

**OHIO**

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S**

**Reproductive Justice  
Policy Agenda**

**2024**



# About URGE



Young people today – a majority of whom are Black, Indigenous, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or Latinx/a – are on the frontlines of the fight for Reproductive Justice: they are organizing, educating, shifting culture, and building power with URGE.

URGE envisions a liberated world where we can live with justice, love freely, express our gender and sexuality, and define and create families of our choosing.

As a state-driven national organization, URGE builds power and sustains a young people's movement for Reproductive Justice by centering the leadership of young people of color who are women, queer, trans, nonbinary, and people of low-income.

URGE deep investment states are Alabama, California, Georgia, Kansas, Ohio, and Texas: states where young people are poised to play a pivotal role in shifting political and cultural power to achieve life-changing wins for Reproductive Justice -- and there is potential for using innovative strategies.

By increasing youth voter engagement, activating young people around policy advocacy, organizing our communities, and shifting cultural narratives, URGE has cemented our reputation as innovative, impactful, and fearless in our fight for Reproductive Justice.



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# The Issue Areas



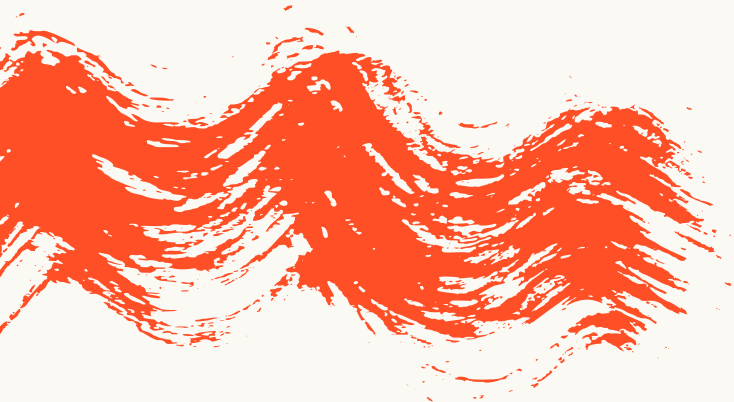
Reproductive Justice issues we worked on in the 2023 Ohio legislative session included fighting anti-abortion, anti-queer & trans, and anti-democracy legislation. In the past 4+ years, we've seen attacks on our autonomy and democracy, which have disproportionately threatened young people's lives and future. Here's what young Ohioans need in order to thrive in 2024....

## URGE YOUNG PEOPLE'S POLICY AGENDA:

1. ACCESSING ABORTION WITHOUT BARRIERS
2. SUPPORTING TRANS, INTERSEX, AND QUEER YOUNG PEOPLE
3. REALIZING THE POTENTIAL OF OUR DEMOCRACY
4. ACCESSING HEALTHCARE AND COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION
5. TRANSFORMING OUR ECONOMY SO YOUNG PEOPLE CAN LIVE
6. CREATING SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## OHIO-SPECIFIC POLICY PRIORITIES

1. REPEAL THE REMAINING ABORTION RESTRICTIONS AND CODIFY THE RIGHT TO REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM
2. END STIGMATIZATION OF YOUNG TRANS PEOPLE
3. MAKE VOTING EASIER FOR OHIOANS
4. MAKE HEALTHCARE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL OHIOANS
5. FUND COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND SEXUAL EDUCATION
6. INCREASE MINIMUM WAGE TO \$15/HR
7. SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING SOLUTIONS
8. SUPPORT COMMUNITY-CENTERED PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVES



# Issue 1:

## REPEAL THE REMAINING ABORTION RESTRICTIONS AND CODIFY THE RIGHT TO REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

In November 2023, Ohioans voted to amend the state constitution to protect reproductive freedom, including abortion access, through the Right to Reproductive Freedom with Protections for Health and Safety amendment. This amendment ensures access to abortion and other forms of reproductive health care, making it a constitutional right and protecting reproductive freedom.

The political landscape in Ohio reflects a recent shift towards protecting reproductive freedom and ensuring access to abortion. However, several laws remain that intentionally create barriers to abortion services, including mandatory ultrasound, mandatory counseling, and a 24-hour wait period.



