

# STATE OF **BLACK** CALIFORNIA

The Case for Restoration Through Reparations



# 2024



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# FOREWORD

The State of Black California event series was born out of an unwavering commitment—to uplift, to listen, and to act. As representatives of the people, we understand that policymaking cannot happen in a vacuum. It must be shaped by those closest to the issues, those whose lived experiences provide the clearest insight into what is needed to create a just and equitable future. That is why we launched this series—to be in deep dialogue with Black Californians across the state, to shine a light on the challenges they face, and to ensure that their voices and vision translate into policies that improve lives and conditions in our communities.

At its core, the fight for reparations is about truth, justice, and repair. It demands that we confront the enduring legacy of slavery and systemic racism, ensuring that the state not only acknowledges its role in perpetuating harm against Black communities but also takes meaningful action to restore and remedy the generations of harm inflicted upon Black Californians. The California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) has played a key role in this movement, committed to advancing policies that address historic and ongoing racial disparities. Yet, we knew that to push forward bold, transformative solutions, we needed to hear directly from those impacted.

With this in mind, we designed the State of Black California event series as more than just a convening—it is a model for how community-centered policymaking can be done. We prioritized inclusion, ensuring that Black voices from diverse corners of the state were heard. From Oakland to San Diego, from the Central Valley to the Inland Empire, we embraced the regional nuances that shape our communities’ experiences. We did not assume that the challenges faced in one community were identical to those in another. Instead, we engaged in thoughtful, place-based conversations that captured the distinct needs of Black Californians across varied landscapes.

Through these dialogues, a powerful truth emerged: Black communities are not monolithic, but we are united in our demands for justice, opportunity, and equity. Across every region, we heard a resounding call for solutions that address the lack of affordable housing, economic exclusion, environmental neglect, and systemic disinvestment—all lingering consequences of policies rooted in anti-Blackness. And across every region, we saw an unshakable resolve to not only fight for reparations but to build a future where Black Californians thrive.

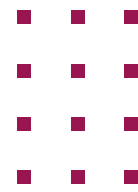
The State of Black California series reaffirms that the best solutions are born from those who experience the challenges firsthand. As elected officials, our role is not simply to legislate; it is to ensure that the policies we champion are rooted in the realities of the people we serve.

The work ahead is great, but so is our determination. This report is not the conclusion of our efforts—it is a roadmap for the future. With the insights gained from this series, we are more prepared than ever to legislate boldly, advocate relentlessly, and push California forward on the path to reparations and racial justice.

**Assemblywoman Lori D. Wilson,**  
*Chair Emeritus on behalf of the California  
Legislative Black Caucus*



# INTRODUCTION



Oakland Council Member, Treva Ward (left) and former District Director for Assemblymember Mia Bonta, Rowena Brown

On the heels of the most destructive natural disaster to hit Los Angeles County, the conversation around repair for Black Californians has been brought into sharper focus. In January, the Eaton Fire devastated historically Black neighborhoods in Pasadena and Altadena, once communities of promise and opportunity for middle-class Black families who were unable to purchase homes in other parts of Los Angeles due to restrictive covenants and redlining.

"...Black victims of the fire, lived west of Lake Avenue, where many early homeowners of color were pushed because of redlining," New York Times journalist Corina Knoll wrote. "Even after redlining was outlawed, the practice continued informally through steering by real estate agents."

One of the last Black enclaves in Los Angeles County, Altadena's Black population peaked at over 40 percent in the 1980s but has since fallen to around 18 percent – still an outsized representation when compared to the fact that only 8 percent of the population of Los Angeles County is Black.\* The concentration of Black communities, a direct result of historically racist policies and practices, has created circumstances in which

**61 percent of Black households** in Altadena are located within the Eaton Fire perimeter, and nearly half (**48 percent**) of Black households/units were destroyed or majorly damaged, **compared to 37 percent for non-Black households.\*\***

Beyond the loss of homes and possessions, the possibility that the area's Black population may further decrease, or worse, cease to exist, weighs heavily in this moment.

As Black residents turn toward recovery and rebuilding, the data tells us that the journey will be even more challenging for them than their white counterparts. Recent studies highlight how systemic racism shows up in disaster relief: Black communities receive fewer grants and lower levels of assistance than others following natural disasters, and FEMA is less likely to approve disaster assistance to Black homeowners – even when they live in similar disaster-impacted areas as white residents.\*\*\*

This disproportionate impact on Black families, both in the immediate aftermath of the fires and in long-term recovery, is a direct result of a legacy of systemic racism and inequities that concentrated Black communities in more vulnerable and less-resourced neighborhoods and excludes them from disaster recovery resources and policy-making. And, it is these same systemic inequities that were documented by the California Reparations Task Force in their final report and serve as the underpinning for the case for restoration through reparations for Black Californians.

\* (Deng, Jireh. "Black Altadenans seek hope and resilience in the wake of the LA wildfires." *NPR*, February 18, 2025)

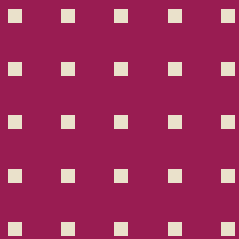
\*\* (Ong, Paul, et. al. *LA Wildfires: Impacts on Altadena's Black Community*. UCLA Ralph J. Bunche Center, 2025)

\*\*\* (Arena, Olivia, et. al. "Disparities in Disaster Mitigation Resources and Information Can Leave Households Unprepared for Climate Threats." *Urban Institute*, July 6, 2020; Flavell, Christopher. "Why Does Disaster Aid Often Favor White People?" *New York Times*, June 8, 2021)



# IN THE MORE THAN 1,000-PAGE REPORT,

the Task Force put forth over 115 recommendations for how the state should redress and repair the harms experienced by Black Californians.



# BACKGROUND

In June of 2023, after two years of intensive study, analysis, and public hearings, the first-in-nation California Reparations Task Force issued its final report on the ongoing and compounding harms experienced by Black Californians as a result of slavery and its lasting effects on society today. In the more than 1,000-page report, the Task Force put forth over 115 recommendations for how the state should redress and repair the harms experienced by Black Californians, recommendations intended by the drafters of the report to serve as a blueprint for future reforms and legislation. The California Legislative Black Caucus introduced its first set of bills based on the recommendations in the final report in February 2024.

Seeking to engage, educate, and empower Black Californians around the movement for reparations and priority issues impacting Black communities throughout the state, the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) partnered with the California Black Freedom Fund (CBFF) to develop and host the State of Black California event series between June and December 2024.



THE STATE OF BLACK CALIFORNIA  
EVENTS ENGAGED MORE THAN

650 PEOPLE IN PERSON AND  
GARNERED MORE THAN

1,000 VIEWS  
ONLINE

OUR APPROACH

In partnership with CLBC, we designed the State of Black California event series to be more than just a series of conversations – it was about power-building. Too often, policy happens to Black communities instead of with Black communities. This series was an intentional effort to shift that dynamic. It was a vehicle for Black Californians to not only voice their concerns but also shape the policies that will impact their lives.

Unique in its movement-oriented approach, the State of Black California event series created a forum for lawmakers, local leaders, grassroots organizers, and members of the community to convene around the issues Black communities care about most and the solutions to drive our communities forward. The series aimed to build bridges and amplify the voices of the community and reinforce that their participation was not only welcome but essential to the fight for reparations. The integration of regionally relevant data also affirmed and validated the lived experiences of attendees.

Each of the six host locations in the series - San Diego, Santa Barbara, Fresno, Sacramento, Inland Empire, and Oakland - was selected as part of an overarching strategy to reach and hear from as many Black Californians as possible, especially those in geographic areas often overlooked and underrepresented. The events engaged more than 650 people in person and garnered more than 1,000 views online.

This report provides an overview of each of the six State of Black California events, including location-specific demographic data compiled by USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute and key findings from live polling conducted at each event; outlines the case for an expansive reparations framework that includes Black immigrants; and highlights the progress made and the journey ahead. It is more than a record of what we heard – it is a blueprint for what must come next.

APPRECIATIONS

The success of the State of Black California series would not have been possible without the vision and steadfast leadership of Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas. The catalyst for this series, Senator Smallwood-Cuevas recognized the urgency of centering community voices in the fight for reparations and understood that policy should be shaped by the people it is meant to serve. Her commitment to racial justice and equity set the foundation for what the series has become – a model for community-centered policymaking.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson, whose leadership and invaluable partnership were instrumental in designing and executing these convenings. His deep engagement, dedication to the community, and strategic insight made these events possible. Their leadership, vision, and belief in the power of Black Californians made this series a reality – and for that, we are deeply grateful.

**Marc Philpart**  
*Executive Director, California Black Freedom Fund*







# STATE OF BLACK CALIFORNIA EVENT SERIES



“Reparations is about making sure we get what we need to restore our communities to their traditional greatness and to tell the story of how this movement is going to help all Californians.”

Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson (AD 60)

“The State of Black California event series made it clear: The path to repair must be guided by the lived experiences of Black Californians. From the Central Valley to South LA, the event series provided an open platform for Black Californians to share their experiences, voice their concerns, and advocate for reparative justice policies. Reparations aren't only to reconcile the past of Black Californians. They're ultimately about building a stronger, more equitable future for all Californians.”

Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (SD 28)



# THEMES ACROSS EVENTS


With the State of Black California event series complete, clear themes around how Black people are faring across the state and their opinions on the movement for reparations have fully emerged.


The regional-specific data compiled and presented by the USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute (ERI) tells a story of moderate progress by Black communities over the last 30 years, but not nearly enough to put them on par with, let alone exceed, the economic and educational positioning of other groups. These disparities are directly linked to the systemic racism and structural inequities documented by the Task Force in their final report and are also identified by State of Black California attendees as harms requiring redress and repair.


Since 1990, Black homeownership has increased, and the number of Black families living below the poverty line has decreased. However, when compared to other groups, Black communities throughout the state consistently experience severe rent burden, higher unemployment rates, and lower homeownership and median income. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that when polled, State of Black California attendees identified Housing Segregation and Environment & Infrastructure as top issue areas they'd like reparations policies to address.

Priorities for reparations policies were consistent across all six events, with the following three ranked in the top five at each stop:


## TOP PRIORITIES ACROSS EVENTS

 **Housing Segregation and Unjust Property**  
*Housing Segregation Persists, Blocking African American Families from Fair Property Ownership*


 **Environment & Infrastructure**  
*African American Neighborhoods Suffer from Neglect in Infrastructure and Environment*

 **Mental and Physical Harm and Neglect**  
*Systemic Neglect Causes Ongoing Mental and Physical Harm in African American Communities*

## NEXT HIGHEST PRIORITIES

 **Enslavement**  
*Legacy of Enslavement: Historical Injustices Continue to Impact African Americans*

 **The Wealth Gap**  
*The Persistent Wealth Gap Between African Americans and White Americans Widens*

 **Control Over Creative, Cultural, Intellectual Life**  
*African American Contributions to Arts and Culture Often Controlled and Exploited*



**While there is strong support for reparations among Black communities in the state, State of Black California participants were cautious in their optimism** regarding the path forward. In San Diego, 63.6 percent of poll respondents said they feel optimistic about the state's efforts - the highest of any of the events. We can assume that optimism is not higher, in part, because of a lack of accessible information and knowledge about the efforts being made. This presents a clear opportunity for the CLBC and aligned groups to meaningfully engage and activate Black communities across the state.

**Poll respondents consistently identified the following sources of information on reparations: community organizations, social media, and the news.** Outreach and education through these mediums, including specific strategies to combat mis and disinformation, are key to reaching Black communities. **Black communities are ready to be moved from passive supporters to engaged**

**advocates, but need additional resources and training.** In fact, respondents noted that, among other things, being connected to a community of reparations advocates, conversation guides, and reading materials and handouts would make them feel comfortable engaging others in conversation about reparations.

**With over 90 percent of respondents at each of the six locations reporting that they have a better understanding of the movement for reparations in California** after having attended the event, the State of Black California series should serve as an outreach model and an example of the type of impact that strategic and targeted education and engagement can have to advance the fight to secure reparations for Black Californians.

The State of Black California series underscored the vital role of Black political power and representation in advancing the needs and interests of Black communities. Across the state, Black representatives are leading increasingly diverse communities, including event stops like Moreno Valley, Sacramento, San Diego, and Oakland. Their representative leadership ensures that the issues impacting Black residents are not overlooked. However, in places like Santa Barbara and Fresno, where Black communities exist without Black representation, political power for these communities remains fragile. This makes it even more urgent to amplify Black voices and prioritize the needs of these communities. **The CLBC has long been the leading force in advocating for Black Californians, but in areas without Black representation, it is critical that leaders at every level step up to do the same.** If we fail to connect the dots between representation and the policies shaping our lives, we risk missing a crucial opportunity to meaningfully serve and empower all Californians.



# BLACK IMMIGRANTS & REPARATIONS

*“Immigration is a Black issue, and the reparations movement must include all Black Californians.”*

*Dr. Kim Tabari, External Affairs Director of the USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute*

Black immigrants in the U.S., primarily from the Caribbean, Africa, and Latin America, navigate a racial hierarchy rooted in anti-Blackness. While they may not share direct lineage with enslaved Africans in the United States, their lived realities are shaped by the same systemic racism that has oppressed Black Americans for centuries. From employment discrimination and disproportionate policing to racial profiling and economic exclusion, Black migrants are often subject to racialized barriers that are legacies of slavery and Jim Crow. “Black immigrants are affected by red-lining and housing discrimination because of the legacy they come into when they arrive,” Dr. Manuel Pastor, Director of the USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute (USC ERI), noted during the State of Black California Oakland, reinforcing the modern-day impact of historical harms.

The notion that Black immigrants experience less racial discrimination due to their foreign origins ignores how structural racism functions—targeting Blackness regardless of nationality. **The experiences of Black immigrants reveal the enduring legacy of white supremacy and reinforce the need for broad-based, intersectional approaches to reparative justice.**

## THE IMMIGRANT SHARE OF BLACK CALIFORNIANS CONTINUES TO INCREASE, from just 3.4% in 1990 to 7.8% in 2021.

The immigrant share of Black Californians continues to steadily increase, from just 3.4 percent in 1990 to 7.8 percent in 2021. Nearly 15 percent of Black children in the state have at least one immigrant parent. These numbers were even higher in the regions visited during the State of Black California event series.

In San Diego County, home to large numbers of immigrants and refugees from East Africa, Congo, and Haiti, 10.8 percent of the Black population are immigrants, and 27 percent of Black children have at least one immigrant parent.

“In our listening sessions with East African elders, we heard an overwhelming call to build and invest in a more expansive reparations movement and framework that reflects the full depth and experience of Black identity,” said Ramla Sahid, Executive Director of CBFF community partner, Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA). “The wisdom of our elders reminded us that reparations is about correcting the deep injustices that have shaped all our lives and is a fight for all Black people. This fight for reparations is ultimately about ensuring that future generations inherit justice.”



*Chinedu Valentine Okobi*

In October 2018, Nigerian-American Chinedu Valentine Okobi was tased and fatally beaten by San Mateo County sheriff’s deputies in Millbrae, California.

A poet, devoted father, Morehouse graduate, son, and brother, Chinedu was more than a statistic—he was deeply loved.

His story, like so many others, is a stark reminder that anti-Black racism and state violence do not discriminate based on lineage.

The immigrant share of the Central Coast’s Black population is 7.5 percent, while in the Inland Empire, 11.6 percent of Black children have at least one immigrant parent. This trend is mirrored in the northern parts of the state, with the immigrant share of the Black population in Sacramento at 5 percent and the number of Black children with at least one immigrant parent at 11.6 percent. And, in the East Bay Area, 8.8 percent of the Black population are immigrants, and 16 percent of Black children have at least one immigrant parent. This demographic shift underscores the need for their inclusion in the fight for reparations, as they, too, face systemic racial inequities rooted in historical anti-Black policies.

These systemic harms are further exacerbated in this present moment by threats of deportation and removal. “Mass deportations and the new Administration’s immigration policies will impact Black families,” Dr. Pastor pointed out during the Oakland event. “The Administration will make Brown people the face of mass deportations, but Black immigrants are disproportionately targeted and mistreated by immigration policies and enforcement agencies, so we know that they will be harmed.” In fact, according to the Black Alliance for Just Immigration, in 2022, 82 percent of those deported were Black, up from 76 percent in prior years.\*

*“A little over 20% of Black Californians are immigrants or children of immigrants. While the experiences are not always identical, we experience Blackness in this country together. We live, love, work and play with each other. We must build collective Black power as Black Diasporic communities, fighting against our criminalization, exclusion, and separation from family and community while advancing racial justice and reparations.”*

*Nana Gyamfi, Executive Director, Black Alliance for Just Immigration*

\* (Black Alliance for Just Immigration. “BAJI to White House: Conditions for Black migrants are worse in 2024 than they were in 2022.” October 7, 2024)

Black communities in California, which the ERI data shows consistently have worse outcomes as it relates to jobs, education, and housing when compared to other groups, are now having to contend with hostile policies and enforcement that threaten to tear apart families and further disadvantage them. **Black children with immigrant parents, who in some parts of the state make up a quarter of the area’s number of Black children, risk food insecurity, housing instability, and learning loss if their parent or parents are deported.**

ERI provided data on Black immigrants in California as well as disaggregated data for 4 key regions: Los Angeles County, the Bay Area (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Solano Counties), the Inland Empire (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties), and San Diego County. The Equity Research Institute looked at data by country of origin, by nativity, and status. They also included data specifically on English Learners through linguistic isolation, languages spoken, and limited English proficiency. Over 2,700 “English Learner” students in California schools spoke a language from a Black majority country during the 2023 to 2024 school year. And 1 in 10 Black immigrant households are “linguistically isolated,” which are households where no one over the age of 14 speaks English very well.

