

# GEN Z 20 24 AGENDA

 **VOTERS OF TOMORROW**

**The 2024 Gen Z Agenda**

Dear partner,

The Gen Z Agenda is more than a list of legislation — it's a representation of our generation's vision for our country's future. Based on our original polling and other sources, the 2024 Agenda is grounded in Gen Z's values and ideas. The legislation we pass today will impact our generation for decades to come. Making sure that legislation looks like the future our generation wants depends on you, our partners in government, taking our voices into account and legislating with that vision in mind.

Whether it's a lack of polling locations on campuses or not being allowed to vote by mail, young voters, voters of color, and minimum-wage earners are disproportionately affected by laws that seek to make voting harder. H.R.6267 Election Day Act would establish Election Day as a Federal holiday, which 59% of young people say would make them more likely to cast a ballot.

Our future and our quality of life are closely intertwined with that of our planet. The U.S. needs to transition to clean energy yet, our taxes are keeping climate change profitable. That's why we're supporting H.R.1483 End Oil and Gas Tax Subsidies Act, which aims to eliminate various tax benefits for the oil and gas industry.

Healthcare is another top priority for Gen Z, and mental healthcare in particular can be challenging to access. S.1665 Higher Education Mental Health Act would create an advisory commission to support students with mental health disabilities in higher education.

Since the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, codifying abortion and reproductive healthcare access have been a top priority. We continue to emphasize just how important reproductive freedoms and bodily autonomy are to young Americans.

Ensuring a future-focused government goes beyond legislation directly on these issues. The legislation you make today impacts our generation for decades to come, so including young people in the legislative process is vital. H.R. 444, introduced by Rep. Darren Soto (FL-09) and known as the Youth in Gov proposal, would establish an Executive Office of Young Americans, ensuring that the President hears from our generation on key issues that affect our future. The legislative decisions that we make right now impact young people the most, yet we have never had a formal seat at the table in government — it's time to change that.

Thank you for being a partner in our work and giving Gen Z a seat at the table. Working to ensure a brighter future for Gen Z and our country depends on your support. We appreciate you taking the time to listen to young people, encourage you to continue to engage with young people, and look forward to working with your office more in the future.

Sincerely,

Santiago Mayer  
Executive Director, Voters of Tomorrow

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# 21st Century Economic Justice

## Raising the Minimum Wage

Anyone working forty hours a week should not be living in poverty. The minimum wage was designed to increase as the economy grew and worker productivity increased. Despite continued economic growth and increases in worker productivity, the federal minimum wage has not been raised in over a decade – the longest period of time without an increase since it was enacted in 1938. If the minimum wage had increased at the rate of productivity since 1960, it would be over \$23 right now. A \$7.25 minimum wage is embarrassingly low, and 86% of college students believe we must keep pushing for a minimum wage that is a living wage.

Proposal: [Raise the Wage Act of 2023](#)

## Abolish the Tipped Wage

Many young people rely on tips in their first jobs. Forcing people to rely on a tipped wage is an unfair labor practice to begin with. How can we expect young people, who don't have years of savings to fall back on, to financially plan for big life expenses if they don't know how much money they're going to make at tomorrow's shift? No one can afford a day of work where they may only take home \$2.13 an hour (the federal minimum wage for tipped workers). We must consider joining many other countries including Switzerland, France, and Germany in ending the tipped minimum wage so workers' take-home pay is the duty of the employer to provide, not the customer.

Proposals: [Raise the Wage Act of 2023](#), [Tipped Worker Protection Act](#)

## Pay Your Interns

Experience is not going to pay the bills. Unpaid internships exploit young people and prevent working-class students from gaining valuable experience. If an internship is unpaid, students may not be able to afford to sacrifice time they could use getting paid at a job, leaving only privileged and already wealthy students in internships and high-paying entry-level jobs. *Pay Our Interns* says it best: We must be “committed to ensuring all people – especially people of color and of low-income backgrounds – have equitable access to professional career paths through the implementation of paid internships across all work sectors.”

Proposals: [H.R.5681 - To expand opportunities for employment of recent graduates in Federal Government positions](#)

### Increasing Unionization

As the middle class continues to shrink, unions are one of Gen Z's best paths to the middle class. Unionized workers earn about 20% more than non-unionized workers and also receive increased benefits. Unions also help reduce wage inequality, benefiting working-class people, blue-collar workers, and workers who do not have a college degree. As the costs of items like healthcare and education increase, we must utilize the power of collective bargaining to increase wages and benefits to ensure Gen Z enjoys an equal or better quality of life than those that came before them.

