



US Senator Bernie Sander: Higher Heights Questionnaire

Issue & Policy Questions:

Healthcare

- 1. Please outline the specifics of your policy proposal on healthcare, including expanding access, what would be covered, lowering prescription drug costs and transition from the current system.**

Bernie running for president because the time is long overdue for the United States to join every other major country on Earth and guarantee health care to all people as a right, not a privilege, through a Medicare for All program. Health care is not a commodity. It is a human right. The goal of a rational health care system should be to keep people well, not to make stockholders rich. His Medicare for All program would provide comprehensive health coverage to all with no premiums, deductibles, copayments, or surprise bills.

Bernie's plan would ensure that Americans can go to the doctor of their choice and get the care they need, when they need it, without going into debt. Under Medicare for All, we will stop the pharmaceutical industry from ripping off Americans by making sure that no one in America pays over \$200 a year for the medicine they need by capping what Americans pay for prescription drugs. Medicare for all would also expand coverage to include home and community based long-term care services, ensuring people with disabilities can receive the care they need to stay in their homes and remain part of their communities. Mental healthcare, under Medicare for All, will be free at the time of service, with no co-payments that can be a barrier to treatment. Over four years we will transition to a system in which Medicare is expanded to cover everyone with no copays, deductibles or premiums.

- 2. How does your plan address the myriad of disparities – including chronic illness, underdiagnosing of illness, heart disease, mental health, access and affordability that negatively impact the health and well-being of Black women?**

We will not only guarantee health care to all as a right with Medicare for All, we must also end the long-standing racial disparities that exist within America's health care system and workforce. Far too many black Americans have died as a result of these injustices and there is no time to wait for racial justice and health care for all. When we are in the White House, we will address the need for more black doctors, more black dentists, more black nurses, and more black mental health providers who can provide the care that is so desperately needed in their communities.

We'll significantly expand the National Health Service Corps, Community Health Centers, and Teaching Health Centers to bring more doctors and nurses of color to underserved areas. We will increase the number of nurses, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants and allowing them to practice at the top of their license in order to increase the number of practitioners of color to provide culturally competent care in the communities they serve.

We'll address the fact that in the U.S., black women are three and a half times more likely to die from pregnancy than white women. The research from experts is clear: to solve our maternal mortality crisis, we need to address uninsurance. When Bernie is in the White House, he'll enact Medicare for All, which will guarantee health care, including quality maternal health care, as a human right to everyone in America, free at the point of service.

3. What are your policy plans for the future of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid?

At a time when about half of American households over the age of 55 have no retirement savings and one out of five seniors are trying to live on less than \$13,500 a year, our job is not to cut Social Security. Our job is to expand Social Security across the board so that everyone in this country can retire with the dignity they have earned and everyone with a disability can live with the security they need.

Social Security is the most successful government program in our nation's history. Before Social Security was signed into law, nearly half of seniors lived in poverty. Today, while much too high, the poverty rate for seniors is down to 9.2 percent. Through good times and bad, Social Security has paid every nickel owed to every eligible American – on time and without delay. That is an extraordinary accomplishment. Bernie's Social Security plan would lift this cap and apply the payroll tax on all income over \$250,000 in order to expand benefits across-the-board.

And we will guarantee health care to all people as a right, not a privilege, through a Medicare for All program. Health care is not a commodity. It is a human right. The goal of a sane health care system should be to keep people well, not to make stockholders rich. His Medicare for All program would provide comprehensive health coverage to all with no premiums, deductibles, copayments, or surprise bills.

4. How will your administration protect Roe v. Wade and a woman's legal right to reproductive rights and justice?

When we are in the White House, Bernie will fight back against the Republican assault on abortion rights across the country and defend a woman's right to control her own body.

Under his Medicare for All program, the Hyde Amendment is fully repealed, and reproductive health coverage is provided to all, free at the point of service. He will also oppose all efforts to undermine or overturn Roe v. Wade, and will appoint federal judges who will uphold women's fundamental rights. Bernie will also oppose increasing attacks on women's rights happening at the state and local level.

When Bernie is in the White House, he will also:

- Repeal the Trump Administration's gag rule which is a disgraceful assault on women's rights and an assault on millions of Americans' ability to get the health care they need.
- Fully fund Planned Parenthood, Title X, and other initiatives that protect women's health, access to contraception, and the availability of a safe and legal abortion.