ERI included multiple data points focused on language access including the types of languages spoken, households facing linguistic isolation, and those who are limited English proficient. However, data on English Learner students is limited. The California Department of Education does not provide publicly available data on students by race and language spoken/limited English proficiency. The number of Black immigrant English Learner students is based on a compilation of languages that are commonly spoken in Black

majority countries (e.g. Haitian Creole and Amharic) but this data is also limited due to only reporting on language spoken and not race. For example, the estimate for English learner students does not include those who speak French or Arabic due to the inability to identify the race of these students. We know that many Black immigrants speak these languages, however, if these languages had been included, non-Black immigrants could have inadvertently been included in the count.

While Black immigrants face unique challenges in navigating racial and cultural integration in the U.S., **they also bear a responsibility to engage with the history and legacy of systemic racism in their new home.** Black immigrants must actively challenge the false narratives that separate them from native-born Black Americans and recognize their shared stake in dismantling white supremacy. **Understanding this history is a necessary step toward forging stronger coalitions within the Black diaspora to fight for collective justice, including reparations.**

The reparations movement must expand to acknowledge the complexities of Black identity in California and the nation. **Excluding Black immigrants from the reparations discourse reinforces a divisive and narrow framework of Black identity, perpetuates anti-Blackness, and weakens the broader fight for equity. Black immigrants are not outsiders to the struggle for racial justice—they are integral to it.** Reparations must be understood not as a zero-sum endeavor but as a necessary corrective to centuries of economic and social dispossession that affect all Black people in varying ways.

STATE OF  
BLACK CALIFORNIA



SAN DIEGO

JUNE 15, 2024





Assemblymember Mike Gipson (AD 65)



Dr. Manuel Pastor, USC ERI

The State of Black California event series kicked off in San Diego on Juneteenth weekend with a community conversation at Will C. Crawford High School in the Mid-City neighborhood of El Cerrito. More than 85 local leaders, residents, and dignitaries were welcomed by the event's host, current Senator Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson (SD 39), who, at the time of the event represented the 79th Assembly District. Senator Dr. Weber Pierson began the program by reflecting on the role of reparations in addressing the immense struggles endured by Black communities on the path to equity and justice.

"The call for reparations is not merely an acknowledgment of past wrongs," Dr. Weber Pierson said. "It is a moral imperative, a recognition of the debt owed to Black Californians who have suffered and persevered in the face of systemic oppression."

To provide additional perspective on reparations, Secretary of State Shirley Nash Weber, Ph.D, often referred to as California's "Godmother of Reparations" for her role in introducing the measure that established the California Reparations Task Force, shared the journey to this point and how California's leadership has inspired other cities, states, and educational institutions to do the same.

"The fact that we have never given reparations to African Americans is a blemish on this country," she said.

*The world is looking at us to see if we can do what no one has been able to do in four hundred years in terms of justice for African Americans.*

Shirley Nash Weber, Ph.D,  
California Secretary of State

Additional speakers and panelists at the event included Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson (AD 60), who presented the CLBC's reparations policy package and communications strategy, and Dr. Manuel Pastor with USC ERI, who presented an overview of San Diego's Black population, including demographic shifts and indicators of health, wealth, and educational achievement. These presentations can be accessed via the QR code on page 58.





SAN DIEGO: KEY DATA POINTS FROM USC ERI

MEDIAN INCOME for Black households is **\$56,000**  
compared to \$98,000 for white households

In San Diego County, where Black people are 4 percent of the population, the high cost of housing has caused people to move from the city to suburban and inland areas to the east and north.

In June 2023, the City of San Diego launched a down payment assistance program to help low and moderate-income people of color buy their first home.


In March 2024, an anti-affirmative action group filed a lawsuit against the City, claiming the program violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

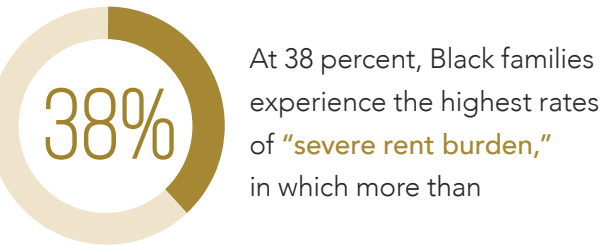
Immigration is transforming the makeup of San Diego’s Black community, with more than

**25%** of Black children in San Diego having at least one IMMIGRANT PARENT

Black San Diegans have lower rates of high school and college completion, and Black people with degrees are experiencing worsening “wage penalties” due to discrimination and lack of access to job networks.

San Diego’s Black population also reflects the area’s ties to the military, with many Black people from other states having settled in the area.

 One in four Black men in San Diego older than 25 are military veterans.



**50% OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME** is spent on housing.

**2X** Turning to jobs, wealth, housing, education, and health, Dr. Pastor noted that “San Diego may be generating jobs, but it’s not generating equity.

The Black unemployment rate is about twice the white unemployment rate. That hasn’t changed since 1990. If you don’t have access to jobs, you don’t have an opportunity to grow assets, and your future is being stripped from you.”

Black San Diegans continue to be the target of far **MORE HATE CRIMES THAN ANY OTHER GROUP**, a trend that is mirrored statewide.



Senator Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson (SD 39)



California Secretary of State Shirley Nash Weber, Ph.D



Senator Steven Bradford (SD 35)

In considering equity and reparations, Dr. Pastor said it’s important to think about the past, present, and future. This means identifying past harms and seeking to correct them, supporting full participation in policy design in the current moment, and ensuring that the future doesn’t regenerate racial disadvantage.

After Dr. Pastor’s presentation, Assemblymember Mike Gipson (AD 65) and former Senator Steven Bradford (SD 35), along with Assemblymember Dr. Jackson, took questions from the audience during a robust reparations Q&A session. Community members wanted to know more about who would be eligible for reparations; how soon reparations legislation could be enacted; how community organizations can get involved; and how community-based solutions to reduce incarceration become part of the reparations agenda.

“Reparations is about righting the wrongs of California when it comes down to enslaved people,” Assemblymember Gipson shared. Reiterating the importance of reparations, then Senator Steven Bradford noted, “Reparations is what was promised, what is owed, and what is 160 plus years overdue.”

At the close of the program, attendees were encouraged to participate in a live poll to express their reparations priorities. Respondents were asked, among other things, to rank the five most important issues, each based on one of the 13 chapters of recommendations in the Task Force’s final report, that they want the legislature to address.

A summary of responses can be accessed using the QR code on page 58.



# SAN DIEGO REPARATIONS LIVE POLL RESULTS

## TOP FIVE ISSUES

-  **Housing Segregation and Unjust Property**  
*Housing Segregation Persists, Blocking African American Families from Fair Property Ownership*
-  **Environment & Infrastructure**  
*African American Neighborhoods Suffer from Neglect in Infrastructure and Environment*
-  **Enslavement**  
*Legacy of Enslavement: Historical Injustices Continue to Impact African Americans*
-  **Mental and Physical Harm and Neglect**  
*Systemic Neglect Causes Ongoing Mental and Physical Harm in African American Communities*
-  **The Wealth Gap**  
*The Persistent Wealth Gap Between African Americans and White Americans Widens*



## ADDITIONAL POLL TOPLINES

**43.6%** of respondents identify as a **first or second-generation American**.

**Community organizations (69.7 percent), social media (66.7 percent) and the news (60.6 percent)** are the top sources respondents use to stay informed about reparations.

**ONLY 12.5%** of respondents said they **engage with their state legislators often** (at least once a month), compared to 28.12 percent that said not at all.

**34.5%** **talk to state legislators about the issues identified** by the Task Force; the same percentage of respondents said they do not.

**THE TOP 3 THINGS** **needed to feel comfortable engaging others in conversation about reparations** are training (31.3 percent), reading materials/handouts (25 percent), and informational videos (15.6 percent).

**100%** of respondents reported having **a better understanding of the movement** for reparations in California after attending the State of Black California San Diego.

**When asked if they feel optimistic** about California’s reparations efforts, 63.6 percent said yes, 33.3 percent said somewhat, and 3 percent said no.

Representatives from many San Diego community organizations attended the event, including the San Diego Black Worker Center, Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans, the San Diego Organizing Project, the Black Equity Collective, and Pillars of the Community.

“I’m excited to be part of a movement that’s pushing for accountability and pushing for reparations and justice for all,” said Khalid Alexander, founder and board president of Pillars of the Community. “The report on reparations is the first step. The next step is really going to be calling out the systems that are continuing to cause harm. If reparations is just a check, if it’s just a report and we don’t address the areas that are continuing to target and harm the Black community, I don’t know what it’s all for.”

Also participating in the San Diego event were many state and local elected officials, including Assemblymember Brian Maienschein of San Diego’s 76th District; Assemblymember David Alvarez of San Diego’s 80th District; San Diego County Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe, who served on the California Reparations Task Force; San Diego Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Lamont Jackson; San Diego Unified School District Trustee Sharon Whitehurst-Payne; Lemon Grove Mayor Racquel Vasquez; and La Mesa City Council Member Patricia Dillard.

*I’m excited to be part of a movement that’s pushing for accountability and pushing for reparations and justice for all.*

*Khalid Alexander,  
Pillars of the Community*





# STATE OF BLACK CALIFORNIA



# SANTA BARBARA

JULY 13, 2024

With rocky bluffs overlooking the ocean, large homes and palm tree-lined boulevards, and a cost of living that is 57 percent above the national average, many assume that Black people do not live in Santa Barbara. But they do and have for generations.