### THE POLLING DATA:

A 2024 public opinion poll from HIT Strategies of 18-30-year-old voters in Ohio also affirms the shift towards protecting reproductive freedom. The poll found 68% support protecting access to abortion.

## IN OHIO, URGE IS ADVOCATING FOR THE ABORTION-RELATED POLICIES THAT:

- ★ *END REMAINING RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESSING ABORTION SERVICES*
- ★ *SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE'S AUTONOMY, PRIVACY, AND RIGHT TO MAKE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISIONS*
- ★ *DEFUND CRISIS PREVENTION CENTERS*



# Issue 2:

## END STIGMATIZATION OF YOUNG TRANS PEOPLE



The 135th General Assembly has successfully passed an alarming number of anti-trans bills into law, including a ban on gender-affirming care for minors and anti-trans school bathroom and school sports legislation. These measures have led to fear and uncertainty among trans youth and their families, with some considering leaving the state due to unsafe climate.



### THE POLLING DATA:

56% of young voters in Ohio say they support LGBTQIA+ rights and equality.

## IN OHIO, URGE IS ADVOCATING FOR THE TRANS-RELATED POLICIES THAT:

- ★ *REPEAL ANTI-TRANS SPORTS BANS*
- ★ *REPEAL GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE BAN FOR MINORS*
- ★ *BLOCK ANTI-TRANS BATHROOM BILLS*
- ★ *PROTECT ACCESS TO GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE FOR PEOPLE OVER 18*
- ★ *PROTECT LEGALLY TRANS IDENTITY*



# Issue 3:

## MAKE VOTING EASIER FOR OHIOANS



In 2023, Ohio enacted laws imposing stricter voter ID requirements, compressing early voting times, and lengthening the absentee request process. The new law eliminates exceptions for voters who cannot produce ID, and prohibits curbside voting. As a result, it is more difficult for the elderly, disabled, and low-income populations to vote. The electoral landscape is influenced by ongoing legislative measures and ballot initiatives. The Secretary of State publishes [the Voter Access Guide](#) to promote voter engagement.



### THE POLLING DATA:

73% of young Ohio voters support making it easier for every voice to be represented in voting.

## IN OHIO, URGE IS ADVOCATING FOR THE ELECTION-RELATED POLICIES THAT:

- ★ INCREASE ACCESS TO POLL LOCATIONS
- ★ CREATE PERMANENT VOTER REGISTRATION LISTS



# Issue 4:

## MAKE HEALTHCARE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL OHIOANS

Ohio ranks 45th in public health spending—a contributing factor to the poorer health outcomes and disparities among Black and Hispanic populations. Efforts to improve healthcare access and affordability in Ohio include streamlining health and human service programs, and addressing social determinants of health (such as poverty and income inequality). The State Health Improvement Plan prioritizes chronic disease, injury and violence, infectious diseases, infant mortality/premature births, and access to care.



### THE POLLING DATA:

85% of young Ohio voters said they support policies that would create affordable access to health care.

## IN OHIO, URGE IS ADVOCATING FOR THE HEALTHCARE-RELATED POLICIES THAT:

- ★ PROVIDE UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE COVERAGE FOR ALL OHIOANS
- ★ PROMOTE MENSTRUATION EQUITY
- ★ FUND PREGNANCY-RELATED CARE



# Issue 5:

## FUND COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND SEXUAL EDUCATION

Ohio stresses abstinence-only sex education as a general policy, with limited requirements for comprehensive sex education. The sex ed curriculum is not required to be medically accurate or to include instruction on consent, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Parents are allowed to opt their children out of receiving sexual or relationship education. Ohio law emphasizes adoption as the best option for unintended pregnancies.



### IN OHIO, URGE IS ADVOCATING FOR THE EDUCATED-RELATED POLICIES THAT:

- ★ INCORPORATE MEDICALLY-ACCURATE, COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION INTO SCHOOL CURRICULA
- ★ FUND HIV/AIDS EDUCATION





# Issue 6:

## INCREASE MINIMUM WAGE TO \$15/HR - SUPPORT SB 146



In 2024, the minimum wage for larger employers (at least \$385k in annual gross receipts) increased to \$10.45 for non-tipped employees and \$5.25 for tipped employees. According to MIT's cost of living calculator, a single childless adult working full time needs at least \$15.33 per hour to afford the necessities in Ohio. Ohio's median hourly pay in 2022 was \$21.51.