5. How does your healthcare plan address access and affordability issues to the full range of reproductive services including contraception, comprehensive sex education, STI prevention and care, disparities in prenatal, pregnancy and postnatal care, which disproportionately impacts Black women, women of color, women who may not be able to afford these services and/or may not have the ability to travel long distances to access these services?

Medicare for All will cover every person and provide them with reproductive services, preventative care, maternal care, free at the point of service. The plan will also cap cost sharing for prescription drugs to \$200 annually.

Bernie's plan will also expand Community Health Centers and the National Health Service Corps to bring more health care providers to underserved communities. When Bernie is in the White House, he will ensure we are putting health care providers and resources in every community in America.

Furthermore, Bernie's Medicare for All plan includes explicit language that bans providers from discriminating against patients, including discrimination based on

race, color, gender, and pregnancy, and allows courts to award damages to patients if this is violated.

6. Do you support the repeal of the Hyde Amendment? Why or why not?

Yes, and Bernie has voted against the Hyde Amendment throughout his career. Under his Medicare for All program, the Hyde Amendment is fully repealed, and reproductive health coverage is provided to all, free at the point of service. He will also oppose all efforts to undermine or overturn Roe v. Wade, and will appoint federal judges who will uphold women's fundamental rights. Bernie also believes that we must oppose increasing attacks on women's rights happening at the state and local level. When we are in the White House, Bernie will fight back against the Republican assault on abortion rights across the country and defend a woman's right to control her own body.

When Bernie is in the White House, he will also:

- Repeal the Trump Administration's gag rule which is a disgraceful assault on women's rights and an assault on millions of Americans' ability to get the health care they need.
- Fully fund Planned Parenthood, Title X, and other initiatives that protect women's health, access to contraception, and the availability of a safe and legal abortion.

Economy

1. How will your administration address the racial wealth gap, the pay gap for women and promote economic security for middle, and low-income Americans?

Bernie will treat the racial wealth divide like the crisis it is. He'll work to end the especially pernicious racial wealth divide that exists today in America within the gap between millionaires and the poor, working, and middle classes of all races.

He'll raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Raising the minimum wage will increase the wages of 38% of African-American workers and 33% of Latinx workers. He'll also guarantee Equal Pay for Equal Work.

Raising the minimum wage is not enough, black students, particularly black women, are saddled with more student debt than their white counterparts, and, because of income disparities, take longer to pay it off while paying more interest. Canceling student debt would cut the racial wealth gap for young Americans by more than half-- from 12:1 to 5:1.

He'll guarantee housing for all; significantly expand sustainable homeownership in this country; and end the structural racism in our housing system. He'll also create a commission to establish a financial relief program to the victims of predatory lending, mortgage fraud, redlining and those who are still underwater on their mortgages as a result of the 2008 crash which will address the fact that Black Americans lost 40 percent of their wealth in the 2009 housing crisis and were directly targeted by predatory lenders.

Bernie will end the discriminatory practices in our financial services. We will allow every post office to offer basic and affordable banking services and end lending discrimination once and for all.

2. How do your plans for economic growth address investment in underserved communities?

As President, Bernie will make sure resources are focused on the people and communities that need it most -- often as a result of structural disadvantage. Bernie supports the 10-20-30 approach to federal investments which focuses substantial federal resources on distressed communities that have high levels of poverty.

Bernie's Green New Deal will directly invest an historic \$16.3 trillion in line with the mobilization of resources made during the New Deal and WWII, but with an explicit choice to include black, indigenous and other minority communities who were systematically excluded in the past.

He'll invest in Environmental Justice centered community economic development. We'll clean up and repair thousands of contaminated sites. We will invest \$238 billion to clean up Superfund sites and \$150 billion to clean up

and revitalize Brownfields, and other areas and communities that have been polluted by the fossil fuel, chemical and mining industries.

He will create a Climate Justice Resiliency Fund. The CJRF will ensure infrastructure and communities are protected from the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Once the CJRF is established and funded at \$40 billion, the EPA, together with a number of other agencies, will conduct a nationwide survey to identify areas with high climate impact vulnerabilities and other socioeconomic factors, public health challenges, and environmental hazards. Each community will then be eligible for funding in order of most vulnerable to least vulnerable.

We'll also create a \$10 billion grant program within the Minority Business Development Agency to provide grants to entrepreneurs of color.