Proposals: [H.R.20/S.567 Richard L. Trumka Protecting the Right to Organize \(PRO\) Act](#), [Protect Student Workers Act](#)

### Paid Family, Sick, & Medical Leave

How does the richest country in the world not have paid family and medical leave? With the costs of starting a family increasing, we must ensure parents can fully spend time with and take care of their baby instead of having to worry about money and medical care. Those who require medical leave for other reasons must have time to take care of themselves or others without having to worry about making ends meet. It is time for the United States to join the rest of the developed world and enact a robust paid family and medical leave policy.

Proposals: [H.R. 3409/S.1664 Healthy Families Act](#), [H.R.3481/S.1714 FAMILY Act](#), [H.R.789/S.242 - Caring for All Families Act](#)

### A Federal Jobs Guarantee

A federal jobs guarantee would create a baseline standard for employment in the United States and allow us to dedicate major labor power to public service priorities like infrastructure, caregiving for seniors, child care, community development, and environmental conservation. These jobs would include a livable wage, full healthcare, and family and medical leave for all. Access to good benefits in the public sector would incentivize the private sector to offer competitive compensation and benefits to retain their employees. Where necessary, these jobs would also offer training and experience to workers.

Proposals: [Federal Jobs Guarantee Development Act of 2023](#)

### The Right to Housing

Every American deserves shelter. It is incomprehensible that while roughly 600,000 are unhoused, more than 15,000,000 homes in the US are vacant. As wages have stagnated and the cost of living has increased, we must ensure that housing is

affordable to all, especially young people. Homeownership is largely considered one of the best ways to generate wealth, and if Gen Z can never afford to buy a home, they will struggle to live an equivalent standard of living to their parents and grandparents.

Proposals: [H.R.1708 - Housing Is a Human Right Act of 2023](#)

### *Ending Food Insecurity*

No one should go to bed at night hungry or wake up in the morning wondering where they will find their next meal. How can you expect someone to work hard, focus in school, and succeed when all they can think about is how they are going to feed themselves and their families? We have the power to put an end to food insecurity and reduce barriers to nutritional assistance. This includes having fewer restrictions so those with medical diets can have the food that they need. Nutritional assistance benefits should be strengthened to ensure access to nutritious food options.

Proposals: [EATS Act of 2023](#)

### *A Secure Retirement in Our Future*

Young people need to start thinking about retirement. With the high costs of healthcare, education, and housing, it is becoming increasingly difficult for young people to put money aside and save for retirement. We need to make sure that our government is enacting policies to allow people to retire without working themselves to death. To ensure that everyone can retire with dignity and respect at a reasonable age, we must expand Social Security and Medicare.

Proposal: [S. 393/H.R.1046 Social Security Expansion Act](#)

### *Ending Childhood Poverty*

No child deserves to be living in poverty. No one has control over the socioeconomic status they are born into. A child's education, health, and future should not be determined by anything out of their control. Our government needs to make a major commitment to ensuring all children, no matter their background, have access to all the tools they need to have a bright future.

Proposal: [H.R.2540 End Child Poverty Act](#), [H.R. 3899 American Family Act](#)

## *A Just Tax Code*

It is unacceptable that there are corporate CEOs in this country who pay an effective tax rate that is lower than teachers or construction workers. It has become normalized in the United States that major corporations can routinely pay nothing in federal income taxes. At a time of massive wealth and income inequality, we need a tax system that is based on the ability to pay. If we want to create a more economically just country and rebuild the middle class, we have to demand that the wealthiest Americans, large corporations, and Wall Street pay their fair share in taxes.

Proposals: [H.R.2676/S.1178 For the 99.5 Percent Act](#), [H.R.3000 Tax-Free Pell Grant Act](#), [H.R.2641 Expanded Student Saver's Tax Credit Act](#), [H.R.1041/S.441 American Opportunity Accounts Act](#), [H.R.1014/S.408 Big Oil Windfall Profits Tax Act](#)

## *Broadband for All*

Participation in our 21st-century society requires quality internet. Whether it is looking for a job, doing a job, paying the bills, or completing an education, those who do not have access to the Internet are at a significant disadvantage. Something that has become such a necessity in everyday life should not depend on your zip code or your income.

Proposals: [H.R.2552/S.1197 Community Broadband Act](#)

# Justice For All

## *Gun Violence Prevention*

Gun violence is not an isolated policy issue. Gun violence can come in many forms: mass shootings, street violence, police violence, domestic violence, suicide, hate crimes, and many other types of violence; therefore, we need to treat it as the complex and multifaceted issue that it is. Gun violence is the result of systemic injustices and failures of the United States dating back to the founding of our nation. If we are to truly find a solution to preventing gun violence, we must address the root causes of gun violence in addition to enacting common sense gun laws that 64% of college students support.

