



Lifting Up Black Virginians: Terry's Plan to Create a Stronger, More Equitable Commonwealth

"I will use my power as Governor to remedy the wrongs of the past and build an equitable future for all Virginians." - Terry McAuliffe

The COVID-19 pandemic has exemplified the effects of pervasive, generational racism that plagues our society. Systemic racism is present in every facet of our systems, from education to housing, to criminal justice and healthcare, and Black Americans and Virginians experience disparities because of it. Racism is a public health crisis, and the inaccessibility of equitable opportunity and mobility is endangering and killing Black Virginians. In order to truly address inequities and disparities, we must acknowledge and name systemic racism, and consciously work to dismantle it every single day. Like all other crises, Virginia must tackle it using a head-on approach.

While federal, state and local governments have worked to eliminate racist and discriminatory laws and policies, many still exist and the effects of past policies continue to create disparities for Black Americans. These disparities existed well before the COVID-19 pandemic, and have only worsened since it started, with Black students more likely to fall behind in school; in health care, with Black Americans more likely experience chronic illnesses and die prematurely, and Black women more likely to die while pregnant, during childbirth, or postpartum; and in our economy, where Black Americans have been systematically denied opportunities to build wealth, including through homeownership. It is going to take bold leadership to root out these inequities once and for all to create an equitable post-COVID economy. Terry knows we can make big progress on this issue, because he delivered big progress before.

As Virginia's 72nd Governor, Terry upended the status quo that left communities of color behind. He boldly reversed a racist Jim Crow law that disenfranchised hundreds of thousands of

Virginians and restored voting rights to 173,000 Virginians — more than any Governor in American history. He also issued a record 227 pardons, many of which relieved Virginians who received excessive and unjust sentences, some stemming from bias in the sentencing process. Terry was also proud to lay the groundwork for Medicaid expansion by embedding the \$421.7 million in estimated savings from expansion into his outgoing budget. While Republicans refused to expand Medicaid to hundreds of thousands of Virginians in need, Terry refused to take no for an answer and implemented his “A Healthy Virginia” plan, which extended health care coverage for tens of thousands of Virginians and created a first-of-its-kind program in Virginia that provided free dental care for low-income, pregnant women. Thanks to Terry's efforts, Governor Ralph Northam and the Democratic-led General Assembly, which Terry fought so hard for in 2019, was able to expand Medicaid, leading to coverage for more than 500,000.

Despite the progress Virginia Democrats have made over the past eight years, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown just how much work remains to be done. Terry is running for Governor to tackle these inequities head on with bold, progressive policies to support and lift up every Black Virginian-- and this begins at the top, rooting out decades of systemic racism and providing opportunity for communities of color to who have been left behind for generations to get ahead. We must rebuild our economy in an equitable way that creates opportunity for all Virginians, particularly Black Virginians, who have disproportionately suffered during this pandemic. We are in need of a comprehensive overhaul of the way everyday life operates, allowing an opportunity for Black Virginians to have a fair shot. As Governor, Terry will work tirelessly to:

Create Opportunities for Black Virginians to Build Wealth

The racial wealth gap is a struggle that appears to be worsening. Black Americans can expect to earn \$1 million less than white Americans during their lifetime.¹ Further, a white family has almost ten times the wealth than a median Black family.² Closing this wealth gap is an important step at achieving racial equity. We also must work to eliminate the cliff effect -- or the notion that millions of Black Americans are making too much income to receive government benefits, but not nearly enough money to pay their bills or support a family, let alone accumulate wealth. It is time we eliminate the narrative that people are choosing to be in poverty. Rather, the system America has created is choosing it for them. The time has come to fully rebuild the new Black Wall Street -- provide meaningful opportunities for Black Virginians to build wealth. The first steps of this begin with a chance to learn and talk about money, the ability to store their money in Black-owned banks, and the opportunity to own a home. As Governor, Terry will:

Ensure Equitable Access to Economic Opportunity

- **Accelerate the path to a \$15 minimum wage and address racial wealth disparities.** Rebuilding an equitable post-COVID economy means that we have to address the

¹ “The Economic Impact of Closing the Racial Wealth Gap.” *McKinsey & Company*, 13 Aug. 2019, www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/the-economic-impact-of-closing-the-racial-wealth-gap#

² “Recent Trends in Wealth-Holding by Race and Ethnicity: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances.” *Federal Reserve*, Board of Governors, 27 Sept. 2017, www.federalreserve.gov/econres/notes/feds-notes/recent-trends-in-wealth-holding-by-race-and-ethnicity-evidence-from-the-survey-of-consumer-finances-20170927.htm

worsening racial wealth gap. 54% of Black Americans are paid less than \$15 per hour.³ Additionally, Black men make 87 cents on a white man's dollar,⁴ and Black women 60 cents.⁵ If we want to improve economic security for communities of color, we have to address the racial wealth gap and accelerate the path to a \$15 minimum wage. Virginia has not enacted an increase to its \$7.25 per hour minimum wage since 2009 when it adopted the federal standard. Under current law, Virginians must wait another half decade to receive \$15 per hour of work. Terry believes hardworking Virginians cannot wait this long to start earning a living wage, especially while trying to overcome the economic effects of COVID-19. As Virginia's next Governor, Terry will work with the General Assembly and Virginia's business community to accelerate the timeline and guarantee a minimum wage of \$15 per hour by 2024. Terry will also work to eliminate racial pay disparities by increasing transparency and holding businesses accountable to address them.

- **Equitably implement marijuana legalization and ensure Black communities benefit from the new industry.** For too long, marijuana laws have disproportionately impacted Black communities in Virginia and across the nation. Despite reports of similar rates of use, Black Virginians are 3.5 times more likely to be arrested and 3.9 times more likely to be convicted of marijuana-related offenses compared to their white counterparts.⁶ Virginia has finally taken critical steps to legalize marijuana, but Terry recognizes that equity must be at the forefront as we begin implementing the new law. It is essential that the communities that have been impacted the most by the criminalization and enforcement have meaningful opportunities to benefit from the new industry. Across the nation, a vast majority of business owners in the cannabis industry are white,⁷ and the up-front costs of opening a business can be cost-prohibitory, especially for communities of color that have historically lacked access to capital. As governor, Terry will ensure that legalization, the regulatory structure and business ownership opportunities are inclusive and promote Black ownership opportunities.
- **Support Black business ownership.** The COVID-19 pandemic has been detrimental to small businesses, and has disproportionately impacted Black- and Brown-owned businesses. A national report from last June indicated that 41% of Black business owners and 32% of Latinx business owners had closed during the pandemic, compared to 17% of

