

Inside

Supreme Court to Decide Fate of Trump's Citizenship Order

Public opinion data show strong opposition to the order, especially among Black Americans. A Pew Research Center survey found that 74% of Black adults disapprove of the order, compared with 51% of white adults who approve.

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OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL
BACKS TRUMP ORDER ENDING
BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP



CLEVELAND OBSERVER

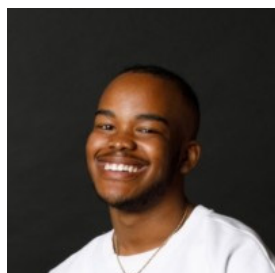
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Vol. 6 Issue 9 September 2025

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A Vessel for the Vision: Jerome White Brings Art, Spirit, and Healing to Cleveland



By Konner Hines



Scan To Listen



Painter Jerome White, a Cleveland native and graduate of Cleveland Heights High School
Credit: Vince Robinson

In classrooms, on sidewalks, and across murals that stretch along Cleveland's city blocks, you can find the signature of a man whose artistry is just as much about vision as it is about voice.

“I guess I never stopped,” says Jerome White, reflecting on how his passion for art began. “It started with comic books, drawing on the porch...creating superheroes and stories together. I just kept going.” That creative spark, ignited in childhood, has since evolved into something larger, a lifelong calling to connect, uplift, and inspire through art.

White, a Cleveland native and graduate of Cleveland Heights High School, has spent the last three decades cultivating not just a personal body of work, but

a legacy rooted in service. After studying at Tuskegee University and Baldwin Wallace University, he briefly pursued a career in medical illustration before earning a master's in art education from Case Western Reserve University. He returned home in 1997 and has taught in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District

ever since.

“This is my 32nd year teaching, 29 of those in Ohio,” he says proudly, noting his current post at Monticello Middle School. “There's just something about Cleveland, it's not too fast, not too slow. And there's an opportunity here. There's family. It's familiar.”

White's impact stretches far beyond school walls. Across Cleveland, his work is in public murals, festivals, and galleries, often created alongside students and young artists. His goal: not only to beautify neighborhoods, but to help youth see themselves reflected in their surroundings, and their potential.

“I was just taking on opportunities as they came,” he says of his early mural projects. “It came naturally, working with middle and high school kids. Each mural, each art show, it's all practice, all part of growth.”

One of his latest and most meaningful projects is the All Our Babies Transformative Art Fund, a city-funded initiative on maternal health in the Black community



This Bob Marley-themed mural titled “Three Little Birdies” was painted live by Jerome White during Black History Month at Tower City. It is now located at the Ingenuity Warehouse. Credit Jerome White

and the concept of Afrofuturism. “It's a beautiful challenge,” White explains. “Combining spiritual symbolism, motherhood, and futurism, it gave me a chance to visually communicate something bigger than myself.”

White's mural for the project

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An All-Or-Nothing Approach: Ohio Passes Sweeping Phone Ban for Public Schools



Scan To Listen

By Evelyn Rossman

Students will soon forgo texting for textbooks thanks to the new phone ban for all Ohio public schools, which will take effect in July 2026. The ban has mostly drawn support from parents and teachers, but some have raised concerns about student safety.

The Cell Phone Issue

Cell phones are increasingly relevant to students' lives, even in the classroom. A recent study from Seattle Children's Research Institute found that the average adolescent (13-18) years old spends an average of 1.5 hours on their smartphone during a 6.5-hour school day.

