that determine the quality of life of residents of a municipality. It impacts the social vitality and mental health of a community as well as the economic success of an area, having a major influence in whether a community attracts investment. Public safety is a particularly important issue for black Americans. African Americans are ten times more likely than white Americans to be killed by gun homicide, and, according to one study, every year more than 46,000 African Americans are shot and wounded. CFP believes all Americans deserve to live and raise their families in violent free communities. Therefore, we call for adequate, not excessive, funding of police departments and increased funding for social services proven to reduce crime.

Furthermore, although many police officers around the country perform their duties well and honorably and CFP believes it is in the best interests of citizens for police departments to receive adequate funding, the fact is that police misconduct has been and continues to be a persistent problem in America. Police department issues vary by type and severity depending on the locality, but notable problems include excessive use of deadly force, patterns of harassment of racial minorities, discriminatory non-enforcement of the law, employment discrimination, a “code of silence”, and lack of accountability. Since police misconduct hinders community relations and good law enforcement, addressing police abuse is a necessary aspect of neighborhood safety. CFP supports the following policies related to public safety:

- **Adequate Funding of Police Departments as Determined by an Annual**

**Independent Analysis of Public Safety Service Demand:** Across 150 large cities, the share of spending dedicated to police departments has grown over the past 40 years, even as some cities have become safer. As spending on the police has increased, aid to cities has decreased in other areas that also impact public safety, such as antipoverty programs and social services. The Community Freedom Party believes police officers, like all public workers, deserve to be adequately funded. Police perform an important public service in oftentimes dangerous situations, and there are conceivably legitimate reasons for increasing police budgets. However, CFP would be remiss if we didn't point out that increasing police budgets and force size cannot be the answer to every public safety challenge cities face. Increasing the police budget does not always result in less violent crime. CFP therefore calls for adequate funding of local police departments, but such funding must be determined by an annual analysis of public safety demand performed by an independent board of public safety experts, community leaders and residents, police officials, and government officials.

- **Increased Funding for Social Services Proven to Reduce Crime:** As previously mentioned, higher police funding and increasing the number of police officers does not always lead to reduced crime. In fact, excessive and indiscriminate spending on police departments can lead to over-policing, community mistrust, and the underfunding of local programs that can have a significant impact on public safety outcomes, including mental health services, youth and after-school programs, drug addiction services, and workforce economic programs. CFP, therefore, calls for a significant increase in funding for social and other services proven to reduce crime in the short-, medium- and long-term. With collaboration from police departments and neighborhood residents, these programs and services must be a bigger component of public safety strategies.

- **Establishment of Police-Neighborhood Committees to Improve Police-Community Relations, Encourage Collaborative Decision-making and Promote Feedback:** For a public safety campaign to be most effective, there must be trust and communication between the police and the communities they patrol. To improve police-community relations, encourage collaborative decision-making and policy implementation, and promote feedback, CFP supports the establishment of formal or informal police-neighborhood committees consisting of police officers and community residents. In part, the committees would be responsible for finding ways to improve relations between the police and community members, discussing potential approaches to achieve active citizen-police partnership in crime prevention, striving to ensure throughout the community equal protection under the law for all residents, reviewing and proposing solutions for incidents of policing problems which create community concern, and offering a forum for feedback of any proposed new police tactics and policies.

- **Suspension of the Use of Stop-and-Frisk by Police Departments:** Studies have consistently demonstrated racial disparities in the use of stop-and-frisk by police departments in the United States. For instance, a study of stop-and-frisk by the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C., found that of 11,045 stops that did not end in a warning, ticket or arrest, 86% were of black people. Black youths made up 89% of the people under 18 who were stopped and they were stopped at 10 times the rate of their white peers. Data showed that the Milwaukee Police Department conducted traffic stops on black Milwaukee residents an estimated 9.5 times more often than on white residents. In Philadelphia, African American residents had the highest percentage of stops, but the lowest proportion of searches where contraband was found. A previous study of Chicago's Police Department found that black Chicago residents disproportionately bore the highest number of stop-and-frisk encounters, and half the stops were not justified by the officers. Moreover, there is little to no evidence that stop-and-frisk has an impact on

crime – in New York, when stops dropped, crime did as well. Given the racial disparities involving stop-and-frisk and the dearth of evidence concerning its impact on crime, CFP believes it is unjust and immoral to continue its practice and calls for its suspension. Stop-and-frisk reduces community trust of the police and, consequently, makes the delivery of police services in black communities less effective.

