

THE NATIONAL COALITION OF 100 BLACK WOMEN, INC.
THE 100 BLACK MEN OF AMERICA, INC.

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA AREA CHAPTERS

LEGISLATIVE DAY 2024

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ENSURING **THE VOTE** Position Papers



100

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Ensuring Quality Education for All Students in Georgia

Quality education serves as the cornerstone of a thriving community, empowering individuals with knowledge, critical thinking skills, and opportunities for socio-economic mobility. In the state of Georgia, the pursuit of excellence in education must be underpinned by a steadfast commitment to inclusivity, truth, and the preservation of diverse perspectives.

Access to quality education is not merely a privilege but a fundamental right for all students in Georgia. By cultivating a dynamic educational ecosystem grounded in evidence-based practices, innovation, and inclusivity, we can equip learners with the tools they need to succeed academically, professionally, and personally. A robust education system lays the foundation for vibrant communities, economic prosperity, and social cohesion, nurturing the talents and aspirations of every child, regardless of background or circumstance.

Despite the imperative of quality education, the state of Georgia faces formidable challenges and threats that jeopardize the integrity and inclusivity of its educational landscape. Attacks on critical race theory, attempts to erase black history, and the propagation of disinformation undermine the pursuit of truth and equity in education. Efforts to suppress diverse perspectives, censor literature, and curtail academic freedom constitute an affront to the values of democracy, enlightenment, and intellectual inquiry.

Children in Georgia have the right to be taught the unvarnished truth about our nation's history, including the lived experiences of marginalized communities and the enduring legacies of systemic oppression. Critical race theory, equitable legislation, and inclusive curricular frameworks serve as essential tools for fostering empathy, understanding, and reconciliation in our classrooms and communities. Banning books, stifling dialogue, and perpetuating sanitized narratives only serve to perpetuate ignorance, division, and injustice.

The freedom to learn is sacrosanct, encompassing the right of every student to explore diverse perspectives, engage in rigorous inquiry, and confront uncomfortable truths. In Georgia, we must reject attempts to impose ideological orthodoxy, silence dissent, or sanitize history in service of political expediency. Instead, we must embrace the richness of our collective heritage, acknowledge the complexities of our past, and empower students to navigate the complexities of our present with wisdom, discernment, and compassion.

In conclusion, the pursuit of quality education in Georgia demands unwavering commitment, courage, and integrity. By safeguarding academic freedom, promoting truth, and embracing diversity, we can cultivate a vibrant educational ecosystem that fosters curiosity, empathy, and resilience in the next generation of leaders, innovators, and citizens. Let us stand together in defense of the freedom to learn, the pursuit of truth, and the promise of a brighter future for all students in Georgia.

In essence, our collective commitment to quality education transcends ideological divides, honoring the inherent dignity and potential of every child to thrive, contribute, and shape the future of our state and our nation.

Ensuring Access to Voting Rights in 2024

The Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965 remains a cornerstone of democracy in the United States, designed to safeguard the fundamental right to vote for all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. As we navigate the landscape of 2024, it is imperative to reaffirm our commitment to accessibility and inclusivity in every aspect of the electoral process.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 emerged as a response to decades of systemic disenfranchisement, particularly targeting African American voters in the South. It aimed to eliminate discriminatory barriers such as literacy tests, poll taxes, and intimidation tactics that obstructed marginalized communities from exercising their constitutional right to vote.

In 2024, the essence of the Voting Rights Act persists as a beacon of equality. However, challenges persist, highlighting the necessity for continuous adaptation and enhancement. Accessibility for all voters, regardless of physical ability, geographical location, or socioeconomic status, remains paramount.

Absentee voting provisions play a pivotal role in ensuring access to the ballot box, especially for individuals facing mobility constraints, military personnel, and citizens residing overseas. Expanding and streamlining absentee voting procedures can mitigate barriers and empower every eligible voter to participate in the democratic process.

Early voting initiatives serve as a vital mechanism for increasing voter turnout and reducing logistical hurdles. By offering extended periods for casting ballots, early voting accommodates diverse schedules, alleviates congestion on Election Day, and enhances the convenience of participation for working individuals, caregivers, and those facing unexpected circumstances.

Implementing same-day registration and voting policies represents a progressive step towards inclusivity and accessibility. Such measures afford citizens the opportunity to register and cast their ballots on Election Day itself, facilitating engagement and enfranchisement for individuals who encounter registration barriers or experience last-minute changes in residency.

As guardians of democracy, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to fortify the principles enshrined within the Voting Rights Act of 1965. In 2024 and beyond, the pursuit of universal access to the ballot box must transcend political divides and unite us in our collective endeavor to uphold the fundamental tenets of democracy. By championing accessibility, embracing innovation, and safeguarding the voting rights of all citizens, we honor the legacy of those who fought tirelessly to secure our democratic freedoms.

In essence, the evolution of the Voting Rights Act in 2024 must reflect our unwavering dedication to ensuring that every voice is heard and every vote counts in the vibrant tapestry of American democracy.