³ "Why We Need to Raise Wages for America's Lowest-Paid Families." *The Leadership Conference Education Fund*, Center on Poverty and Inequality, www.georgetownpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Bare-Minimum.pdf

⁴ Miller, Stephen. "Black Workers Still Earn Less than Their White Counterparts." *Society for Human Resource Management*, www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/compensation/Pages/racial-wage-gaps-persistence-poses-challenge.aspx

⁵ "Lifetime Wage Gap Losses for Black Women State Rankings: 2019." *National Women's Law Center*, Mar. 2020, wtop.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NWLC.pdf

⁶ Key Considerations for Marijuana Legalization. (2020). Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission. Retrieved from <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt542-6.pdf>

⁷ "Chart: Percentage of Cannabis Business Owners and Founders by Race." *Marijuana Business Daily*, 11 Sept. 2017, mjbizdaily.com/chart-19-cannabis-businesses-owned-founded-racial-minorities/

white business owners.⁸ We can and must do better to support these businesses. One barrier small businesses, particularly Black-owned small businesses, face when trying to start or expand is access to capital. Making matters worse, small dollar loans are becoming more difficult to access due to the generally low returns on investment for lenders paired with administrative burdens that are comparable to processing larger loans. During his administration, Terry bolstered Small Women and Minority-Owned (SWaM) businesses by creating a SWaM micro-loan program. As Virginia's next governor, Terry will build on this effort by creating a pilot program within the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity to support small businesses with access to capital and regular access to training and technical support that will lead to successful, thriving businesses. He will also work with lenders to improve access to small-dollar loans that can help businesses get started, or keep them on a path to success.

- **Transform the regulatory process and increase support for small businesses.** For too long, Virginia's regulatory process and business support programs have favored large and well-established companies. While large companies play an essential role in our economy, small businesses remain the backbone of our economy and our communities. COVID-19 has decimated small businesses, especially Black-owned small businesses. As we rebuild an equitable post-COVID economy, it is critical that we rethink our regulatory structures to better support small and minority-owned businesses. Terry will build on his work as Virginia's 72nd Governor and transform Virginia's regulatory process to ensure that small businesses, especially minority-owned businesses, have access to the support they need to be successful.
- **Facilitate educational opportunities and promote financial literacy.** Racist and discriminatory banking practices have prevented Black Americans from building wealth and flourishing, and while we have worked to eliminate and root out these laws and policies, their effects remain. Black communities continue to distrust financial institutions, and Virginia's education system does not do enough to teach financial literacy, which has led to generations of underdeveloped financial literacy. A 2021 survey found that Black Americans are uncomfortable talking about their finances and credit, fear judgement about their credit scores, and learn most of their financial literacy from family members.⁹ Terry recognizes that strong financial literacy is key to future success. In order to eliminate racial wealth gaps and promote Black wealth building, it is essential that we promote financial literacy and increase educational opportunities. As governor, Terry will partner to create and disseminate culturally competent financial literacy education for formal and informal settings and work with communities and local school divisions to improve outcomes for Black communities.
- **Support Black-owned banks and promote diversity in financial fields.** Black-owned financial institutions play a critical role in our communities, but have declined 50% in the

⁸Fairlie, R. W. (2020, June). The Impact of COVID-19 on Small Business Owners: Evidence of Early-Stage Losses from the April 2020 Current Population Survey. Retrieved from https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w27309/w27309.pdf

⁹ "More Than a Number Examining the Impact of Credit Challenges in the Black Community." *Self*, learn.self.inc/more-than-a-number/

last two decades, leaving only 21 Black-owned banks in the United States. Additionally, none of the remaining institutions manage over \$1 billion.¹⁰ These institutions play a critical role in our communities and help to build financial literacy among Black communities that have historically distrusted banks. They can also drive important resources into the communities that have disproportionately lacked access to capital and support small and mid-size businesses or meet other local needs. We cannot continue to sit back as these institutions close and further restrict economic opportunity for the communities that need it the most. As Governor, Terry will work to promote Black-owned financial institutions, promote diversity among staff in financial institutions and among investors. He will work to leverage any available federal or state funds to offer grants to Black-owned banks to support or expand their work across the Commonwealth.

Address the Generational Effects of Redlining

- **Strengthen down payment assistance programs, low-interest loans, and rent-to-own programs in opportunity-rich areas.** Redlining and other discriminatory policies that segregated Black Americans into areas without basic services or community investments have robbed generations of Black Americans and families from economic opportunity, primarily by excluding these communities from homeownership. While redlining was officially banned more than 50 years ago, its effects continue to live on. Two key barriers to Black homeownership are lack of access to capital for down payments and high debt-to-income ratios, both of which are a direct result of these discriminatory laws and practices.¹¹ When Black Virginians are able to overcome these tremendous barriers and purchase homes, they are often in less opportunity-rich areas where homes do not appreciate as much over time.¹² In order to interrupt this cycle and help close the racial wealth gap, Virginia must create meaningful, sustainable pathways to homeownership. That includes providing access to capital or low-interest loans and exploring rent-to-own programs that enable a portion of a tenant's monthly rent to be placed into an escrow account later used to purchase the home. Terry will work with Virginia Housing to leverage the Commonwealth's state housing finance authority to increase down payment assistance programs, increase the availability of low-interest loans, and rent-to-own programs.
- **Combat mortgage lending discrimination.** The federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 prevents lenders from discriminating against any person based on a number of factors, including race, but a substantial white-Black homeownership gap in America remains.¹³ President Obama increased fair housing protections during his administration by ensuring that states were proactively identifying opportunities to advance fair housing and combat

¹⁰ Costa, Cameron. "Minority Entrepreneurs at a Tipping Point as Black-Owned Banks Dwindle in the U.S." *CNBC*, 25 Aug. 2020, www.cnbc.com/2020/08/25/minority-entrepreneurs-at-tipping-point-as-black-owned-banks-dwindle.html

¹¹ Schuetz, Jenny. "Rethinking Homeownership Incentives to Improve Household Financial Security and Shrink the Racial Wealth Gap." *Brookings Institute*, 9 Dec. 2020, www.brookings.edu/research/rethinking-homeownership-incentives-to-improve-household-financial-security-and-shrink-the-racial-wealth-gap/

¹² Lerner, Michele. "One Home, a Lifetime of Impact." *The Washington Post*, 23 July 2020, www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/07/23/black-homeownership-gap/?arc404=true

¹³ *Ibid.*

segregation, but President Trump reversed these policies, eliminating critical efforts.¹⁴ As governor, Terry will work with President Biden's Administration to revisit these opportunities and brainstorm new ones to eliminate lending discrimination and hold industries accountable when there is evidence of discriminatory practice. Terry will also engage with mortgage lenders in Virginia to collect and analyze data and implement concrete solutions to reduce lending disparities in the Commonwealth.

