



WORKING TOGETHER.



ACHIEVING RESULTS.



2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

D ALABAMA HOUSE
DEMOCRATIC
CAUCUS



2021 Legislative Agenda

Key Aims

- 01 Combatting COVID-19 and Ensuring Access to Affordable Health Care
- 02 Voting Rights: Defending the Cornerstone of Our Democracy
- 03 Our Brightest Future – Advancing Education
- 04 Strengthening Small Businesses and Revitalizing Our Economy
- 05 Criminal Justice Reform
- 06 Fighting for Equity and Social Justice
- 07 Law Enforcement Reform

EXPAND MEDICAID TO MAKE QUALITY HEALTH CARE MORE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALABAMA FAMILIES

The depth and extent of the crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us how urgent and critical it is that we strengthen our health care infrastructure.

Prior to the pandemic, Alabama had already seen 17 rural hospital closures (since 2010), a rise in uninsured workers, a profound lack of adequate mental health resources, and dangerous physician shortages.

The state's failure to expand Medicaid has cost Alabama more than the staggering billions in economic impact left on the table—it has cost lives.

This already handicapped system was compounded by other factors (i.e., initial hesitancy to follow CDC guidelines and recommendations), impairing Alabama's ability to effectively and swiftly respond to a deadly public health emergency with rural, impoverished and African American communities bearing the brunt of the system's failure.

We can no longer delay. Alabama must revise Medicaid eligibility to cover adults up to age 64 with incomes of up to 138% of the poverty level.

The **economic impact** of expanding medicaid in the state of Alabama is estimated at **\$11.4 billion** over four years.

Source: Alabama Hospital Association



EXTEND MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR NEW MOTHERS UP TO ONE YEAR AFTER CHILDBIRTH AND ENHANCE ACCESS TO MATERNAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES

How we care for pregnant mothers and their babies should be indicative of our core values as Alabamians.

Though we have made some progress, Alabama still has some of the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the nation.

First and foremost, we must enhance access to critical maternal health care services for new and expectant mothers by extending care for mothers up to one year after giving birth, especially those in rural communities who travel long distances to see a pediatrician or OB-GYN.

In addition, we have a duty to better prepare mothers and protect their infants by improving access to maternal health care, nutrition, and necessary screenings, as well as enhancing public awareness on dangers related to sleep safety, substance abuse, postpartum depression, and domestic violence.

It is high time that we fund research into the health risks facing Alabama mothers, especially those of color, who are dying at exponentially higher rates.

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Research has shown that in states where Medicaid expansion was adopted, there were reduced maternal mortality rates and positive maternal health outcomes.

Based on the findings of the committee's review, Medicaid program expansion will allow women to receive needed healthcare before, during, and after pregnancies.

- ADPH-Alabama Maternal Mortality Review Committee | 2016

Combatting COVID-19 and Ensuring Access to Affordable Health Care



ENSURE FAIR AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE

House Democrats will fight to ensure that high-risk, minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable populations are prioritized based on science and need, and that vaccinations are performed rapidly in a fair and equitable manner.

In Alabama, **63%** of rural hospitals are **at risk of closing** and **56%** are at an **immediate risk of closing**.

Source: Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform | January 2021

CREATE AND SUPPORT INCENTIVES TO BRING QUALIFIED DOCTORS, NURSES AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS TO OUR STATE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

The growing physician shortage and closure of rural hospitals has left far too many Alabamians dangerously geographically distanced from vital health care services ranging from primary care physicians to emergency room services to medical specialists.

This complex crisis requires an innovative, flexible, and sustainable approach.

In addition to supporting Medicaid expansion, we must take steps and back incentives to bring qualified doctors, nurses, and health care professionals back to our state and the rural communities that need them the most.

Alabama Democrats will support measures that improve access to training programs, including foundational courses, in order to strengthen and increase our health care workforce.

In addition, we will support investments in innovative, tech-based programs such as telemedicine, to close the geographic gap in connecting rural residents with doctors and services.

ENHANCE AND INCREASE TELEMEDICINE PROGRAMS ACROSS THE STATE

House Democrats support common-sense approaches to controlling rising health care costs, simultaneously ensuring that all residents, particularly in underserved rural communities, have access to quality care.