A growing collection of research has revealed the damage that phones have on student interactions and focus. According to one 2022 study, smartphone

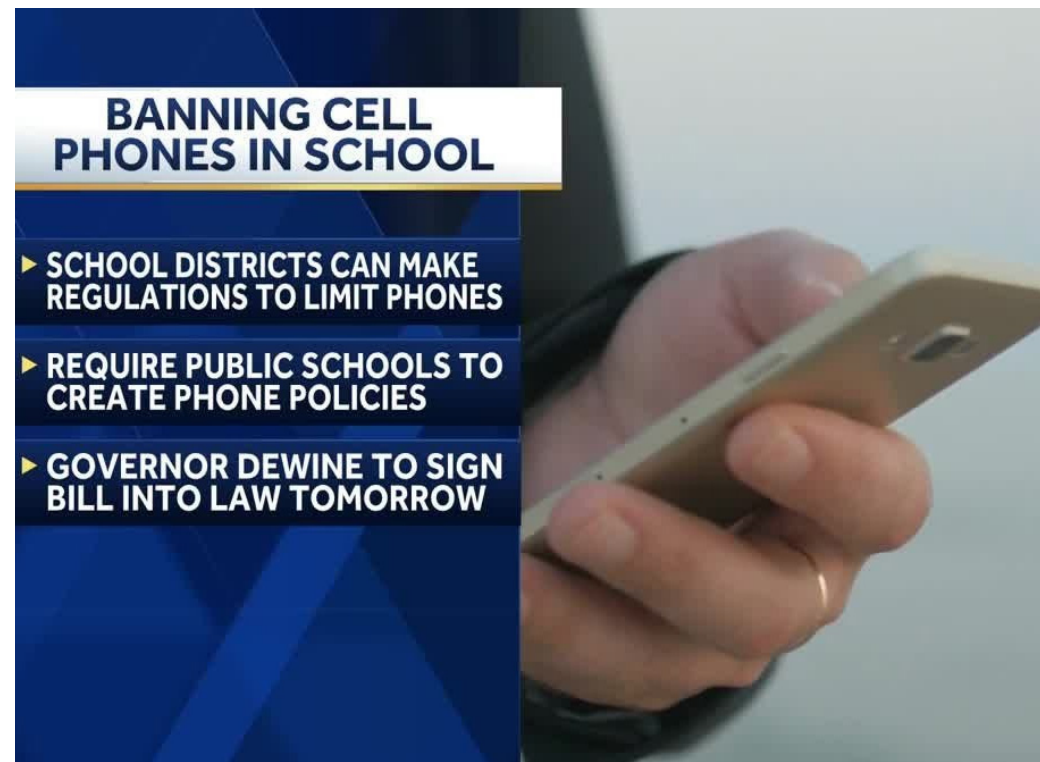
notifications can distract everyone in a classroom, leading to slower task completion. Teachers, like Sarah Davis, are well aware that phones are a significant detractor from classroom learning.

“Thinking about your phone, and checking your phone all the time, is really bad for concentration,” said Davis, a history and government teacher at Shaker Heights High School (SHHS). “For certain kids, it can be incredibly harmful...it has lowered their ability to get through the school day.”

On June 30, Mike Dewine signed a statewide phone ban for Ohio public schools. This provision, a small section of Ohio's sweeping budget bill, requires all public schools to enforce cellphone bans by January 2026, with exceptions for medical emergencies. This ban solidifies into law a growing nationwide trend of phone restrictions in schools.

The Rise of Yondr

Currently, 77% of public schools across the US have cell-phone policies prohibiting phone use.



Credii Youtube, WLWJ -5 News

Last August, Shaker Heights City School District (SHCSD) instituted Yondr pouches at both Shaker Heights Middle School (SHMS) and High School. Yondr pouches are individual containers for students' phones that are magnetically locked during school hours. Other Cleveland schools hopped onto the Yondr trend, including those in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

“We've [seen] a real culture shift,” said Dr. David Glasner, superintendent at SHCSD. “If a student...has not put their phone in a Yondr pouch, and they decide to use it when they're walking between classes in the hallway, it is very obvious.”

Glasner says that Ohio's new phone ban will simply

Continue on page 2

Phone Ban for Public Schools

reinforce what Shaker is already doing. However, some teachers and students say that the Yondr pouches aren't entirely effective. Cassie Lyles, a rising senior at SHHS, says that students quickly found ways to cheat the system.