- **Ensure Black Virginians are made aware of and given access to critical state housing resources.** While government programs and public-private partnerships exist to serve and lift up historically marginalized communities to promote homeownership, there can be a lapse in outreach that prevent these communities from being aware of or accessing these opportunities. In addition to making new resources available, Terry will engage state agencies and private partners to promote these programs so that every Virginian is aware of and has access to them. Terry will increase the housing counseling network to promote homeownership opportunities. He will also work to launch education campaigns in communities that can benefit the most.
- **Address disparity in home appraisals.** Black Americans face tremendous disparities related to homeownership and mortgage-lending, but also face bias and discrimination during the home appraisal process. Despite home appraisers being bound by law to not discriminate in their appraisals, Black homeowners repeatedly report receiving lower appraisals than similar houses owned by white homeowners.¹⁵ Simply put, home appraisers are contributing to a system that prevents Black Americans from accumulating wealth. As Governor, Terry will work to eliminate bias and discriminatory practices during the appraisal process. He will strengthen licensing requirements through the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, ensure cultural competency training and require better reporting and analysis of appraisals so that Virginia can quickly take action to combat discriminatory practices. Virginians should not have to worry about a low evaluation of their home's worth as a result of the color of their skin.

Fiercely Defend and Protect Civil Rights

Black Americans have been fighting for their basic, fundamental rights since our country was founded. Virginia has been on the wrong side of history for far too long, as the former capital of the confederacy. It also had the most lawsuits filed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) during the civil rights movement.¹⁶ Deep-rooted racism is a horrible part of our history and is the foundation for many state and federal laws that still exist today. As Governor, Terry will critically examine and overhaul the laws that prevent Black Virginians from access to their basic civil rights, like voting and equal treatment under the law. But we can't stop there. Terry will also prioritize equity and second chances when it comes

¹⁴“Leading Civil Rights & Housing Groups Condemn President's Effort to Gut Fair Housing, Use of Incendiary Racial Rhetoric for Political Gain.” *National Low Income Housing Coalition*, 23 July 2020, nlihc.org/news/leading-civil-rights-housing-groups-condemn-presidents-effort-gut-fair-housing-use-incendiary

¹⁵ Debra Kamin. “Black Homeowners Face Discrimination in Appraisals.” *The New York Times*, 25 Aug. 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/realestate/blacks-minorities-appraisals-discrimination.html

¹⁶ “Explore These 5 Notable Civil Rights Sites in Virginia.” *Blog.Virginia.org*, 27 Feb. 2020, blog.virginia.org/2020/02/virginia-civil-rights-sites/

to criminal justice reform and he will correct the generations of discriminatory policies that have been at the forefront of our criminal justice system. As governor, Terry will:

Protect and Expand Every Virginians' Right to Vote

- **Ensure restoration of voting rights automatically.** As Virginia's 72nd Governor, Terry's proudest accomplishment was reversing a Jim Crow law that disenfranchised hundreds of thousands of Virginians and restoring civil rights to over 173,000 Virginians, more than any governor in American history. Despite being sued twice by the Republican leadership in the Virginia General Assembly, Terry was committed to personally restoring every one of those individual's rights and he delivered on that promise. Terry is proud of this accomplishment and recognizes the tremendous impact it has had on these Virginians' lives, but there is more work to be done. That starts with bringing Virginia in line with states across the country. In 39 states, individuals convicted of felonies either never lose their voting rights or have them automatically restored at some point. In 11 states, including Virginia, people convicted of felonies lose their rights indefinitely.¹⁷ Individuals who have completed their sentences should not be prohibited from utilizing their voice in our democracy. Terry will work with the Democratic-controlled legislature and voters across the Commonwealth to ensure a constitutional amendment to automatically reinstate a Virginian's voting rights is proposed, passed, and implemented.
- **Spearhead Registrar reform in Virginia.** The Democratic majorities in the Virginia General Assembly have made significant progress in recent years making the ballot more accessible to voters. While the legislature is responsible for passing these critical election laws, local electoral boards and the registrars they appoint have tremendous authority and the ability to control access to the ballot, and without oversight from the state or their local government. Registrars determine where and when people can register to vote and cast their ballots, and they engage with the community about voting. They also control how critical dollars are spent and investments in new, secure technologies to protect voters. This authority can ultimately result in limiting access and make it harder for people, particularly communities of color, to vote. And we've seen examples of registrars in Virginia, most recently in the City of Richmond,¹⁸ using their power and authority to do exactly that. Terry is, and always has been, a firm believer that we need to create more opportunities for people to participate in our democracy, and we need to make sure that votes are secure and protected. As Virginia's 72nd Governor, Terry proposed \$28 million to modernize voting devices, but Republicans cut the funding from the budget.¹⁹ As Virginia's next governor, Terry will work with the Democratic majorities in the legislature, local governments and registrars to reform our existing processes, ensure that

¹⁷ "Restoration of Voting Rights for Felons." *National Conference of State Legislatures*, 8 Jan. 2021, www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights.aspx

¹⁸ Lazarus, Jeremy M. "Kirk Showalter, Richmond's Voter Registrar, Is Dismissed by the Richmond Electoral Board after Multiple Complaints Surrounding the Nov. 3 General Election." *Richmond Free Press*, 2 Apr. 2021, richmondfreepress.com/news/2021/feb/04/kirk-showalter-richmonds-voter-registrar-dismissed/

¹⁹ Vozella, Laura. "Virginia Scraps Touch-Screen Voting Machines as Election for Governor Looms." *Washington Post*, 8 Sept. 2017, www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/virginia-scraps-touch-screen-voting-machines-as-election-for-governor-looms/2017/09/08/e266ead6-94fe-11e7-89fa-bb822a46da5b_story.html

our local registrars are adopting policies and practices that are inclusive and promote accessibility, and that Virginians can be confident that their ballots are secure and will be counted accurately.