This is especially urgent given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the increased threat of viral infections in enclosed spaces.

Cost-effective measures like the expansion of telemedicine programs can provide safe, quality health care and further improve access for people in rural areas that would otherwise have to travel great distances.

Combatting COVID-19 and Ensuring Access to Affordable Health Care

INCREASE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

We have both a moral and legal responsibility to provide quality mental health treatment options for Alabamians suffering from mental illness.

We must also invest in training for our educators, so they are able to effectively recognize and support the mental health needs of their students.

Failure to meet that commitment with adequate funding levels and effective programs has led to increased costs in emergency care and incarceration, not to mention the human cost in countless lives devastated and families and communities disrupted.

House Democrats will thoroughly review existing state-funded mental health services to ensure that such appropriations are effective and efficient.

House Democrats will advocate for policies that expand access to mental health treatment, specifically within schools and the criminal

justice system, so that no family will have to go without the resources they need when a loved one is in crisis.

This includes focusing specifically on delivering effective mental health services to veterans who are nearly twice as likely to die by suicide than civilians.

Alabama's **veteran suicide rate (37.2%)** is **twice the national average (18.4%)**.

Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs | 2018

> PENDING HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION:

HB432 | MOORE: This bill would expand the Medicaid program, in light of our on-going and rural health crisis and the pandemic facing the nation, to provide assistance to all persons for whom matching funds are available to the state under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

HB431 | HALL: This bill would extend the period during which a pregnant woman who is eligible to receive medical assistance under Medicaid may continue to receive Medicaid assistance from 60 days to one year after giving birth.



UPLIFTING ALL ALABAMA VOICES

All Alabamians have a right to know that their voices are heard, their words matter, and their votes count.

House Democrats stand for policies that aim to ensure fair districts and increase turnout at the ballot box, not discourage and disenfranchise voters.

We support efforts and policies to educate young people on the importance of voting while ensuring that the elderly and infirm can exercise their democratic rights.

Archaic and unnecessary barriers to voting must be removed so that no eligible voter – regardless of age, ability, income, or geographic location – is denied the right to vote.



FIVE METHODS TO INCREASE VOTING RIGHTS

Having a presidential election in the midst of a pandemic has shown that with appropriate planning, oversight, and transparency, the following measures can and should be implemented to increase voter participation and turnout, regardless of political affiliation:

1. Allow “no excuse” absentee voting;
2. Allow early voting;
3. Create automatic voter registration upon the age of 18;
4. Eliminate requirements to pay fines and fees to regain the right to vote; and,
5. Expand eligibility for restoration of voting rights.



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> PENDING VOTING RIGHTS LEGISLATION:

HB 37/82 | HALL: This bill would expand persons eligible for the restoration of voting rights by simplifying the process of applying for a Certificate of Eligibility to Register to Vote and eliminating the requirement to pay fees and fines.

HB 38/84 | HALL: This bill would establish inmate identification cards as a valid form of identification for absentee voting.

HB 180 | CLARKE: This bill would authorize an early, no-excuse, in-person voting period. Early voting would begin the Saturday 17 days before election day. Polls must be open at least 4 hours between 7am and 8pm with at least 2 days being until 8pm.

