

POWER Interfaith presents



OUR PLATFORM FOR A PROSPEROUS PENNSYLVANIA

POWER

www.powerinterfaith.org

WHO WE ARE



POWER Interfaith is a network of more than 200 congregations throughout Philadelphia and the surrounding counties, in the Lehigh Valley and in Lancaster, a statewide organizing force for economic and racial justice on a livable planet.

Our History

In the spring of 2011, more than 150 lay and clergy leaders from POWER congregations conducted research meetings to gain an understanding of how and why our key systems are failing to provide the pathways to opportunity our families need, and to learn about both the scope of the challenges, as well as opportunities for collective action and possible transformation in our job training and employment systems, our K-12 and adult education systems, our housing and vacant land management systems, our healthcare systems and in our public safety and criminal justice systems.

Our Mission

POWER Interfaith uses our common belief in God's goodness and compassion for the suffering to organize and empower Pennsylvanians to live and work together to transform the conditions of their communiti, and that life flourishes for all.



PLATFORM FOR A PROSPEROUS PENNSYLVANIA

Preamble

POWER Interfaith is a multi-racial, multi-faith, grassroots coalition of Pennsylvanians committed to organizing for racial and economic justice on a livable planet. Our long-term vision of a better and inclusive world for all, regardless of skin color, class, or citizenship, necessitates that we push for change in our communities, regions, and statewide; the changes we envision are outlined below:



Education Equity

We need fully funded schools free from racial or economic biases. Each child in Pennsylvania deserves to go to a public school that receives the funding it needs from a Commonwealth budget prioritizing high-quality, equitable education for all and correcting for decades of underfunding for majority Black, brown, and low-income districts. Fair funding for each child in each district, regardless of race or family wealth, is a moral imperative.

Education Demands

- Pass legislation that fully enacts into law a schedule of increases over the course of 7 years, raising the Basic Education Funding by \$5.1 Billion, to meet the adequacy gap caused by decades of racial bias and inequity in school funding.
- Protection of, and full investment in, our public education system: Our tax funds must be focused on fixing our unconstitutional public school funding system and not on privatization, vouchers, or private school tax credits.