"You could easily put something else in the Yondr pouch," she said. "I would see calculators, old iPods...someone made a clay phone in [art class] and put it in their Yondr pouch."

Community Members' Reactions

The ban has been met with support from the majority of parents. Carrie Rhodes, a Shaker Heights mother of four, says that she's grateful to know that her kids will be off their phones in the classroom.

"I think [most] parents have read the research and seen from their own experience [that] the phones are a distraction," she said. "They're not helping during the day."

Some parents, however, are wary of student phone bans. They worry that they won't be able to reach their child during an emergency, or that school coaches won't be able to communicate with athletes.

"The logistics of parenting are really challenging, so I understand parents today wanting to be in touch with their kids," said Davis. "Parents feel, for lots of reasons, that [their kid will] be in trouble if they're not keeping track of [them] all the time."

Glasner says that the issues of communication can be solved by using PA systems and landlines already present in classrooms. Additionally, he says that phones can sometimes create more chaos during an emergency.

"Let's let students and teachers focus on learning and teaching," he said, "and chances are, whatever information we need to get out, we'll get out at the appropriate time."

Despite criticisms, Yondr pouches have seen positive results in a relatively short period. Lyles said that separation from her phone improved her focus and grades. Glasner also mentioned that he's seen much more student connection in the hallways and cafeteria. With the new legislation backing them up, he hopes this will continue to grow.

"Those kinds of social interaction opportunities are so much healthier for all of us," he said. "So, it's nice to see us getting closer to that point."

Evelyn is a journalism intern at The Cleveland Observer and a student at Boston College, specializing in narrative writing and culture reporting. She is fluent in German and brings experience as both a tutor and culture writer.

Healing to Cleveland

consists of four large panels, each expressing interconnected themes of ancestry, birth, resistance, and hope. "If we don't pass down knowledge, it gets lost," he says.

"There are things we should all know about how to live, how to reconnect with nature, with each other. My hope is to inspire future generations not to forget—but to remember, and to build."

He recently contributed to The Stories of Us, a national traveling installation featuring symbolic, story-driven artwork on sculptural drums. One of White's collaborators was a former student who now works alongside him on several projects. "That full-circle moment, having a student now

creating with you, it's powerful," he says.

When asked what he hopes his work does for the next generation of artists, White pauses: "You just want to share your voice with the world. And if what I create helps someone reflect, or dream, or heal—then I've done what I was meant to do. Every now and then, someone tells me my work moved them. That's enough fuel to keep going."

For White, art isn't just self-expression. It's spiritual. It's communal. It's necessary. "There's no break," he laughs. "But I love the ride. I'm here to keep creating."

Want to Get Involved?

To support the All Our Babies

Transformative Art Project, visit their website or follow upcoming events in the Cleveland area. Volunteer opportunities, donations, and community support are always welcome.

To view more of White's work, visit www.jeromesartroom.com

Konner Hines is a marketing and international business student at Baldwin Wallace University and a member of the Honors College. Passionate about storytelling and global issues, Hines explores pop culture, media and social justice through thought-provoking writing.



This piece celebrates the first African-American Trailblazers from Northeast Ohio as part of the Art Walk of Fame. Painted by Jerome White, it was commissioned by the Cleveland Historical Society to spotlight regional Black history.

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CLEVELAND OBSERVER

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New Ohio Tax Policy Could Cut Services, Benefit Wealthy



By Staff Writer

Ohio is poised to implement a 2.75 percent flat income tax, a major shift embedded in the newly signed \$60 billion biennial state budget. Republican leaders say the policy will simplify taxes and promote growth, but analysts warn the change will disproportionately benefit high-income residents while putting public services, including education, health care, and infrastructure, at risk.

