Poor People's Campaign

A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL

NORTH CAROLINA FACT SHEET • 2024

The Poor are a Powerful Force in This Country

- North Carolina is home to nearly 3.5 million poor and low-income eligible voters who make up 41.45% of the electorate.
- If poor and low-income eligible voters went to the polls at the same rate as higher-income voters, they would have the power to sway election outcomes in every state.

Obstacles to Full Democratic Participation

- The Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act in 2013 and the Senate blocked a bill to restore these rights by a two-vote margin in 2022.
- Between 2020 and 2023, North Carolina state lawmakers introduced 22 voter restrictive bills and several have passed.

Political Debates Ignore Urgent Concerns

- A key factor discouraging poor and low-income people from voting: political campaigns that don't speak to their issues.
- Not 1 of the 15 presidential debates in 2020 devoted even 30 minutes to poverty, **the 4th-leading cause of death in America.** Long-term poverty claims 295,000 lives every year, more than homicide, gun violence, diabetes, or obesity.

North Carolina Data on Interlocking Injustices Harming Poor and Low-income People

Poverty

- Between 2018-2020, 4.2 million North Carolinians were poor or low-income, accounting for 40.2% of the state's population.
- In 2021, 2,089,000 children received the expanded Child Tax Credit and 601,000 low-wage workers received the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit.
- Since these pandemic programs have expired, poverty has been on the rise — proving that **poverty is a policy choice.**

Low Wages, Inequality, and Rising Costs

- To meet basic needs, two adults with two children need to earn over $25/hour. But at the state's minimum wage of $7.25, an individual must work 106 hours/week to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment.
- 37% of the state's workforce earns less than $15/hour and 328,949 households were behind on rent or housing payments at the beginning of 2023.
- In 2021, all Republicans and 8 Senate Democrats blocked an increase in the federal minimum wage to $15, leaving it at $7.25 ($2.13 for tipped workers).
- Since 2017 Republican tax cuts, the 748 U.S. billionaires are $2.2 trillion richer.

Health

- 372,000 people are expected to lose Medicaid by March 2024 due to the end of pandemic protections.
- North Carolina's average life expectancy dropped by 1.5 years between 2019 and 2020.
- 4 million workers, or 78% of the state's workforce, do not have paid leave.

Climate Crisis Impact on the Poor

- Poor and low-income North Carolina households spend 7 times as much of their income on energy costs as the average household.
- Poor and low-income people are bearing the brunt of deaths and injuries due to climate change. North Carolina has had significant changes in precipitation patterns, with increased risks of flooding, drought, and water scarcity.

Militarism

- In 2023, the federal government spent $1.1 trillion on war and weapons, law enforcement, mass incarceration, deportations, and detention.
- In North Carolina, state taxpayer dollars for deportations and border control could instead subsidize 70,549 public housing units. Taxpayer dollars for nuclear weapons could provide health insurance for 239,658 children.

These facts underscore the need for a resurrection of justice, love, and truth — *not* an insurrection of injustice, lies, and hate.

Detailed versions of this report and fact sheets for all 50 states available at: https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/learn/

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