

Public Policy Agenda 2021-22

**PILLSBURY
UNITED
COMMUNITIES**



Pillsbury United Communities co-creates enduring change toward a just society. Built with and for the people we serve, our united system of programs, neighborhood centers, and social enterprises empowers individuals and families across the region to own their future on their own terms.



OUR APPROACH

Our agency advocates for and advances policy at all levels of government that promotes, protects, galvanizes, and heals the communities we serve: African Americans, Indigenous people, immigrants, refugees, and people who live in poverty.

We are committed to addressing the root causes of the challenges that bring people with unmet basic needs to the doors of our centers and enterprises seeking services. We aim to shift power to create a just society where everyone has personal, social and economic power, and can transformatively shape government for generations to come.

We strive to be anti-racist in our approach, recognizing that structures—particularly policy and not individuals—are responsible for the disparities that exist in Minnesota and our country today. We commit to humbly interrogating our own institutional history and the ways we have been, at times, complicit in propping up unjust systems. We invite being pushed, called out, and challenged to work more justly in service of those who are most marginalized.

Essential to this work is unlocking public funds for the places that need them most. We believe budgets are moral documents and that true equity requires correcting the racist, structural disinvestment that has taken place since this country's inception. Tangible economic reparations at the scale of disinvestment are essential to actualizing justice.

Learn more and sign up for our policy & advocacy newsletter at www.pillsburyunited.org/policy.





Priorities

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- **Expand access to affordable, culturally-relevant models of comprehensive healthcare** by strengthening and growing our community health worker infrastructure. The need for universal healthcare has become especially urgent due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the opioid crisis, and structural racism, and our healthcare advocacy drives toward this as an end result.
- **Increase funding for culturally-relevant, community-based programs.** We must protect our government-funded human services programs from budget cuts and advocate for an increase in funding due to increased community need for family stabilization and employment support programs, food access infrastructure, and childcare during the pandemic and its aftermath.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Promote equitable neighborhood development while protecting legacy residents with anti-gentrification measures.** Culturally-relevant, community owned assets must be developed in underinvested-in neighborhoods while ensuring that anti-displacement policy keeps pace. Neighborhood associations and community centers are key partners in this; their resources must be ensured.
- **Track toward true public safety for all.** We must reimagine structures that promote and defend public safety, ending police brutality and intra-community violence, particularly domestic and sexual violence, using a data driven and human-centered approach.
- **Champion and foster community co-governance:** Our communities have been overlooked and underrepresented for too long and must be empowered to lead and co-create policy if our democracy is going to be truly representative. We advocate for policy that originates from community, is co-designed by community, and is evaluated after implementation by community.
- **Ensure artists, who cast visions for liberation and highlight systemic injustice, are economically stable.** The creative workforce has been decimated by the pandemic. Artists are critical to achieving an equitable future, and we must bake their expertise into civic processes (including government communication around emergent issues) while financially backing them through public funding.

YOUTH & EDUCATION

- **Increase funding for out-of-school time youth programming.** Public and private funding for youth has been decimated in recent years, especially for younger children. Youth—from infancy to adulthood—need places where their basic needs can be met, where their dreams can be fostered, where they can connect with each other and mentors safely during the hours of the day when they are most at risk, and where they can take part in paid career development opportunities.
- **Dismantle the racial opportunity gap and incentivize innovation.** All students deserve access to resourced, culturally-relevant in-school educational experiences that put them on track for empowered futures in 21st century workplaces. The state's education funding model must be changed—equity cannot be achieved when funding is inequitably distributed based on property taxes. The education system, which was designed at the turn of the century, must be encouraged to evolve.