

Moving from Charity to Change: Policy Priorities for Greater Cleveland

At United Way of Greater Cleveland, we are investing in the capacity of people to not just get by, but to get ahead. We are improving access to and the effectiveness of economic and workforce supports for Greater Clevelanders in poverty, while also removing barriers to economic opportunity for working families still living on the edge. Our public policy and advocacy goals are to reduce the need for government assistance, increase the ability of Greater Clevelanders to participate in our regional economy, strengthen the fabric of our community, and focus on **work as a solution** to create a region where economic mobility is a reality for everyone.

United Way of Greater Cleveland engages in legislative, regulatory, and budgetary advocacy to remove barriers to economic opportunity to help Greater Clevelanders get ahead. We partner with local, county, state, and federal government agencies and elected officials, in addition to local and statewide private sector, non-profit, and community organizations to achieve these goals.



GOAL 1: ENSURE ALL OHIOANS HAVE ACCESS TO EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE SUPPORTS BY PROVIDING 211 ACCESS.

- Invest local, state, and federal funds to fully operate 211 in every county in Ohio at an increased capacity.
- Utilize 211 as a resource and government partner to create efficiencies and cost savings in connecting community members to government initiatives and streamlining enrollment, retention, and transition from public benefit programs to pathways to work.
- Provide ongoing funding to establish 211 as a key partner to state and local governments' public health, community information, emergency preparedness, and disaster response initiatives.



GOAL 2: INCREASE WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION, ECONOMIC MOBILITY, AND REMOVE GOVERNMENT BARRIERS TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

- Strengthen government initiatives that help individuals and employers bridge public benefits cliffs.
- Remove regulatory disincentives to work by improving benefit off-ramps.
- Create efficiencies and coordination in the administration, eligibility, enrollment, and reauthorization procedures of public benefit programs.
- Revise unnecessary and burdensome policies to ensure individuals can work and increase their wages without regulatory burden.
- Enhance anti-theft initiatives to ensure individuals are receiving public benefits they are eligible for and enrolled in.

GOAL 3: INCREASE ACCESS TO SAFE AND STABLE WORKFORCE HOUSING AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WEALTH BUILDING THROUGH HOMEOWNERSHIP INITIATIVES.

- Increase local, state, and federal funding for home repairs, accessibility modifications, and rehabilitation of workforce rental housing to attract and retain workers.
- Advance legislation to provide homeowners with property tax relief.
- Increase housing supply of workforce rental and homeowner units.
- Enhance protections for workforce renters.
- Advocate to ensure utility companies are charging customers fair, accurate, and transparent rates.
- Increase the availability and funding for utility assistance programs and funding for community administration of programs.



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