Proposals: [H.R.1699/S.951 Office of Gun Violence Prevention Act](#), [H.R.2390/S.1026 Gun Violence Prevention Research Act](#), [H.R.715/S.494 Background Check Expansion Act](#), [H.R.1478 Federal Firearm Licensee Act](#), [H.R.3018 Federal Extreme Risk Protection Order Act](#), [H.R.698/S.25 Assault Weapons Ban](#), [H.R.4201 Safe Storage Saves Lives Act](#)



## Women's Rights

Establishing equal pay, protecting reproductive rights, ending the pink and tampon taxes, implementing paid family and medical leave, and combating all forms of violence against women are all essential to helping put an end to the gender inequity present in almost every aspect of our society. We must continue to fight to make sure that women are represented in all places where decisions are being made so we can ensure that we are creating both a society and government that treat all of us with dignity and respect.

Proposals: [H.R.12/S.701 Women's Health Protection Act](#), [S.728 Paycheck Fairness Act](#), [H.R.2604 Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvement Act](#), [Pink Tax Repeal Act of 2021](#)

## Racial Justice

Systemic racism is a part of our nation; it did not disappear after the abolition of slavery or the Civil Rights Movement. Whether it is combating redlining, environmental racism, access to loans, racism in health care and medicine, racial profiling in education and policing, or racist voting laws -- we need to actively work to dismantle all institutions that continue to perpetuate racism against People of Color. It is not enough to not be racist; we must be actively anti-racist and do all that we can to dismantle these institutions and establish equitable institutions that promote racial equality.

Proposals: [S.40/H.R. 40 Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act](#), [H.R.3305/S.1606 Black Maternal Health Omnibus Act](#), [S.1317/H.R.2904 Anti-Racism in Public Health Act](#)

## LGBTQ+ Equality

No one should be discriminated against for their sexuality, gender identity, or gender expression. Gen Z wants to live in a society where all people are allowed to be who they are and love who they love. To achieve this mission, we need to work to ensure they have the same rights and privileges as heterosexual and cisgender people. The basic rights of LGBTQ+ individuals are increasingly under attack from fascist elected officials in the form of "Don't Say Gay" and anti-trans legislation in states all across America. We cannot allow wannabe dictators to continue to pass policies that seek to erase LGBTQ+ from existing in public spaces and must take action to prevent this.

Proposals: [H.R.15 Equality Act](#), [H.Res.269/S.Res.144 Recognizing that it is the duty of the Federal Government to develop and implement a Transgender Bill of Rights](#)

## *Disability Justice*

Disabled people are the largest minority in the United States. With 27% of adults in the United States living with a disability. Disabled people can have an extremely hard time finding an accessible polling place for them to vote. Disability justice also intersects with economic justice with low-income caps that determine Federal assistance.

Proposals: [Disability Access to Transportation Act](#)

## *Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment*

The ratification of the ERA is a transformative and necessary step in helping create the society Gen Z Americans believe in. This major step towards an inclusive society is driven by Gen Z's commitment to equal opportunity for all and social justice. The ERA would help combat gender- and sex-based discrimination by providing legal protections that help safeguard the rights of all people regardless of their sexuality or gender expression.

Proposals: [Resolution to Certify the ERA](#)

## *Justice for Immigrants and Asylum Seekers*

Immigrants are welcome here. No amount of hateful rhetoric will change the fact that the diversity of people and cultures is what makes the United States special. We must provide the necessary funding to process these cases in a timely manner, and we need to establish a pathway to citizenship. We also need to end the abusive practices of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to prevent them from further terrorizing human beings seeking a better life in our nation.

Proposals: [H.R.3194 US Citizenship Act](#), [H.R.666/S.342 Access to Counsel Act](#), [H.R.1643/S.883 New Deal for New Americans Act](#), [H.R.2374 New Way Forward Act](#), [H.R.1698 American Families United Act](#), [H.R.1386 Equal Citizenship for Children Act of 2023](#), [S.1208 Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act](#)

## *Justice for Indigenous People*

Gen Z believes in justice for Indigenous people. The ACLU of New Mexico defines indigenous justice as “the freedom and ability of Indigenous people to exercise their rights and sovereignty over themselves, their people, and their land. This includes the freedom to engage in traditional ways of governing, being, healing, and knowing while also learning and celebrating culture, language, tradition, and heritage by ceremonies and other practices.” The United States has committed far too many atrocities against

Indigenous people, and this goal is the bare minimum we can do to begin to heal these deep wounds.

Proposals: [H.R.3434 Teaching Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander History Act](#), [H.R.1208/S.563 A bill to amend the Act of June 18, 1934, to reaffirm the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for Indian Tribes, and for other purposes](#), [H.R.663 Native American Child Protection Act](#),

### *Addressing Hate on College Campuses*

The recent violence in Israel and Gaza has and continues to deeply impact young people in the United States. As we watch the horrors overseas, we have also witnessed vile acts of antisemitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and other forms of hate and intimidation on college campuses. We must actively denounce hate, condemn violence, and embrace respectful, free public debate on campus and beyond.