Advancing Medicaid Expansion in Georgia

Medicaid expansion stands as a critical imperative for the health and well-being of Georgia's populace, offering a transformative pathway towards equitable access to quality healthcare services. By extending coverage to individuals and families who currently fall within the gap of eligibility, Georgia can catalyze positive health outcomes while fostering fiscal resilience and vitality within its healthcare infrastructure.

The expansion of Medicaid in Georgia represents a pivotal stride towards fortifying the public health landscape. By broadening eligibility criteria to encompass individuals earning up to 138% of the federal poverty level, countless uninsured and underinsured residents will gain access to essential preventive care, chronic disease management, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment. By addressing health disparities and bolstering primary care access, Medicaid expansion holds the potential to mitigate the burden of preventable illnesses, reduce emergency room visits, and foster a healthier, more resilient population.

The economic rationale for Medicaid expansion in Georgia transcends humanitarian imperatives, underscoring its capacity to generate substantial financial returns and alleviate strain on state resources. Through federal funding mechanisms, Georgia stands to receive a significant influx of resources to support the expansion, mitigating the need for disproportionate state expenditures. By leveraging federal matching funds, the state can amplify its capacity to deliver comprehensive healthcare coverage while safeguarding fiscal stability and sustainability. Moreover, Medicaid expansion yields ancillary economic benefits, stimulating job growth, enhancing workforce productivity, and bolstering healthcare sector resilience, thereby invigorating Georgia's broader economic landscape.

At its core, Medicaid expansion epitomizes a commitment to equity, dignity, and social justice for all Georgians. By extending coverage to vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals, communities of color, and rural residents, Georgia can dismantle systemic barriers to healthcare access and foster a more inclusive, compassionate society. Medicaid expansion transcends partisan divides, epitomizing a bipartisan endeavor rooted in the collective pursuit of human dignity, fairness, and opportunity.

The imperative to expand Medicaid in Georgia embodies a moral imperative and a strategic imperative, converging to cultivate a healthier, more resilient, and equitable society. By embracing Medicaid expansion, Georgia can harness the transformative power of healthcare access to uplift communities, empower individuals, and propel the state towards a future defined by prosperity, compassion, and collective well-being.

In conclusion, the decision to expand Medicaid in Georgia represents not merely a policy choice, but a moral imperative and a testament to our shared commitment to the principles of equity, justice, and human dignity. It is a testament to our ability to transcend partisanship and unite in the pursuit of a brighter, healthier future for all Georgians.

Strikingly Noticeable: Our Position on Gun Control

Overview

The on-going issue of gun control has been a subject of intense debate and controversy for many years. The United States has seen a long-standing and passionate discussion surrounding the appropriate measures to address gun violence while respecting the rights of responsible gun owners. We seek to provide a perspective on gun control and acknowledge the complexities and sensitivities involved in this multifaceted issue.

The United States has one of the highest rates of gun ownership in the world and the constitutional right to bear arms, which is deeply ingrained in American culture. However, the country also experiences a disproportionately high rate of gun-related violence and mass shootings compared to other developed nations. These tragic events have prompted calls for stricter gun control measures to prevent tragedies and ensure public safety.

Key Points

The Second Amendment and Public Safety:

We are guided by our Second Amendment. The right to bear arms is enshrined in the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution. It is essential to respect the constitutional right while also recognizing the need for reasonable regulations to prevent gun violence and protect public safety. The safety and well-being of the public is intrinsically necessary. Therefore, our safety and well-being in the State of Georgia must be a top priority. Common-sense measures such as universal background checks, waiting periods and restrictions on high-capacity magazines can help prevent individuals who pose a threat to public safety from obtaining firearms.

Mental Health:

Addressing mental health issues and improving access to mental health care is crucial in preventing gun violence. The removal of such care was and is absurd. Understanding a person's psychodynamics and psychopathy is necessary prior to putting a gun in their hand. There is a need to integrate efforts to identify and assist individuals at risk of harming themselves or others. Mental health assessments should be a required component of any comprehensive approach to gun control.

Enforcement and Oversight:

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Report, Fulton County has the highest percentage in gun law violations than the United States. We must strengthen enforcement of existing gun laws and enhance oversight of firearms sales and transfers. These measures can help prevent illegal gun trafficking and ensure that those who are prohibited from owning firearms cannot easily obtain them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing the complex issues of gun control requires a balanced approach that respects individual rights while prioritizing public safety. However, by acknowledging the constitutional right to bear arms and implementing reasonable, evidence-based measures to prevent gun violence, it is possible to implement strikingly noticeable positions, which would create a safeguard for both the liberty and the lives of the American people. We advocate for a comprehensive and nuanced approach to gun control that considers the diverse perspectives and concerns surrounding this critical issue. Therefore, we urge our legislators to support the following approach:

- Increase common-sense measures such as universal background checks.
- Introduce waiting periods between the purchase of a firearm and its delivery to allow for background checks and cooling-off periods.
- Implement restrictions on high-capacity magazines.
- Require individuals to undergo a formal mental health evaluation conducted by a qualified mental health professional to assess their mental health status and determine their mental capacity to purchase and own a firearm.
- Enhance the enforcement of current gun laws and improving supervision of firearms sales and transfer to deter illicit gun trafficking.

References:

Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). Uniform Crime Reporting Program Links to an external site.. <https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr>



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