

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Washington Bus builds the political power of young people across Washington State. A key part of our programming is the Youth Agenda Survey, an issue based survey which is targeted at young Washingtonians. Each summer our Fellowship gives 15 young people the chance to learn from progressive experts from across the state, run the most innovative, effective, and fun civic programs in Washington State, and collaborate with community organizations and issue campaigns for hands-on organizing experience.

During the summer of 2020, the Covid 19 health crisis and the Black Lives Matter movement made organizing more urgent than ever. This was the first ever remote Fellowship, where Fellows used the tools of digital organizing to engage their peers in critical conversations about key issues that matter to them. The Youth Agenda Survey gives young people the chance to share their top policy priorities. This summer the Fellowship worked on deepening their understanding of three issues on the Youth Agenda survey: Climate Justice, Criminal Justice, and Housing for All.

HIGHLIGHTS

HOUSING FOR ALL

- Housing must be accessible to people with disabilities
- Housing instability and homelessness are interlocking issues
- Young people are urgently affected by student debt, and are increasingly rent burdened
- Stigma around housing instability is a crisis for students, and exacerbates mental health issues

CLIMATE JUSTICE

- Decentering whiteness is critical for an intersectional Climate Justice movement
- BIPOC communities, Immigrant communities, and other marginalized communities are most affected by climate change and must lead the conversation

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Mass incarceration and prisons must be abolished
- Rehabilitation, education and the removal of barriers to re-entry for those behind bars is critical
- Community led programs which give youth alternatives to the criminal justice system should be prioritized
- Public funding which reflects the priorities of BIPOC communities is crucial

THE PROCESS

The Fellows, as activist researchers, led a participatory research process:

- Reflecting on their own stories and experiences with these issues
- Facilitating group conversations with other young people to learn from each other
- Learning from organizations working on these issues

GET ON THE BUS:

The Washington Bus makes politics engaging, effective and fun. The Bus puts young Washingtonians in the driver's seat and gives them the tools to be organizers, legislators and leaders. We catalyze the energy and enthusiasm of young people to create sustainable, positive change in Washington State through civic education, voter engagement, and leadership development.