- **Ban on Police Holds that Restrict Airways:** A 2013 Justice Department survey found that of police departments serving more than a million people, 43 percent allowed neck restraints of some kind, even though, over the past two decades, multiple people have died when neck restraints were used in their arrest. For example, a previous study found sixteen instances of Los Angeles residents – nearly all of them black men – dying from police chokeholds. CFP calls for laws that would prohibit the police from using restraints that restrict the airway or blood flow to the brain.

- **Mandatory Use of Police Body Cameras:** Police departments across America are increasingly using body cameras to monitor police conduct in the field. A research paper by the University of Chicago Crime Lab and the Council of Criminal Justice's Task Force on Policing demonstrated that use of body cameras reduced the use of police force. Although the use of such cameras can be expensive, they can generate savings in reduction of citizen complaints, averted use of force incidents, and a reduction in police investigations and lawsuits. CFP calls for mandatory use of police body cameras, especially since African Americans are at a higher risk of no-cause stops and use of force by the police and police departments sometimes file reports that are inconsistent with subsequent camera footage showing police misconduct.

- **Civilian Review Boards with Power to Suspend and Dismiss Officers without Pay:** Per a 2017 study, since 2006 the nation's largest police departments have fired at

least 1,881 officers for misconduct that betrayed the public's trust. The study found that they were subsequently forced to reinstate more than 450 officers after appeals required by union contracts (In many cases, the underlying misconduct was undisputed, but arbitrators often concluded the firings were unjustified because of procedural mistakes.). This includes a San Antonio police officer caught on a dash cam challenging a handcuffed man to fight him for the chance to be released, a Washington, D.C., police officer convicted of sexually abusing a young woman in his patrol car, and a police officer in Florida fired for fatally shooting an unarmed man. This, of course, does not include police misconduct cases that go unreported. On most police forces, officers accused of wrongdoing are subject to internal affairs investigations to determine whether they violated department policies. However, these internal investigations in which the police investigate themselves can be flawed, resulting in inadequate evidence gathering, false statements, and lack of transparency. Lack of proper accountability not only hurts the reputation and standing of the many police officers who perform their jobs honorably, it also endangers the communities that police are supposed to protect. The Community Freedom Party calls for strong and independent Civilian Review Boards to investigate suspected police misconduct. In localities where Civilian Review Boards are already established but weak and not sufficiently independent, CFP supports reforming them so that they have the following attributes: they must be adequately funded and independent with 1) the power to conduct hearings, subpoena witnesses, and report findings, 2) the authority to independently investigate incidents, 3) the authority to access relevant documents and video footage and subpoena police officers as witnesses, 4) the ability to make policy and reform recommendations, and 5) the power to suspend and fire police officers for egregious misconduct without pay and also the authority to reassign and demote officers.

- **Work with Police Unions to Increase Hiring of Minorities from the Communities that Police Serve:** Greater racial diversity can improve police treatment of minority



communities. A study from the Journal Science analyzed approximately 3 million Chicago police patrol assignments and found that African-American and other minority officers made fewer stops and arrests while using force less often, especially against black people, than their white colleagues. The Community Freedom Party will work with police departments and unions to increase hiring of minorities, especially minorities from the lower- and moderate-income communities the police serve. CFP also believes police forces must address hiring practices which disproportionately hinder the hiring of otherwise qualified minority candidates.

