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One
Voice

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

From Vision to Victory: Building Black Power Through Policy, Partnership, and People



INTRODUCTION

Mississippi, and the nation, stands at a defining crossroads. Across our state, families are making painful sacrifices to make ends meet at a time when affordability is slipping further out of reach. The decisions made by our local and state lawmakers have the power to shape whether Mississippi meets this moment or allows more Mississippians to fall further behind. For One Voice, building Black power is more than just an empty slogan, but a vision for what's possible when policy is crafted in the interest of people. One Voice envisions a Mississippi where all voices are heard, and our 2026 legislative priorities chart a path forward to the future we're fighting for: a Mississippi where WE ALL THRIVE.

AT A GLANCE

Over the past several months, the economy has experienced a rapid decline. During the summer of 2025, the US netted a loss in jobs comparable to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Three hundred thousand federal employees are expected to be subject to layoffs as part of the federal government's downsizing efforts. In just three months, some three hundred thousand Black women were forced out of the workforce; a troubling indicator for impending economic instability.

Here in Mississippi, economists forecast that the Magnolia State is already on the brink of a recession. Economic hardship and the lack of adequate opportunity can create the conditions the Trump administration is using as the pretext to justify the deployment of federal troops. Recently, cities such as DC, Chicago, Memphis, and Portland were subjected to the federal government asserting control over its local law enforcement agencies.

Despite clear evidence that reducing crime is contingent on sustained economic investment, Mississippi continues to prioritize the interests of millionaires ahead of the needs of working families. Rather than funding the programs that make our communities stronger, the state has doubled down on tax breaks for the wealthy.

In 2025, Mississippi passed legislation providing the one-percent with some of the largest tax cuts in the entire country. Millionaires will receive a tax reduction at a rate of 101 times that of the average working Mississippian. According to The Institute of Taxation and Policy (ITEP), this measure alone could cost the state \$2.5 billion a year in revenue. Furthermore, the state legislature enacted a law that will incrementally eliminate the state income tax altogether.

By adopting transformative and bold policies identified here, Mississippi can move towards a more inclusive democracy where all citizens have the opportunity to thrive. Alongside our constituents and partner organizations, and fueled by our vision of a just and equitable society, One Voice remains committed to protecting the interests of all Mississippians, particularly the most vulnerable among us. This is not the moment to cede ground, but rather an opportunity to stand firm in our values and work towards lasting progress.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

EDUCATION EQUITY

We envision a Mississippi where every child, no matter their ZIP code, race, or income level, can attend a well-resourced public school that provides a high-quality education. Having access to a quality education is a fundamental right for all of Mississippi's children, not a privilege reserved for the most fortunate. Education plays a critical role in breaking the cycle of poverty and unlocking upward mobility. One Voice prioritizes fully funding public Mississippi schools, ending corporal punishment in K-12 schools, and providing families with quality state-funded pre-K programs.

To ensure that every child in Mississippi thrives with the support of quality, well-funded schools, One Voice urges our lawmakers to adopt the following policy priorities:

- Expanding Quality State-Funded Pre-K Education Programs
- Fully Funding the Mississippi School Funding Formula
- Keeping Public Dollars in Public Schools
- Expanding Community Schools
- Ending Corporal Punishment in K-12 Schools
- Increasing Access and Affordability in our Higher Education System

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

We envision a Mississippi where our criminal justice system promotes community safety and treats all with fairness and dignity. We envision a justice system that upholds the rights of all with a commitment to fair sentencing, an investment in rehabilitation, and the elimination of racial and economic inequities. One Voice continues to advocate for sentencing reform, expanded reentry programs, and policies that reduce mass incarceration and promotes safety.