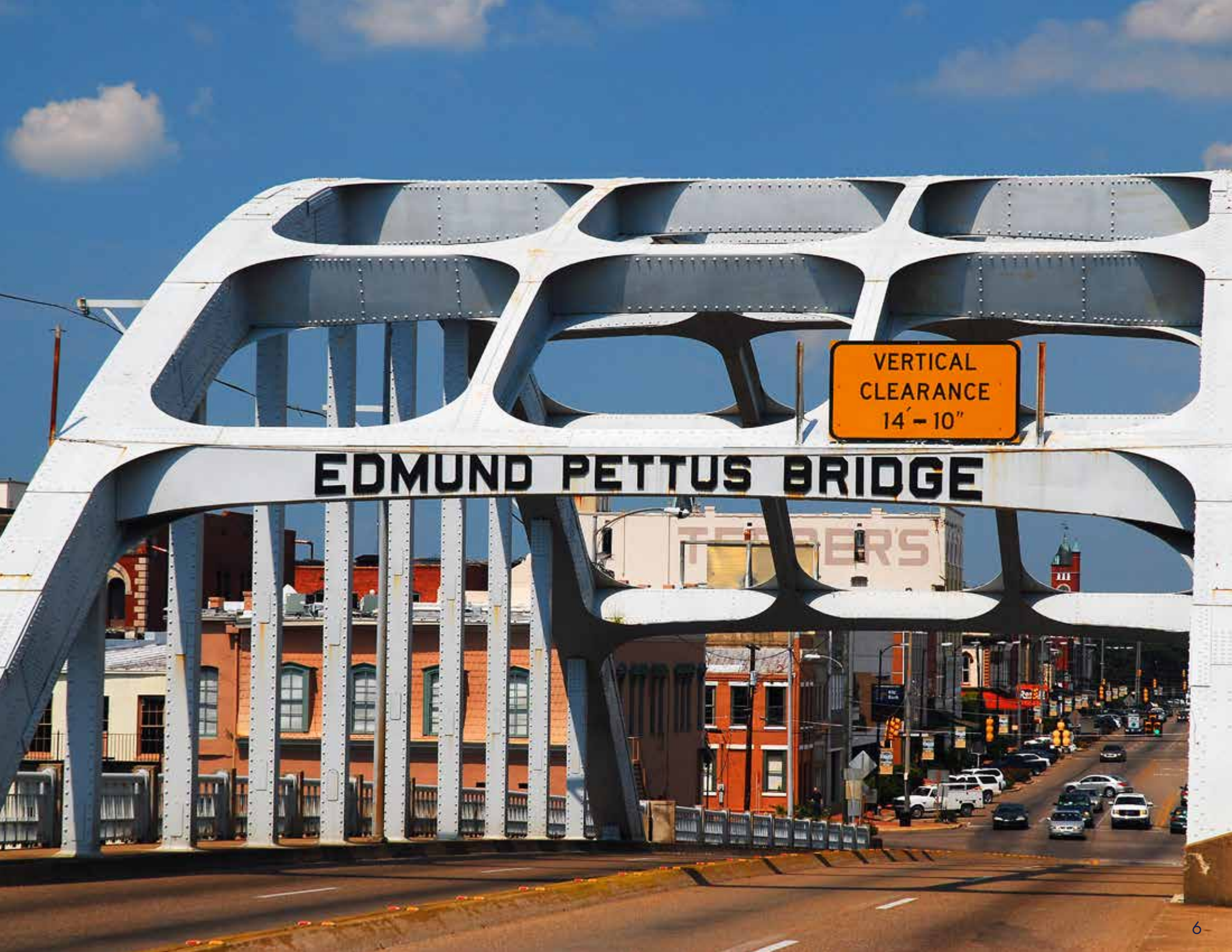
HB 396 | HALL: This bill would allow no excuse absentee voting; would allow the absentee election manager to appoint additional assistants to assist with absentee ballot applications; and would eliminate the requirement that absentee ballots be postmarked the date prior to the election.

HB 438 | CHESTNUT: This bill would automatically register qualified voters upon turning 18 years of age.

HB433 | RAFFERTY*: This bill would allow for same day voter registration.

CHESTNUT*: This would establish an independent redistricting commission.

* Pending Introduction



VERTICAL
CLEARANCE
14' - 10"

EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE

INVESTING IN OUR EDUCATORS

All too often, Alabama teachers are forced to subsidize classroom learning from their own wallets, pocketbooks, and paychecks. They do so because they care about their students, but the burden of providing adequate learning materials should not fall on the shoulders of educators who too often are underpaid themselves.

Currently, this lack of adequate compensation is pushing some of our best and most passionate teachers into retirement or other careers. **In order to attract and retain top-notch, dedicated teachers, we must make Alabama a more desirable place to live and work for teachers and their families.**

This means maintaining a competitive edge with our neighbors in Tennessee and Georgia by investing more in our educators, demonstrating that we are willing to prioritize the future of education in our state.

Alabama's public school teachers

and support staff need better wages, and House Democrats will work to raise their pay. This includes providing access to real opportunities for professional growth and supporting the pursuit of advanced degrees and certifications.

