

The DuBois Bunche Center’s Guide to Project 2025’s Impact on Black Progress

Project 2025 refers to a conservative federal policy agenda created and outlined by The Heritage Foundation and former President Donald Trump administration officials in a publication that sprawls 900+ pages to outline executive branch expansion, major restructuring of federal agencies, and racial/racial-economic regulations. It is set for immediate implementation if a second Trump administration becomes a reality. The policy agenda seeks to remove hundreds of years of progress in the active building of rights, freedoms, and opportunities for Black populations in the United States who fought for those rights, freedoms, and opportunities throughout the past and present. The alarming racial conservative posture of Project 2025 would have downward ripple effects for the more than 47 million¹ Black people that are a part of the United States.

Here are eight ways Project 2025 negatively impacts Black progress in America:

1. REMOVES MERITOCRACY:

Black Americans, historically and presently discriminated against by race, heavily rely on meritocracy in America to work their way up towards success from obtaining skillful education to creating businesses to advancing through meaningful work. There are 7.4 million Black kids who attend public schools². Undergraduate Black students attend colleges utilizing financial aid at a rate of 88% for grants and 71% for loans³. Federal employment, often a route to stable middle-class living, is made up of about 18% Black employees⁴. Black entrepreneurs have and oversee more than 3 million businesses and create jobs for more than 1 million people, making deep contributions to the American economy⁵. The Small Business Administration (SBA), an alternate institution from the banks in helping create businesses, has increased small business lending to Black small businesses from 3.5% in Fiscal Year 2020 to 7.6% in Fiscal Year 2023⁶. Black growth is stymied when opportunities to move upward in society are limited. Project 2025 limitations to American meritocracy extend into areas such as education, government employment, and the Black economy.

- The Project 2025 policy plan aims to eliminate the Department of Education (DOE), a federal agency that assists with affording higher education and access to public education (pre-K through grade 12, higher education). (pg.319)
- Head Start, which is a federal government program that provides preschool education funding for low-income families, would be removed. Pre-school age children of low-income families would lose the opportunity for early education. (pg. 482)
- College-readiness program GEAR-UP, supporting students to persist from high school to college, would be eliminated. (pg. 361)

¹ Mohamad Moslimani et al., “Facts about the U.S. Black Population,” Fact Sheet, January 18, 2024, <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/fact-sheet/facts-about-the-us-black-population/>.

² Veronique Irwin et al., rep., ed. Megan Barnett, Stephen Purcell, and Thomas Nachazel, *Report on the Condition of Education 2024* (Washington, DC: NCES, 2024), 2.

³ “Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups,” Indicator 22: Financial aid, February 2019, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/raceindicators/indicator_rec.asp.

⁴ rep., *Government-Wide DEIA: Our Progress and Path Forward to Building a Better Workforce for the American People* (Office of Personnel Management, 2022), 25.

⁵ Office of Advocacy, “Facts about Small Business: Black-Ownership Statistics 2024,” Office of Advocacy, July 25, 2024, <https://advocacy.sba.gov/2024/02/01/facts-about-small-business-black-ownership-statistics-2024/>.

⁶ “Biden-Harris Administration Announces Significant Increase in Lending to Black-Owned Small Businesses,” *Press Release 23-83* (U.S. Small Business Administration, October 24, 2023).

The DuBois Bunche Center – Project 2025 Guide

- Higher education funding from the DOE’s Office for Postsecondary Education would be consolidated and restricted to only Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal colleges. This policy segregates how Black populations receive aid and narrows their options on where they receive higher education. (pg.327)
- The policy framework seeks to restore Executive Order 13957 to ensure that it is easier to fire long-term government employees (pg. 80).
- Executive Orders 13836, 13837, and 13839 would expand management powers in public employment while retracting the ability of unions to protect workers (pg.81).
- Project 2025 seeks to consider expanding knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) testing to screen and hire prospective government employees. (pg. 72)
- The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, which eliminates higher education debt for public employees and related entities, would be eliminated (pg. 354).
- Project 2025 aims to eliminate the Economic Development Administration, which is a part of the Department of Commerce and economically supports underserved localities. (pg. 683)
- The Small Business Administration would no longer provide direct lending. (pg. 750)

2. IMPACTS AFFORDABILITY:

Black poverty persists at a rate of 17.9%, an increase from the 2022 rate of 17.1%⁷. Black groups are faced with affordability challenges ranging from unaffordable housing to education debt to expensive necessities like groceries. The Project 2025 policy discusses plans to limit access to government programs for low-income groups, alter the taxing system that would increase taxes upon working class groups, and ensure difficulty in maintaining access to growing, unaffordable necessities such as education and health insurance.