3. Do you support a \$15 minimum wage? Why or why not?

Yes. Every person in America deserves to earn a living wage. Bernie led the introduction of a bill to increase the minimum wage to a living wage of \$15 an hour because the time is long overdue to raise the minimum wage to a livable wage. The fight for \$15 has proven to the world that when people stand together and fight for economic, social, and racial justice real change can take place. Just a few short years ago, we were told that our legislation to more than double the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour was a crazy, radical, pie-in-the-sky idea. Today, it is a mainstream idea that the majority of the American people support. The \$7.25 an hour federal minimum wage is a starvation wage that must be raised to \$15 an hour.

4. How will your administration address the disparities in access to capital for Black women owned small businesses?

As President, Bernie will create a \$10 billion grant program within the Minority Business Development Agency to provide grants to entrepreneurs of color. Bernie's Green New Deal focuses on community investment and will prioritize job training and local hiring to reflect the racial and gender diversity of the community receiving federal investments. Federal procurement will prioritize minority- and women-owned businesses, cooperatives and employee-owned firms, and community-owned and municipal enterprises. Programs such as the Historically Underutilized Business Zones will be expanded under the Green New Deal to promote job growth in economically distressed communities.

5. How do your plans address climate change and “green jobs” impact communities of color?

Bernie’s Green New Deal will be centered around justice for frontline communities – especially under-resourced groups, communities of color, Native Americans, people with disabilities, children and the elderly – to recover from, and prepare for, the climate impacts, including through a \$40 billion Climate Justice Resiliency Fund. And providing those frontline and fenceline communities a just transition including real jobs, resilient infrastructure, economic development.

Bernie’s Green New Deal will create the 20 million jobs needed to solve the climate crisis. These jobs will be good paying, union jobs with strong benefits and safety standards in steel and auto manufacturing, construction, energy efficiency retrofitting, coding and server farms, and renewable power plants. We will also create millions of jobs in sustainable agriculture, engineering, a reimagined and expanded Civilian Conservation Corp, and preserving our public lands.

The Green New Deal will focus on job training and local hiring to reflect the racial and gender diversity of the community receiving federal investments. To further prioritize marginalized communities Bernie will ensure that Green New Deal jobs and job training resources are made available to low-income and disadvantaged communities equitably, and ensure equal access to clean energy, electrification, efficiency, and transportation funding, grants, as well as other incentives.

6. Do you support reparations? If so, please describe your specific policy proposals to address the systematic and institutional legacy of slavery, Jim Crow and other forms of racism and discrimination. If not, please explain.

For centuries, America’s economic rise relied on treating millions of Black people as literal property. We have still not come to terms with the horrors of legalized slavery and its continuing impacts on our society. Bernie is proud to co-sponsor the H.R. 40 Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act to finally bring the truth about slavery into the open.

We will transform this country into a nation that affirms the value of its people of color, we must address the five central types of violence waged against black, brown and indigenous Americans: physical, political, legal, economic and environmental.

Whether it is a broken criminal justice system, or massive disparities in the availability of financial services, housing, or health disparities, or environmental disparities, or educational disparities, our job is to—and we will—create a nation

in which all people are treated equally. That is what we must do, and that is what we will do.

Criminal Justice Reform/Gun Violence/Judiciary

1. Please outline the specifics of your plan to address criminal justice reform and include relevant information on returning citizens, over-policing and sentencing reforms.

Together, we will eliminate private prisons and detention centers. No more profiteering from locking people up. Together we will end the disastrous “war on drugs.” If we stand together we will end cash bail. No more keeping people in jail because they’re too poor. If we stand together we will enact real police department reform and prosecute police brutality. If we stand together, there is nothing, nothing, nothing that we cannot accomplish.

Bernie’s comprehensive plan will:

- End for-profit greed in our criminal justice system, including banning cash bail and banning civil asset forfeiture.
- End mass incarceration and excessive sentencing and inhumane incarceration and transform the way we police communities
- Reverse mass incarceration and setting a goal of cutting the incarcerated population in half.
- Transform the way we police our communities, creating an unarmed civilian corp of first responders to handle mental health emergencies, homelessness, and other low-level issues that should not require contact with the police and criminal justice system.
- End the War on Drugs, including legalizing marijuana and expunging past convictions for marijuana-related offenses and finally ending the sentencing disparities for crack cocaine and powder cocaine offenses.
- Enact a Prisoner Bill of Rights for incarcerated individuals, including living wages, access to families, access to educational and vocational training, and the right to vote.