What the flat tax changes

Currently, Ohio’s income tax system includes:

- 0 percent on income up to \$26,050
- 2.75 percent on income from \$26,051 to \$100,000
- 3.5 percent on income over \$100,000

Under Senate Bill 3 and House Bill 30, the state would consolidate all taxable income above \$26,050 into a flat 2.75 percent rate, eliminating the higher 3.5 percent bracket beginning in tax year 2026.

A Policy Matters Ohio report, using data from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) and the Ohio Legislative Service Commission, estimates the change would reduce state revenue by \$1.1 billion annually. The same analysis shows that the top 20 percent of earners would receive 96 percent of the total tax cut, while the bottom 80 percent would receive just 2.88 percent. The top 1 percent, households earning over \$500,000, would receive more than

40 percent of the total benefit.

Income inequality drives county-level impact

While the tax applies statewide, its benefits are not evenly distributed. Counties with lower incomes, including Adams (\$40,014), Meigs (\$41,379), and Scioto (\$43,390), will see little to no benefit, according to U.S. Census Bureau SAIPE data.

Residents in those areas often earn below the taxable threshold, and many rely on state-funded programs that could be weakened by reduced revenue.

In contrast, wealthier counties like Geauga (\$90,177) and Delaware (\$116,315) house a larger share of high-income households who would directly benefit from the 0.75-point rate cut.

“Ohio’s wealthiest 20 percent of households will reap nearly all the benefits of a flat, 2.75 percent income tax,” said Hannah Halbert, executive director of Policy Matters Ohio. “Lawmakers have enacted a budget that will make teachers and truck drivers pay the same income tax rate as billionaires.”

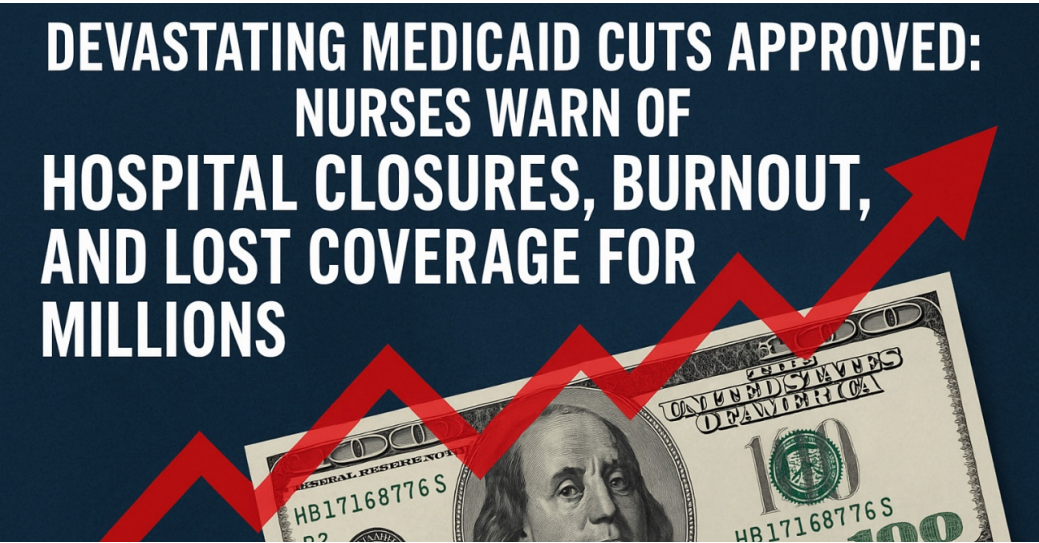
Flat tax may force cuts to education, health care, and public works

Ohio’s General Revenue Fund (GRF) supports public education, Medicaid, and capital improvements. A \$1.1 billion annual loss could force reductions across these sectors.