- The Office of Federal Student Aid, within the DOE, would be removed and transition into a privatized loan office. (pg. 327)
- Income-Driven Repayment plans for student loans would be eliminated, making it harder to eliminate a source of debt. (pg. 337)
- All federal loans would be privatized, allowing for increased loan costs and fees. (pg. 353)
- Student loan forgiveness would be eliminated. (pg. 322)
- Work requirements would be added to Medicaid and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), adding barriers to receiving aid. (pg. 468, 476)
- Project 2025 proposes a 30 percent tax rate for workers, only an 18 percent tax rate for corporate income tax and 15 percent tax rate for “capital gains and qualified dividends”. Wage workers will pay more in taxes than corporations and wealthy individuals. (pg.696)
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) ability to assist with affordable housing would be curtailed through plans of adding work requirements, implementing limited durations, and looser adjustment of payment terms for rental assistance programs. (pg. 511)

3. IMPLEMENTS LAW ENFORCEMENT AND POLICING REGIME

Law enforcement and policing, under Project 2025, would become expanded and extensive. Policing reforms would be rolled back, and national policing would not adhere to jurisdictional or community needs. The law enforcement system, even at present with some reforms, unfairly targets Black groups and needs more time to progress to a racially just system. A Black person have a more likely chance (by five times) to be stopped by a police

⁷ Emily A. Shrider, rep., *Poverty in the United States: 2023* (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024), 5.

officer without a proper just cause in comparison to a White person⁸. Police shootings take the lives of Black people (rate of 6.2 million each year) 2.5 times more than White people (2.4 million each year)⁹. Black groups are more likely to be incarcerated in comparison to White groups by five times¹⁰.

- The Department of Justice (DOJ) would determine whether local jurisdictions have correctly punished those who are deemed as criminals. Broad in its law enforcement goals, the extended federal policing conflicts with local law enforcement independence. The DOJ would have sole discretion and consideration over who broke a law or did not break a law (arbitrary policing). (pg. 553)
- The DOJ, under Project 2025 policy, would strengthen tough-on-crime rules. (pg. 553 – 554)
- DOJ policies that seem incongruent to conservative administration would be slated for elimination. Racial equity and gender equity policies are incongruent to conservative administration. (pg. 557)
- The DOJ’s Civil Rights Division would utilize real and important law enforcement resources to criminalize and open investigations into businesses, colleges, and state/local governments that participate in diversity initiatives. (pg. 562)

4. REPEALS CIVIL RIGHTS, VOTING RIGHTS, AND REPRESENTATION

Project 2025 targets civil rights, voting rights, and public or private representation by weakening programs, laws, and offices designed to increase inclusion in private employment, government employment/contracting, government services, and military. A lack of proper rights and representation for the 47 million Black people across the nation would mean lesser access to opportunities, resources, and visibility.

- DEI initiatives would be slated for complete removal across government, laws, grants, and contracts. (pg. 4 -5)
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives would be eliminated throughout the military, the Agency for International Development, the Treasury, and private/public workplaces. (pg. 103, 258, 708, 582)
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission would have weakened discrimination enforcement abilities. (pg. 586 – 587)
- It would be harder to identify discriminate hiring and employment through the removal of racial data collection among workplaces. (pg. 583)
- The Census Bureau National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic and Other Populations, which helps with better counting racial groups who are usually undercounted and provides resources based on counting results, will be entirely removed. (pg. 682)
- The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, which prevents discrimination among its contractors, would be eliminated (pg. 583)
- Civil rights rules, born from anti-Black discrimination and purposed for remedying such outcomes in its origination, would be re-purposed for colorblind goals where Black inclusion efforts are deemed a violation of civil rights laws. (pg. 561 – 562)
- The DOE’s Office of Civil Rights would move to the DOJ, stripping the expertise of the DOE in handling discrimination in education. (pg. 330)

⁸ “Criminal Justice Fact Sheet,” Criminal Justice Fact Sheet, November 4, 2022, <https://naacp.org/resources/criminal-justice-fact-sheet>.