- Reverse the criminalization of communities, end cycles of violence and provide support to survivors of crime
- Reverse the criminalization of disability, addiction, and homelessness.
- Ensure our system treats children in the criminal justice system as children.

2. How will your administration work with the Department of Justice to handle police misconduct and death in custody issues in state and local police departments?

We must end harmful policing practices like racial profiling, stop and frisk, oppressive “broken windows” policing, and the militarization of police forces — all of which actively undermine public safety and community trust in law enforcement. Violence and brutality of any kind, particularly at the hands of the police meant to protect and serve our communities, must not be tolerated.

- Ensure Law Enforcement Accountability and Robust Oversight
- Rescind former Attorney General Jeff Sessions’ guidance on consent decrees.
- Revitalize the use of Department of Justice investigations, consent decrees, and federal lawsuits to address systemic constitutional violations by police departments.
- Ensure accountability, strict guidelines and independent oversight for all federal funds used by police departments.
- End federal programs that provide military equipment to local police forces.
- Create a federally managed database of police use of deadly force.
- Provide grants for states and cities to establish civilian oversight agencies with enforceable accountability mechanisms.
- Establish federal standards for the use of body cameras, including establishing third-party agencies to oversee the storage and release of police videos.
- Mandate criminal liability for civil rights violations resulting from police misconduct.
- Limit the use of “qualified immunity” to address the lack of criminal liability for civil rights violations resulting from police misconduct.
- Conduct a U.S. Attorney General's investigation whenever someone is killed in police custody.
- Establish a federal no-call policy, including a registry of disreputable federal law enforcement officers, so testimony from untrustworthy

sources does not lead to criminal convictions. Provide financial support to pilot local and state level no-call lists.

- Ban the use of facial recognition software for policing.

3. Please outline your specific policy proposals on gun safety. Do you view gun violence as a public health issue?

Yes. We face an epidemic of gun violence in this country. A significant majority of Americans want common sense gun reform. But the NRA, now a full-fledged, right-wing political organization, spends millions on TV and internet ads attacking candidates who dare to stand up for what voters want.

As President, Bernie will:

- Take on the NRA and its corrupting effect on Washington. The NRA has become a partisan lobbying public-relations entity for gun manufacturers, and its influence must be stopped.
- Enact universal background checks and end the gun show loophole.
- Ban assault weapons, bump stocks, high-capacity magazines, and the 3-D printing of firearms. For existing assault weapons, Bernie will institute strict licensing requirements for ownership - as President Reagan did with automatic assault weapons - along with a voluntary buyback program to get guns off the streets.
- Furthermore he supports grants to states to improve handgun licensing programs.
- He will pass legislation to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and stalkers and "red flag" laws to allow for temporary removal of firearms from those deemed a danger to themselves or others.

4. Do you support the death penalty?

No. The death penalty is cruel and unusual punishment. It is applied disproportionately to people of color. It has been proven not to deter violent crime. The United States must join almost every other advanced country on Earth and abolish the death penalty. As President, Bernie will abolish the death penalty. He will also reverse the Trump administration's guidance on the use of death penalty drugs with the goal of ending the death penalty at the state level.

5. How will you strengthen the Voting Rights Act, protect voting rights and ballot access?

In the last decade, more than 30 states have considered voter suppression laws whose clear intent is to disenfranchise people of color. As President, Bernie will

end voter suppression in this country and move to automatic voter registration. Bernie will make voting easier, not harder. He will Restore the Voting Rights Act; Re-enfranchise the right to vote to those who have had their vote taken away by a felony conviction including those currently incarcerated; Secure automatic voter registration for every American over 18; End voter suppression and gerrymandering; Abolish burdensome voter ID laws; and make Election Day a national holiday.

6. Will your administration recognize violence perpetrated by white supremacist hate groups as acts of domestic terrorism?

When we are in the White House, we will go to war with White Nationalism.

When someone hurts someone else because of the color of their skin, and when someone kills someone else because of the color of their skin, this is not just a hate crime, which it is, it is also an act of domestic terrorism. As President, Bernie will throw the full force of the law against those people.

7. What type of judges will you seek to appoint to the Federal bench and the Supreme Court?

President Trump's court appointments are a rubber-stamp for an extreme, right-wing agenda pushed by corporations and billionaires. The debate on who should be appointed to our courts is about the future of the movement for racial justice, the disability rights movement, the trade union movement, Roe v. Wade, public education, campaign finance reform, voting rights, workers' rights, health care, environmental protection and many other important issues.