Black communities throughout the Central Coast, while they've always been present, represent a small fraction of the area's total population. As such, these communities and their interests are often overlooked, cast in the shadows of larger metropolitan areas like Oakland or Los Angeles that boast greater percentages of Black people. Recognizing this and appreciating the importance of engaging a wide swath of Black Californians to understand the specific and universal concerns and issues facing our communities, the CLBC and CBFF chose to host the second State of Black California event in Santa Barbara at Santa Barbara City College.

In his opening remarks, host Assemblymember Dr. Jackson explained to the audience the CLBC's strategy to tackle reparations using a three-pronged approach: acknowledgment, apology, and atonement.

"Once we get you the apology, we are going to make sure that California puts the apology into action," Dr. Jackson said. "That's what atonement is for, the action part. There's no greater apology the state can do than to get it through the legislature and have the Governor sign it. So we're taking it to the top."

On September 26, 2024, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed a formal apology for California's historical role in the perpetuation of slavery and its enduring legacy.



*Jordan Killebrew, Juneteenth Santa Barbara*





The event featured a presentation of region-specific demographic data by Dr. Kim Tabari with ERI; a presentation of the CLBC’s reparations policy package and communications strategy by Assemblymember Dr. Jackson; a Q&A session with the audience and Dr. Jackson and Dr. Tabari; and a community panel discussion on reparative justice and healing in Santa Barbara featuring panelists from CBFF grantee partners, Gateway Educational Services and Healing Justice Santa Barbara. Dr. Tabari and Dr. Jackson’s presentations may be accessed by scanning the QR code on page 58.

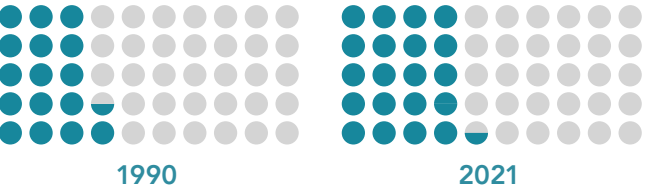


Dr. Kim Tabari, USC ERI

The community panel focused on how Black Santa Barbarans work collectively to be visible and care for one another. Simone Ruskamp, co-founder of Juneteenth Santa Barbara and Healing Justice Santa Barbara, was thrilled the Caucus came to Santa Barbara, demonstrating they recognized the unique experiences of Black people there instead of lumping them in with Los Angeles or other northern cities. Reparations, she said, would be defined differently by different communities based on their experiences.

“I will say reparation looks like safety, it looks like health care, it looks like child care, it looks like support”, Ruskamp said. “It also looks like something that you don’t have to beg for, but something that those who have harmed us know that we, as Black people, are entitled to.”

SANTA BARBARA: KEY DATA POINTS FROM USC ERI

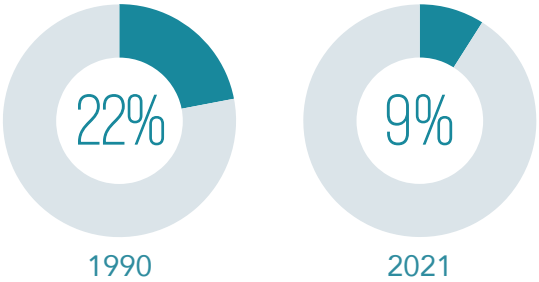


Between 1990 and 2021, homeownership rates among Black people in the area increased from 33 percent to 41 percent. However, Black people in the Central Coast still have the lowest homeownership rates when compared to white, Asian, and Latino communities.

9% At 9 percent, the Black unemployment rate is nearly twice as much as the unemployment rate for whites and Latinos.

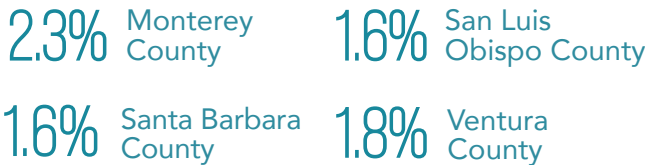
Overall, Black communities in the Central Coast are economically better off than Black communities in other parts of the state, as evidenced by higher rates of homeownership and employment.

Black families experience the highest rates of “SEVERE RENT BURDEN.”



In 2021, 9 percent of Black families lived below the poverty line, a significant drop from 22 percent in 1990.

THE CENTRAL COAST’S BLACK POPULATION



Simone Ruskamp, Healing Justice Santa Barbara



# SANTA BARBARA REPARATIONS LIVE POLL RESULTS

## TOP FIVE ISSUES

-  **Housing Segregation and Unjust Property**  
*Housing Segregation Persists, Blocking African American Families from Fair Property Ownership*
-  **The Wealth Gap**  
*The Persistent Wealth Gap Between African Americans and White Americans Widens*
-  **Enslavement**  
*Legacy of Enslavement: Historical Injustices Continue to Impact African Americans*
-  **Environment & Infrastructure**  
*African American Neighborhoods Suffer from Neglect in Infrastructure and Environment*
-  **Mental and Physical Harm and Neglect**  
*Systemic Neglect Causes Ongoing Mental and Physical Harm in African American Communities*

“This feels like a special historical moment for California, for our history in this country, to claim our space in this country, and to ask this country to do better by the African American community. I am so happy to be here, among other leaders and community members, to support one another in this work.”

Tammy Sims Johnson, Vice President of Philanthropic Services for the Santa Barbara Foundation

## ADDITIONAL POLL TOPLINES

Social media (78.3 percent), community organizations (60.9 percent), and the news (43.5 percent) are the top sources respondents use to stay informed about reparations.

**ONLY 10%** of respondents said they **engage with their state legislators often** (at least once a month), compared to a total of 70 percent that said sometimes (at least once a year) or not at all (35 percent).

**THE TOP 3 THINGS** needed to feel comfortable engaging others in conversation about reparations are training (30.4 percent), a conversation guide (26.1 percent), and being connected to a community of reparations advocates (21.8 percent).

**95.7% OF RESPONDENTS** reported having a **better understanding of the movement for reparations** in California after attending the State of Black California Santa Barbara.

When asked if they **feel optimistic about California’s reparations efforts**, 60.9 percent said yes and 39.1 percent said somewhat.

A summary of responses can be accessed using the QR code on page 58.

Tammy Sims Johnson, Vice President of Philanthropic Services for the Santa Barbara Foundation, which supports local donors who want to have a charitable impact, said for all of the area’s beauty and charm, Santa Barbara also has a history of injustices toward Black residents. She underscored the importance of the CLBC’s visit to the area, both to update the community as well as to understand the issues Black people face in specific locales. Despite many challenges, Santa Barbara’s small Black community is determined and hopeful, she added, saying, “We want to make it better because we can be better.”

# STATE OF BLACK CALIFORNIA



# FRESNO

## AUGUST 17, 2024





California’s Central Valley is one of the economic powerhouse regions of the state, where hard-working communities help put food on the tables of millions of people across the country. But, socially, politically, and culturally, the area’s value has often been ignored - an experience perhaps felt more deeply among the region’s Black population.

Taking place in Fresno at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium, the third event in the State of Black California series aimed to reach Black communities across the Central Valley. For event host and Fresno native, Assemblymember, and then Chair of the CLBC, Lori Wilson (AD 11), the gathering was particularly special.

“When I became chair of my caucus, we held a lot of events in Southern California, and that was

because that’s where the majority of our members came from,” Wilson said. “But it was important to me, being a daughter of Fresno, a daughter of the Central Valley, that we did this event here; when we thought about the six or seven cities that we were going to go to, Fresno was one of them.”

The event kicked off with opening remarks from members of the CLBC, as well as California Latino Legislative Caucus members, Assemblymembers Dr. Joaquin Arambula (AD 31), Esmeralda Soria (AD 27), and Senator Anna Caballero (SD 14). Assemblymember Dr. Jackson then presented the CLBC’s reparations policy package, communications strategy, and Black Fresno demographic data compiled by USC ERI. These presentations can be accessed via the QR code on page 58.



Monita Porter, Deputy Director at Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce (right) and Lynisha Senegal, founder of Vision View Business Formation Center (left)

FRESNO: KEY DATA POINTS FROM USC ERI

11% The Black unemployment rate for Fresno County is 11 percent, the highest of any group.

Black people make up 4 percent of Fresno County’s population and 6 percent of the city of Fresno’s population.

BETWEEN 1990 AND 2021, THE BLACK POPULATION OF FRESNO COUNTY EXPERIENCED AN OVERALL GROWTH RATE OF 37%.

However, in the latter third of that period, from 2010 to 2021, Black population growth declined by 6 percent in Fresno County and by 8 percent in the city of Fresno.

Nearly half (44 percent) of all Black families in Fresno experience “severe rent burden.”

Assemblymembers Wilson and Dr. Jackson shared with the audience some of the reparations bills being carried by the CLBC at that time, including efforts to abolish involuntary servitude, reform solitary confinement, and create a secondary review for book bans in correctional facilities. During the Q&A session, community members asked questions on a range of issues, including how to get young Black people engaged in politics, how the public can participate in the conversation around reparations, how to think of the impacts of redlining on “newcomers” versus “native-born,” and how other racial groups can show up in solidarity to support the movement for reparations.