In addition, it is high time that our retired educators receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

// Teacher salaries are worth less than they were a decade ago after adjusting for inflation.

Teachers in Alabama are paid 72% of what college graduates in other professions earn in the state.

- Alabama Teacher Shortage Task Force
| 2019

SUPPORTING OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Alabama's students deserve a first-class education that will provide them with the tools they need to seek success.

We must reverse the chronic pattern of underinvestment in our schools, students, teachers, and classroom technology, which leaves our children at a disadvantage and discourages investment in our state.

House Democrats will fight to increase education funding to support additional teachers and classrooms, expanded teacher training and specialists in mathematics, reading, computer science, etc.

It is high time we address the failing schools in Alabama and work to ensure our schools have the resources and support to provide the best educational opportunities for all of our students.

It is imperative that school funding formulas be improved to better target dollars to schools in need,

children of color, and those in lower income households.

By investing in our public schools now, we can rebuild our skilled workforce and lay the foundation for economic growth and development for years to come.

After all, to succeed in the global economy, our young people must have access to broadband, the latest technology, equipment, training, and opportunities that ensure future achievement.

Nationally, combined state and local funding per student has finally recovered from the recession.

Alabama meanwhile has remained 10% below pre-recession levels (adjusted for inflation.)

Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities | 2019

Our Brightest Future - Advancing Education



PRIORITIZING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Fully funded quality early childhood education is the key to putting Alabama children on the right track in school, work, and life.

Strong, well-rounded Pre-K programs offer our young people an increasingly essential start to their academic careers.

From early literacy initiatives to STEM activities to exposure to foreign languages to art and music,

strong Pre-K programs are the building blocks for life-long learning.

In addition, **expanding Cradle-to-Pre-K programs for children and families in need, as well as those that help to identify young people with unique challenges and provide access to specialized instruction early on, will help to close the achievement gap in low-income communities.**

FUNDING HIGHER EDUCATION AS A PRIORITY

Higher education is an engine that drives economic opportunity and pushes generations beyond the clutches of poverty.

Accessible public higher education is more important than ever as both a safeguard that ensures education as a right for all, and as a vital employer and cornerstone to our communities' broader economies.

We call for greater investments in need-based scholarships and financial aid for our state's colleges and universities.

Alabama must offer affordable instruction and better support families with demonstrated financial need, making it possible for students to launch their careers right here at home.

Approximately half of the students who receive a bachelor's degree in Alabama leave the state.

Increasing investments in post-secondary education will help Alabama retain our best and brightest.

Alabama trails the nation in per-student education appropriations.

In 2019, **public institutions in Alabama had \$6,001 in education appropriations per full-time equivalent (FTE), approximately 73% of the U.S. average (\$8,196).**

Source: State Higher Education Finance

The most unaffordable public flagships each have high tuition and minimal investment in need-based aid. Alabama, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina all exemplify this model.

Source: Institute for Higher Education Policy | 2019

Our Brightest Future - Advancing Education

FOCUSING ON COLLEGE AND CAREER-READINESS

In addition to encouraging sufficient funding for higher education, House Democrats will champion programs that prepare young people for college, trade schools and other invaluable post-secondary opportunities.

Dual enrollment programs will allow more high school students to get a head start (and reduce higher education costs) by providing them with access to college-level courses.

Public-private partnerships can offer targeted jobs, skill development, and career-preparation opportunities to those who have been historically underserved by our educational system.

In addition, we must refocus our education system to fill the gap of middle-skill jobs – jobs that require education beyond high school but not a four-year degree.

Middle-skill jobs account for a large portion of Alabama's labor market, yet less than half of the state's workers are trained to meet the demand.

// In recent years, Alabama has experienced growth in a number of emerging sectors of the economy, including automotive manufacturing, aerospace, biotechnology, and information technology.

This growth, combined with a low unemployment rate, reflects the many advantages Alabama offers business and industry, including a business-friendly environment, infrastructure, and hard-working citizens.

Along with growth in Alabama's economy, there is increasing demand for a workforce with education, skills, and training in addition to a high school diploma.