⁹ “Police Shootings Database 2015-2024,” Fatal Force, May 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database/>.

¹⁰ “Criminal Justice Fact Sheet,” Criminal Justice Fact Sheet, November 4, 2022, <https://naacp.org/resources/criminal-justice-fact-sheet>.

- “Election-related offenses” responsibility would be transferred to DOJ’s Criminal Division from its Civil Rights Division, changing its focus among the offenses from voting discrimination to voter fraud. (562 – 563)

5. **STALLS HOUSING**

Black groups across America lack access to affordable housing and homeownership on a wide scale. Black renters are moderately and severely cost-burdened at a rate of 54%¹¹. The homeownership rate of 44.1%¹² among Black groups is the lowest in comparison to any other race nationally, even as the Department of Housing and Urban (HUD) agency only provided 250,000 loans to Black homeowners over the course of three years¹³ (2021 to 2024). A HUD agency subjected to Project 2025 policies would keep decent and affordable homes farther out of reach for Black groups, based on affordability and race.

- Project 2025 housing policy seeks to encourage priority legislative support for single-family housing and single-family zoning. (pg. 511)
- Project 2025 advocates for local authority to handle Public Housing Authority (PHA) land sales. This encourages the privatization of public housing, forced evictions, and the depletion of public housing. (pg. 511 – 512)
- The Federal Housing Authority (FHA) would provide “shorter-duration mortgages” and increase mortgage insurance premiums (MIP) for loans above 20-year terms, increasing the costs of buying a home for the first time or maintaining a home purchase. (pg. 510)
- HUD would limit first-time homebuyer eligibility. (pg. 510)
- Housing equity across different dimensions would be eliminated. Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity (PAVE) (for equitable home appraisals), Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) (to prevent discrimination in housing), and climate initiatives would be slated for removal. (pg. 508 – 509)
- The Housing Supply Fund, which provides funding for communities to increase affordable housing supply, would be eliminated. (pg. 509)

6. **IMPACTS HEALTH**

There is more chemical and air pollution in Black communities than White communities¹⁴, especially low-income Black communities. Black groups have a 30% likelier chance to succumb to heart disease than White groups¹⁵. Black groups also have a lower life expectancy in comparison to White groups by four years¹⁶. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has found that the Black maternal mortality rate is higher than any other race group at 49.5 “deaths per 100,000 live births”¹⁷ (other race groups fall below 20 deaths per 100,000 live births). The CDC also reports that Black women seek abortions at the highest rate more than any other race group at 41.5%¹⁸. Health is an important

¹¹rep., *The State of the Nation’s Housing 2020* (Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2020), 1.

¹² Lawrence Yun et al., rep., *2024 Snapshot of Race and Home Buying in America* (National Association of Realtors, 2024), 9.

¹³ “Fact Sheet: Under the Leadership of Secretary Marcia L. Fudge, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Has Delivered for Black People,” *HUD No. 24-020* (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, February 2, 2024).

¹⁴ Alonzo L. Plough, *Necessary Conversations: Understanding Racism as a Barrier to Achieving Health Equity* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022), 118.

¹⁵ National Academies of Sciences et al. *The State of Health Disparities in the United States*. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK425844/>

¹⁶ Mary T. Bassett and Sandro Galea, “Reparations as a Public Health Priority — a Strategy for Ending Black–White Health Disparities,” *New England Journal of Medicine* 383, no. 22 (November 26, 2020): 2101–3, <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmp2026170>, 2101.

¹⁷ Hoyert DL. Maternal mortality rates in the United States, 2022. NCHS Health E-Stats. 2024.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc/152992>.

¹⁸ Kortsmitt K, Nguyen AT, Mandel MG, et al. Abortion Surveillance — United States, 2021. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2023;72(No. SS-9):1–29. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss7209a1>.

part of Black progress. Project 2025 disregards Black health by limiting access to health insurance, ending access to maternal care, and curtailing efforts to combat environmental racism.

