

# 2021-2022 Legislative Agenda

NORTH CAROLINA  
WOMEN UNITED



JULY, 2021



ECONOMIC  
STABILITY

HEALTHCARE  
ACCESS

GENDER-BASED  
VIOLENCE

CLIMATE JUSTICE

INCLUSIVE AND  
EQUITABLE DEMOCRACY

Last year, following the murder of George Floyd, a nationally catalyzing event that called attention to the longstanding and systemic racism and institutionalized violence against Black, Indigenous and people of color in the United States, North Carolina Women United undertook to update our legislative agenda with an intersectional and explicitly anti-racist lens, expanding the number of issues upon which we advocate to stand in solidarity as an explicitly antiracist organization. We continue to stand behind the comprehensive set of recommendations articulated in that legislative agenda, all of which still need urgent attention by policymakers in the state if we are to foster a more equitable and just society for the women and families of North Carolina, in all their diversity.

Building on this comprehensive vision paper, this legislative cycle's agenda proposes a summary view of what bills should be prioritized in the current legislative context (i.e., following crossover). Regrettably and tellingly, a number of the policy proposals that we called for in last year's legislative agenda update did not advance through crossover, and several bills that are antithetical to our principles and policy objectives, have. This is particularly true for bills that would have sought to address systemic racism and injustice in areas such as policing, healthcare, and education, a reality that undermines our ability to deliver an intersectional and antiracist agenda in the current context.

With this important caveat in mind, we have included in this legislative agenda the top one or two bills in each issue area that have advanced through crossover and should either be passed or blocked, in line with our priorities. For a more comprehensive view of the universe of good policy ideas that should be championed to advance women's rights and gender and racial justice in the state, please reference our 2019-2020 legislative agenda update.

Charnessa Ridley, President    Lyric Thompson, Policy Director

## **ABOUT NCWU**

NC Women United (NCWU) is a coalition of progressive state and local organizations working to achieve the full political, social, and economic equality of all women across North Carolina. NCWU works to build women's power through grassroots activism, community organizing, legislative advocacy, and engagement in the political process.

### **Economic Stability**

- Legislators should SUPPORT HB128, which would provide a \$1500 bonus for individuals on unemployment who find a job
- Legislators should VOTE NO on proposed tax cuts

### **Healthcare Access**

- Legislators should SUPPORT HB608, a bill to ban shackling of incarcerated women in childbirth
- Legislators should VOTE NO on HB 453, which would restrict abortion access and women's bodily autonomy

### **Inclusive and Equitable Democracy**

- Legislators should VOTE NO on SB 326, SB 724, and SB 725. These bills would undermine equitable access to the ballot, and in particular, disenfranchise North Carolina's Black and Brown voters.
- Legislators should VOTE NO on HB805, which would allow very serious criminal charges to be brought against someone who is part of a gathering that meets the bill's vague definition of a "riot" and will dampen people's ability for peaceful protest.

### **Gender-Based Violence**

- Legislators should SUPPORT S35, which would increase the age of marriage in North Carolina from 14--the lowest age in statute in the country--to 16 and limit age gaps for children under 18 to four years or less

### **Climate Justice**

- Legislators should VOTE NO on S. 605 (The Farm Act), which would fast-track permitting for projects that lock in the primitive and polluting practices at industrial hog operations that disproportionately harm Black, Latino, and Native American families in eastern North Carolina. The bill also significantly limits the opportunities for impacted community members to weigh in on the permitting process.

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NCWU would like to thank our policy leads, the policy and legislative staff from our member organizations, who volunteer their time and talent to inform our signature policy products, including this agenda:

- Susanna Birdsong, Planned Parenthood South Atlantic
- Kay Castillo, National Association of Social Workers North Carolina Chapter
- Skye David, NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Gloria De Los Santos, Race, Gender and Equity (RAGE), Action NC
- Shemekka Ebony, NC Black Women's Roundtable, I Am Brilliant
- Kathleen Lockwood, North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Ann Webb, American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina

If you or your organization would like to get involved and support our initiatives or find out how to utilize this document to host your own local agenda forums, we would love to hear from you! For more information, contact [info@ncwu.edu](mailto:info@ncwu.edu).

## NCWU Board Members

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## NCWU Members

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AAUW of North Carolina

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Equality North Carolina

ERA NC Alliance

General Federation of Women's Clubs of NC

Greensboro Commission on the Status of Women

Ipas

League of Women Voters of North Carolina

NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina

National Association of Social Workers NC Chapter

NC Association of Women Attorneys

NC Business and Professional Women

NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence

NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault

NC Justice Center

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