- Statewide Educational Attainment
Committee - Alabama Workforce Council
| 2018





> PENDING EDUCATION LEGISLATION:

HB 97 | MORRIS: This bill would require mental health awareness to be included in the annual training session for employees of each K-12 school, encouraging a safer learning environment for our children.

HB 208 | WARREN: This bill would require public school students to successfully complete kindergarten before being admitted to the first grade.

HB 199 | ROGERS: This bill would establish an Alabama Lottery to fund education and general fund programs; create an Alabama Lottery Corporation; establish the lottery trust fund; and ensure that the lottery proceeds will not supplant or replace existing education revenues.

DANIELS*: This bill would establish universal Pre-K across the state of Alabama.

* Pending Introduction

ENSURE THAT BUSINESSES HAVE ACCESS TO SKILLED WORKERS AND HUMAN CAPITAL

We are in the midst of one of the most rapid periods of advancement in human history.

House Democrats believe we must anticipate and swiftly respond to economic changes by ensuring that businesses have access to the skilled workforce and human capital they need in order to thrive.

Starting with high school, we must strive to craft innovative workforce development opportunities for young Alabamians by promoting job-shadowing and workforce training programs.

Expanding trade and apprenticeship programs will give students hands-on experience in vocational and technical careers by providing real-world job experiences and connections.



“ Despite the decreased jobless rate across the state, Alabama’s workforce participation rate has remained at a historical low and is currently the second worst in the nation.

- Alabama Workforce Council | 2020

In 2017, Alabama’s public high school graduating class totaled 49,764 students.

Of these graduates, 32% enrolled in a four-year college, and another 32% enrolled in a two-year college. Over 18,000 high school graduates did not enroll in any college program.

Statistics show that the labor force participation rate for high school graduates without a college degree has dropped almost 10%. Source: Alabama Workforce Council | 2020

Strengthening Small Businesses and Revitalizing Our Economy

SUPPORT SMALL AND MAIN STREET BUSINESSES

Small businesses are the backbone of Alabama's economy. Before the pandemic, small businesses represented 99% of Alabama businesses; today it is uncertain how many will survive.

To keep Alabama working, we must keep Main Street's doors open and get founders and business owners back to work creating new jobs.

House Democrats want to replenish the Unemployment Trust Fund to reduce the tax burden for small business owners.

We want to nurture the growth of small businesses throughout every community by expanding Minority Business Enterprise and Disadvantaged Enterprise programs to ensure that every entrepreneur has a fighting chance to scale their business and reach their maximum potential.

Thriving businesses, especially those owned and operated by minorities and women, should be incentivized

to scale and create new jobs through accessible tax credits.

The State of Alabama must also be a leader in "buying small" and making certain that public spending is inclusive of minority- and women-owned goods and services.

Procurement officials should be required to maintain data on the diverse enterprises qualified to service and supply goods to the State.

Finally, House Democrats understand the need for small businesses to have access to training and education to strengthen, sustain and grow operations.

Many need guidance and support while experiencing periods of growth during economic booms; as well as while sustaining operations during lean times.

Public and private resources must be coordinated to create an ecosystem for the small business sector.

Services like those provided by the Small Business Administration

(SBA) and business incubators are invaluable to small businesses and first-time entrepreneurs.

We support a business environment that encourages private industry to expand its investment in small and minority-owned businesses.

Small businesses created 23,841 net jobs in 2019.

In the fourth quarter of 2018, 2,569 establishments opened, **generating 11,617 new jobs** in Alabama.

In that same period, 2,388 establishments shuttered, **resulting in 8,577 jobs lost**

Source: U.S. Small Business Administration | 2020

> PENDING EDUCATION LEGISLATION:

HB 320 | LAWRENCE: This bill would provide a cost-of-living increase for state employees for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2021.

HB 172 | DRUMMOND: This bill would require the newly established Office of the Chief Procurement Officer and the Secretary of State to collect data relating to women and minority-owned businesses in the state and determine the proportion of procurement contracts awarded to small and disadvantaged businesses.

HB 251: This bill would establish a procedure by which wireless providers would be authorized to collocate, mount, or install small wireless facilities on existing poles, or install new poles on the right-of-way of the state or any agency, county, or municipality thereof.