The event also featured two community panels with CBFF grantee partners: Addressing the Wealth

35% of Black families in Fresno County live below the poverty line.

18.3 percent of Black workers are in “Future-ready” jobs (stable or growing, automation resilient, paying a living wage), compared to 34.7 percent of white workers.

2X White homeownership is twice as high as Black homeownership.

While job growth in Fresno has kept up with both state-wide and national trends, EARNINGS ARE FAR BELOW STATE AND NATIONAL LEVELS.

Gap Through Small Business Development and Fostering Healing, Repair, and Building Power. Local leaders spoke of grassroots programs and efforts in the Central Valley aimed to address inequities and encourage Black prosperity. Monita Porter, Deputy Director at Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce, highlighted local efforts to encourage entrepreneurs. Her organization hosts incubator accelerator programs with business support services such as marketing and accessing capital to ensure that Black businesses have the support they need to be successful. Lynisha Senegal, founder of Vision View Business Formation Center, a business and entrepreneur hub in Fresno, spoke to both the challenges of accessing resources for Black businesses and the opportunities to create new jobs, build wealth, and curb poverty within Black communities.

FRESNO REPARATIONS LIVE POLL RESULTS



TOP FIVE ISSUES

-  **Housing Segregation and Unjust Property**  
*Housing Segregation Persists, Blocking African American Families from Fair Property Ownership*
-  **Environment & Infrastructure**  
*African American Neighborhoods Suffer from Neglect in Infrastructure and Environment*
-  **Enslavement**  
*Legacy of Enslavement: Historical Injustices Continue to Impact African Americans*
-  **Mental and Physical Harm and Neglect**  
*Systemic Neglect Causes Ongoing Mental and Physical Harm in African American Communities*
-  **Control Over Creative, Cultural, Intellectual Life**  
*African American Contributions to Arts and Culture Often Controlled and Exploited*

“We have an obligation to restore Black Californians,” Wilson said. The CLBC must make clear that Black communities “are not asking for a gift” but rather “a repayment of debt.”

ADDITIONAL POLL TOPLINES

Social media (87.1 percent), community organizations (61.3 percent), and the news (61.3 percent) are the top sources respondents use to stay informed about reparations.

The majority of respondents (77.4 percent total) engaged with state legislators on issues they care about sometimes (38.7 percent) or never (38.7 percent). Only 6.5 percent of respondents said they engage with their state legislators often (at least once a month).

The top 3 things needed to feel comfortable engaging others in conversation about reparations are being connected to a community of reparations advocates (35.5 percent), reading materials/handouts (32.3 percent), and training (25.8 percent).

93.6% of respondents reported having a better understanding of the movement for reparations in California after attending the event.

When asked if they feel optimistic about California’s reparations effort: 54.8 percent said yes, 38.7 percent said somewhat, and 6.5 percent said no.

A summary of responses can be accessed using the QR code on page 58.

After the event, Assemblymember Wilson reflected on the importance of engaging the community around reparations and the hard but necessary work ahead to educate Californians on the state’s role in slavery, racism, and discrimination.

STATE OF  
BLACK CALIFORNIA



SACRAMENTO  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2024



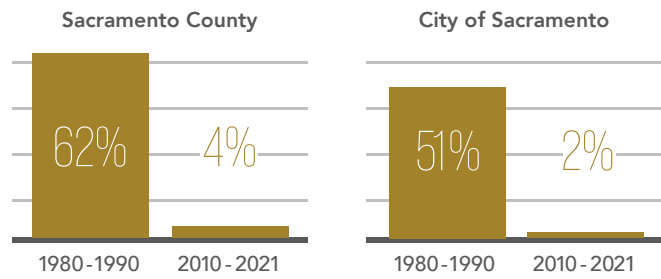
The continuation of the event series, held in the state’s capital, came at a unique moment for the CLBC and supporters of reparations. State of Black California Sacramento, hosted at the Secretary of State building, was the first event in the series held after the end of the legislative session. And, although there were legislative successes, two bills included in the reparations policy package did not make it out of the legislature. Those bills were SB 1403, which would have formed the California American Freedmen Affairs Agency to administer reparations programs, and SB 1331, which would have established the Fund for Reparations and Reporative Justice in the State Treasury for the purpose of funding reparations policies.

In the days after the end of the legislative session, some reparations advocates, including proponents of cash payments for descendants of persons enslaved in the U.S., expressed disappointment and frustration around the outcome of the session. The State of Black California Sacramento event was an opportunity to hear from these community members and correct misinformation regarding the bills.

The event partially followed the format of the prior events, including a presentation of region-specific demographic data by Dr. Tabari and Assemblymember Dr. Jackson’s presentation of the CLBC reparations policy package and communications strategy, both accessible via the QR code at the end of this report. The audience Q & A session for this event included then Assemblymember Kevin McCarty (AD 6) and Assemblymembers Dr. Jackson and Mia Bonta (AD 18).



SACRAMENTO: KEY DATA POINTS FROM USC ERI



Black population growth has significantly decreased in both Sacramento County and City. Between 1980 and 1990, the Black population saw 62 percent growth in Sacramento County, compared to 4 percent growth between 2010 and 2021. In the city of Sacramento, the Black population grew by 51 percent between 1980 and 1990, compared to 2 percent growth between 2010 and 2021.

OVER THE NEXT 30 YEARS, the Black population in Sacramento County is expected to stay stagnant, hovering just around 11 percent. Comparatively, the Latino population is expected to grow by at least 10 percent to 39 percent by 2060.

The median household income for Black households in Sacramento County is \$55,263, lower than any other group. For Black households with children under 5, the median household income is \$70,133, lower than white and Asian American & Pacific Islander households and only \$2,000 higher than Latino households.

Between 1990 and the present day, there has been a substantial decrease in the number of Black families, both in Sacramento County and Sacramento City, that live below the poverty line. Today, 22 percent of Black families live below the poverty line in Sacramento County, compared to 34 percent in 1990. In Sacramento City, 23 percent of Black families live below the poverty line, compared to 38 percent in 1990.

The Black unemployment rate for Sacramento County is 10 percent and 8 percent for Sacramento City, both higher than any other group.

Black Foreign-Born Population in Sacramento City

1 in 20 Black 25-34 year-olds are foreign-born

1 in 11 Black 35-44 year-olds are foreign-born

1 in 13 Black 45-54 year-olds are foreign-born

1 in 16 Black 55-64 year-olds are foreign-born

Black families in Sacramento HAVE SEEN A DECREASE IN HOMEOWNERSHIP. In 1980, Black homeownership was 48 percent. By 2021, that number dropped to 33 percent, while homeownership rates for others stayed steady at between 10 to 30 percentage points higher than Black residents.

There are lots of ways that lawmakers are trying to make it so Black folks have some assistance and a lot of organizations are trying to make that a priority, particularly Black-led organizations because they know that homeownership helps generations of families.

Dr. Kim Tabari, USC ERI

39% of all Black families in Sacramento City experience “severe rent burden.”

# SACRAMENTO REPARATIONS LIVE POLL RESULTS

During the Q&A session, members of the audience expressed their frustration with the outcome of the legislative session. Understanding the importance and value of hearing from attendees, the CLBC and CBFF devoted the remainder of the session to an open forum with attendees where participants expressed their opinions, concerns, and ideas as the Members listened.

## TOP FIVE ISSUES

-  **Enslavement**  
*Legacy of Enslavement: Historical Injustices Continue to Impact African Americans*
-  **Housing Segregation and Unjust Property**  
*Housing Segregation Persists, Blocking African American Families from Fair Property Ownership*
-  **Environment & Infrastructure**  
*African American Neighborhoods Suffer from Neglect in Infrastructure and Environment*
-  **Mental and Physical Harm and Neglect**  
*Systemic Neglect Causes Ongoing Mental and Physical Harm in African American Communities*
-  **The Wealth Gap**  
*The Persistent Wealth Gap Between African Americans and White Americans Widens*



*We were always very clear as a caucus that this is going to be a multi-year effort, and it's going to require some time and some building blocks in order to be able to get it done.*

Assemblymember Mia Bonta (AD 18)

## ADDITIONAL POLL TOPLINES

**60%** of respondents identify as **first or second-generation** American, the highest percentage of all the locations visited.

**Social media (73.3 percent), community organizations (66.7 percent), and friends/family (60 percent)** are the top sources respondents use to stay informed about reparations.

Sacramento respondents **engage with their legislators on the issues they care about**, with 46.7 percent engaging sometimes, 26.7 percent engaging regularly, and 20 percent reporting that they engage often. Only 6.7 percent said they do not engage at all.

**THE TOP 3 THINGS** needed to feel comfortable **engaging others in conversation about reparations** are being connected to a community of reparations advocates (37.5 percent), a conversation guide (18.8 percent), and 'other' (18.8 percent).

**100%** of respondents reported having **a better understanding of the movement for reparations** in California after attending the event.

When asked if they feel **optimistic about California's reparations efforts**, 37.5 percent said yes, 56.3 percent said somewhat, and 6.3 percent said no.