- Project 2025 proposes duration limits or “lifetime caps” for Medicaid benefits. (pg. 468)
- Medicare would be rolled back and replaced with Medicare Advantage, privatizing a significant safety net for seniors. (pg. 464)
- The Affordable Care Act (ACA) would be weakened in some areas, as Project 2025 aims to change rules to surprise medical billing and remove unsubsidized insurances from the ACA market (lowering affordable healthcare options). (pg. 469 – 470)
- Project 2025 seeks to eliminate abortion access nationwide and stop funding for Planned Parenthood. (pg. 450, pg. 471)
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would not be able to fully enforce the Clean Air Act. In one instance, the Department of Transportation would be tasked with regulating carbon dioxide emissions in engines rather than the EPA. (pg. 628)
- The EPA’s abilities to pursue environmental justice on the basis of racial discrimination would be weakened. (pg. 441)
- The EPA’s Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights would be eliminated. (pg. 442)
- Project 2025 seeks to utilize the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to lower public assistance eligibility for states and communities in need of emergency funding during or after a disaster. (pg. 153)

7. TARGETS IMMIGRATION

From the second wave of the Great Migration to the backbone of America’s economy, Black immigrants historically has been a part of the communal fabric. There are 4.3 million Black immigrants¹⁹ (from American Immigration Council) in the United States that have contributed about \$36 billion in taxes to the American economy.²⁰ Their livelihoods and their rightful stake in the country would be under threat under a Project 2025 rule.

- The Office of Refugee Resettlement would possibly be moved to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), policing the refugee process. (pg. 166)
- A Project 2025 administration would seek to prioritize “immigration offenses” and “immigration-related offenses” at the DOJ. (pg. 567)
- The DHS would “raise” its standards of what can be considered as a “credible fear of persecution”, which is needed for authorized asylum. (pg. 148)
- Employment authorization would be limited for immigrants. (pg. 149, 151)
- All state and local law enforcement would be extensively used for immigration duty. (pg. 150)
- Non-citizens would be subjected to “mandatory detention” or subjected to possible deportation. (pg. 150, 135)

8. CHANGES FEDERALISM STRUCTURE

Some of the networks are rearranged between federal, state, and local governments, which impacts how resources are coordinated or provided. Project 2025 encourages state and local independence while

¹⁹ Karen Aho and Quinn Bankson, “Immigrants in the US Continues to Rise,” web log, *Immigration Impact* (American Immigration Council, February 9, 2024), <https://immigrationimpact.com/2024/02/09/data-number-of-black-immigrants-in-the-us/#:~:text=Fast%20Growth%20of%20the%20Black,states%20with%20sizable%20immigrant%20populations.>

²⁰ rep., *Power of the Purse: The Contributions of Black Immigrants in the United States* (New American Economy Research Fund, March 19, 2020), <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/black-immigrants-2020/>.

The DuBois Bunche Center – Project 2025 Guide

discouraging federal support for socioeconomic concerns such as education and politicized federal intervention in other cases such as prosecuting local businesses or colleges for implementing diversity initiatives. Project 2025 combines federal expansion and executive overreach. A previous major change to the federalism structure took place in the early 1970s under Richard Nixon’s presidential administration which aimed to decrease federal support and big government, especially in cities which were targets of decreased funding and those impacted cities could not afford to address socioeconomic needs of minorities²¹.

- Project 2025 aims to eliminate FEMA grants for states, which are utilized for emergency management purposes such as training or shelters support. (pg. 154)
- The Department of Education would increase state and local control of colleges/universities through higher education accreditation policies. (pg. 352)
- Federal government retraction would be implemented in local land use and zoning (pg. 511).
- While the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) is independent from the DOJ, Project 2025 calls for increasingly centralizing law enforcement and national security resources by moving FBI operations to DOJ. (pg. 549)

Bibliography

Aho, Karen, and Quinn Bankson. “Immigrants in the US Continues to Rise.” Web log. *Immigration Impact* (blog). American Immigration Council, February 9, 2024. <https://immigrationimpact.com/2024/02/09/data-number-of-black-immigrants-in-the-us/#:~:text=Fast%20Growth%20of%20the%20Black,states%20with%20sizable%20immigrant%20populations>.