HB 442 | MOORE: This bill would phase out the state sales and use taxes on food by reducing the rates by one percentage point over a four-part reduction schedule beginning October 1, 2021.

Strengthening Small Businesses and Revitalizing Our Economy

LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD: ACCESS TO CAPITAL IS CRITICAL FOR SMALL BUSINESSES TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE

House Democrats recognize the need for small and growing businesses to have greater access to capital to help them survive and thrive.

The wide-ranging success of Alabama's large corporations and global manufacturers is critical to the state's economic success. If we hope to have more small and middle-market businesses grow to the heights of our corporate giants, greater opportunities and incentives are necessary to support these businesses.

Some efforts to provide relief to employers in the COVID economy have remained out of reach for the businesses that need it the most. Many small business owners were unsuccessful in securing these funds and have been left reeling on the brink of closure, while some have closed permanently.

Small businesses without existing



relationships to larger banks were excluded from accessing initial funding, hitting minority-owned and rural businesses with ties to community banks especially hard.

House Democrats support the development of innovative solutions and the creation of public-private growth funds to make capital accessible to help businesses reopen, recover and rebuild stronger than ever before.

BOLSTER RURAL AND UNDERSERVED ECONOMIES THROUGH UPGRADES TO VITAL PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES, TRANSPORTATION, BROADBAND AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

House Democrats support working with local and federal governments and partnering with private enterprises to build the infrastructure necessary to enhance education, increase business opportunities, and improve the quality of life in our small-town communities. This begins

with broadening access to rural broadband.

An estimated 662,000 Alabamians lack access to high-speed broadband.

Alabama must strengthen the connection to rural and other unserved areas through increased investments in public infrastructure and enhanced access to broadband.

Strengthening Small Businesses and Revitalizing Our Economy

CLOSE THE INCOME INEQUALITY GAP AND HELP WORKING FAMILIES ACCESS SAFE, AFFORDABLE HOUSING

House Democrats believe that Alabama citizens should be able to access safe and affordable housing.

Too many working-class families are unable to afford the upfront costs associated with finding housing, whether it be leasing or purchasing.

Families across the state are having to work multiple jobs and are still struggling making ends meet. Added to this financial pressure on working families are costs specifically associated with the pandemic, including health care, child care, grocery options and more.

That is why House Democrats continue to work to assemble support resources for families that have lost loved ones to COVID-19.

Building a bridge to prosperity remains a priority for Alabama House Democrats, and the benefits of supporting lower-income families will have positive effects on Alabama's economy as a whole.

CULTIVATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

In order to accelerate new economic growth, encourage statewide entrepreneurship, and attract and retain talent, **Alabama House Democrats support the development of public/private partnerships that embrace and expand innovation.**

This would benefit Alabama businesses, particularly in rural communities, by providing educational programs, business accelerators, mentor networks, incentive programs and other tools to generate successful business growth.

Entrepreneurs will have greater opportunities for success by having access to resources that are centered on advancing technical skills, research and development at existing companies, and training for the implementation of best practices.

All of this will help Alabama to maintain speed in a fast-paced, competitive economy.

The broadband access gap is the widest in Alabama's rural communities. **Coverage is 30% or less in several counties:**

Perry County
Greene County
Cleburne County
Marengo County
Lowndes County

Fayette County
Choctaw County
Wilcox County
Bibb County

Source: Federal Communications Commission | 2019

// Alabama's greatest success stories are rooted in innovation. Our trailblazers continue to pave the way to meet the demands of our evolving world through forward-thinking 21st century technologies.

- Alabama Innovation Commission | 2021





IT'S GOING TO TAKE MORE THAN BRICKS AND MORTAR TO FIX ALABAMA PRISONS

House Democrats support a comprehensive and pragmatic approach to the state's criminal justice challenges and urgent prison crisis.

Plans to spend well over a billion dollars on new prisons call for a close, hard look at the policies and practices that feed our overpopulated and under-resourced criminal justice system.

House Democrats do not believe we can simply build our way out of this crisis. While it is clear that our physical prison structures must be repaired or replaced, we cannot stop there.

We must examine evidence-based, comprehensive solutions, including community-based treatment and supervision alternatives that are both cost-efficient and more effective in reducing recidivism and violence within our prisons, while addressing the systemic issues that increase the likelihood of incarceration.