A summary of responses can be accessed via the QR code on page 58.

In their remarks, the Members assured the audience that the CLBC was not giving up the reparations fight and that the strategy to secure reparations would require ongoing education of their colleagues and the public, community support and collaboration, and patience with the pace of progress.

# STATE OF BLACK CALIFORNIA



# STATE OF THE BLACK I.E.

OCTOBER 5, 2024





The second annual State of the Black I.E. served as the fifth event in the State of Black California series. Moreno Valley and other parts of the Inland Empire, often forgotten in the vastness of California’s geography, are home to sizable Black communities.

The 2023 State of Black Inland Empire report from the University of California, Riverside’s Center for Social Innovation noted, “The Inland Empire is rapidly emerging as a hub for the Black community, ranking as the third fastest growing region for Black Californians.”

In 2021, the Black population size of the Inland Empire-Ontario Metro Area was 413,917, up almost 60,000 from 2010, and right behind the second most populous region for Black Californians, the San Francisco-Oakland Metro area, which had a population of 424,212.\*

Hosted by Assemblymember Dr. Jackson, the State of the Black I.E. moved away from a reparations-focused program and instead aimed to amplify the issues and concerns top of mind for Black communities throughout the Inland Empire.

“This is more than an event, it represents a commitment to lift up our communities, to challenge systems of inequities and to create spaces where our voice, our contributions, and our presence are not just recognized but they are celebrated,” Dr. Jackson said. “It is a reminder that while we have made strides, our journey towards justice and true equality continues.”

The program featured presentations on Black California data demographics by Dr. Tabari and Alex Reed with Mapping Black California, a discussion on Black infant health with local public health officials, and a community panel about fostering healing, repair, and building power. This event also integrated arts and culture components with a performance by youth violinists with the Crescendo Conservatory of the Arts, and Brandon Allen, a spoken word artist.

At the onset of her presentation, Dr. Tabari cautioned the audience that while the data presented may be challenging to digest because Black Californians are struggling across the state, they must not lose sight of hope and opportunity. “We have to see each other,” Dr. Tabari said. “We have to see where the gaps are so we can know how to be intentional about our solutions.” The full data presentation can be accessed via the QR code on page 58.

Crescendo Conservatory of the Arts



\* (UCR Center for Social Innovation, 2023 State of the Black I.E.: Overcoming Barriers and Advancing Progress. 2023)

INLAND EMPIRE: KEY DATA POINTS FROM USC ERI

The I.E. is home to the **third-largest Black population in California**. The Black share of the population increased from 5.4 percent in 1990 to 7.4 percent in 2022.

Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metro has seen tremendous job growth over the past four decades. Between 1980 and 2021, the area experienced

**271% JOB GROWTH**  
compared to just 88 percent for the state and 78 percent for the country.

After a survey of 1,100 Black parents, students, and community stakeholders about their top priorities for an equitable education, the Center for Social Innovation at UC Riverside and the Inland Empire Black Equity Initiative outlined recommendations falling into the following **five priority areas: academic success, Black history, college and career access, effective teachers, and graduation rates**.

**54%** of Black students in the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario area were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in 2020.

The amount of Black families living below the poverty line **DROPPED 5%** from 28 percent in 1990 to 23 percent today.

In the Inland Empire, the share of **Black children with at least one immigrant** parent has increased from 7.3 percent in 1990 to 11.6 percent in 2021.

**44%**  
Black homeownership in Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metro is at 44 percent, **nearly 10 percent higher than Black homeownership across the state**.

**37%** of all Black families in Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metro experience **“severe rent burden.”**

The Black unemployment rate for Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metro is **9 percent, the highest of any group**.

The median household income for Black households in the Inland Empire is **\$62,580** compared to \$79,482 for white households and \$90,080 for Asian American & Pacific Islander house-

For **Black households with children under five**, the median household income is \$60,422.

In the Inland Empire, **27%** of the population living in a **‘disadvantaged community’** based on the CalEnvrio Screen, a screening methodology used to help identify California communities that are disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution, is Black.

TOPLINES FROM MAPPING BLACK CALIFORNIA

- **Moreno Valley, the Blackest city by count**, has the highest population of Black residents in the Inland Empire, with over 41,000 individuals making up 19.8 percent of its total population.
- **In Victorville, the Blackest city by density**, one in five residents identifies as Black alone or in combination, for a total of 27,000 people.
- **In San Bernardino city, the Black population** stands at over 32,000, representing 14.7 percent of the city’s residents.
- High school **graduation rates** for Black students have **increased by over 12 percent in the past decade**, and 53 percent of Black graduates enroll in post-secondary institutions.

IN THE INLAND EMPIRE, A SLIGHT MAJORITY, 51 PERCENT, OF BLACK CHILDREN LIVE IN NEIGHBORHOODS MORE LIKELY TO LACK THE QUALITY OF RESOURCES AND CONDITIONS THAT MATTER FOR CHILDREN TO DEVELOP IN A HEALTHY WAY.



Following the demographic data presentations, Curley Palmer and Monique Amis with the Black Infant Health Program shared insights into the health disparities experienced by the Black birthing community and their infants and the systemic and societal factors contributing to them.

BLACK INFANT HEALTH DATA

- **Black preterm birth rates** (babies born before 37 weeks) for both Riverside and San Bernardino counties **are higher than any other group at 12 percent and 14 percent, respectively**.
- Across both Riverside and San Bernardino counties, fetal mortality (spontaneous death or loss of a fetus during pregnancy) is experienced by Black-birthing people at a rate two times higher than other groups.
- In Riverside County, **Black infants are nearly three times more likely to die before their first birthday**. Black infants in San Bernardino County are two and a half times more likely to die before they turn one.
- In both counties, Black birthing people experience significantly higher rates of maternal complications like hypertension, asthma, and preeclampsia.
- In California, the rate of **pregnancy-related mortality for Black birthing people is nearly four times higher** than their white counterparts.





Though the data is troubling, there are community-driven solutions that aim to reverse the trends and empower Black birthing people. The Black Infant Health Program is located in California communities where over 90 percent of Black births occur and provides a wide range of services to pregnant and mothering people and their families, including training on the basics of maternal and infant health, mental health consultations and postpartum depression screenings, referrals for treatment, connection to resources, group sessions, life planning, and birth plan development.

The Abundant Birth Project provides guaranteed income to people with the highest risks of preterm birth and currently serves mothers in four counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Riverside, and Los Angeles. The project expanded to San Francisco, but the future of the program is at risk after an anti-affirmative action group filed a lawsuit against the City of San Francisco in May 2023.

While the topic of reparations was not a focus of the State of the Black I.E., attendees were still encouraged to share their opinions in the live reparations poll.

## INLAND EMPIRE REPARATIONS LIVE POLL RESULTS

TOP FIVE ISSUES

**Housing Segregation and Unjust Property**  
*Housing Segregation Persists, Blocking African American Families from Fair Property Ownership*

**Environment & Infrastructure**  
*African American Neighborhoods Suffer from Neglect in Infrastructure and Environment*

**Enslavement**  
*Legacy of Enslavement: Historical Injustices Continue to Impact African Americans*

**Mental and Physical Harm and Neglect**  
*Systemic Neglect Causes Ongoing Mental and Physical Harm in African American Communities*

**Control over Creative, Cultural, Intellectual Life**  
*African American Contributions to Arts and Culture Often Controlled and Exploited*

ADDITIONAL POLL TOPLINES

45% of respondents identify as **first or second-generation American**, the second highest percentage out of the six locations visited.

Community organizations (63.4 percent), social media (61.8 percent), and news (58.5 percent) are the top sources respondents use to stay informed about reparations.

THE MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS **engage with their legislators** on the issues they care about regularly (26.2 percent) or sometimes (38.9 percent). 13.5 percent reported engaging with their legislators often, while 21.4 percent said they do not engage at all.

THE TOP 3 THINGS **respondents need to feel comfortable engaging others in conversation about reparations** are being connected to a community of reparations advocates (40 percent), training (16.8 percent), and informational videos (15.2 percent).

91% of respondents reported having a **better understanding of the movement for reparations** in California after attending the event.

When asked if they **feel optimistic about California’s reparations efforts**, 45.2 percent said yes, 46 percent said somewhat, and 8.7 percent said no.

A summary of responses can be accessed via the QR code on page 58.



“I think it’s really beautiful that the State of Black Inland Empire exists to ensure that the Black people that live in these counties, even if we’re not the majority, we’re still home here. We’re still seen here, and there are still organizations and philanthropists and organizers that want to ensure that we’re taken care of as well.”

Sky Allen, Executive Director of Inland Empire United

# STATE OF BLACK CALIFORNIA



# OAKLAND

## DECEMBER 13, 2024

The final event of the series took place in Oakland, a community that has long been at the forefront of activism, social justice, and community empowerment. The State of Black California Oakland was the only event of the series held after the 2024 General Election, and a sense of uncertainty about the nation's trajectory was felt and expressed by many of the event's attendees and speakers. Equally as palpable, however, was a spirit of resolve, hope, and resilience.