Education: Pressure on districts and levies

Districts dependent on state aid could face:

- Flat or reduced per-pupil funding
- Delays in fully implementing the Fair School Funding Plan



Credit: Daily Nurse.com

- Greater reliance on local levies, especially in low-wealth districts

“The flat tax is not a neutral policy,” said Melissa Cropper, president of the Ohio Federation of Teachers. “It diverts resources away from the schools and services our students depend on.”

Medicaid: Risk to coverage and federal matches

Medicaid covers 1 in 4 Ohioans and is largely federally funded, but requires a state match from the GRF.

“As one in four Ohioans relies on Medicaid, cutting the General Revenue Fund would threaten access and coverage,” said Loren Anthes, a Medicaid policy fellow at the Center for Community Solutions.

Infrastructure: Deferred projects and lost federal funding

Ohio often uses GRF to meet matching requirements for federal infrastructure grants. Budget shortfalls could result in:

- Delayed road, water, and transit upgrades
- Missed opportunities to draw down federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) dollars

“When states can’t provide the match, they leave federal money on the table,” said Leah Hudnall, director at Opportunity Ohio. U.S. Treasury IJJA FAQ

A simple tax with complex consequences

The flat tax offers simplicity, but at a potential cost to equity and state solvency. Whether the economic benefits materialize remains to be seen, but the revenue losses are immediate and quantifiable.

Policy Matters Ohio and ITEP estimate that nearly all tax relief benefits Ohio’s top earners, while the rest of the state may bear the burden through reduced services or local tax increases.

What readers can do

TCO invites readers to share how the flat tax could affect your household or community:

- Contact your state legislators about how budget changes may impact education, health care, or infrastructure in your area.
- Attend local budget hearings and school board meetings to stay informed.
- Share your story with us. Email info@cleobserver.com or tag @cleobserver on social platforms.

Legal Aid helps residents with Medicaid, SNAP benefit issues



By Tonya Sams

Navigating Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program can be complicated. The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland provides free help for residents who face delays, denials, or confusing eligibility rules.

How Legal Aid Works

“Individuals applying for Medicaid and SNAP must apply through their county’s Job and Family Services office,” said Emily Adams, senior attorney in Legal

Aid’s Health & Opportunity Practice Group. “Oftentimes, there are more applications than there are workers to process them, so individuals may have a hard time getting their application processed in a timely manner. We have contacts at the Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) that are able to alert us that an application has been submitted, and we work with them to get them processed.”

When benefits are denied or terminated, Legal Aid staff review the case to determine why. Denials often occur because of missed recertification deadlines, missing paperwork, or, in the case of SNAP, when applicants cannot reach someone at JFS to complete an interview. In those situations, Legal Aid helps clients submit paperwork and reschedule interviews.

“If it’s because the individual doesn’t qualify anymore because they make too much income, we can look at their pay stubs and compare them against income criteria,” Adams said. “If they do meet the criteria, we submit that information to their county’s JFS office and work with them to get qualified again.”

Upcoming Rule Changes

Accessing benefits may become more difficult under new requirements.

- Beginning Dec. 31, 2026, Medicaid applicants will need to work, attend school, or participate in job training for at least 80 hours a month to qualify.
- The age limit for able-bodied

adults without dependents who must meet work requirements for SNAP has already increased from 54 to 64, according to recent federal changes.

These rules could create additional challenges for older adults and low-income workers already struggling with eligibility.

How to Get Help

Residents facing benefit issues can contact Legal Aid by calling 888-817-3777 or completing an intake form at lasclev.org/apply. A full schedule of Legal Aid Brief Advice Clinics is available at lasclev.org under the “Events” tab.

Tonya Sams is the development and communications manager with the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

Juvenile Justice Recommendations Released, Community Awaits Action



By Angela Hay

In December 2022, more than 300 people gathered at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church to discuss their concerns about juvenile justice in Cuyahoga County. More than two years later, community leaders are still waiting for the Cuyahoga County Council to make substantial changes.