Any person who Bernie nominates to the court must fundamentally understand the need to protect the rights of everyone, not just a select few. They must defend Roe v. Wade and the constitutional right to an abortion. That means a promise to defend the rights of people with disabilities. It means they vote to overturn the disastrous Citizens United decision. They must defend voting rights. And they must respect the rights of workers, which includes a commitment to overturn the disastrous Janus decision and protecting our public sector workers. And, unlike many of Trump's nominees, any justice Bernie nominates must loudly and clearly support the original Brown v. Board ruling.

Education

1. Please outline your platform on K-12 education, and Post-Secondary education opportunities other than two-or four-year college like apprenticeships, trade school etc.?

Bernie will make transformative investments in our children, our teachers and our schools and fundamentally rethink the unjust and inequitable funding of our public education system. He will:

1. Combats Racial Discrimination by supporting community-driven strategies to desegregate schools.
2. End the Unaccountable Profit-Motive of Charter Schools by banning for-profit charter schools and supporting the NAACP's moratorium on public funds for charter school expansion.
3. Provide Equitable Funding for Schools by tripling Title I funding and establishing a national per-pupil spending floor.
4. Provides at least 50 percent of the funding for IDEA.
5. Set a starting salary for teachers at no less than \$60,000, expanding collective bargaining rights and teacher tenure, and funding out-of-pocket expenses for classroom materials.
6. Expand access to summer and after-school programs, teen centers and tutoring.
7. Provides year-round, free universal school meals, and incentivizes locally sourced food.
8. Expand funding for sustainable community schools that provide a holistic approach to learning and the well-being of our young people.
9. Rebuild and modernize our nation's schools.
10. Makes Schools Safe and Inclusive by protecting the rights of all students.

He will guarantee childcare and universal prekindergarten for every child in America.

And he will guarantee everyone the right to quality higher education if they

choose to pursue it, no matter their income. Bernie's College for All Plan makes public colleges, universities, trade schools, community colleges, tribal colleges, and apprenticeship programs free for all. And he will cancel all student debt.

2. Do you support charter schools?

Recognizing the problems in a one-size-fits-all model of education, teachers' unions and parent activists established alternative, experimental "charter" schools to better serve kids struggling within the traditional system. But few charter schools have lived up to their promise. Instead, billionaires like DeVos and the Waltons, together with private equity and hedge fund executives, have bankrolled their expansion and poured tens of millions into school board and other local elections with the hope of privatizing public schools. Charter schools are led by unaccountable, private bodies, and their growth has drained funding from the public school system.

The damage to communities caused by unregulated charter school growth must be stopped and reversed. Bernie believes we must make sure that charter schools are accountable, transparent and truly serve the needs of disadvantaged children, not Wall Street, billionaire investors, and other private interests. As president, Bernie will ban for-profit charter schools and implement a moratorium on public funds for charter school expansion until a national audit has been completed to determine the impact of charter growth in each state. That means halting the use of public funds to underwrite new charter schools. The truth is, we do not need two schools systems; we need to invest in our public schools system. That said, existing charter schools must be made accountable by mandating that charter schools comply with the same oversight requirements as public schools.

3. How will your education plans address the school to prison pipeline, the over-discipline of Black girls and protect programs like STEM?

Due to implicit racial bias, Black students, even in preschool, are nearly four times as likely to be suspended as Whites, putting them at greater risk of falling behind and getting caught up in the juvenile justice system. Black students and students with disabilities are more likely to be subjected to exclusionary discipline measures than their same age peers. When a child is pushed out of school they lose instructional time and are more likely to become involved with the juvenile and adult justice systems. Bernie will end the school-to-prison pipeline.

Bernie will address disciplinary practices in schools that disproportionately affect Black and Brown children. He'll fully fund the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights and remove current protocols that allow for arbitrary dismissal of complaints. He'll decriminalize truancy for all youth and their parents. He'll eliminate federal incentives for schools to implement zero-tolerance policies. We'll eliminate criminal charges for school-based disciplinary behavior that would not otherwise be criminal and invest in school nurses, counselors, teachers, teaching assistants, and small class sizes to address disciplinary issues. This includes ensuring every school has the necessary school counselors and wrap-around services by providing \$5 billion annually to expand the sustainable community school model. Bernie will make transformative investments in our children, our teachers and our schools and fundamentally rethink the unjust and inequitable funding of our public education system to protect STEM and ensure all students are able to get a quality education regardless of the zip code they live in.