- **Make it easier for Virginians to vote.** Recently, Virginia has made great progress in passing “no excuse” early voting. Additionally, the General Assembly passed legislation this year allowing Virginians to vote on Sundays. These historical reforms increase voting accessibility for low-income voters, voters of color, voters with disabilities, and voters living in rural areas. Voting is a fundamental right -- our democracy relies on equal freedom to cast a ballot. Without the opportunity to vote early, we exclude a large portion of qualified voters from having their voices heard. Factors such as work, transportation, geography, or child care can hinder the ability for Virginians to get to the polls. As Virginia’s next Governor, Terry will take Virginia’s progress further by increasing the number of early voting locations, expanding the hours early voting locations are open, and incentivizing localities to provide free transportation to early voting sites.
- **Improve education around the power of voting and promote voter registration.** When we vote, our voices are heard and our democracy is strengthened. An integral part of breaking down barriers is ensuring Virginians understand the power of their vote and ensuring that every Virginian registers to vote. As Governor, Terry will work diligently with localities to increase voter education, ensuring information is readily available on when and where to cast a ballot. He will also ensure that every Virginia student registers to vote before they leave high school, making sure students understand the importance of participating in their democracy and are able to do so when they turn 18. As part of Terry’s efforts to educate community members on the importance of voting, he will also work to recruit diverse poll workers so that every Virginian feels welcomed and represented when they arrive to vote. Terry will work every day to make Virginia the best state for voting.

Rebuild Trust Between Communities and Public Safety Agencies

- **Break down systemic racism within the criminal justice system.** While Black Virginians represent only 20% of our population,²⁰ they represent 55% of the incarcerated population in our state correctional facilities.²¹ For too long, Black Virginians have been disproportionately impacted by Virginia's criminal justice policies and overrepresented in our criminal justice system. The system is fraught with injustices and systemic racism. We must critically examine every aspect of our system, from our criminal laws, enforcement practices, to sentencing and re-entry services. Every Virginian should be treated fairly under the law regardless of the color of their skin or what neighborhood they live in. Terry released a [bold plan to reform our criminal justice](#)

²⁰ “Quick Facts Virginia.” *United States Census Bureau*, 1 July 2019, www.census.gov/quickfacts/VA

²¹ “Management Information Summary Annual Report.” *Virginia Department of Corrections*, vadoc.virginia.gov/media/1623/vadoc-financial-annual-mis-report-2020.pdf

[system](#), and as governor he will work tirelessly to finally deliver a fair criminal justice system for Virginians.

- **Ensure accountability and transparency of law enforcement misconduct.** In order to rebuild trust between communities and law enforcement, transparency and open dialogue must be at the forefront, and the public must have confidence that officers are held accountable for serious misconduct. Virginia has made a lot of progress, and the General Assembly recently passed legislation to expand and strengthen laws around decertification of officers following misconduct and directed the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to develop a statewide code of conduct that can inform the new decertification process. Additionally, the legislature directed DCJS to update and standardize law enforcement training standards, and that those standards include learning objectives around cultural competency, implicit bias, the history of racism in policing, and more. As Virginia's next governor, Terry will work with communities and local law-enforcement agencies to fully implement these new laws. He will continue to improve training, expand body-worn camera programs, and return to a community policing model that embraces and supports every member of our communities, regardless of their race or zip code. Terry will also work to increase transparency so that members of the public can access critical information about an officer's disciplinary history and incidences of serious misconduct.
- **Increase funding and technical assistance for community policing initiatives.** Achieving long-term public safety requires strong relationships, mutual respect, and understanding between law enforcement and the communities they serve. We must shift our operations away from the militarization of law-enforcement agencies and back to the basics of communication and trust. Community policing is grounded in the belief that when we all work together, we can better address the underlying issues our communities are facing and prevent crime more effectively. While most law-enforcement agencies in Virginia strive to implement community policing models, localities need additional resources to support innovative programs. Terry is a fierce believer in community policing and has laid out a bold [plan](#) to rebuild trust between communities and law enforcement. As governor, Terry will ensure that federal and state funds are directed to supporting community policing efforts. He will also act boldly to promote unifying initiatives, and partner with local agencies to encourage practices like rotating officers between neighborhoods, citizen engagement in training, and holding regular community events and activities that can foster trust and communication. Terry will also work with these agencies to encourage young people to consider a future in law enforcement through initiatives like cadet programs.
- **Improve confidence in law enforcement by increasing diversity and focusing on procedural justice.** Terry recognizes how critical it is to improve confidence in law enforcement, particularly for Black and Brown communities. While increasing diversity, improving career advancement, and rooting out cultural issues that prevent diverse candidates from becoming law-enforcement officers is critical, we must also ensure that agencies are focused on recruiting and retaining officers who believe in and ensure procedural justice. A recent study indicates that Black and Brown communities are most

concerned with officers that promote procedural justice and utilize fair and effective policing practices.²² We must ensure that procedural justice is modeled at the highest levels of leadership and informs recruitment and career advancement opportunities, and agencies must hold officers accountable when they fail to uphold this principle. Terry will leverage federal and state funds to invest in initiatives that will promote effective and just policing practices while improving diversity and recruiting the highest-quality law enforcement-officers.

- **Create a state fund to support law-enforcement accreditation.** Virginia has over 330 law-enforcement agencies and over 22,000 certified law-enforcement officers. Of those agencies, less than one-third have achieved accreditation nationally or in Virginia. Accreditation is a rigorous process that examines every aspect of an agency’s policies and operations, and ensures that agencies are held to the highest standards of excellence. Unfortunately, the cost of accreditation can be prohibitive for some agencies, especially small agencies. Terry recognizes the importance of accreditation, and will create a state fund that will help support the cost for local agencies so they can complete the process and become accredited.

