

## **COVID-19 Community-Led Policy Agenda**

### *Health Care*

- Expand access to health care through MNSure, MinnesotaCare, and medical assistance in both special enrollment periods & extended enrollment throughout the year
- Dramatically increase testing, tracing, and isolation strategies in African heritage communities, utilizing the “moonshot” approach that has been deployed in other communities especially vulnerable to being exposed to COVID-19
- Increase data tracking to better accurately portray how many Minnesotans of African heritage are tested, confirmed positive, & turned away from testing
- Increase access to PPE, especially face masks, for individuals, organizations, and businesses in African heritage communities

### Legislation

- HF 1507/SF1579 -PCA’s provide hands-on assistance - such as getting dressed, bathing, and preparing meals for many who need additional help, 61 percent of those who are in the PCA system are people of color.
- This bill would provide additional support by doing the following: Increasing the monthly limit on the number of hours a personal care assistant may provide care, creating a temporary allowance for parents, step-parents, or legal guardian of minor, or the spouse of a PCA recipient, to provide services and be compensated during the peacetime emergency and temporarily increasing PCA pay rate by 15%.

### *Education*

- Support local districts in achieving a 1:1 model to ensure every student has a computer device, with specific focus on underserved families, including those of African heritage
- Increase parent/guardian/familial supports as they support their students in distance learning
- Increase individualized support for students in Special Education programming to support their specific learning needs while engaging in distance learning
- Expand broadband internet access, especially throughout rural counties
- Increase social-emotional supports to prioritize student’s wellbeing as they navigate the stressors and traumas induced by this crisis
- Ensure flexibility in tracking absences as it relates to truancy
- Analyze further Minnesota state standards to ensure greater flexibility
- Ensure job security and compensation for Education Service Professionals (ESPs) and other hourly workers, who are disproportionately people of color

### Legislation

- HF 4415/ SF4369- This bill provides compensation for school employees during distance learning periods during the 2019-2020 school year, exceptions made for probationary teachers, unexcused absences won’t be counted as truancy.
- HF 1507/SF1579 -This bill would appropriate 15M for emergency distance learning wireless needs, 10M for border-to-border broadband needs and 2M for telemedicine needs.

### *Public Safety*

- Following county correctional facilities, decrease the incarcerated population among those with non-violent offenses to increase capacity for social distancing and adequate health care
- Add correctional facilities to “congregate settings” that have a greater risk of spreading the virus
- Allocate housing and employment resources and services for those recently released

#### Legislation

- HF 3156 : This bill modifies the occupancy limits of cells to allow single cells when they are available; expands the powers of the commissioner to provide early conditional releases for those sentenced for nonviolent crimes who have 180 days or less to serve. This bill also requires that all prisons must publish correctional facility daily population data on the website and requires local juvenile and adult facilities to report as well, for the next year.

#### *Housing*

- Extend the moratorium on evictions to remain in effect after the end of the peacetime emergency order
- Provide cash assistance relief for Minnesotans struggling to pay rents and mortgages, eliminate late fees and other penalties, & institute no interest rates on mortgages
- Strongly consider cancellation of residential/commercial rents & mortgages

#### Legislation

- HF 1507/SF1579: This bill will provides several housing protections including late fee stops, moratorium on evictions, lease terminations and foreclosure filings. This bill also includes 100M for emergency assistance grants.

#### *Economic Advancement & Labor*

- Allocate funds specifically for grants and forgivable loans for small & micro businesses in communities of African heritage
- Provide direct appropriations to Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) directly serving businesses & organizations of African heritage
- Mandate high health, safety, and economic standards to protect frontline workers, who are largely Black and Brown, across the State of Minnesota
- Support appeals to federal delegation to waive garnishment of stimulus checks because of back child support to ensure economic relief is getting to the over 4,200 Minnesota families affected

#### Legislation

- HF 4611/ SF4540 -This bill create will create the COVID-19 emergency community relief grant program. This program will assist those who do not qualify or are not eligible to receive federal or state assistance. Grants are up to \$1500 per person and can be used to purchase food, emergency household items, rent support, utility bills.
- HF 1507/SF1579- This bill will provide 55 million to DEED for small-business emergency loans, \$11 million will be specifically directed to smaller businesses, those who have 6 or fewer employees.