Proposals: [To condemn the rise in antisemitism, call on all Americans to combat antisemitism in the United States, and implement aspects of the U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), [Combating Hate Across Campus](#)

### *Police Accountability & Redefining Public Safety*

Our current solution to public safety is not working. Despite the endless amounts of money that local, state, and federal governments invest in policing, it is not having the desired effect in reducing crime. We must invest in community-based solutions that address the root causes of crime instead of investing in over-policing. Additionally, we must institute better systems for holding police accountable. Their job is not easy, nor should this many responsibilities be placed on them, but they have to be held accountable if they fail to do their job or abuse their position. Ultimately, we must rethink what the characteristics are of a world that would make us more safe.

Proposals: [H.R. 843 Federal Police Camera and Accountability Act](#), [H.R.2847/S.1196 Ending Qualified Immunity Act](#)

### *No More Forever War*

Young people are tired of being used as pawns in the endless and senseless wars of the military-industrial complex. Peace and diplomacy should always be the top priority of US foreign policy, and war should always be the very last option on the list. No one benefits from war, except the military contractors who profit from it, but we all benefit from peace and cooperation. If we want to tackle global problems like climate change, we need to have global cooperation to avoid impending disaster. Russia's

unjustified invasion of Ukraine has derailed these efforts significantly, and the United States must work towards a diplomatic solution that limits the bloodshed and protects the sovereignty of Ukraine.

Proposals: [H.R.932/S.316 A bill to repeal the authorizations for use of military force against Iraq](#), [H.R.1111 Department of Peacebuilding Act](#), [H.Res.261 Reaffirming the importance of diplomacy and development in United States-African Union relations](#), [H.Res.209 Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the importance of taking a feminist approach to all aspects of foreign policy](#)

### *Peace and a Two-State Solution*

Young people at home and abroad believe in maintaining peace, prosperity, and human life. All indiscriminate attacks on Israeli and Palestinian civilians must be condemned. Immediately, the global community must ensure the safe return of all hostages to their families, protect all civilians from indiscriminate bombing, and ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza through a bilateral ceasefire and other diplomatic efforts. The ultimate goal of negotiations must be a mutual agreement to long-lasting peace and a two-state solution.

Proposal: [To express the policy of the United States to support a two-state solution](#)

### *Ending the War on Drugs*

Gen Z knows better than to continue to fall for a decades-long failed War on Drugs that disproportionately incarcerates Black and Brown Americans. In contrast, we now know that many of the drugs for which people have been imprisoned, like marijuana, are beneficial for medicinal and recreational use. 93% of college students believe that marijuana should be legal at least for medical use, and 68% believe it should be legal for recreational use as well. In addition, adult drug use should not be considered a crime the same way cigarette smoking and drinking alcohol are not a crime. We need to be treating substance use disorder as a medical condition rather than a criminal justice issue. For those who are already victims of this immoral policy, we need to clear their records and let them have their lives back.

Proposals: [S.1323/H.R.2891 SAFE Banking Act](#)

### *Implement a Restorative Justice System*

We need to fundamentally reevaluate the justice system. The goal of prison should not be to dehumanize and ruin the lives of all incarcerated people. Someday, many of these people are going to be released from prison and we need to ensure that all

incarcerated people are ready to reenter society productively. Recidivism rates in the United States are far too high and we must combat that with a new vision for incarceration. Other countries around the world have implemented restorative justice systems where inmates are treated like humans and the punishment is solely that they are cut off from the outside world. A system like this would allow us to rehabilitate inmates, decrease recidivism, and help them improve their lives when they are released.

Proposals: [S.516 Fair Wages for Incarcerated Workers Act](#), [H.R.3344 Justice for Incarcerated Moms Act](#), [H.R.2825 Prison Libraries Act](#), [H.R.1124 Federal Death Penalty Abolition Act](#), [H.R.3860/S.1820 To amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to provide a consistent standard of health care to incarcerated individuals, and for other purposes](#), [S.1677 Democracy Restoration Act](#), [S.1165/H.R.2400 Reentry Act](#)

### *Abolish Cash Bail*

If the “justice” system has policies or laws in place that have a monetary value tied to them, then those policies only apply to low-income people. No one should have to remain in prison for the duration of their case just because they do not have the financial means to pay their bail. Cash bail only applies to low-income people and we need equal justice.

Proposal: [Recognizing that the United States has a moral obligation to meet its foundational promise of guaranteed justice for all](#)

### *Ending Private Prisons*

There absolutely cannot be a profit incentive for incarceration in the United States. Similar to the military-industrial complex, if we allow people to profit off the suffering of others, then they are going to do everything in their power to maximize it in order to maximize profits. About 25% of the world’s prison population is in the US, despite the fact that the US is less than 5% of the world’s population. If we are to begin to stop our mass incarceration problem, we must end the profit incentive.