Protect Black LGBTQ+ Virginians

- **Improve identification, reporting and enforcement of hate crimes.** Black Virginians in the LGBTQ+ community experience violence at disproportionate rates, and it has to stop. In fact, 58% of LGBTQ+ people reporting hate-inspired violence nationwide were also people of color, and Black LGBTQ+ people were 1.4 times more likely to face physically violent hate crimes than other members of the LGBTQ+ community.²³ This is unacceptable. As governor, Terry will take big, bold action to protect Black, LGBTQ+ communities in Virginia. Terry will increase access to training for our communities and law-enforcement agencies to ensure that hate crimes are being identified, reported, and addressed consistently and appropriately, and to break down biases that perpetuate this hate. He will also work to improve workforce harassment policies, with a focus on streamlining the reporting process and bolstering enforcement of anti-discrimination policies. Terry is also committed to working with the Biden administration and Virginia’s congressional delegation to ensure LGBTQ+ individuals are identified in the highest risk categories in the Older Americans Act so that Virginia can draw down every available federal dollar to support our most vulnerable adults.
- **Invest in culturally competent mental health services.** In order to improve the mental health and overall well-being for Black LGBTQ+ individuals, we must expand access to care and invest in culturally competent care. Nationwide, 39% of gay, lesbian, and

²² MacLean, Charles E. “Improving African American Confidence in Law Enforcement: Recruit to Optimize Procedural Justice, Not Racial Quotas - Charles E MacLean, 2020.” SAGE Journals, 30 Dec. 2020, journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1461355720974698

²³ “Hate Violence Against Communities of Color.” *National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs*, avp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/ncavp_hvpocfactsheet.pdf

bisexual people report having a mental illness,²⁴ and even more report a history of suicidal ideations or attempts. In fact, 44% of Black LGBTQ+ youth report that they have seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months. These numbers are even more striking for transgender communities of color, with 59% of Black transgender and nonbinary youths and 48% of Black transgender adults reporting a history of suicidal thoughts or attempts.²⁵ Unfortunately, we know that Black Americans, particularly members of the LGBTQ+ community, lack access to culturally competent care and are more likely to be ignored by providers when they seek an appointment.²⁶ This is unacceptable. Virginia can and should do better to support these members of our communities, and as governor, Terry will make access to culturally competent care a top priority. In addition to increasing funding for mental health services, Terry will expand access to critical training that combat bias, break down stigma, and improve the overall quality of care.

- **Ensure equality for adoptions & fostering for LGBTQ+ people of color.** There are over 5,500 Virginia children in foster care, 1,700 of which are ready to be adopted into loving families.²⁷ Black children are overrepresented in the system, representing 29% of all children in need of foster homes. It is unacceptable that we continue to exclude families who are willing to care for our most vulnerable children. No person should be prevented from providing a loving home to a child in need because of who they are or who they love. As governor, Terry will work with stakeholder groups to ensure Virginia's adoption policies and procedures are inclusive to LGBTQ+ people of color.

Promote Equity and Access Across Systems

The fight towards justice is arguably more important now than it ever has before -- the devastating impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the Black community only continues to exacerbate generational disparities. If we do not act now, future generations of Black Virginians to come will continue to be left behind. Every Virginian should have access to all opportunities and experiences regardless of their skin color. That includes equitable access to health care, education, and environments free of pollution and contaminants. It is absolutely critical that we act boldly to close the gaps too many African Americans face in accessing basic resources. As Governor, Terry will:

Build a Healthcare System that is Accessible and Responsive to Black Virginians

- **Increase provider acceptance of Medicaid.** Practitioners who provide health services to patients covered by Medicaid receive a standard reimbursement rate, typically much less than payment from private insurance companies,²⁸ and these lower rates coupled with the

²⁴ "LGBTQ+ Communities And Mental Health." *Mental Health America*, mhanational.org/issues/lgbtq-communities-and-mental-health

²⁵ Ibid and The Trevor Project, [10/6/20](https://www.thetrevorproject.org/2020/06/10/10-6-20)

²⁶ "Understanding and Addressing the Social Determinants of Health for Black LGBTQ People: A Way Forward for Health Centers." *National LGBT Health Education Center*, June 2020, www.lgbtqiahealtheducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TFIE-33_SDOHForBlackLGBTPeople_Web.pdf

²⁷ "Virginia Foster Care Statistics ." *United Methodist Family Services* , www.umfs.org/virginia-foster-care-statistics/

²⁸ "Appointment Availability after Increases in Medicaid Payments for Primary Care." *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 5 Feb. 2015, www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa1413299

potentially long reimbursement waiting period can deter providers from accepting Medicaid patients. This inevitably creates further disparities in health care access for Medicaid recipients and disproportionately affects Black communities, which are already more likely to experience severe or chronic illnesses.²⁹ We must do more to ensure Black Virginians have access to high-quality, affordable health care coverage when they need it, including access to high-quality providers. Research suggests that for most states, even a \$45 increase on reimbursement could close over two-thirds of disparities in access for adults and eliminate disparities among children.³⁰ As governor, Terry will work to increase reimbursement rates and decrease the waiting period for providers to be reimbursed. Terry will also work with providers across the Commonwealth to identify and break down other barriers in order to improve coverage.

- **Rebuild trust and promote health literacy.** Historically racist and discriminatory practices have understandably led Black communities to distrust health care professionals, which has further exacerbated disparities by preventing care-seeking behavior or compliance with treatment.³¹ Eliminating these disparities will not only require new investments and better access to care, but will also require outreach and engagement to hear from communities and take action to rebuild trust. This outreach must include efforts to promote health literacy that will foster care-seeking behaviors and enable communities to get the help they need. This is especially essential as more Virginians gain access to Medicaid coverage, which can be more complicated and challenging to navigate than free clinics. In fact, the Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics have highlighted the challenge their patients have faced locating, accessing and understanding providers post-Medicaid enrollment and have even adapted their practices to meet ongoing needs.³² Lack of trust and poor health literacy compound inequities and as governor, Terry is committed to addressing these issues head-on.
- **Address social factors that hinder good health for communities of color.** Individual health is determined by more than one's access to health care, and is heavily influenced by social factors like access to nutritious food, stable housing, a safe physical environment, and economic stability. Communities of color face barriers to good health in many of these dimensions.³³ Far too many people of color experience poor health due to lack of access to healthy food options, safe and stable housing, and clean outdoor

²⁹ "African Americans More Likely to Have High Blood Pressure, Diabetes, CDC Says." *AARP*, 3 Feb. 2020, www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2020/health-risks-african-americans.html

³⁰ "Increased Medicaid Reimbursement Rates Expand Access to Care." *National Bureau of Economic Research*, 3 Oct. 2019, www.nber.org/bh/increased-medicaid-reimbursement-rates-expand-access-care

³¹ Wells, Lindsay, and Arjun Gowda. "A Legacy of Mistrust: African Americans and the US Healthcare System." *Proceedings of UCLA Health*, 2020, proceedings.med.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Wells-A200421LW-rko-Wells-Lindsay-M.D.-BLM-formatted.pdf

³² "Stories of Impact: Oiliver's." *Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics*, 22 Apr. 2020, www.vafreeclinics.org/blog_home.asp?display=23

³³ "Advancing Health Equity by Addressing the Social Determinants of Health in Family Medicine (Position Paper)." *AAFP*, Apr. 2019, www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/social-determinants-health-family-medicine.html

environments.³⁴ As governor, Terry will work with the Biden administration to obtain a waiver from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, allowing Virginia to invest more resources in addressing these social determinants of health in communities of color. Terry will leverage these funds as well as community partnerships to improve the health of these communities to ensure every Virginian has a shot at a healthy life.

