



Roadmap 2022

A Black, Progressive
Policy Brief



Introduction

Against tremendous odds, Black voters have elected progressive candidates across this country and have supported policies that would help our communities thrive. Yet, Black communities across the nation continue to be failed by policies that do not consider us – limited (and shrinking) COVID-19 relief, even more obstacles for us to cast our votes, and limited access to the policies we need to improve our lives, like the Child Tax Credit and student loan debt forgiveness.

The question remains: What will it take to make Black communities powerful in public policy? This roadmap is our response.

Black communities deserve policies that address the issues that shape our lives. The Black to the Future Action Fund (B2F) created this roadmap to identify concrete policy recommendations that are responsive to our communities' needs.

Our policy recommendations are based on three core beliefs that shape our thinking about the solutions that are needed to lift up Black communities:

1

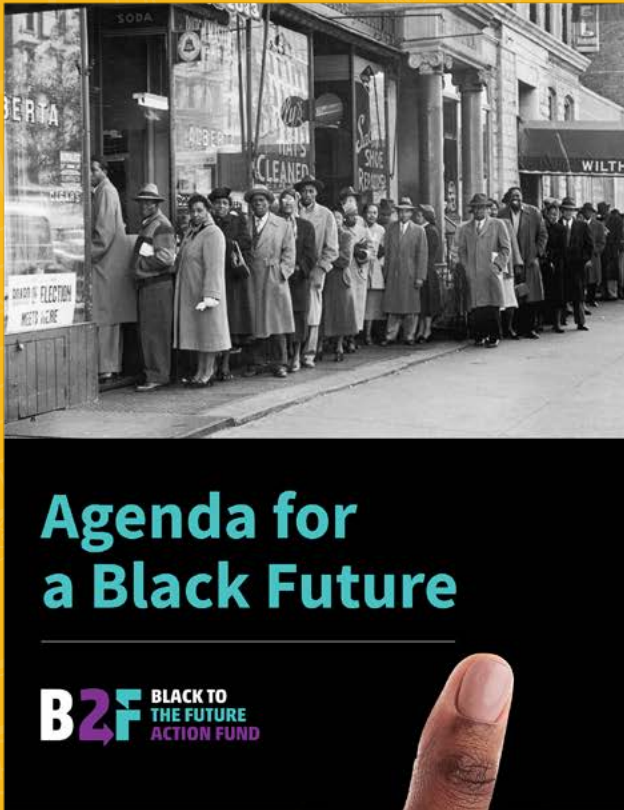
Race matters. We must acknowledge, address, and focus on the root causes of inequality in order to disrupt the cycle of racism. Race-neutral policies will not resolve structural racism; race-forward policies will.

2

Government must be accountable. The government, and the people who operate it, must be held accountable for laws, policies, and practices that marginalize and perpetuate disparities for Black communities and Black people. Policymakers must take action to bridge racial gaps in health, wealth, and other social outcomes. They must eliminate laws, policies, and practices that harm Black people and outlaw private sector practices that exploit racial disparities in order to boost profits.

3

The Black agenda is a progressive agenda. Fundamentally, we believe progress for Black communities requires progressive thinking. Old ideas, play-it-safe strategies, and incremental movement will not secure Black futures. We need bold, innovative ideas that aggressively drive us forward.



In 2020, B2F published the Black Agenda 2020 - a set of economic goals and structural changes that hold the government accountable to our communities. The Black Agenda 2020 was informed by the data from the Black Census Project, which is, to date, the largest survey conducted of Black people in America in 157 years. The Black Agenda 2020 shared policy recommendations and analyses that reflect the demands and needs of Black communities across the United States and provided a roadmap for policymakers. The following year, we published the Build Back Bolder Black Mandate, an additional guide for the Biden-Harris administration on how to respond to the needs of Black communities and advance campaign promises into bold, tangible solutions.

2022 is ripe with the potential for significant policy wins for Black communities, which will secure progressive policy change for the entire nation beyond 2022. It is imperative that policies represent the interests of Black voters - especially around COVID relief and economic recovery, voting rights, and combating the rise of white nationalism.

The Importance of 2022

Black people deserve to be powerful in our everyday lives and, to do so, we must be powerful in politics. Our communities are under attack by powerful forces opposed to the change that our communities usher in: change that benefits everyone in this country. From COVID-19 relief and economic recovery, to voting rights, to combating white supremacy, an agenda that benefits Black communities benefits all communities.

When Black communities flex our political power, everyone benefits. Today, we're seeing the backlash to us flexing our power, and our opponents are trying to rig the rules so we don't get a say in how we live our lives. That's why we created this agenda; public policy should benefit the public, not just the wealthy and the corporations they run.



Democracy

Voter suppression is an old problem with renewed vigor. Through gerrymandering, voter suppression laws, and racist intimidation, there is an onslaught of attacks on the power of Black voters. Black voters demonstrated power in 2020 and, just days before the inauguration of a new President, former President Trump renewed attacks on voting rights and election integrity. His goal was clear: stop Black voters from being powerful in subsequent elections.

2022 presents an opportunity for Black voters to mobilize and create a clearer pathway for progressive policy. Through robust data collection, bold policy recommendations, and direct accountability of officials, B2F is working to provide more opportunities for Black voters to elect progressive candidates and push policies that speak directly to the needs of our communities and families.

Our Policy Priorities

We are monitoring legislation and other policy work related to →



COVID Relief & Support

Two years into the pandemic, Black communities are more likely to get sick or die from COVID than white communities. However, policymakers across the country have allowed extensions and expansions of assistance programs to end, leaving our communities incredibly vulnerable. Our officials must support policies that guarantee Black families access to the resources needed to weather the ongoing storm.