Proposal: [H.R.444 End For-Profit Prisons Act](#)

### *Decriminalizing Sex Work*

Sex work is work. Criminalizing consensual sex, including the exchange of these services, is taking away from the human right to autonomy and privacy. The government should not be telling consenting adults who they can have sexual relationships with and on what terms.

Proposals: [SAFE SEX Workers Study Act of 2021](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Recognizing that the United States has a moral obligation to meet its foundational promise of guaranteed justice for all](#)

## Government & Democracy Reform

### Voting Rights

Our democracy is under attack. Federal and State legislators from across the country are working day and night to disenfranchise voters, particularly voters of color, for political gain. 30 states have enacted laws that restrict access to the ballot box since the 2020 election. Allowing state legislatures to legally disenfranchise millions of voters nationwide will undermine our democratic values and suppress the will of the people perpetually. We must simplify voting through policies such as vote-by-mail, same-day voter registration, and automatic voter registration. Voting needs to be easy and accessible to everyone. Other worthwhile policies also include introducing Election Day as a federal holiday, a policy that 65% of college students say would make them more likely to vote, among other proposals. We must also ban gerrymandering by allowing nonpartisan commissions to draw districts fairly.

Proposals: [For The People Act of 2021](#), [S.630 Sustaining Our Democracy Act](#), [H.R.2905 End Prison Gerrymandering Act](#), [S.700/H.R.1439 Vote at Home Act of 2023](#), [Election Day Act](#)

### D.C. Statehood

American citizens residing in Washington, D.C. have been denied the most basic of rights belonging to those in the rest of America, the right to federal representation. They bear the same responsibilities as all Americans, such as paying federal taxes, with no representation to show for it. It is time we right the wrong of denying over half a million citizens their full right to federal representation without taxation, the basis of what our nation was founded upon.

Proposals: [S.51/H.R.51 Washington, D.C. Admission Act](#)

### Self-Determination for US Territories

The US's history of imperialism and not granting the same rights to all citizens make it imperative that we allow US territories to determine their own fate. Voters of Tomorrow supports the people of all US territories in determining whatever status is

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<sup>1</sup> While this bill is outdated, we are asking for a similar bill to be introduced.

best for them. The citizens of Puerto Rico do not deserve to be used as a political pawn traded back and forth by Congress. As a result, all citizens of US territories deserve the right to choose their own fate, whether that is statehood within the US total independence, or somewhere in between.

Proposals: [H.R.2757 Puerto Rico Status Act](#)

### *Youth Representation*

It's time that future generations receive some say, beyond voting, for matters in the US Government. It's necessary that we have formal and recognized youth representation from qualified individuals in both legislative and executive branches of government in the form of councils or boards that serve as a form of advisement for the president and lawmakers alike. Youth voices and youth issues deserve and need to be heard to protect the interests of youth generations moving forward and to better protect the future of this country and the world. This starts with establishing a White House Youth Americans Advisory Council.

Proposals: [YouthInGov Executive Order, To establish in the Executive Office of the President an Office of Young Americans, and for other purposes H.J.Res.16 Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States extending the right to vote to citizens sixteen years of age or older,](#)

### *Abolish the Filibuster*

The filibuster, a long-time abused system in the Senate, can block all progress in acting on critical issues like civil rights. It is an undemocratic process that stifles the will of the people and places power in the hands of self-acting politicians. The current system remains illogical, undemocratic, and selfish; it has no place in our democratic system. For our government to truly act on the will of the people instead of the interests of a powerful few, we must eliminate the use of the filibuster, so that Congress can pass crucial legislation. 56% of college students support abolishing the filibuster to allow legislation to pass through the Senate with a simple majority.

Proposals: [Change Senate Rule 22](#)

### *Campaign Finance Reform*

Government is no longer of the people, by the people, and for the people. It is now of the wealthy, by the wealthy, and for the wealthy and will continue to be so until drastic action is taken. Political spending is at an all-time high. Super PACs, special interest groups, and political parties alike all funnel endless amounts of money from anonymous shell companies to elect more members of their party and to ensure specific policies that enrich themselves and their wealthy donors at the expense of their constituents are

enacted or blocked. It's critical that we pursue policies to limit money in politics while simultaneously disallowing politicians from impacting legislation when they receive considerable amounts of money from stakeholders of that legislation.

Proposals: [H.J.Res.13 Democracy for All Amendment](#), [S.512 DISCLOSE Act](#), [H.R.2516 End the Congressional Revolving Door Act](#)

## Health Care

### Universal Health Care

Health care is a human right. Plain and simple. It is not a good or service that's price or scarcity should be left up to the free market. The median family of four in the United States is making about \$60,000 a year but can pay upwards of \$10,000 a year on healthcare costs alone. These astronomical costs leave about 37 million Americans uninsured and an additional 41 million are underinsured. In the richest country in the world, that is unacceptable and 83% of college students agree we need to achieve universal health care coverage in the United States.