- **Establishment of a Police-Citizens Bill of Rights:** The Community Freedom Party believes it is a worthwhile effort for each municipality to produce and widely distribute a Police-Citizens Bill of Rights. Such a Bill of Rights would not only inform citizens about what to do during encounters with the police, but it would also serve as a constant reminder to police officers of the limits of their authority, what compliance they are entitled to from citizens, and what respect they are responsible for giving the people they serve.

- **“Criminal Misdemeanor” Crime Classification for Reporting A Suspected Crime When Such a Report is Shown to be Solely or Primarily Based on Racial Bias or Prejudice:** Over the decades, African Americans have too often had police summoned by non-black citizens after engaging in mundane activities: sitting in restaurants, sleeping in university common rooms, moving into apartments, leaving or entering their apartments or houses, going for walks, barbecuing, political canvassing, walking their dogs, standing on the sidewalk, sitting or sleeping in their cars, and other innocuous behaviors or activities. Some of these complaints can be classified as racially motivated – calls, complaints or reports made when African Americans are engaged in behavior that would not have been deemed suspicious if they were another race – or as racially weaponized – calls, complaints or reports made against African Americans in an effort to capitalize on law enforcement

mistreatment of black persons or harm the victim because of their race. Often, these unjustified calls have resulted in innocent African Americans experiencing embarrassment, physical or psychological injuries, or, in the worse cases, fatal encounters with the police. CFP calls for laws that would make it a criminal misdemeanor to knowingly or recklessly report members of a protected class, including African Americans, to law enforcement agencies without reasonable suspicion of criminal activity.

### ***Transition from Prison***

Over 600,000 people are released from state and federal prisons each year. Many struggle to reintegrate into society and need access to robust support while they work to attain self-sufficiency. Such support includes stable employment, secure housing, and treatment for physical and mental health conditions. However, a wide variety of federal, state and local policies make it extremely difficult for released prisoners, many of them African Americans, to support themselves and receive the assistance they need. In fact, a 2010 study by the Pew Center on the States found that so many residents of African-American neighborhoods, particularly men, had been touched by the justice system and systemically locked out of the traditional workforce, it was very difficult for them to break out of the cycle of poverty.

Successful transitions from prison to society are important not only for the formerly incarcerated (30%-50% of former prisoners become homeless after release) but also for their families and the predominantly minority communities to which they return. The Community Freedom Party therefore calls for policies that encourage rather than hinder the social and economic reintegration of released prisoners.

- **Increased Educational Opportunities for Prisoners:** One 2013 study from the Rand Corporation estimated that prisoners who enrolled in an education program were 43 percent less likely to return to prison. Sentence-blind GED, vocational, associate's,

and bachelor's programs should be made available in all jails, prisons, and juvenile and civil commitment settings. CFP calls for the continued availability of Pell Grants as well as a mix of low interest, government-subsidized educational loans for America's prison population and access to physical or digital libraries. The educational programs made available to prisoners should be certified for quality and possibly be provided by the public universities of the state in which the prison is located and HBCUs. A staff of counselors and tutors should also be made available to enrolled prisoners to help them as they earn their degrees as well as instruct them in basic job search skills such as typing, drafting resumes/cover letters, and preparation for job interviews.

• **\$7.25/hr. Minimum Wage for Incarcerated Prisoners Who Perform Job Functions:**

As of 2017, the average of the minimum daily wages paid to incarcerated workers for non-industry prison jobs was 86 cents and the average maximum daily wage was \$3.45. Making it hard for incarcerated people to earn money hurts their chances of success after they are released from prison and makes it more likely they will commit crimes in the communities they return to. Though each state is different, individuals are often released from prison with little more than small stipend (which can range from \$10 to a few hundred dollars), a bus or train ticket, a set of clothes, and the personal property with which they were admitted. CFP calls for a \$7.25 per hour minimum wage for incarcerated workers. Part of these funds should be kept in an interest-earning savings account or mutual fund that can be accessed by the prisoners upon release to help increase their chances of post-release success in the communities they return to, which are usually minority communities.