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The Department has reasonable cause to believe that ADOC violates the constitutional rights of prisoners housed in Alabama's prisons by failing to protect them from prisoner-on-prisoner violence, prisoner-on-prisoner sexual abuse, and by failing to provide safe conditions.

- U.S. Department of Justice | 2019

The total number of Unlawful Possession of Controlled Substance and Unlawful Possession of Marijuana convictions increased by over 1,000 in FY2018, and accounts for over one-third of all convictions in the state.

Source: Alabama Sentencing Commission | 2020

Criminal Justice Reform

COMMON SENSE REFORMS ARE NEEDED

True prison reform includes serious discussion and consideration of practical and long-overdue reforms to bail, probation, expungement, and sentencing guidelines that currently resemble wealth-based incarceration.

House Democrats support applying technical violator reforms to all parolees and probationers.

Further, we support applying habitual felony offender and drug trafficking reforms retroactively.

Marijuana decriminalization deserves open discussion and honest consideration, as our antiquated, ill-defined laws from the drug-war era continue to cost millions in taxpayers' dollars, devastating lives and communities.

REDUCING RECIDIVISM

Alabama prisons and local supervision programs exist to keep our communities safe. To accomplish this goal, their primary focus cannot solely be security, but must also be rehabilitation, reentry and a significant reduction in recidivism.

We strongly advocate restructuring the Board of Pardons and Paroles to ensure fair, just, and equitable consideration. It is not only the right thing to do, but it also serves as an incentive for rehabilitation and successful societal reintegration.

From an economic perspective, there is likewise incentive for reducing recidivism which will in turn reduce costs to both taxpayers and the state.

Most importantly, Democrats believe that through the

implementation and expansion of prevention and rehabilitation programs – such as education, career readiness, and mental health programs – we can reduce recidivism and boost the success rate of an ex-offender's reentry into society.

FOCUSING ON FAIRNESS

Rather than continue with obsolete and outdated practices that hurt so many communities, **House Democrats favor an effective, evidence-based approach to corrections.**

That is why we must address other issues such as the unforeseen consequences of the 2019 Habitual Felony Offender Act, by repealing consecutive sentencing.

It is why we must eliminate coercion or deception affecting victims who

are physically or mentally ill in cases of human trafficking. It is why Alabama needs to adopt federal guideline procedures for using restraints on pregnant women who are incarcerated.

House Democrats also support other measures like allowing courts to issue ex-parte protective orders for individuals who pose a harm to themselves or others (Gun Violence Protective Order Act).

> PENDING CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM LEGISLATION:

HB 107 | ENGLAND: This bill would revise sentencing standards in certain circumstances. This bill would repeal the Habitual Felony Offender Act and provide for resentencing for defendants whose sentences were based on the Habitual Felony Offender Act.

HB 226 | ENGLAND: This bill would expand the expungement of criminal records to include convictions of certain felony offenses, traffic violations, municipal ordinances, and misdemeanor offenses. This bill would increase the filing fee for expungements.



IT'S TIME TO MOVE FORWARD

Alabama House Democrats stand strong in our belief that diversity is our greatest strength and that it is time to move toward a more just and equitable future for our state and for our children.

We strongly believe that symbolic steps such as removing confederate monuments from our state parks, eliminating the confederate state trooper patch, and abolishing state-sanctioned celebration of confederate holidays are necessary

to promote equity, inclusion, and healing.

Racism has no place in Alabama and many of these obvious actions, like prohibiting the National Guard from using confederate medals on their uniforms, are long overdue.

Equally important are more substantive measures, like common-sense legislation to track traffic stops to eliminate racial profiling and help ensure that all citizens are treated justly and fairly.

ENSURING, PROTECTING, AND CELEBRATING CIVIL RIGHTS FOR ALL

Alabama was at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement, and House Democrats firmly believe we can once again show leadership during this moment of unprecedented national reckoning by ensuring civil rights and protections for all.

This includes ensuring that every Alabamian – regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, class or position in life – should have the same chance to thrive without facing discrimination.

We are dedicated to fighting for and protecting the human and civil rights of all Alabamians.

