



PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, INC.

Resolution in Support of the Freedom Plan Policy Agenda for a Better America

Whereas, America — a nation built on stolen labor and stolen land — feeds on racialized economic injustice and systemic dispossession of nonwhite peoples. Reified and reincarnated peculiarly for each generation of Americans, our republic’s racial capitalism morphed from the chattel regime into a carceral empire. The median wealth of Black families (\$17,000)—is less than one-tenth that of White families (\$171,000). The economic incentives of White supremacy condemn Black and brown communities to healthcare apartheid, education segregation, political authoritarianism, jobs vacuums, and death zones;

Whereas, in 2021, more than 440 bills were introduced in 49 states with an eager eye on restricting the nonwhite vote. Voting is a civic sacrament—a sacred responsibility for the everyday guarantors and beneficiaries of democracy. The political theatrics in Washington benefit from an organized conspiracy to shrink the American electorate, which grows increasingly younger and less white with each passing election. The sinful collusion between our political and economic systems—normalized with each election cycle—converts our neighborhoods into airtight poverty pockets, public schools into prison preparatory academies, and nonwhite zip codes into food deserts and sites of concentrated diseases;

Whereas, nearly a tenth of people in America, 30 million, are uninsured 13 years after President Barack Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law. Reprehensibly, 3.6 million children do not have access to health insurance, causing countless children to die from a physical accident, flu pandemic or treatable genetic disease. Most children access affordable healthcare via the options furnished by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), their parent's employment benefits or safety nets like the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Medicaid;

Whereas, our public schools look like prison preparatory academies. 74% of Black students, compared to 31% of White students, were in mid-high or high poverty schools, with 44% of the Black students in high-poverty schools, compared to 8% of White students. Majority non-White school districts as a whole receive \$23 billion less than majority White districts, despite serving the same number of students;

Whereas, Americans owe \$1.78 trillion in education debt, which is delaying decisions to marry, enter the market as homeowners, expand families, and pursue advanced education. Black people who incur student loan debt experience a difficult time paying off their debt. Black borrowers owe 95% on their original balance compared to their counterparts who owe only 6%;

Be it resolved, the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. (PNBC) endorses the Freedom Plan Policy Agenda for a Better America authored by the Our Money Movement—a faith-based coalition committed to expanding access to the ballot and the full federal budget;

Be it further resolved, we seek to preserve the integrity of our democracy, and to responsibly harness the full extent of the federal government’s spending power for state and local priorities related to jobs, public education, and health care. We believe that in doing so we can have stronger families, safer neighborhoods, thriving businesses, less household debt, and reduced tax burden;

Be it further resolved, we must restore the integrity of our democracy by protecting the interests of voters, so our voices are not drowned out by voter suppression tactics and the influence of special interest groups. Blacks have fought long and hard for access to the ballot, and we must do everything possible to preserve and protect those victories;

Be it further resolved, PNBC demands the passage of a 28th amendment to the US constitution that would make voting a permanent right for adult US citizens and residents. This constitutional provision establishes automatic voter registration unless they decline, ensures online voter registration is available for all, allows same-day voter registration, early voting, and no-excuse absentee voting, and prevents gerrymandering, criminal disenfranchisement laws, and voter purging;

Be it further resolved, PNBC supports legislation to create a federal jobs guarantee—the last economic justice policy demanded by Dr. King. A Federal Job Guarantee is a federally funded, state and locally administered program that promises a decent paying, dignified job with full benefits at a livable wage for every American who wants a government job. We believe in the abolition of involuntary unemployment in our society by providing a public option for jobs for millions of Americans, many of whom are Black, who are not able to find meaningful employment in the private sector;

Be it further resolved, PNBC adds our voice to calls for free public healthcare for all. Poverty should never be a death sentence for any of God’s children. To address health issues impacting our communities, we must go to the source, ensuring every individual has access to healthcare. Whether contracted through private organizations or administered through public providers, free public healthcare is paid for by the government regardless of age, health status, or an individual’s ability to pay;

Therefore, PNBC backs a need for federally funded public education and the abolition of student loan debt. No longer dependent on state and local taxes, Federal funding would give ALL students access to a quality primary and secondary education, free public college, and minimize the tax burden on citizens.