Proposals: [S.1655/H.R.3421 Medicare For All](#), [H.R.244 Medicare Hearing Aid Coverage Act](#), [H.R.33 Medicare Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act](#)

### Reproductive Healthcare

Everyone deserves autonomy over their bodies without interference from politicians. People with uteruses deserve access to abortions, birth control, and reproductive healthcare overall. 79% of college students believe we need new legislation that accomplishes these goals while simultaneously barring attempts to strip the rights of people with uteruses from doing what's best for their own bodies. The strictest abortion law in the United States now bans abortions after the 6th week of pregnancy, before a majority of people know that they're pregnant. Not only is it important we address the problems of reproductive healthcare now, establishing comprehensive sexual education programs for the future is also necessary for decreases in accidental pregnancies as well as sexually transmitted diseases.

Proposals: [H.R.12/S.701 Women's Health Protection Act](#), [H.R.3589/S.1698 Affordability is Access Act](#), [H.R.3305/S.1606 Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act](#)



## Mental Health Care

Any true universal health care system must include mental health care. Our mental health is a crucial part of our overall well-being and it is time that the US healthcare system begins to treat it as the health care issue it is. Mental Health conditions can be disabling and that needs to be recognized by our government so people can feel supported and work to get better. Additionally, we need to continue to destigmatize mental health care treatment so people feel comfortable and empowered to seek out the best treatment options for themselves.

Proposals: [H.Res.434 Declaring a mental health crisis among youth in the United States, and expressing the pressing need for historic investments in mental health care for students](#), [H.R.1638/S.838 Improving Access to Mental Health Act](#), [H.R.3548/S.1700 Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act](#), [S.1665 Higher Education Mental Health Act](#)

## Lowering the Cost of Prescription Drugs

Cost should not be a barrier to anyone seeking the medicine they need to live and be healthy. In the case of lifesaving drugs like insulin, it is horrifying that most Americans are paying roughly 15 times as much for a single vial of insulin than our neighbors to the north in Canada. That has got to change. Medicine is a necessity, not a luxury and we must take the steps necessary to ensure cost is not a barrier to receiving it. While there was a noticeable change with the implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act, there must be more done to protect Americans.

Proposals: [H.R.3093 Affordable Pricing for Taxpayer-Funded Prescription Drugs Act](#), [S.142 Preserve Access to Affordable Generics and Biosimilars Act](#), [S.935 Fair Accountability and Innovative Research Drug Pricing Act](#), [S.1264 SMART Prices Act](#)

# Education

## Higher Education for All

Every American deserves the opportunity to pursue as much knowledge as they desire without having to worry about cost as a barrier for entry. Given that college degrees and professional certifications are becoming a necessity to gain an entry-level job, we cannot allow the socioeconomic status one was born with to determine whether or not they are able to earn a decent living. Whether it is a trade school, an apprenticeship, a four-year college, community college, or any other form of professional training, every American deserves the chance to pursue their education and

to make a decent living. A majority of voters support making college tuition free for all students, and even larger majorities support enacting tuition-free college for families with incomes under \$120,000 a year and free community college for all. Studies also suggest that the idea of free college education has beneficial effects on high school academic outcomes by providing students a future to work toward.

Proposals: [S.1963/H.R.4117 College for All Act](#), [S.1848 Debt-Free College Act](#), [S.83/H.R.511 American Apprenticeship Act](#), [H.R.3028 Community and Technical College Investment Act](#)

### *Cancel Student Debt*

Despite President Biden's relentless efforts to cancel as much student loan debt as possible, it continues to burden Americans young and old alike. Education fuels better, high-paying job opportunities and creates a path to a brighter future for everyone. No one should live under the exceedingly unbearable weight of loans taken out to seek education. This extreme level of debt is forcing young adults to delay or reconsider starting a family and, in many cases, is making it nearly impossible for them to own a home. We must continue to find new avenues to cancel student loans and create a better economic future for Americans.

Proposals: [Executive Order](#), [Student Debt Cancellation Act of 2019](#), [H.R.1757/S.963 Loan Forgiveness for Educators Act](#), [S.1353 Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act](#), [H.R.1001 Military and Veteran Caregiver Student Loan Relief Act](#), [H.R.1731 To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to double the Pell Grant award amount, improve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, and reduce interest rates, and for other purposes](#)

### *Early Childhood Education & Universal Child Care*

To ensure Americans are the best-educated population in the world, we need to start educating students earlier. In addition to the benefits of a well-educated population, such as expansive prosperity for all, expanding early childhood education and providing universal child care alleviates some of the larger costs associated with having children. By lowering this financial burden, more young adults who want to have children can do so without having to worry about whether or not they can afford it. In a poll conducted by Generation Lab, 79% of college students said affordable childcare would make them more likely to have children or adopt.