• **Pre-release Enrollment in State and Federal Benefit Programs:** Some states prevent prisoners from applying for benefits before their release. This increases the risk of rearrest or reincarceration for former prisoners if they must wait a long time to receive support for accessing basic needs. For instance, it can take states up to 30

days to process Federal SNAP applications after a person files a request. CFP calls for allowing incarcerated prisoners to apply for eligible federal and state benefits prior to their release so that benefits can be available as of the date they leave prison.

- **Better Access to Health Services in Jails and Prisons:** A lack of adequate healthcare has been documented in many United States prisons and jails. However, one in six prisoners has a diagnosable mental illness, and the prison population suffers from infectious and chronic disease at rates that are four to ten times higher than the total population. Inmates deserve to have adequate healthcare services, especially since those who do not receive adequate mental and physical health services bring their health issues back to their communities after they are released. CFP supports better access to health services in jails and prisons and the increased federal and state funding necessary to achieve this.

- **Elimination of Collateral Consequences for People with Criminal Records:** Collateral consequences are a set of legal and regulatory restrictions that limit people with criminal records from engaging in a wide range of activities, including voting, participating in public benefits programs, and acquiring certain jobs and occupational licenses. Particularly, restrictions on employment, occupational licensing, and housing assistance can create serious barriers to finding well-paying jobs and stable affordable housing, increasing the risks of economic instability and recidivism. CFP calls for the elimination of collateral consequences relating to voting, employment opportunities, and public benefits programs.

- **Prohibit Employers from Asking About an Applicant's Criminal History:** The previously incarcerated have a difficult time finding and retaining adequate employment. Up to half may remain unemployed for as long as a year after their release. Evidence suggests that employers are more averse to hiring those with criminal convictions than any other disadvantaged group. Another study found that

both being black and having a criminal history independently decreased the probability of being called back for a job interview; black individuals with criminal records had the lowest callback rates of the study population. CFP supports the prohibition of employers asking about an applicant's criminal history. This is necessary to allow parolees a fair chance to make an honest living, support their families, and successfully integrate back into their communities.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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### *Medical Facilities*

African Americans are living longer and a majority have some form of health care insurance coverage. However, the American health care system is still beset with problems that have a disproportionate impact on black Americans and other minorities. One major issue is that majority African-American and Hispanic areas are more likely to lack hospitals and other health care providers. Furthermore, when health care providers are located within majority African-American and Hispanic neighborhoods, they tend to offer low-quality care. Hospitals in African-American neighborhoods are also more likely to close.

A previous analysis by the Post-Gazette/Journal Sentinel showed that nearly two-thirds of hospitals opened since 2000 were in wealthier, mostly suburban areas. As health systems opened those facilities, they closed medical facilities in urban areas. The number of hospitals in 52 major cities in the U.S. fell from 781 in 1970 to 426 in 2010. Most of the medical facilities closed were community hospitals in urban neighborhoods and public hospitals, leaving many lower-income and working-class minority neighborhoods with no safety-net hospitals.

To provide African Americans with the high-quality health facilities they need and deserve, CFP calls for the following policies:

- **Increase Federal, State and Local Funding for Safety Net Hospitals:** According to data from one study by the Lown Institute, the best-funded hospitals in America generally avoid treating lower-income people in their local communities and fill their beds instead with affluent patients with generous health-care plans. Lower-income and minority patients, who generally have more meager health insurance or

none at all, are forced to use under-resourced safety net hospitals (i.e., hospitals that by legal obligation or mission provide healthcare for individuals regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay) such as those owned and operated by municipal governments. Data shows that minorities typically lack access to prestigious, well-funded hospitals even when these hospitals are located nearby and might benefit from a tax-exempt status (Most U.S. hospitals are nonprofit and retain tax-exempt status based primarily on the premise that they provide services to the community. But free or reduced-cost care for lower-income residents is now a very small part of what many hospitals focus on.). The hospitals that minorities do typically have access to are generally underfunded. The Community Freedom Party calls for substantially increased federal, state and local funding for safety net hospitals. The level of higher funding should be sufficient enough to allow safety net hospitals to cover their costs while providing high quality and efficient care to lower-income, working-class and minority communities. Also, CFP calls for hospitals to demonstrate that they are providing a fair and equitable level of medical care and services to lower-income, working-class and minority residents in their surrounding communities in order to maintain their tax-exempt status.