After an inspired observance honoring the ancestors by Greg Hodge, CEO of the Brotherhood of the Elders Network, and opening prayer by Pastor Jeremy McCants of Imani Community Church, host Assemblymember Mia Bonta began the program by reflecting on the reparations journey up to that point and the contributions of Black lawmakers like former U.S. Representatives John Conyers, Jr., Sheila Jackson Lee, and Barbara Lee.

The event included a presentation of East Bay Black demographic data by Drs. Pastor and Tabari (accessible via the QR code at the end of this report) and a panel conversation moderated by

Assemblymember Isaac Bryan (AD 55) and Assemblymember Mia Bonta (AD 18)



“Think both about how California has contributed to the narrative of anti-Blackness and how the community, our legacy has allowed us to be louder than that voice.”

Assemblymember Mia Bonta (AD 18)

President and CEO of the East Bay Community Foundation, Brandi Howard and featuring Assemblymembers Bonta and Isaac Bryan (AD 55) and CBFF Executive Director Marc Philpart. The event concluded with an audience Q&A session and an empowering closing message from Oakland Councilmember Treva Reid.

Just as they did in prior events, Drs. Pastor and Tabari walked the audience through region-specific data on a wide range of issues, providing a snapshot of Black life in the East Bay - Solano, Alameda, and Contra Costa counties.





OAKLAND: KEY DATA POINTS FROM USC ERI

AT 13%, SOLANO COUNTY HAS THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF BLACK PEOPLE IN THE STATE. This can be attributed to the soaring cost of living in the Bay Area, driving Black people from Alameda County, now ten percent Black, to Solano County.

OVER THE NEXT 30 YEARS the East Bay’s Black population is expected to continue to decrease, reaching only 6 percent by 2060. The Asian American & Pacific Islander population is predicted to stay relatively stable at around 33 percent, and the Latino population is predicted to increase to the plurality by 2040, reaching 41 percent by 2060.

JOB GROWTH in the East Bay consistently trends upwards, above both the state and national job growth levels. However, Black and Latino populations who have been in the Bay Area for generations are often shut out of high-earning jobs there.

In Alameda County, between 1980 and 2021, workers in the 90th percentile saw their wages balloon, growing by 73 percent in that time period. While workers in the 20th percentile saw only a 5 percent growth.

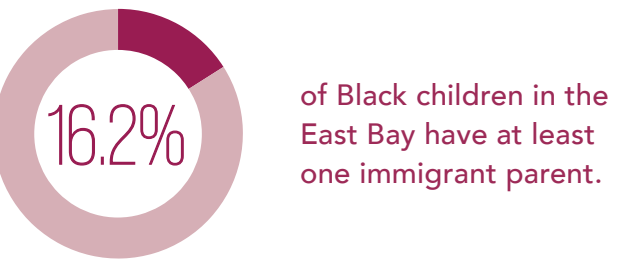
38% Black homeownership in the East Bay Homeownership rates for other groups are as follows: 47 percent for Latinos, 66 percent for Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders, and 68 percent for whites.

8% The Black unemployment rate in the East Bay is at 8 percent, the highest of any other group.

18% of Black families lived below the poverty line in 2021, more than 3x the percentage of white families. While there are fewer Black families living below the poverty line now than there were in 1990, much of that can be attributed to the migration of low-income families from the Bay Area to the Central Valley in pursuit of affordable housing and a lower cost of living.

SOLANO COUNTY HAS BECOME HOME TO THE BAY AREA’S WORKING CLASS of every ethnicity, with 36 percent of the population having a high school diploma or less, 27 percent having completed some college, 10 percent having received an AA degree, and 27 percent having received a BA or higher. Compare this to Alameda County, where 25 percent of the county’s adult population has a high school diploma or less, 16 percent have completed some college, 6 percent have an AA degree, and 52 percent have received a BA or higher.

THE IMMIGRANT SHARE OF THE EAST BAY’S BLACK POPULATION HAS QUADRUPLED OVER THE LAST 30 YEARS, from 2.4 percent in 1990 to 8.8 percent in 2021.



In-state, U.S.-born Black adults have attained less formal education than both out-of-state, U.S.-born Black adults and foreign-born Black adults.

During the panel conversation, Assemblymember Bryan, whose District includes Baldwin Hills, the Crenshaw District, Ladera Heights, and large parts of South Los Angeles, spoke about the parallel trend of Black displacement, comparing the pushing out of Black people from Alameda County to Solano County to the pushing out of Black people from Los Angeles to the Inland Empire. Assemblymember Bonta reflected on the wins secured by the CLBC for the 2024 legislative cycle, including the Governor’s issuance of a formal apology for the state’s role in slavery and its enduring legacy and the passage of AB 51, authored by Bonta, which establishes the California Universal Preschool Planning Grant Program to expand access universally to preschool programs for 3- and 4-year-old children across the state. Both Members shared their priorities for 2025, which include exploring and expanding the legal framework and broadening the definition of ‘takings’ as strategies to withstand legal challenges that may arise in pursuit of reparations for Black Californians.

“I want us to be clear-eyed about the moment that we are in, and I need us to have clarity so that we can have clarity of purpose”

Bonta said. “And I am speaking specifically about the relationship between California and the federal government. I want us to be very clear about how we’re going to move together to protect our service sector, our advocates, and our civil liberties.”

During the Q&A session, audience members wanted to know how the community could collaborate with the CLBC to ensure alignment between community desire and legislative priorities; what role elected officials play in advancing the reparations



agenda; and how we’re advancing the fight for reparations while addressing the immediate needs of people suffering as a result of the legacy of slavery. Assemblymember Bryan stressed the need for collaboration and partnership between the community and CLBC, urging the group to “build in authentic sincerity” and “give ourselves the grace to organize in community.”

“Solidarity is everything,” said Bryan. “From the grassroots to the grasstops, the folks in elected office to our scholars in universities – we all have a role to play. And so, from the everyday community member to somebody leading a community-based organization, we have to move with intentionality, with a commitment to shared progress, with the love and support that’s required for...change, and we have to move with urgency.”



# OAKLAND REPARATIONS LIVE POLL RESULTS

## TOP FIVE ISSUES

-  **Housing Segregation and Unjust Property**  
*Housing Segregation Persists, Blocking African American Families from Fair Property Ownership*
-  **Mental and Physical Harm and Neglect**  
*Systemic Neglect Causes Ongoing Mental and Physical Harm in African American Communities*
-  **Environment & Infrastructure**  
*African American Neighborhoods Suffer from Neglect in Infrastructure and Environment*
-  **The Wealth Gap**  
*The Persistent Wealth Gap Between African Americans and White Americans Widens*
-  **Control over Creative, Cultural, Intellectual Life**  
*African American Contributions to Arts and Culture Often Controlled and Exploited*



## ADDITIONAL POLL TOPLINES

**29.6%** of respondents identify as **first or second-generation American**.  
Social media (80.8 percent), community organizations (69.2 percent), and news (65.4 percent) are the top sources respondents use to stay informed about reparations.  
The same number of respondents report **engaging with their legislators** on the issues they care about regularly (30.8 percent) and sometimes (30.8 percent). 19.2 percent reported engaging with their legislators often and not at all, respectively.  
**THE TOP THINGS** respondents need to feel comfortable engaging others in conversation about reparations are being connected to a community of reparations advocates (30.8 percent), conversation guides (19.2 percent), and training and reading materials (both at 15.4 percent).

**96%** of respondents reported having a **better understanding of the movement for reparations** in California after attending the event.  
When asked if they **feel optimistic about California's reparations efforts**, 48.2 percent said yes, 48.2 percent said somewhat, and 3.7 percent said no.  
A summary of responses can be accessed via the QR code on page 58.

The final State of Black California event was capped by closing remarks from Oakland City Councilmember Treva Reid. Rallying the audience around a message of hope and solidarity, Councilmember Reid reminded, "This moment is about us living and leading in ways that we couldn't have imagined. You cannot grow weary in the next four years. [The CLBC] needs us."

# CONCLUSION



*“Reparations are not just about financial compensation, but about addressing the deep-rooted inequalities that continue to plague our societies. It is about investing in education, health care, housing, and economic opportunity that have been denied from Black Californians for far too long.”*

Senator Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, Chair of the CLBC

The State of Black California events series' design provides a framework for meaningful community engagement and strategic collaboration across groups - lawmakers, community, and philanthropy - in the movement for reparations.  
By prioritizing locally focused data, amplifying the voices and solutions of those most proximate to the issues, and engaging in transparent dialogue about the challenges and opportunities for Black Californians throughout the state, the CLBC and CBFF facilitated a statewide conversation rooted in lived experiences and tangible next steps. The events underscored that progress requires continued education, mobilization, and a community-centered approach that assures the inclusion of those most impacted.



# THE WINS & WORK AHEAD

As we reflect on how far we’ve come since the California Reparations Task Force was formed, we must acknowledge the significant strides that have been made. By the end of the 2024 legislative cycle, **six of the fourteen reparations bills introduced by the CLBC earlier that year had been signed into law.** These laws seek to address the various ways anti-Black systemic racism continues to impact Black well-being and self determination.

## REPARATIONS BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW

**AB 1815**, authored by Senator Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, expands the CROWN Act to protect against discrimination based on hair texture and protective styles.

