



Public Policy Agenda 2023-24

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 advances and advocates for policy at all levels of government that promotes, protects, galvanizes, and heals the communities we serve: Black, Brown and Indigenous people, immigrants, refugees, queer and trans people, working class people, 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 and reparative 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, challenged, and called out 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 in America since its inception. Tangible economic reparations at the scale of disinvestment are essential to actualizing justice.

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1. HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Imagine and implement greater access to affordable, culturally-relevant models of comprehensive health care.

We are invested in the expansion of MN's community health worker workforce and infrastructure. We support the development of a diverse mental health workforce that can combat culturally specific stigma and treat the trauma and compounding stresses our communities, from youth who are homeless to East African immigrants, face. Additionally we advocate for abortion and reproductive healthcare access, harm reduction approaches to the opioid crisis, and tobacco-free communities.

Racism and economic inequity are a public health crisis; we must eliminate disparities.

The incomes of poor and working class Minnesotans must be increased, their cost burdens must be eased, and they must be given both wealth-building opportunities and adequate wraparound stabilization supports when they need them. To do this, we advocate for increased funding for culturally-relevant, community-based supports like family stabilization and employment programs, food access infrastructure, and guaranteed basic income. We must ensure these supports are not undermined by benefits cliffs.

2. ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Promote equitable neighborhood development while protecting legacy residents with anti-gentrification and environmental justice measures.

Culturally-relevant, community-owned assets must be developed and maintained in under-invested-in neighborhoods while ensuring that anti-displacement policy keeps pace. Community-based organizations are key partners in this; our 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, is evaluated after implementation by community, and has language accessibility and accessibility for those with disabilities embedded throughout.

Ensure artists, who cast visions for liberation and highlight systemic injustice, are economically stable.

The creative workforce and arts institutions have 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 equitably-distributed public funding.

3. YOUTH & EDUCATION

Increase funding for out-of-school time youth programming.

Public and private funding for youth has been cut dramatically in the last decade, especially for younger children. Youth—from infancy to adulthood—need holistic 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.

Develop anti-racists tools for evaluating our schools and students, 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 evolve.

2023 State Legislative Priorities

	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (PEOPLE)	ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (PLACE)	YOUTH & EDUCATION (PROSPERITY)
LEAD ISSUES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bonding appropriation for Pillsbury House + Theatre Expansion (\$7.5M+) <i>Longer term:</i> Create a capital fund for community center infrastructure statewide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jobs appropriation for Career Pathways (\$1M) Education appropriation to pilot new, anti-racist accountability framework through MN Dept. of Ed
KEY SUPPORT ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health: more culturally specific resources & workforce opportunities Harm reduction approaches to opioid crisis Ease and eliminate the benefits cliff Expand the community health worker workforce & reimbursement Humane encampment support Paid family & medical leave <i>Hunger Solutions Agenda</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coyle Center expansion appropriation; an MPRB-led priority (\$20M) Driver's Licenses for All Expand Legacy Amendment eligibility Combat gentrification & displacement <i>Together We Rise Tax Agenda</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase funding for EL learning Increase support for teachers of color Increase Youth@Work allocation <i>Ignite Agenda</i> <i>MACSA Agenda</i>
KEY PARTNERS	MN Community Health Worker Coalition, Violence Free MN, MN CASA, Hunger Solutions, All Elders, LEAD PCG	Center for Economic Inclusion, Together We Rise, Hennepin County Anti-Displacement Work Group	Ignite, MACSA
STAFF LEAD	Awol Windissa, Lou Nelson, Miski Abdulle, Latasha Jennings, Jihan Rashid, ShaVunda Brown	Signe Harriday, Noel Raymond, Amano Dube, Jovita Morales	Tesa Johnson, Sam Diaz, Vanan Murugesan, Julie Graves, Andrea Pierre

2023 Policy Priorities (other levels of government)

	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (PEOPLE)	ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (PLACE)	YOUTH & EDUCATION (PROSPERITY)
GLOBAL	<p>We are part of the International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centre's which has the highest consultative status amongst NGOs at the UN.</p> <p>IFS has representation and in some cases leadership on five key NGO committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aging Human Rights Migration Social Development Status of Women 		
FEDERAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ease and eliminate the benefits cliff Universal healthcare Paid family & medical leave A racially & environmentally just Farm Bill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combat gentrification & displacement Fund neighborhood centers Explore and actualize economic reparations Universal/Guaranteed Basic Income 	
COUNTY & CITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe, humane encampment support Increase funding for food shelves Virtual accessibility in government 		



Contact Us

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