- **Increase Funding for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Lower-Income and Moderate-Income Neighborhoods:** Federally Qualified Health Centers are community-based organizations that provide comprehensive primary and preventive care – including oral and mental health services – to persons regardless of their ability to pay. They often provide care to patients in underserved communities. Healthcare providers in these centers can help community residents manage their day-to-day health needs by teaching them ways to stay healthy, treating them for common illnesses and chronic conditions, and helping them make better health decisions and engage in practices that aid in disease prevention. FQHCs can also help decrease the burden on hospitals, especially by reducing emergency department visits for primary care treatable conditions. However,

FQHCs currently lack the resources to help everyone who needs their services; about 20 million lower-income people don't have access to these health centers. Because FQHC's can have a positive impact on neighborhoods and their residents, the Community Freedom party supports significantly higher appropriations for these organizations.

### ***Health Insurance Coverage***

While health insurance coverage expansions under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) have furthered progress toward universal coverage, the continued high cost of many coverage options means that access to affordable health plans is still a challenge for many Americans, particularly African Americans. The average annual cost for health care premiums among blacks is almost 20 percent of the average household income (it is 11 percent of family income for the U.S. population overall). Moreover, the Commonwealth Fund estimates that as many as 87 million people are underinsured, meaning they have health coverage but their plan leads to unusually high out-of-pocket costs that can lead to a strain on personal finances and even debt. To increase quality health insurance coverage, CFP supports the following policies:

- **Medicaid Expansion:** Under the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid eligibility was expanded for adults with incomes up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. However, due to a 2012 Supreme Court ruling in *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius*, the expansion of Medicaid is optional for states. The states that haven't expanded Medicaid are largely concentrated in the southern region of the United States, where approximately 58 percent of African Americans live. Due partly to the lack of Medicaid expansion, the southern U.S. is now home to some of the nation's sickest people and it has the highest health disparities between whites and minorities. Consequently, the Community Freedom Party supports and will work for the expansion of Medicaid in those states that have not done so.



Furthermore, CFP calls for the elimination of financially burdensome cost-sharing requirements, lock-out periods, benefit cuts or mandatory work or community engagement policies that have the effect of reducing enrollment among vulnerable individuals.

• **Public Option for Health Insurance:** The Affordable Care Act (ACA) significantly improved health coverage in the U.S., but many Americans remain uninsured or underinsured. Moreover, health insurance deductibles and premiums continue to rise, placing a substantial financial burden on many Americans. For instance, the average median deductible for benchmark silver health insurance plans grew from \$1,809 in 2014 to \$4,879 in 2021, and that for the bronze plans rose from \$1,674 to \$6,992 over a similar period. In 2016, the average employer group plan deductible rose 12%. CFP supports a Public Health Insurance Option that is 1) administered by the federal government, 2) offers automatic enrollment of the uninsured and those who lose their jobs, 3) is available to those in the marketplace, those enrolled in Medicaid, and lower-wage employees offered job-based coverage (this is especially important for lower-wage workers who often pay on average \$7,000 toward premiums and \$2,679 in deductibles for employer-offered health plans), 4) covers essential health benefits with extension of the full scope of Medicaid benefits, 5) features no deductible for all enrollees, no cost sharing for enrollees with income up to 250% of the federal poverty level, and co-insurance set at 85/15 for people with incomes above 250% of the federal poverty level up to an out-of-pocket cap set at 10% of after-tax income, 6) has monthly premiums set at \$0 for those with income up to 200% of the federal poverty level, 3% of income for those with income up to 250% of the federal poverty level, 5% of income for those with income up to 400% of the federal poverty level, and 8.5% of income for those with income greater than 400% of the federal poverty level, 7) includes hospitals, physicians and other health care providers currently participating in Medicaid and Medicare, 8) is structured to

have no impact on the current Medicare program, and 9) is partially funded through closing existing corporate tax loopholes.