**AB 1929**, authored by Assemblymember Tina McKinnor, aims to rectify racial disparities within career technical education (CTE) programs by requiring local educational agencies receiving CTE state grants and the California Community College Chancellor’s Office to disaggregate program and performance accountability outcome data by race and gender.

**AB 1986**, authored by Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, requires the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to notify the Office of the Inspector General when they make changes to the prison system’s banned books list.

**AB 3089**, authored by former Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr., required the state to formally apologize for its role in chattel slavery and perpetuating harms against Black Californians.

**AB 3131**, authored by former Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, targets workforce development and economic support to formerly redlined communities.

**SB 1089**, authored by Senator Lola Smallwood Cuevas, mandates grocery stores and pharmacies to give advance notice to their workers and communities to plan for the potential impact of closures.

## THE FOLLOWING REPARATIONS-RELATED BILLS PUT FORTH INDIVIDUALLY BY CLBC MEMBERS WERE ALSO PASSED:

**AB 51**, authored by Assemblymember Mia Bonta, establishes the California Universal Preschool Planning Grant Program to expand access universally to preschool programs for 3- and 4-year-old children across the state.

**AB 1984**, authored by Senator Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, requires the Department of Education to publish data on disciplinary transfers, promoting transparency and encouraging better support for students.

**AB 2319**, authored by Assemblymember Lori Wilson, aims to reduce the maternal mortality rate among Black women and pregnant people by ensuring the successful implementation of the California Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act of 2019 and strengthening implicit bias training.

**AB 2508**, authored by Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, expands CalKIDS college savings accounts to ensure foster youth in grades 1-12 get an additional deposit of \$500 to support their educational goals.

**AB 2906**, authored by Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, prevents counties throughout the state from using survivors’ benefits owed to foster youth to pay for their care and instead requires the governing agencies to hold the money in an account for the youth until they turn 18.

**SB 1340**, authored by Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, provides authority to local agencies to adjudicate workplace discrimination cases in partnership with the California Civil Rights Department.

**SB 1348**, authored by Senator Steven Bradford, establishes the Designation of California Black-Serving Institutions to recognize campuses of these segments that excel at providing academic resources to Black and African American students.



On February 20, 2025 the CLBC introduced its Road to Repair 2025 Priority Bill Package. In continuing its commitment to address the enduring badges of systemic racism, discrimination, and inequity, the CLBC will focus on advancing the following measures:

ROAD TO REPAIR 2025 CLBC PRIORITY BILL PACKAGE

ACA 6 (Wilson), would prohibit slavery in all forms

ACA 7 (Jackson), seeks to clarify Prop 209 to ensure state, county, and local institutions understand intent and parameters in current statute

AB 7 (Bryan), would authorize priority admissions for descendants of American chattel slavery to higher education institutions

AB 57 (McKinnor), seeks to allocate a portion of Home Purchase Assistance Funds to first-time home buyers who are descendants of American chattel slavery

AB 62 (McKinnor), seeks to create pathways for victims of racially-motivated eminent domain to seek redress

AB 475 (Wilson), seeks to require CDCR to develop voluntary work programs for institutional residents

AB 742 (Elhawary), seeks to designate descendants of American chattel slavery for priority when issuing professional licenses

AB 766 (Sharp-Collins), seeks to, among other things, require racial equity analyses for Executive branch agencies and respond accordingly to further advance racial equity

AB 785 (Sharp-Collins), would create the Community Violence Interdiction Grant Program and fund community-driven solutions to decrease violence in neighborhoods and schools

AB 801 (Bonta), would direct the Department of Financial Protection and Innovation, in collaboration with the Civil Rights Department, to identify and address ongoing mortgage lending discrimination

AB 935 (Ransom), would require the Civil Rights Department and the Department of Education to collect anonymized data to determine how complaints are handled

SB 347 (Weber Pierson), would require the California State University to independently research and report on scientific methodology to determine an individual's genealogical fingerprint for the purpose of verification as a descendant of an enslaved person in the United States

SB 464 (Smallwood-Cuevas), seeks to expand employer – employee demographic data reporting to the Civil Rights Department for the purpose of enforcing civil rights protection under existing law

SB 503 (Weber Pierson), seeks to regulate the use of artificial intelligence in critical healthcare applications to mitigate racial biases present in commercial algorithms

SB 510 (Richardson), seeks to require complete and accurate K-12 curriculum regarding racial disparities, including impacts of segregation, slavery, and systemic discrimination

SB 518 (Weber Pierson), would establish the Bureau of Descendants of American Slavery



Community advocates are also working to move the needle on reparations for Black Californians. The Alliance for Reparations, Reconciliation, and Truth (ARRT) is a multi-racial, multi-sector alliance advancing reparations in California. ARRT works to engage and educate Californians on four general propositions: (1) reparations should be impactful, transformative, long-lasting, and comprehensive, in accordance with the five United Nations principles for reparations; (2) Consistent with the United Nations

principles, it is incomplete to limit reparations solely to financial compensation; (3) consistent with AB3121, which established the California Reparations Task Force, reparations go beyond addressing harm from enslavement and must also redress ongoing racial pathology legacy harms, and (4) Reparations policies for Black Americans, particularly those focused on systemic reforms and investments, must have broad-based multiracial support.





“We have nothing better, more revolutionary, or rewarding to do at this time than to foster truth, repair, and reconciliation by advancing reparations in California. This is a case for justice whose time has come. This is a case for Black Californians present and past to be seen, felt, heard, and understood. This is a case for justice that bears fruit for healing for all Californians.”

*Dr. Cheryl Grills, ARRT leadership and former member of the California Reparations Task Force.*

CBFF has continued the work to advance the fight for reparations through its limited series, Restoration Through Reparations, launched in early 2025. Through a number of virtual and in-person convenings with lawmakers, philanthropy, and community leaders, CBFF continues to build bridges and engage in dialogue in order to expand and galvanize conversation and action around reparations.

*As California goes, so goes the nation. With the eyes of leaders, advocates, and Black communities across the country fixed on the state, California has the opportunity to lead with bold and transformative action to redress a multi-generational debt owed to its Black residents. In this pivotal moment, when hard-fought progress is under threat, we cannot retreat – we must move forward, collectively and with resolve, to advance the movement for reparations.*

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our deepest gratitude to our legislative, community, and philanthropic partners whose support, insights, and contributions aided in the success of the State of Black California. Their unwavering commitment to equity and racial justice continues to drive the movement for reparations in California forward.

## THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS (CURRENT AND IMMEDIATE PAST MEMBERS)

- Senator Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson (SD 39), Chair
- Assemblymember Isaac Bryan (AD 55), Vice Chair
- Assemblymember Mia Bonta (AD 18), Treasurer
- Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson (AD 60), Secretary
- Assemblymember Sade Elhawary (AD 57)
- Assemblymember Mike Gipson (AD 65)
- Assemblymember Tina McKinnor (AD 61)
- Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom (AD 13)
- Senator Laura Richardson (SD 35)
- Assemblymember Dr. LaShae Sharp-Collins (AD 79)
- Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (SD 28)
- Assemblymember Lori Wilson (AD 11), Immediate Past Chair
- California Secretary of State, Dr. Shirley Nash Weber
- California State Controller, Malia Cohen
- Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Thurmond
- Former Senator Steven Bradford (SD 35)
- Former Assemblymember Christopher Holden (AD 41)
- Former Assemblymember Kevin McCarty (AD 6)
- Former Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr. (AD 57)

## COMMUNITY AND STATE PARTNERS:

- The California Latino Legislative Caucus
- University of Southern California Dornsife Equity Research Institute
- California Black Power Network
- Black Equity Collective
- LIVEFREE CA
- Black Alliance for Just Immigration

## EVENT PRESENTERS:

- Dr. Manuel Pastor, USC ERI
- Dr. Kim Tabari, USC ERI
- Juneteenth Santa Barbara
- Gateway Educational Services
- Healing Justice Santa Barbara
- Assemblymember Dr. Joaquin Arambula
- Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria
- Senator Anna Caballero
- Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce
- Vision View Business Formation Center
- BreakBox Thought Collective
- Black Students of California United
- Mapping Black California
- Black Infant Health Program
- Riverside University Health System
- San Bernardino County Department of Public Health
- Inland Empire United
- Starting Over, Inc.
- Crescendo Conservatory of the Arts
- Brandon Allen
- Brotherhood of Elders Network
- Pastor Jeremy McCants
- Brandi Howard, East Bay Community Foundation
- Oakland Councilmember Treva Reid

# ACCESS THE DATA

Scan the QR code to explore the data and research cited in this report. This folder contains key sources, supporting materials, and additional insights to deepen your understanding of the findings and recommendations presented.





# STATE OF **BLACK** CALIFORNIA

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## ABOUT CALIFORNIA BLACK FREEDOM FUND

The California Black Freedom Fund (CBFF) ensures that community leaders, grassroots organizations, and networks have the sustained investments and resources they need to empower Black communities and realize racial justice. Since its launch in 2020, CBFF has distributed over \$40 million to more than 140 organizations.

Learn more about CBFF at [cablackfreedomfund.org](https://cablackfreedomfund.org).

