



Alpha Kappa Alpha SORORITY, INCORPORATED 2021 – 2022 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



The Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® legislative agenda outlines target-driven focus areas for advocacy with federal, state and local lawmakers to help advance our international program, *Exemplifying Excellence Through Sustainable Service*. Members are asked to support the activations, e.g. GOTV campaigns and Calls to Action, led by the International Connection Committee as well as develop grassroots advocacy campaigns to address critical local and state issues.

When building local programming and planning “AKA Day at the Capitol” events, members are asked to consider state and local angles on national issues as well as advocate for issues that specifically address the needs of their local communities. The five *Excellence* targets should provide guidelines for selecting which additional issues to address.

**Denotes advocacy to be led by the International Connection Committee seeking federal action or a coordinated national effort.*

Issue	Target Area	Priorities	Rationale	Impact
Federal and State Funding for Education	HBCU for Life	<p>A. Reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) to increase investments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)*. Support provisions at the federal and state level seeking to address higher education issues related to access and affordability.</p> <p>B. Fully fund provisions of the national K-12 education law, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to ensure that all students receive a high-quality public education, which includes Arts education and civic engagement courses. *</p> <p>C. Advocate for states and local education agencies to allocate funding for public education in an equitable manner across all school districts.</p>	<p>Maintain support for federal HBCU programs by advocating for the national law for higher education, (HEA), prioritizing the needs of HBCUs.</p> <p>Urge elected officials to increase federal and state funding budgeted for HBCUs and K-12 education.</p>	<p>An increase in funding for relevant federal and state programs will support HBCUs efforts to provide their students with a high-quality education and assist the nation in combating the COVID-19 virus.</p> <p>Provisions in federal and state laws governing all levels of education will be fully funded and executed in the best interests of our nation’s college and K-12 students.</p>



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<p>Health Equity and Maternal Health</p>	<p>Women’s Healthcare and Wellness</p>	<p>A. Uphold all provisions of the Affordable Care Act *</p> <p>B. Ensure a strategic focus on communities with the greatest health risks, and reduce disparities in access to quality healthcare, particularly for African American women.</p> <p>C. Maintain adequate funding for Medicaid, Medicare, and all health programs that benefit women.</p> <p>D. Address the unacceptably poor maternal healthcare outcomes, including disproportionately high rates of death related to pregnancy and childbirth.</p>	<p>Eliminate health disparities that adversely affect African Americans and underserved communities. Provide resources and health services for health promotion and disease prevention.</p>	<p>Promote healthy lifestyles, support for caregivers, and removal of barriers that prevent individuals from receiving quality health and maternal care.</p>
<p>Economic Empowerment</p>	<p>Building Economic Legacy</p>	<p>A. Support federal funding and provisions for African American and underserved communities to enhance their financial literacy. *</p> <p>B. Decrease barriers to entry into entrepreneurship, including ensuring integrity of the Small Business Administration’s 8(a) program and fair government contracting opportunities.</p> <p>C. Increase resources for financial literacy courses and services available to communities of color.</p>	<p>Enhance financial literacy in African American and underserved communities to expand their access to entrepreneurship and pathways for building and sustaining wealth.</p>	<p>Closing the wealth gap and increasing opportunities for wealth-building, entrepreneurship and financial stability.</p>



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<p>Voting Rights and Protections</p>	<p>Global Impact</p>	<p>A. Restore and strengthen the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. *</p> <p>B. Restore voting rights for disenfranchised citizens.</p> <p>C. Eliminate voter suppression and ensure every vote is counted especially absentee ballots, provisional ballots and student casts votes.</p> <p>D. Enact automatic voter registration for eligible citizens, starting at age 18.</p>	<p>Elections have consequences for the short- and long-term, within and beyond the U.S borders. Advocating for fairness in elections will help ensure that all voices are heard and every vote is counted.</p>	<p>Restoration of Section 5 and other key provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Elimination of voting restrictions and suppression for eligible residents in all elections.</p>
<p>Criminal Justice Reform and Violence Prevention</p>	<p>Global Impact</p>	<p>A. Correct sentencing disparities and reduce mass incarceration of nonviolent offenders by reducing the use of mandatory minimum sentencing. *</p> <p>B. End the school-to-prison pipeline and ensure all students can learn in supportive academic environments.</p> <p>C. Reduce gun violence through proper funding of education programs, mental health screening and intervention, enactment of legislation to require proper background checks and ID.*</p> <p>D. Appropriately fund protections for women through the Violence Against Women’s Act and similar legislative measures. *</p>	<p>Mass incarceration rates are damaging families and denying opportunities for productive citizenship for some offenders. The current environment of mass incarceration, gun violence and overly aggressive disciplinary measures in schools present health and safety risks that call for legislative interventions and protections.</p>	<p>Fair treatment and justice under the law for minorities and women. Improved relations between law enforcement and communities of color to create a safe society.</p>