- **Expanded Premium Subsidies:** The Community Freedom Party supports recent efforts to increase funding and expand eligibility for premium subsidies for those enrolled in marketplace health plans. Such changes improve affordability of health coverage for individuals and families already enrolled in marketplace health plans and those who would want to do so. Particularly, CFP calls for fully subsidizing the benchmark gold plan for people earning up to 200% of the federal poverty level. Furthermore, people earning between 200% and 250% of the federal poverty level should be required to contribute no more than 3% of household income toward a benchmark gold plan, 5% of household income for those earning between 250% and 400% of the federal poverty level and 8.5% of household income for those with higher incomes. These changes would be partially funded through closing existing corporate tax loopholes.

- **Decrease in Prescription Drug Prices:** An estimated 18 million Americans were unable to afford a prescription due to its cost in 2021, and the U.S. pays three times more than other countries for brand-name drugs. CFP supports allowing the federal government to negotiate on behalf of all Americans a fair price for drugs with pharmaceutical companies. There should be very few, if any, limits on the number or type of drugs subject to possible negotiation. CFP also calls for tying what Americans pay for drugs to the rate of inflation, requiring pharmaceutical companies to report and justify price increases, limiting out-of-pocket prescription drug payments for Medicare recipients to \$1,500 annually, restricting a drug company's ability to unjustifiably extend their original patents, heavily fining pharmaceutical companies for paying competitors not to introduce generic drugs, and linking pharmaceutical research tax credits to price concessions. Although the pharmaceutical industry claims that allowing the government to negotiate prices

would hamper research and innovation, the largest drug companies spent \$577 billion on stock buybacks, dividends and executive salaries between 2016 and 2020, which is less than they spent on research and development.

## POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY

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### *Pollution-free Neighborhoods*

Over the decades, black Americans have shouldered a disproportionate burden of the United States' pollution. Examples include toxic water in Flint, Michigan and dangerous chemicals that have poisoned a corridor of Louisiana known as Cancer Alley. A 1983 study by the U.S. General Accounting Office found that in the United States, commercial waste treatment facilities and uncontrolled waste dumps were more likely to be found near black than white residential areas. A 2017 report from the NAACP and the Clean Air Task Force found that African Americans are 75 percent more likely than other Americans to live in areas situated near facilities that produce hazardous waste. A 2018 study conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency's National Center for Environmental Assessment reported that African Americans are subjected to higher levels of air pollution than white Americans regardless of income level.

Like all citizens of the United States, African Americans should be able to go to work, socialize with their neighbors, and raise their families without having to suffer the negative health effects of living near sources of pollution. CFP will work for the following policies to help ensure that black Americans enjoy clean air, water and soil in their communities:

- **Ban on the Placement of New Pollution-Producing Facilities Near Black**

**Neighborhoods:** Communities of color, especially those that are lower-income, are routinely targeted to host facilities that have negative impacts on the environment (e.g., landfills, industrial plants, incinerators, and radioactive waste storage areas). Affluent and non-minority communities would never tolerate such facilities, and the

Community Freedom Party believes black and other minority communities shouldn't either. The Community Freedom Party will work to enact municipal ordinances banning the placement of new toxic waste and pollution-producing facilities near minority neighborhoods and communities and prohibiting the expansion of such facilities that already exist.

- **Enactment of Amortization Ordinances:** In addition to banning the placement of new toxic waste and pollution-producing facilities near minority neighborhoods and communities, CFP calls for phasing out existing pollution-producing facilities that have a detrimental environmental impact on minority communities. Specifically, in or near black and other minority communities, operations that have negative impacts on the health of residents (e.g., landfills, industrial plants, incinerators, and radioactive waste storage areas) must be designated as nonconforming land uses and be required to be phased out within a reasonable and legally-defensible time period. Moreover, after the phase-out period, adequate funds should be made available to rehabilitate the land for future economic, residential or commercial use that does not harm the health of local residents.