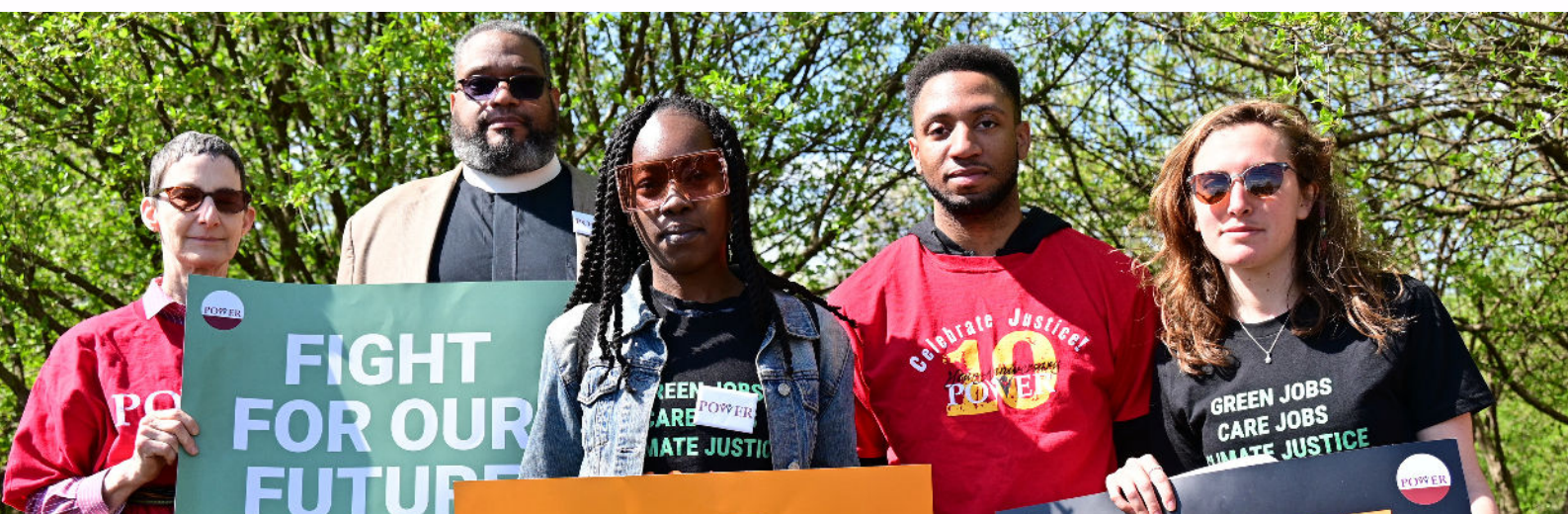


Climate Justice and Jobs

For a prosperous Pennsylvania, we need a healthy planet. Our Commonwealth Constitution requires all officials to act as trustees of a healthy environment, but pollution and unsustainable resource extraction have damaged our communities in pursuit of profit. We need affordable renewable energy, environmental justice, and public investment to rebuild our economy with healthy green jobs and fair labor practices.

Climate Justice and Jobs Demands

- The bipartisan Whole Home Repair Program, popular across our state, must receive sufficient funding in the state budget to stabilize our communities, create local green jobs, and allow low- and middle-income families to remain in safe and resilient homes within communities building stable, intergenerational wealth.
- We look for Pennsylvania to enact and fund solar power grant programs for schools to help K-12 sites install solar panels, lowering energy bills, freeing up school funds for other urgent needs, and creating good, green, union jobs.
- Pennsylvania's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard must be upgraded to achieve a goal of 30% renewable energy by 2030, and to emphasize truly clean, renewable sources of energy.
- Address the public transit funding crisis in order to prevent service cuts and fare hikes. The PA Legislature and Governor Shapiro should enact legislation that allocates 6.4% of the state sales tax to public transit, up from 4.4%, in order to provide an additional \$295 million for transit agencies across Pennsylvania. Safe, affordable, reliable, and accessible public transit is essential for racial, economic, and climate justice.





Live Free

All people deserve to live free, but for us to live free, we must change a judicial system that devalues and disproportionately detains Black and brown bodies, funneling people of all ages into a morass of prisons and detention centers. We expect authorities to help foster safe environments in which to live, and we insist on accountability for police officers who commit egregious harms against members of our communities. POWER Interfaith's Live Free campaign, based in Philadelphia, invites other POWER chapters to join us in this journey toward reform, justice, and police accountability.

Live Free Demands

- We support policies that address decades of disproportional detention, arrest, and incarceration for Black and brown community members, particularly efforts to reduce incarceration rates long-term.
- We support efforts to bring about police accountability throughout Pennsylvania and to increase transparency for communities harmed through police misconduct, including through closing accountability loopholes created under PA Act 111.
- We urge lawmakers to enact policies that foster an environment in which people, citizens and non-citizens, can live safely in our communities and that lead us away from a criminal justice system that is based on punishment and towards one based on redemption, restoration and rehabilitation.
- We support a non-police crisis response by behavioral and medical health professionals as well as peer specialists to assist those who call for help with issues due to mental health, addiction, domestic violence or homelessness.





Economic Dignity

No person should be forced to choose between healthy food and paying for rent, utilities, or health- and child-care. We are dedicated to an economy that provides a basic level of dignity and housing stability for all Pennsylvanians.

Economic Dignity Demands

- We call on lawmakers to raise the state minimum wage to \$15 per hour, allowing Pennsylvanians more to spend on basic human needs like food, housing, and medicine.
- Wage policies should include annual cost of living adjustments to keep the statewide minimum wage fair and competitive.
- We must end the minimum wage preemption preventing cities and municipalities from setting a minimum wage appropriate for their local economy and cost of living.
- The tipped worker minimum wage must increase for workers otherwise exempted from an increase to \$15 per hour.





Expanding Democracy

We want more people to participate in the democratic process – unintimidated by White Christian Nationalist attempts to restrict and ultimately strangle our democratic rights. We want to remove barriers, streamlining democratic participation and making voting easier for each voter. We therefore work to ensure that everyone in our community who is eligible to vote is able to vote, from returning citizens to senior citizens.

Expanding Democracy Demands

- We oppose any unnecessary and regressive barriers for exercising the right to vote like voter ID laws, complicated mail in ballot instructions, insufficient and difficult-to-access drop boxes, and voter intimidation at polling locations and drop boxes.
- We will work to expand democracy by supporting policies and practices that make it easier and simpler for citizens to vote, including protecting and expanding no excuse mail-in voting, making drop boxes easily accessible, safeguarding automatic voter registration when acquiring a driver's license or state ID, and making it simpler for people to participate via mail-in voting.