Proposals: [S. 1398 Universal Child Care & Early Learning Act](#), [S. 388 Child Care for Every Community Act](#), [H.R.2976 - Child Care for Working Families Act](#)

### *A Holistic and Honest Curriculum*

A well-educated population does not mean being just educated in math, English, and science, but also being educated in civics and history. Students should graduate high school and be ready to become active and informed citizens. This means teaching them practical skills like applying for a job, learning how to pay bills, budgeting, and so much more. They cannot be fully active citizens if they are not being educated on how our government really works and how public policy works. They cannot become fully informed if history is being taught differently in different parts of the country. This isn't indoctrination. This is about being honest and reckoning with the true history of the United States so students can have the necessary information and skills to push our country toward our ideals.

Proposals: [H.R. 1387 Civics Learning Act](#), [H.R. 658 Strengthening Youth Apprenticeships Act](#), [H.R.2943 Student Empowerment and Financial Literacy Act](#), [S. 1546 Teaching Asian Pacific American History Act](#)

### *Fair Funding for Public Schools*

It is a disgrace that in the wealthiest country in the world, educational outcomes are largely determined by zip code. We need to put to an end the practice of using regressive taxation like property taxes to fund public schools. The federal government and state governments need to make education a priority and ensure that every child in America has access to a public school that is more than adequately funded. We must elect leaders who will fight to create more equitable school funding formulas and will assist in the creation of state and federal policies to lift up school districts where local funding either can not or will not provide for the needs of all of their students.

Proposals: [Economic Policy Institute Report on Federal Role in Education Policy](#), [NYC Int 1014-2018 CA Educational Budget](#)

### *Inclusive Special Education*

Our education system must recognize that all students have different needs without completely segregating disabled students from the traditional classroom environment. Our education system can still provide all students with the resources they need without isolating them. While every situation is different, we should not have disabled students only interacting and working alongside other disabled students, and we should not have non-disabled students interacting and working alongside only non-disabled students. This is not only segregation but dubs these kids as deviant, and it is the first step to them being criminalized. By being more inclusive to those who require special education, we can expand opportunities for all students and better prepare them for the real world.

Proposals: [S.1070/H.R.2421 Safe Equitable Campus Resources and Education Act](#), [S.1071/H.R.2401 RISE Act](#), [S.1072 PREP for All Students Act](#), [Advisory Committee Representation Enhancement Act](#)

### *End Standardized Testing*

There is something fundamentally wrong with the idea that an hours-long test on a select number of subjects is the best way to evaluate a student's intelligence. So many students are not good test takers, excel in completely different subject areas, are different types of learners, and to initiate one format to assess academic aptitude does not make any sense. While there are also preparation options for these tests, many have a significant price tag attached to them, which puts students from low-income households at a massive disadvantage. We must set a standard of evaluating each student holistically to allow them to pursue the best higher education and/or career options for them

Proposal: [H.R.1741 More Teaching Less Testing Act](#)

### *Universal School Meals*

It's a simple question: Should any student have to go to school hungry? When students are hungry, they can't focus on their schoolwork because they're thinking about their empty stomachs. Public schools need more money, and that money should be used to make sure every student gets three healthy meals each day. We need to get rid of "school lunch debt" and make sure every student has the chance to succeed in and out of the classroom. Research shows that when students have enough to eat, they do better in school. So, giving schools enough money for food programs helps students succeed in the future. These programs should be available to all K-12 students, no matter how much money their school district has, because every student deserves to have enough to eat at school.

Proposal: [S.1568/H.R.3204 Universal School Meals Program Act](#)

### *Comprehensive Health & Sex Education*

Health, and specifically sex, can undoubtedly be an uncomfortable subject to discuss with young people, but we are doing them a massive disservice by not being straightforward about it. Our education system needs to be honest in providing the information and resources necessary to make sure young people are safe, responsible, and respectful in their sex life. Abstinence-only education is not a responsible or reliable form of education. Students need to be educated on concepts like consent and contraception, then they can make educated decisions to protect themselves and adhere

to their beliefs. Additionally, we need to do a better job educating students on nutrition and their personal health. This education should not pressure students to feel like they need to conform to certain health or beauty standards, but instead, inform them on strategies to better take care of their mind and body so they can be the best they can be.

Proposal: [H.R.3583/S.1697 Real Education and Access for Healthy Youth Act of 2021](#)

## **Combatting the Climate Crisis**

### *Nationwide Mass Economic Mobilization*

To prevent an uninhabitable future and secure a sustainable planet for generations to come, we must mobilize all of our resources and the American people to address the urgent climate crisis that has already begun. This requires a monumental effort, comparable to the scale of mobilization witnessed during World War II, that engages every sector of our economy, implements transformative policies, and prioritizes sustainable practices. We cannot compromise or delay action when the fate of our planet hangs in the balance.