- **Require Environmental Impact Reviews for New Developments:** Many municipalities already have a process to review proposals for new developments through their planning and zoning boards. But sometimes the review process doesn't require applicants to address the environmental impact of their projects on surrounding communities. CFP supports laws, regulations and ordinances requiring new development applicants to submit detailed information about what chemicals and potentially harmful substances are expected to be emitted, released or stored as a result of the development and what environmental impacts the development will have on surrounding communities in the short-, medium- and long-term. The laws, regulations and ordinances should also give municipalities the authority to reject

applications based on projected environmental consequences on surrounding communities or require changes to mitigate those impacts.

### ***Additional Environmental Policies***

- **\$85 Billion Contribution to the Superfund Trust Fund:** Superfund sites are locations where hazardous waste (e.g., lead, trichlorethylene, chromium, benzene, and arsenic) has been dumped from such sources as mines, processing plants, manufacturing facilities, and landfills. Recent legislation has appropriated \$3.5 billion in funding for the cleanup of 49 Superfund sites. However, there are more than 1,300 Superfund sites in the U.S. These sites have especially impacted minority communities, leading to contaminated drinking water and health problems for residents, including asthma, cancer, and neurological damage. More than one in four black Americans live within three miles of a Superfund site. The Community Freedom Party believes that the current situation, which has resulted in the continued contamination of black communities, is intolerable and must be immediately addressed with adequate funding. The present funding level for Superfund site cleanup is obviously insufficient, and, over the past several decades, has been inconsistent (from 1999 to 2020, annual appropriations to the Superfund Trust decreased from \$2.3 billion to just under \$1.2 billion). CFP calls for an \$85 billion one-time contribution to the Superfund Trust Fund to finance the immediate cleanup of America's over 1,300 Superfund sites. This contribution is meant to supplement, not replace, the Superfund Trust's usual annual appropriation, which should increase or decrease depending on the progress of Superfund site cleanup efforts. CFP also supports necessary state and local legislation and regulations to ensure that minority residents actually benefit from cleanup efforts, rather than being displaced from their neighborhoods to make room for new commercial and residential development.

- **Enact and Strengthen Laws That Protect Residents from Pollution:** The Community Freedom Party believes that all Americans deserve to live and work in environments that are free of pollution. Where appropriate, CFP will work to enact and strengthen local, state and federal laws that result in clean and safe environments for American families.

## AFTERWORD

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A democracy, by definition, is a state of society characterized by formal equality of rights and privileges. But if members of a recognized group of citizens are afforded less funding for their schools, if they are more likely to live near sources of pollution and toxic waste sites, if they are commonly displaced from their underfunded neighborhoods when economic investment does occur, if they are disproportionately denied access to the inputs necessary for wealth creation, and if they are frequently the recipients of low-quality health care, can anyone legitimately argue that they have been afforded their equal rights and due privileges? Specifically, under the current political process, can anyone plausibly maintain that African Americans are being granted the same rights and privileges as all other groups of Americans?

Even in a democracy, equality of rights and privileges is not always assured. It must be continually secured and protected through the political process via representation that is steadfast, unremitting, void of corruption, improves the condition of those represented, and is indivisible. The Community Freedom Party is committed to working for the achievement of full political rights and privileges for African Americans. This is our continuous commitment, not our commitment every four years and not our commitment when it is politically convenient.

As previously mentioned, the Community Freedom Party seeks to help the African-American community reach its full potential, not only because it will benefit black Americans, but also because we believe it will help the United States ascend to its greatest heights. A strong black community is better positioned to help all segments of American society prosper. The beauty of standing is the ability to augment the efforts of those already on their feet and to pull others up with you. With God's help and blessing, may all Americans stand, work, love, and prosper together for the benefit of all humanity.



**THIS PLATFORM HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND RATIFIED BY**

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