- **Establish a statewide social determinants of health coordinator at the Virginia Department of Health.** In December, Governor Northam directed \$10 million in federal CARES funding to support the implementation of a statewide screening and referral system through Unite Us. This important investment will allow Virginia to truly move the needle on social determinants of health and better coordinate systems of care to provide for Virginians. Innovation is already occurring across the public and private sectors, but there are concrete steps the Commonwealth can take to accelerate progress and ensure more equitable outcomes. Terry will establish a statewide position under the Commissioner of Health dedicated to supporting social determinant screening and referral systems, including capacity building for community service providers and statewide data analysis to assess gaps in services and program effectiveness.
- **Expand and diversify the health care workforce.** Eliminating health inequities will require an expansion and evolution of the current health care workforce in the Commonwealth and improving trust between healthcare professionals and Black communities. One way to improve trust is to diversify our workforce. In Virginia, the number of Black physicians in practice remains strikingly low, making up 19% of physicians in Virginia.³⁵ Virginia needs a broad array of health care workers who come from the communities they serve and as Governor, Terry will explore opportunities like loan repayment programs and the creation of new residency slots specifically for students in underrepresented health professions who commit to practicing in Virginia. Building a diverse and broad workforce of physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals is a critical step in Virginia being able to eliminate health inequities for good. Terry will also improve cultural competency and bias training for medical professionals.
- **Promote food justice.** Almost 1 in 10 Virginians qualify as food insecure, and 40% of those who are food insecure are above the income threshold for nutrition-assistance programs.³⁶ Food insecurity or lack of access to nutritious foods can be detrimental, and lead to poor outcomes in health, child development, educational attainment, and overall success, and affects Black communities at disproportionate rates.³⁷ Nationally, nearly one in five Black Americans identifies as being food insecure,³⁸ and Black communities have

³⁴ “Beyond Health Care: The Role of Social Determinants in Promoting Health and Health Equity.” *Kaiser Family Foundation*, 10 May 2018, www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/beyond-health-care-the-role-of-social-determinants-in-promoting-health-and-health-equity/.

³⁵ “Virginia’s Physician Workforce: 2018.” *Healthcare Workforce Data Center*, Jan. 2019, www.dhp.virginia.gov/media/dhpweb/docs/hwdc/medicine/0101Physician2018revised.pdf

³⁶ “Food Insecurity in Virginia.” *Feeding America*, map.feedingamerica.org/county/2018/overall/virginia

³⁷ Edwards, Chloe. “Family Economic Security Equity Impact Statement.” *Voices for Virginia's Children*, 2021, vakids.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2021-Family-Economic-Security-Equity-Impact-Statement.pdf

³⁸ “The Impact Of the Coronavirus On Food Insecurity In 2020 And 2021” *Feeding America*, March 2021, https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/National%20Projections%20Brief_3.9.2021_0.pdf

four times fewer supermarkets in their communities compared to predominantly white neighborhoods.³⁹ This is unconscionable, and as Virginia's 72nd Governor, Terry and his wife Dorothy made ending childhood hunger and combating food insecurity a top priority. Terry proposed over \$7 million in funding to initiate the Virginia Grocery Investment Fund, which incentivizes grocery stores to open or renovate in food deserts, providing equitable nutrition to underserved areas. He also secured state and federal funds that resulted in 13 million more meals being served in Virginia each year. Despite this progress, Virginians are still hungry. Terry released a [bold plan to combat food security](#), something he will continue to champion as Virginia's next governor and partner with the Biden administration to build upon. As governor, Terry will establish a Nutritious Food Trust Fund that can support the development of affordable supermarkets in underserved areas, and encourage local markets to sell fresh and healthy foods. The fund will also expand current grant opportunities that allow organizations to establish and support urban and community gardens, mobile markets, community kitchens, and food hubs. Virginia must prioritize food justice to create a more equitable Commonwealth.

- **Reduce maternal mortality.** Black women, regardless of income, die at an alarming rate during or after childbirth compared to white women. In fact, in Virginia, Black women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy complications than white women.⁴⁰ This is beyond unacceptable -- it is negligent. Governor Northam and his administration have prioritized this issue, working to secure doula coverage under Medicaid and extend coverage for a full year for postpartum women. As governor, Terry will build on these efforts and continue to break down these disparities. Research suggests that the continued expansion of Medicaid is associated with lower rates of maternal mortality.⁴¹ This expanded coverage will include better maternity care, essential home visiting programs for new mothers that increase access to support and education, mandatory mental health screenings during and after pregnancy, and ensuring every woman has access to lactation support and counseling.

Deliver Equitable Access to a World-Class Education for Every Black Student

- **Expand the Virginia Preschool Initiative to include all 3- and 4-year olds in need.** Quality preschool programs offer the greatest possible return on investment for state education funds, yielding between \$4 and \$9 per \$1 invested.⁴² Studies estimate that within nine years, the benefits of these programs would outweigh the costs and the Commonwealth would begin to see a greater return on its investment.⁴³ Nevertheless, Virginia falls in the bottom third of all states with investment in early-childhood

³⁹ "Neighborhood Characteristics Associated with the Location of Food Stores and Food Service Places." *National Library of Medicine*, National Center for Biotechnology Information, pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11777675/

⁴⁰ Pauly, Megan. "Lawmakers Act to Correct Racial Disparity in Maternal Mortality Rates." NPR, PBS, 3 Mar. 2020, [vpm.org/news/articles/11186/lawmakers-act-to-correct-racial-disparity-in-maternal-mortality-rates](https://www.vpm.org/news/articles/11186/lawmakers-act-to-correct-racial-disparity-in-maternal-mortality-rates)

⁴¹ Eliason, Erica L. "Adoption of Medicaid Expansion Is Associated with Lower Maternal Mortality." *Women's Health Issues*, 1 May 2020, [www.whijournal.com/article/S1049-3867\(20\)30005-0/fulltext](https://www.whijournal.com/article/S1049-3867(20)30005-0/fulltext)