²¹ Peter Eisinger, “City Politics in an Era of Federal Devolution,” *Urban Affairs Review* 33, no. 3 (January 1998): 308–25, <https://doi.org/10.1177/107808749803300302>, 309-311.

The DuBois Bunche Center – Project 2025 Guide

Bassett, Mary T., and Sandro Galea. "Reparations as a Public Health Priority — a Strategy for Ending Black–White Health Disparities." *New England Journal of Medicine* 383, no. 22 (November 26, 2020): 2101–3. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmp2026170>.

"Biden-Harris Administration Announces Significant Increase in Lending to Black-Owned Small Businesses." *Press Release* 23-83. U.S. Small Business Administration, October 24, 2023. [https://www.sba.gov/article/2023/10/24/biden-harris-administration-announces-significant-increase-lending-black-owned-small-businesses#:~:text=The%20SBA%20backed%204%2C781%20loans,Year%202020%20\(2.78x\)](https://www.sba.gov/article/2023/10/24/biden-harris-administration-announces-significant-increase-lending-black-owned-small-businesses#:~:text=The%20SBA%20backed%204%2C781%20loans,Year%202020%20(2.78x)).

"Criminal Justice Fact Sheet." *Criminal Justice Fact Sheet*, November 4, 2022. <https://naacp.org/resources/criminal-justice-fact-sheet>.

Eisinger, Peter. "City Politics in an Era of Federal Devolution." *Urban Affairs Review* 33, no. 3 (January 1998): 308–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107808749803300302>.

"Fact Sheet: Under the Leadership of Secretary Marcia L. Fudge, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Has Delivered for Black People." *HUD No. 24-020*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, February 2, 2024.

Rep. Government-Wide DEIA: Our Progress and Path Forward to Building a Better Workforce for the American People. Office of Personnel Management, 2022.

Hoyert DL. Maternal mortality rates in the United States, 2022. NCHS Health E-Stats. 2024. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc/152992>.

Irwin, Veronique, Ke Wang, Julie Jung, Erika Kessler, Tabitha Tezil, Sara Alhassani, Alison Filbey, Rita Dilig, and Farrah Bullock Mann. Rep. Edited by Megan Barnett, Stephen Purcell, and Thomas Nachazel. *Report on the Condition of Education 2024*. Washington, DC: NCES, 2024.

Kortsmit K, Nguyen AT, Mandel MG, et al. Abortion Surveillance — United States, 2021. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2023;72(No. SS-9):1–29. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss7209a1>

Moslimani, Mohamad, Christine Tamir, Abby Budiman, Luis Noe-Bustamante, and Lauren Mora. "Facts about the U.S. Black Population." *Fact Sheet*, January 18, 2024. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/fact-sheet/facts-about-the-us-black-population/>.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice; Committee on Community-Based Solutions to Promote Health Equity in the United States; Baciu A, Negussie Y, Geller A, et al., editors. *Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity*.

The DuBois Bunche Center – Project 2025 Guide

Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2017 Jan 11. 2, *The State of Health Disparities in the United States*. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK425844/>

Office of Advocacy. “Facts about Small Business: Black-Ownership Statistics 2024.” Office of Advocacy, July 25, 2024. <https://advocacy.sba.gov/2024/02/01/facts-about-small-business-black-ownership-statistics-2024/>.

Plough, Alonzo L. *Necessary conversations: Understanding racism as a barrier to achieving health equity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022.

“Police Shootings Database 2015-2024 .” Fatal Force, May 2015. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database/>.

The database was updated in October 2024.

Rep. *Power of the Purse: The Contributions of Black Immigrants in the United States*. New American Economy Research Fund, March 19, 2020. <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/black-immigrants-2020/>.

Shrider, Emily A. Rep. *Poverty in the United States: 2023*. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024.

Rep. *The State of the Nation’s Housing 2020*. Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2020.

“Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups.” Indicator 22: Financial aid, February 2019. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/raceindicators/indicator_rec.asp.

Yun, Lawrence, Jessica Lautz, Brandi Snowden, and Meredith Dunn. Rep. *2024 Snapshot of Race and Home Buying in America*. National Association of Realtors, 2024.