To achieve a more equitable criminal justice system, One Voice proposes:

- Reforming Pretrial Detention Procedures, Ending Money Bail and Providing Alternatives for Nonviolent Offenders
- Reducing Recidivism Rate by "Banning the Box" on Employment Applications, Broadening Reentry Programs, and Addressing Collateral Consequences
- Passing a Comprehensive Criminal Justice Reform Package: Reducing Penalties for Low-Level Offenses and the Prison Population, and Improving Prison Conditions

ENERGY DEMOCRACY

We envision a Mississippi where every community has access to clean, renewable energy sources and distributing access equitably during every stage. Sustainable energy solutions should be developed with two key objectives in mind: protecting the environment and ensuring all communities can participate in the rollout. One Voice advocates for the continued, bold investment in renewable energy, strong safeguards for the safety of residents, and funding for expanded utility access.

To position Mississippi ahead of the curve in renewable energy development, One Voice advocates for the following policy initiatives:

- Commit Additional Funds to Expand Utility Assistance Programs, such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Develop and Enforce Safeguards for the Expansion of Data Centers: Addressing Water Usage, Increases in Utility Services, and Air Pollution Concerns Into Consideration
- Expedite The Release of Federal Funding Through BEAD/BEAM to Provide Internet Access to Underserved Communities

VOTING RIGHTS

We envision a Mississippi where every voice is heard in the political process. Our democracy thrives when all voters are granted full participation and One Voice has worked on eliminating the barriers to voting that have silenced too many Mississippians. Together, we can build a modernized democracy and voting system that paves the way for a more just society. One Voice seeks to improve this process by abolishing the state's archaic felony disenfranchisement law and expanding the window voters have to cast a ballot.

To expand voting rights and further strengthen Mississippi's democracy, One Voice recommends the following policy proposals:

- **Enact an Early Voting period** and No-Excuse Absentee Voting
- Redraw the Supreme Court Districts in to **Prevent the Dilution of Black Voting Power** (in Accordance to the Voting Rights Act)
- Reinststate an **Equitable Ballot Initiative Process**
- Eliminate the Draconian Felony Disenfranchisement Law and Provide a **Clear Process for Restoring Their Voting Rights**
- Enact Online Voter Registration

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

We envision a Mississippi where families access the lever to economic mobility and one where our systems seek to reduce poverty. Our definition of economic justice means creating a system that enables families to build stronger, more resilient communities. One Voice has long advocated for policies that raise wages, expand healthcare coverage, and make our budget process more transparent. Our key priorities include improving the state's budget-making process, investing in aid-based programs, and developing in-state tax credits to provide working families with a much needed break.

To advance economic justice across the state, One Voice recommends the following policy actions:

- Increasing the State Minimum Wage to a **Livable Wage**, at Least \$12 an Hour
- **Expanding Medicaid** to Extend Healthcare Coverage to over 100,000 Mississippians
- Enacting an **Earned Income Tax credit and Child Tax Credit**
- Developing a More Participatory Budget Process. We can delete the part that says "such as the People's Budget"

CONCLUSION

Meaningful, long-lasting change requires our collective power to ensure our voices are fully represented in the legislative process. Build the future of Mississippi by committing to these empowering actions:

- **Champion grassroots power by mobilizing, educating, and organizing your community** to drive broad participation and political engagement.
- **Command legislative attention by assertively and consistently communicating with your elected officials** (calls, emails, office visits) to demand policy changes that reflect our shared values of **justice, equity, and prosperity**.
- **Amplify our collective voice by attending lobby days and delivering compelling public testimony** that shapes the legislative narrative and compels lawmakers to act.
- **Stay informed and strategically engaged by subscribing to One Voice's critical alerts** to receive timely analysis and direct action steps throughout the legislative session.




Together, we can transform our state and continue building power in our communities through policy and partnership; ensuring historically silenced communities have representation and influence in spaces of power, until our Mississippi is one where WE ALL THRIVE.



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ONE VILLAGE
ONE VISION
ONE VOICE

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About One Voice: Guided by principles of self-determination, One Voice ensures historically silenced communities have representation and influence in spaces of power. We envision a Mississippi where we all thrive.