4. Do you support increasing teacher pay?

Yes. Our system is failing our public school teachers: One in five teachers are now forced to take on a second job to get by and half have considered leaving the profession. We cannot have the best educated workforce in the world until we treat our teachers like the professionals they are. My Thurgood Marshall Plan for Public Education will ensure every teacher is paid at least \$60,000 a year. We will tie this starting salary to cost of living, years of service, and other qualifications; and allowing states to go beyond that floor based on geographic cost of living.

We will also:

- End racial and gender disparities in teacher pay.
- Ensure professional development for all teachers, including continuing education and mentorship programs.
- Protect and expand collective bargaining rights and teacher tenure.
- Triple the above-the-line tax deduction for educator expenses and index it to inflation to reimburse teachers for the nearly \$500 on average they spend on out of pocket classroom expenses each year.
- Create a grant program to provide teachers with funds explicitly meant for classroom materials.
- Empower teachers to provide a teacher-supported curriculum that gives students the best possible education.

5. How will your administration address funding disparities among school districts?

In America today, most school districts are funded out of local property tax revenue, resulting in unconscionable inequalities. The federal government, by conditioning funding on standardized test scores, has worsened the disparities between school districts and among states. Since school districts are funded out of local property taxes, less is invested in the education of children from low-income families compared with their more affluent peers. In America, the quality of a child's education should not and cannot depend on their zip code.

As President, Bernie will rethink the link between property taxes and education funding. He will establish a national per-pupil spending floor and eliminate barriers to college-readiness exams by ensuring states cover fees for the ACT, SAT and other college preparatory exams for all students. He will Triple Title I funding to ensure at-risk schools get the funding they need. He will provide \$5 billion in annual funding for sustainable community schools to provide a holistic, full-service approach to learning and the wellbeing of our young people.

Bernie's plan calls for a transformative investment in our children, our teachers and our schools and a fundamental re-thinking of the unjust and inequitable funding of our public education system. Bernie's plan will provide \$5 billion annually for career and technical education to give our students the skills they need to thrive once they graduate. He will build on the Strength in Diversity Act to increase, not cut, federal funding for community-driven strategies to desegregate schools. Additionally, his plan will fund school transportation to help integration, ending the absurd prohibitions in place.

6. How will you address the student loan crisis in America?

As President, Bernie will cancel the entire \$1.6 trillion in outstanding student debt for the 45 million borrowers who are weighed down by the crushing burden of student debt. This will save around \$3,000 a year for the average student loan borrower.

Today in our country, 45 million people hold some \$1.6 trillion in student debt. The average college student in the U.S. graduates with close to \$30,000 in student loans and one in six college students will be stuck with over \$50,000 in student loan debt after graduation. The reality we face is that more than half of students who enroll in college don't complete a degree. Millions are leaving school with no degree and thousands of dollars in debt. Almost two-thirds of all student debt — nearly \$929 billion as of 2019 — in the U.S. is held by women. Black students take out loans at a higher rate to pay for school, graduate with

more student debt than white counterparts and, because of income disparities, take longer to pay it off while paying more interest. My proposal would cut the racial wealth gap for young Americans by more than half-- from 12:1 to 5:1. Bernie believes our country is morally bound to close the racial wealth divide. In order to do that we are going to cancel all student debt.

7. How do your plans for higher education address HBCU's?

Established as institutions to educate African Americans during segregation, HBCUs continue to fill an important role in providing access to quality higher educational opportunities for African Americans. We must address the persistent racial disparities that still exist in higher education by investing in the institutions that consistently demonstrate the most effective pathway to a degree for African-American students. Black students are nearly 16 percent more likely to graduate from an HBCU in six years than similar black students at predominantly white institutions. We must ensure adequate federal support for these institutions and work to eliminate tuition and fees at private HBCUs and MSIs.

As President, Bernie will invest in historically black colleges and universities and minority-serving institutions. Public HBCUs will receive funding through Bernie's College for All program. As part of the program, he will provide an additional \$1.3 annually billion to private, nonprofit HBCUs and MSIs every year to eliminate or significantly reduce tuition and fees for low-income students. This funding would support some 200 schools which serve at least 35 percent low-income students. Furthermore, Bernie will establish a dedicated fund to create and expand teacher-training programs at HBCUs, MSIs and tribal colleges and universities to increase educator diversity.