⁴² Early Childhood: High Return on Investment - Center for High Impact Philanthropy. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.impact.upenn.edu/early-childhood-toolkit/why-invest/what-is-the-return-on-investment/>

⁴³ Vaghul, K., & Lynch, R. (2015, December 2). A snapshot of the long-term impacts of universal pre-k in Virginia. Retrieved from <https://equitablegrowth.org/state-page-va/>

education, ranking 31st in access and funding for its publicly funded preschool programs.⁴⁴ Moreover, the Virginia Preschool Initiative currently serves mostly at-risk 4-year olds, meaning that at-risk 3-year olds largely do not have access to public preschool programs. Research is clear that two years in a high-quality program has a profound impact in closing gaps before kindergarten for our most vulnerable students. There are 41,500 3- and 4-year olds who are unserved and in need of preschool.⁴⁵ That is why this program needs to be drastically expanded to include all three- and four-year olds who are in need.

- **Get every Virginia student online.** COVID-19 has further demonstrated how critical access to broadband is, especially for students. Right now, 14% of our students still lack access to broadband and that is unacceptable.⁴⁶ Without access to the internet in their homes, students experience negative outcomes related to test scores and overall success in higher education or technical training programs. This is an even greater issue for our rural communities. Preparing our students to enter the workforce and attracting businesses to locate in all areas of the Commonwealth requires affordable, universal broadband access. Terry's plan will get every student in Virginia online by expanding infrastructure and helping families in need cover the costs of the service.
- **Cultivate the next generation of highly qualified and diverse educators through the Lucy Simms Educator program.** Building and sustaining a high-quality, diverse workforce of educators in Virginia means getting more young people into the teacher-training pipeline. We have to engage early with middle and high school students about the opportunity to become an educator in Virginia. Eliminating the future burden of student loan debt by requiring a five-year teaching commitment in our public schools will help attract the young people we need to enter the profession. This program will specifically target traditionally hard-to-staff positions and will support students from low-income backgrounds. Terry will also partner with our Historically Black Colleges and Universities because we know that having a diverse workforce of educators benefits all students, particularly students of color.
- **Promote diversity in STEM-H and computer science fields through education.** Terry released a bold plan to make Virginia the [best state in the nation for STEM-H and computer science education](#), and his plan focuses heavily on improving diversity in these fields. That includes engaging students, particularly students of color, at a young age. Too often, Virginia's education system fails to help young women and students of color fail to see their STEM-H or computer science potential, which has created serious diversity issues in these fields. Only 9 percent of girls between the ages 13-17 report

⁴⁴ The State of Preschool 2019. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Virginia_YB2019.pdf

⁴⁵ 2020 Children's Budget Report. (n.d.). https://www.vecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/VECF_ChildrensBudgetReport4_Full.pdf

⁴⁶ Allison, T. (2020, September 10). A closer look at Virginia's digital divide in education. Retrieved from <https://www.schev.edu/index/reports/insights/insights/2020/09/10/a-closer-look-at-virginia-s-digital-divide-in-education>

being interested in STEM careers,⁴⁷ and only 9 percent of STEM workers are Black.⁴⁸ STEM-H and computer science are the industries of the future and we cannot continue to leave young women and students of color behind. As governor, Terry will equip educators with the tools and skills they need to cultivate interest and break down barriers. He will also continue to develop and push out culturally competent materials in formal and informal learning environments, and he will create summer learning opportunities for students that have been historically left behind.

- **Infuse Black history into school curriculum year-round.** For too long, education curricula around the nation have failed to deliver accurate, holistic education about Black history. This failure encompasses not only Virginia's ugly history of slavery, but also fails to appropriately celebrate Black leaders that have moved our nation forward and inspired transformation change. Put simply, Black history is American history, and it is encouraging that Virginia has taken steps in recent years to update education curricula to ensure that students receive a holistic and factual accounting of that history. However, more work remains. As Governor, Terry will work with the Virginia Department of Education and stakeholders across the Commonwealth to redesign the Black American history curriculum in culturally and age-appropriate ways and ensure that we address and teach all parts of Black history.
- **Increase funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other minority serving institutions.** Black American students have the lowest college completion rate among races, and 19% of Black Americans 25 years and older have a bachelor's degree.⁴⁹ This clearly demonstrates that educational institutions nationally and in Virginia have failed to appropriately recruit and support students of color through their educational careers. Across the country, we have made significant progress in enrolling Black American students in the last several decades, and this can be attributed to our HBCUs. HBCUs work to address many obstacles students face, yet have been neglected for decades. It is absolutely integral that we increase funding to these institutions, many of which attract first generation college students. These students often require unique guidance and support, and by increasing funding for these institutions, Virginia can uplift our students of color. These institutions can also play a key role in improving diversity in high-demand fields that have historically lacked diversity, like STEM-H and computer science. Currently, one quarter of Black American graduates with STEM degrees come from HBCUs.⁵⁰ Governor Northam expanded the public-private partnership, U-Teach, at two of our state funded HBCUs, encouraging more students of color to become STEM-H and computer science educators. Terry will build on this important progress by investing

⁴⁷ Rose, Ashley. "Female Interest in STEM Education and Careers Decreasing." *Government Technology*, Center for Digital Education, 3 June 2019, www.govtech.com/education/Female-Interest-in-STEM-Education-and-Careers-Decreasing.html

⁴⁸ Funk, Cary, and Kim Parker. "Diversity in the STEM Workforce Varies Widely across Jobs." *Pew Research Center*, 9 Jan. 2018, www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/01/09/diversity-in-the-stem-workforce-varies-widely-across-jobs/

⁴⁹ "The Numbers Don't Lie: HBCUs Are Changing the College Landscape." *United Negro College Fund*, uncf.org/the-latest/the-numbers-dont-lie-hbcus-are-changing-the-college-landscape

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

in private, non-profit minority serving institutions, aiming to close intergenerational equity gaps for students of color.