### THE POLLING DATA:

75% young Ohio voters support reducing economic inequality

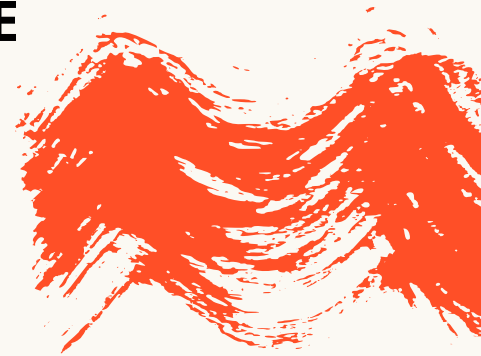
# Issue 7: SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING SOLUTIONS



Proposed state-level remedies include the introduction of a state Low Income Housing Tax Credit and a Single Family Housing Tax Credit, aimed at stimulating the construction of more affordable housing units, from large multifamily developments to single-family, owner-occupied units. Regionally, there is increased collaboration to resolve the housing shortage, particularly in rapidly growing areas like Central Ohio, where the lack of affordable housing is exacerbated by increasing demand, rising rents, and property values. The Ohio Senate has also formed a select committee dedicated to addressing housing issues, indicating a legislative commitment to finding solutions to the state's housing challenges.

## IN OHIO, URGE IS ADVOCATING FOR THE HOUSING-RELATED POLICIES THAT:

- ★ *REDUCE HOUSING INSECURITY FOR LGBTQ+ YOUTH*
- ★ *FUND AND SUPPORT PREGNANT AND PARENTING YOUTH*
- ★ *PROVIDE ACCESS TO PRO BONO REPRESENTATION FOR EVICTION DEFENDANTS*
- ★ *FUND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR OHIOANS 18-TO-30-YEARS-OLD*



# Issue 8:

## ***SUPPORT COMMUNITY-CENTERED PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVES***

There is a shift towards prioritizing public funds for community-based public safety strategies that extend beyond traditional law enforcement and corrections. Community stakeholders are increasingly being involved in public safety decision-making and are leading, influencing, or providing feedback on investment strategies. This approach calls for investing in critical community needs such as health care, stable and affordable housing, mentoring, conflict resolution, restorative justice, trauma-informed care, education, and employment services. The majority of the public supports treatment for mental health and drug addiction, job and skills training, and mentoring and counseling programs.



### **THE POLLING DATA:**

73% of young OHIO voters support community-based policies that support safety without over-policing.

## **IN OHIO, URGE IS ADVOCATING FOR THE ABORTION-RELATED POLICIES THAT:**

- ★ *END REMAINING RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESSING ABORTION SERVICES*
- ★ *REDUCE THE POLICE STATE AND FUNDING OF THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX*
- ★ *PRIORITIZE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED PEOPLE*
- ★ *MANDATE BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR FIREARM PURCHASES*
- ★ *SUPPORT SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE*

# Conclusion



There is no one policy – not even one policy area – that will usher in an era of reproductive justice and liberation. And young people are not a monolith; there are as many different perspectives on the issues and ideas for change as there are young people in this country. At the heart of this vision for reproductive justice are the voices of URGE chapter leaders and young people engaged in their communities. It represents young people living in big cities, small towns, and rural parts of the country.

URGE envisions a liberated world where we can live with justice, love freely, express our gender and sexuality, and define and create families of our choosing. This policy agenda is not exhaustive, and the policy areas do not stand alone; each issue is inextricably bound with the other, as much as our individual liberation is inextricably bound up with that of our communities.

It is our hope that the **Young People's Reproductive Justice Policy Agenda** will fuel the flame for change with young people – it is a tool for liberation!

Policymakers: This is the future, and we invite you to join us in building it.

**GET CONNECTED**

Contact URGE at [info@urge.org](mailto:info@urge.org), and sign up for more information at [urge.org/yppa](http://urge.org/yppa).





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& GENDER EQUITY



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GENDER EQUITY ★ OHIO



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