Proposals: [H.Res. 319 Green New Deal](#)

### *Good-paying Green Jobs*

To effectively address the transition to renewable energy in the United States, we must prioritize the well-being of workers and communities affected by the shift away from fossil fuels. This requires providing them with training, job opportunities, and comprehensive support to combat the climate crisis. We must also address the economic and social challenges faced by these individuals and communities, investing in job retraining programs, protecting and expanding new employment opportunities in renewable energy sectors, and implementing policies that prioritize their needs and voices. By fostering inclusivity and support, we can build a sustainable and resilient future that benefits all Americans.

Proposal: [H.R.5783 - Blue Collar and Green Collar Jobs Development Act](#)

### *Protecting Communities Most Affected*

The disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on communities of color and urban areas must be acknowledged. This includes individuals in public schools and housing, who often face dangerous conditions due to outdated appliances, pipes, and infrastructure, posing threats to their lives and the surrounding communities through

issues like tainted water, mold, and air pollution. It is imperative that clean drinking water and safe air quality are recognized as human rights rather than mere priorities. Efforts need to be made to hold polluters accountable and enforce regulations on their operations, particularly in densely populated regions.

Proposals: [S.611 Energy Efficiency for Affordable Housing Act](#), [Green New Deal for Public Schools Act of 2023](#), [S.919/HR.1705 Environmental Justice for All Act](#)

### *Investing in a Clean Energy Future*

The United States must swiftly transition to clean energy and away from fossil fuels to combat the detrimental effects of climate change. Upholding commitments made in the Paris Climate Accords, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, is critical to ensuring a future for our generation. While initiatives like the Inflation Reduction Act provide significant support for clean energy, it is essential to implement both incentives and penalties to effectively address the challenges posed by the fossil fuel industry and consumption. A comprehensive approach, combining positive measures with regulatory actions, is necessary to mitigate the catastrophic impacts of climate change.

Proposals: [HR.1014/S.408 Big Oil Windfall Profits Tax Act](#), [America's Clean Future Fund Act of 2021](#) [H.R.1483 - End Oil and Gas Tax Subsidies Act of 2023](#)

### *Stop Polluting Our Land*

Agriculture plays a significant role in the United States' greenhouse gas emissions, contributing 10.6% in 2021. What makes it even more concerning is the fact that agricultural emissions are on the rise, unlike many other industries in the country. The excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers in farming has resulted in various issues, such as the creation of dead zones in the ocean where oxygen levels are depleted. To address these problems effectively, it is crucial to implement stricter regulations on the appropriate usage of these chemicals. Additionally, by adopting responsible soil management practices that avoid excessive tilling, we can harness the potential of soil to sequester carbon.

Proposals: [S.269/H.R. 5085 Protect America's Children from Toxic Pesticides Act](#), [H.R.1840/S.1016 Agriculture Resilience Act of 2023](#), [H.R. 3844 Sustainable Agriculture Research Act](#)

## **Gen Z-Authored Legislation:**

- ★ [A resolution recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to guarantee the rights of all young Americans](#) authored by Ryan Yeager of Voters of Tomorrow

- ★ [Protect Student Workers Act](#) authored by Ryan Yeager of Voters of Tomorrow
- ★ [H.Res.434](#) - A resolution, authored by Saanvi Arora of the Youth Power Project, declaring a mental health crisis among youth in the United States, and expressing the pressing need for historic investments in mental health care.
- ★ [President’s Award for Civic Engagement \(PACE\) Act](#) authored by Saanvi Arora of Youth Power Project
- ★ [Virginia H.B.2069 of 2023](#) - A bill, authored by Elijah Lee of Voters of Tomorrow Virginia, to require a student member on each school board in Virginia.
- ★ [Virginia H.B.1525 of 2023](#) - A bill, authored by Elijah Lee of Voters of Tomorrow Virginia, that permits the hiring of peer recovery specialists who have been convicted of certain barrier crimes where a history of such offense does not pose a risk in the work of a peer recovery.
- ★ [Virginia S.B.1147 of 2023](#) - A bill, authored by Elijah Lee of Voters of Tomorrow Virginia, that subjects any licensee of the Board of Medicine to complete up to two hours of continuing learning activities or courses in a specific subject area. Under the bill, the first subject area shall be on the topic of human trafficking.
- ★ [Virginia S.B.1300 of 2023](#) - A bill, authored by Elijah Lee of Voters of Tomorrow Virginia, that requires public school teachers in Virginia to undergo annual training to recognize and address signs of childhood trauma in students and provide necessary support.
- ★ [Virginia H.B.1721 of 2023](#) - A bill, authored by Elijah Lee of Voters of Tomorrow Virginia, that directs the VA Commissioner of Health to convene a work group to study the occurrence of microplastics in Virginia’s public drinking water.