Fight for Environmental Justice

- **Promote equitable land use.** Historically, land use has not been supportive of lower income communities of color and has created barriers to community health, wellness, and equitable development.⁵¹ Terry will promote community control of land and housing by encouraging more localities to establish land banks, which allow them to acquire abandoned properties and prepare them for better uses.⁵² He will also create a strong statewide framework for community groups to pursue Community Benefits Agreements — legally binding agreements between developers and the community that ensure community interests are protected.⁵³ In order to steer equitable investment to underserved neighborhoods, Terry will establish equity criteria to prioritize general obligation bond funds to finance projects in low income neighborhoods that prevent resident displacement or develop green spaces. Under Terry’s leadership, the Commonwealth will prioritize funds for projects that promote access to quality land for Black Virginians.
- **Ensure equitable access to safe and welcoming green spaces through environmental impact bonds.** While 93% of Virginians state that access to outdoor parks and green spaces is important or very important, many also state that they do not have access to parks.⁵⁴ This is especially true in cities like Richmond where 22% of residents live beyond a 10-minute walk to one of the city’s 164 parks.⁵⁵ Green spaces in communities are extremely beneficial, as they have demonstrated the ability to reduce crime and pollution, and drastically improve physical and mental health in our communities.⁵⁶ Historically, green spaces were excluded from Black communities as part of the larger practice of redlining.⁵⁷ Terry will work with localities to finance greenspace projects through environmental impact bonds, a risk-sharing system that allows investors to construct new projects and be repaid by municipalities based on measures of environmental improvements.⁵⁸ These “Pay-for-Success” bonds help city governments put green spaces in underserved neighborhoods while freeing up financing for future projects and limiting liability.⁵⁹ The City of Hampton issued Virginia’s first

⁵¹ “Sustainable and Equitable Land Use.” *We Act*, www.weact.org/whatwedo/areasofwork/landuse/

⁵² Green, Jarrid. *Community Control of Land and Housing*. Democracy Collaborative, thenextsystem.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/CommunityControlLandHousing.pdf

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Anthony, Cat, and Justin Doyle. “Ensuring Every Virginian Has Access to Parks and Green Spaces.” *Virginia Conservation Network*, www.vcnva.org/ensuring-every-virginian-has-access-to-parks-and-green-spaces-2/

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Human Benefits of Green Spaces*. University of Delaware, 18 Nov. 2018, www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/fact-sheets/human-benefits-of-green-spaces/

⁵⁷ Alejandro Borunda. “How ‘Nature Deprived’ Neighborhoods Impact the Health of People of Color.” *National Geographic*, 29 July 2020, www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/how-nature-deprived-neighborhoods-impact-health-people-of-color

⁵⁸ “Green Space: An Underestimated Tool to Create More Equal Cities.” *World Resources Institute*, 29 Sept. 2020, www.wri.org/blog/2020/09/green-space-social-equity-cities

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

environmental impact bond in December to fight stormwater flooding.⁶⁰ Terry will secure funding to ensure every community has equitable green spaces.

- **Diversify the clean energy workforce.** The clean energy sector is growing rapidly in the Commonwealth and across the country, with thousands of new clean energy jobs coming to Virginia each year. As Virginia moves to a clean energy future, it is critical that the transition is equitable and creates opportunities for every community, especially the communities that have been impacted the most by pollutants and contaminants that result from fossil fuels. Right now, wind and solar sector jobs are dominated by white workers⁶¹ and around 88% of executives in the solar industry are white.⁶² As Governor, Terry will partner our local school divisions and industry leaders to inspire the next generation of clean energy workers, with a specific focus on building diversity and securing Virginia's just transition to clean energy.
- **Increase access to electric vehicles (EVs) and ensure equitable distribution of EV charging infrastructure.** In Virginia, transportation contributes to 45% of all carbon emissions. Every year, these emissions kill 750 Virginians and cost the state \$750 million in net impacted health, disproportionately burdening communities of color. Black Americans breathe 66% more hazardous air pollution than white Americans, which has been linked to increased prevalence of certain chronic illnesses, cancers and premature deaths. Virginia recently passed legislation to create strict Clean Car Standards and promote the adoption of EVs and EV infrastructure, but implementation will require strong leadership from Virginia's next Governor. As we transition to cleaner technologies, we cannot continue to leave rural, low-income, and communities of color behind. In addition to incentivizing the purchase of EVs, Terry will ensure that EVs and its infrastructure are deployed equitably in all regions of the Commonwealth and not just in wealthy suburbs.
- **Electrify public transit and school buses.** Today, Black school-aged children are inhaling diesel-powered, polluted air on their ride to school. Research suggests that each electric school bus equates with taking 5.2 cars off the road.⁶³ In comparison to a diesel-fueled school bus, electric school buses are about 60% less expensive to operate, saving school districts nearly \$6,400 per year per bus on fuel and maintenance.⁶⁴ Similar issues

⁶⁰ Welch, Kaniqua. "City of Hampton Fights Flooding with Issuance of Virginia's First Environmental Impact Bond." *The Kresge Foundation*, 7 Dec. 2020, [kresge.org/news-views/city-of-hampton-fights-flooding-with-issuance-of-virginias-first-environmental-impact-bond](https://www.kresge.org/news-views/city-of-hampton-fights-flooding-with-issuance-of-virginias-first-environmental-impact-bond)

⁶¹ "2020 U.S. Energy & Employment Report." *USEnergyJobs*, NASEO & EFI, static1.squarespace.com/static/5a98cf80ec4eb7c5cd928c61/t/5e78b3c756e8367abbd47ab0/1584968660321/USEER+2020+0323.pdf

⁶² "Solar Industry Diversity Study 2019." *The Solar Foundation*, www.thesolarfoundation.org/diversity/

⁶³ <https://news.dominionenergy.com/2019-08-29-Dominion-Energy-Proposes-Largest-Electric-School-Bus-Initiative-in-the-Country>

⁶⁴ "Virginia Announces \$20 Million Electric School Bus Initiative." *American School & University*, 25 Sept. 2019, www.asumag.com/green/sustainability-initiatives/article/20857371/virginia-announces-20-million-electric-school-bus-initiative#:~:text=The%20money%20will%20help%20school,their%20diesel%20powered%20bus%20fleet.&text=Virginia%20says%20it%20will%20spend,school%20buses%20in%20the%20state

exist when it comes to public transportation, which low-income and Black communities rely heavily upon. Investing in clean public transportation, including school buses, can save local governments tremendously in the long-term while reducing exposure to dangerous pollutants and improving health outcomes for their communities. The Virginia General Assembly passed legislation this year to support the local cost of this transition, and as Virginia's next governor, Terry will build on these efforts and continue to make critical dollars available. He will also explore public-private partnerships, additional opportunities to support financing, and investment of federal funds.