

Together, we can...

Build an Economy That Works for All of Us

The U.S. economy is improving, with more people finding good jobs, yet since early 2021 big corporations have raised prices faster than our wages, and too many of our neighbors are barely staying afloat. Many of our most essential workers who care for our young children, help seniors live with dignity, pick our Virginia apples, and prepare our food at restaurants are paid unlivable wages and have no access to paid sick or family leave, vacation time, or affordable child care for their own children. And many families can't afford to live in communities of opportunity with access to high-quality public schools. Policies set up almost a century ago to exclude many Black workers from basic protections like the minimum wage are still harming many working people of color today.



Virginia's vast yet untapped people-powered sector persists despite being systemically excluded for generations and represents the heart and soul of what makes Virginia business so diverse and unique. We must develop new pathways for historically marginalized Virginians to level up with a new set of strategic power tools developed especially for all those on the front lines of the struggle.

- Free B. | Untold RVA | Richmond

Big corporations have manipulated the system to get away with squeezing small businesses and their own workers by way of unfair practices like misclassifying their workers as independent contractors to avoid paying decent wages and benefits, and getting policymakers to give them special tax breaks. And some politicians and wealthy elites are trying to manipulate us and divide our families against each other, rather than work to build an economy that truly works for all of us.

What can we do?

Through smart policy choices, we can build a more fair, more robust, and thriving economy that works for families today and in the future. We can choose to break down barriers to opportunity and invest in what we know helps working people, small businesses, and families to thrive.

Advance commonsense policies

- Invest in today's and tomorrow's families through helping more families afford child care while raising wages to improve the lives of child care workers and address staff shortages that make it hard for families to find child care.
- Step up to the plate on housing affordability through a state-level program modeled on the successful — but limited — federal Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Broaden access to paid sick leave and paid family and medical leave so that no one has to choose between caring for a sick child or putting food on the table.
- Level the economic playing field for small businesses by expanding access to affordable healthcare for small business owners, expanding access to credit, and ending unfair tax giveaways for large multinational corporations that try to play our states against each other.

Learn more & engage

Many organizations, from unions of working people to small minority business alliances, are working to increase economic opportunity for Virginia families. You can learn more about labor unions from AFL-CIO's intro page (aflcio.org/what-unions-do) and Virginia's wide-ranging small business alliances include such organizations as the Virginia Hispanic Chamber, the Metropolitan Business League, the Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce, and many more.