House Democrats support the immediate ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. We also strongly believe that Juneteenth (June 19, 1865 was the day that slaves in the United States were emancipated) should be an official Alabama holiday to celebrate civil rights.

ELIMINATING GERRYMANDERING AND REDISTRICTING FAIRLY AND EQUITABLY

Alabama House Democrats strongly support the creation of a non-partisan board to handle redistricting in our state to prevent gerrymandering.

It's time to eliminate unfair and unethical practices such as "stacking and packing", to ensure that districts are redrawn in a fair, equitable, and non-partisan manner.

It's time to put the long-term interests of Alabama voters ahead of short-term political gain.

Alabama is the nation's fifth poorest state. The poverty rate for minorities is double to nearly three times that of White Alabamians (12%).
 Black (28%)
 Hispanic/Latino (32%)

Source: Alabama Possible | 2020

> PENDING SOCIAL JUSTICE LEGISLATION:

HB 115 | JACKSON: This bill would designate the third Saturday in June of each year as Juneteenth National Freedom Day to remember the abolition of slavery throughout the US and its territories in 1865. It would further require the Governor to issue an annual proclamation recognizing the important contributions of African Americans to the state. Further, it would allow public schools to offer instruction and programs regarding Juneteenth.

HB 149 | HATCHER: This bill would designate the nineteenth of June as the state holiday of Juneteenth and would require the Governor to issue an annual proclamation honoring this observance. It would allow each county and municipality to elect whether or not to observe Juneteenth as a holiday.

HB 8 | GIVAN: This bill would authorize local governments to remove certain historical monuments. This bill would require transfer of ownership to the Archives and History of the Alabama Historical Commission for public display under the Alabama Memorial Preservation Act of 2017.

HB 307 | HALL: This bill would amend the Elder Abuse Protection Order and Enforcement Act to redact contact information from court documents released to the public and allow an elderly person of sound body or mind to hire legal counsel.

HB 352 | RAFFERTY: This bill would provide workplace protections against pregnancy discrimination.





REBUILD THE TRUST BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Our criminal justice system must be focused on reform, rehabilitation, and public safety, not warehousing nonviolent offenders based on draconian drug laws or legal technicalities that stack the deck against minorities and people of color.

In order to rebuild trust between the community and law enforcement, law enforcement must reform its policies and tactics, prioritizing the elimination of racial profiling and the excessive use of force.

When members of law enforcement break the laws they have sworn to uphold, or violate the civil and human rights of any suspect or person in their custody, they must be held accountable.

IMPROVE TRAINING FOR OFFICERS TO INCLUDE TRAINING ON IMPLICIT BIAS, CULTURAL COMPETENCY, AND DE-ESCALATION TACTICS AND TECHNIQUES

Law enforcement must be grounded on the principle of equal justice for all.

We wholeheartedly support enhanced training for law enforcement, including identifying implicit and explicit bias and supporting community policing methods that keep all of us safe.

Across the nation, the tide is turning in favor of criminal justice, police, and prison reform based on evidence, facts, and fairness.

House Democrats believe that better education and training for law enforcement and the implementation of evidenced-based, de-escalation techniques will make our communities safer for everyone.



> PENDING SOCIAL JUSTICE LEGISLATION:

HB 106 | ENGLAND: This bill would require the Corrections Department to make quarterly reports to the Joint Legislative Prison Oversight Committee. This bill would provide for the reporting requirements and would revise the correctional officers oath of office.

HB 286 | COLEMAN: This bill would define racial profiling and prohibit officers from exhibiting racial profiling by requiring law enforcement agencies to adopt policies that prohibit racial profiling. This bill specifically relates to traffic stops, the handling of complaints, and the reporting and collection of data on injuries to state and local law enforcement officers.

HB 411 | McCAMPBELL: This bill would establish a law enforcement officer employment database. This bill would require law enforcement agencies to report complaints, disciplinary actions, and background information on officers to the Alabama Peace Officers' Standards and Training Commission.



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PLATFORM COMMITTEE

Neil Rafferty, *Chair*
Adline Clarke
Anthony Daniels
Barbara Drummond
Chris England
Jeremy Gray
Laura Hall
Kirk Hatcher
Sam Jones
Kelvin Lawrence



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