Black adults overwhelmingly support policies for COVID relief and economic recovery in response to the pandemic. This illustrates how important the pandemic has been for our communities.

- ➔ Distribute regular \$2,000 monthly relief checks because Black families need support with basic living expenses like utilities, food, and rent/mortgage payments.
- ➔ Reinstate the eviction and foreclosure ban as well as rent and mortgage cancellation.
- ➔ Invest in policies that will mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and help bring the pandemic to an end, including:
 - » A requirement that customers show proof of vaccination or a recent negative COVID-19 test to enter a business.
 - » A vaccination mandate for employees of private businesses and non-governmental organizations.
 - » A vaccination mandate for government employees like teachers and police.
 - » Mask mandates for school staff and students.
 - » Guarantee of access to COVID relief for every person in America, despite immigration status.
- ➔ Guarantee of free vaccines and testing and 100% coverage of COVID-19 treatments for all persons in the United States, despite citizenship and/or incarceration status.
- ➔ Expand emergency health care coverage via a public plan.
- ➔ Ensure racial equity in COVID-19 vaccine, booster, and treatment distribution.
- ➔ Enact universal family care social insurance policies that assure paid leave and access to affordable healthcare.
- ➔ Strengthen the capacity of public sector workers to unionize and support the right of private sector workers to organize.



Increase housing affordability by:

- ➔ Controlling rents and home prices.
- ➔ Incentivizing local governments to reduce land-use restrictions that drive up the costs of new home construction.
- ➔ Strengthening anti-discrimination laws and improving the housing voucher program.
- ➔ Support homeownership.



Voting Rights

We have seen persistent, dangerous attacks on our voting rights. In 2020, many states expanded voting access due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this increased access to the ballot resulted in significant backlash. As of December 2021, 19 states have enacted 34 new laws that make it more difficult for Americans to vote. As we head into the midterm elections, policymakers must protect Black communities' ability to participate in the decisions that impact our lives.

To make Black communities powerful in politics, we must:

Enact federal voting rights legislation that would:

- ➔ Secure Election Day as a federal holiday.
- ➔ Expand voter registration to include same-day and automatic registration.
- ➔ Prohibit ongoing gerrymandering.
- ➔ Shore up the protections from the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
- ➔ Combat voter suppression by introducing and passing state policies that ban unilateral voter purges and voter ID laws.
- ➔ Make voting as accessible and convenient as possible by:
 - » Expanding no-excuse mail voting.
 - » Utilizing secure drop boxes for early and same-day voting.
 - » Ensuring a minimum of three weeks of early voting.
- ➔ Automatic restoration of voting rights upon a person's release from incarceration.



Combating White Supremacy

In the spring and summer of 2020, protests, rallies, and marches for Black lives in the wake of the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd erupted across the country and around the world. Despite significant social action for change, the persistent threat of violence as white nationalist extremism grows has not subsided. Our government must secure protections that address racial terror at the hands of white nationalist extremists and prevent this violence from undermining our democracy.

Black adults have consistently ranked combating white supremacy as a top policy priority, indicating a desire in our communities to have our representatives address this insidious issue.

- ➔ Declare white supremacist acts as domestic terrorism.
- ➔ Remove white supremacists from federal, state, and local police departments.
- ➔ Prevent those who have committed hate crimes from getting firearms.
- ➔ Declare white supremacy a national security threat.
- ➔ Require data collection and regular reporting on:
 - » The true breadth of white nationalist domestic terrorism in America.
 - » Efforts to curb white nationalist violence, including data on monitoring and policing tactics.
 - » Efforts to disrupt the systems and networks that foster white nationalist terrorism.
 - » Enact stricter guidelines around surveillance funding to ensure that budgets approved to protect civil rights cannot be used to ultimately thwart them.

Our Work

This year, our work to build Black political power will focus on collecting regular, recent, and relevant data about what is most important to our communities through our bi-monthly Temperature Check Polls and the Black Census 2022. We will also release our Black Agenda 2022 and support candidates who champion the issues our communities care about, and who will work to legislate our solutions through public policy.



Black Census 2022

This unique and representative survey will collect valuable data about the experiences and needs of Black communities across the nation, and will inform our policy priorities. The Black Census Project 2022 will be used to ensure the priority issues highlighted by candidates and their midterm election campaigns are directly responsive to the needs our communities have named.

Candidate Endorsements

B2F will support candidates up and down the ballot who will fight for bold and innovative policies aimed at uplifting Black communities and creating a more equitable and inclusive America. Any person running for elected office who seeks to change how politics operates through authentic and consistent engagement with diverse Black communities and seeks to proactively generate solutions that address the unique challenges facing our communities is invited to apply for endorsement.

Priority States

Building Black political power requires investing time, resources, and capacity to build, and also maintain, Black political power. We are working with communities, coalitions, and organizations in California, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Wisconsin to build the power of Black communities to enact policies that are responsive to the specific needs of Black communities, and to elect representatives who will move this mandate forward. This includes on-the-ground mobilization to turn out Black voters throughout this midterm election year.








Conclusion

Our work does not happen without our communities and our champions. This year, it is more important than ever for us to work together to build Black political power. Every year that we work to build Black political power matters; this year happens to be one where elections will help us see our power in action. Elected officials must be responsive and accountable to our communities by moving policies that are both race-forward and progressive. 2022 cannot be a year of platitudes and promises. Our representatives must commit to and follow through with work that is directly responsive to the demands of our communities.

We look forward to working with you this year - and beyond.

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