The Juvenile Court Advisory Subcommittee released a detailed list of recommendations at the end of May 2025, but no action has yet been taken by the County.

Community Concern Demands Response

The gathering at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church was driven by a growing sense of urgency around juvenile justice in Cuyahoga County, specifically focused on the justice system’s interactions with Black youth.

According to the Juvenile Court Advisory Subcommittee, Black children comprise only 42% of the juvenile population in the county, but represent 90% of the detention center population.

Black youth are also disproportionately affected by discretionary juvenile bindover, in which a judge chooses to transfer a minor to be tried and sentenced as an adult. Cuyahoga County has the highest number of bindovers in the state, four times more than the next highest county. Black youth comprise 94% of these bindovers.

Two years after this initial gathering, articles published by the Marshall Project and the Cleveland Plain Dealer drew additional attention to the community’s concerns.

The Juvenile Justice Subcommittee

The Cuyahoga County Council formed a subcommittee

Value of Diversion & Community Based Programs:

Why Justice System Involvement Leads to Worse Youth Outcomes & Less Safety



to study these issues in April 2024. Their mission, per the recently released report, was to “conduct a comprehensive review of existing programs, program outcomes, and rates of recidivism within Cuyahoga County’s Juvenile Justice system and to submit findings and recommendations upon the completion of its work.”

The professionals chosen for the subcommittee all have extensive experience in justice reform and deep roots in Cleveland communities. They include:

- The Honorable Ronald Adrine. He has been practicing law since 1973 and has worked on multiple projects involving racial justice, family justice, and domestic violence. Notably, in 2015, Adrine was responsible for filing an administrative order stating that there was probable cause to charge the two police officers involved in the Tamir Rice case.
- Marvin Cross, a retired Cleveland police commander.
- Bridget Gibbons, the Juvenile Court Deputy Court Administrator at Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court
- The Honorable Robert McClelland, who practiced law for 30 years and acted as a judge for nine years. He retired in 2020 and is currently described on his LinkedIn page as a “mediator.”
- Jennifer Blumhagen Yarham,

Justice system involvement negatively affects the entire course of young people’s lives.

Youth formally processed by the juvenile justice system experience far worse outcomes in the 5 years after arrest as compared to similar youth who were diverted:

- X More likely to be rearrested and incarcerated
- X More engaged in violence
- X More peers involved in delinquency
- X Lower school attainment and graduation rates
- X Fewer skills to manage their emotions
- X Lower perception of opportunity

Elizabeth Cauffman et al., “Crossroads in juvenile justice: The impact of initial processing decision on youth 5 years after first arrest,” Development and Psychopathology (2020): 1–14. <https://faculty.lsu.edu/pricklab/pdfs/juvenilejustice-pdfs/dpcauffmanetalmaincrossroadsweb.pdf>



the Executive Director of Applewood Centers, Inc., a residential treatment program for girls with behavioral problems.

Before starting the process, both Cross and Adrine expressed concerns about whether their recommendations would be seriously considered and acted upon by the County Council.

The Subcommittee’s Final Report

After nine months of public meetings and data collection, the subcommittee released a 37-page report containing its findings, recommendations, and observations.

The report describes the impetus for the subcommittee as a combination of community activism, in-depth reporting, and media attention, which the report summarizes as “public clamor.”

Recommendations: Funding

The subcommittee’s recommendations span nine categories. The primary focus, however, is funding. Action items include \$1 million for “community-based alternatives to detention” and an unspecified amount of additional money for early intervention, restorative justice, vocational activities, and therapy.

The subcommittee recommends funding Care First Cuyahoga, described by Cuyahoga County as “a continuum of care to divert youth from the juvenile justice system into community-based alternatives.” The Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court was granted \$450,000 in May 2024 to design this program, but money does not yet exist for its implementation.

The report indicates that the final cost will be determined when planning is done. No public update has been made about the completion of that initial stage.

An additional \$1.2 million

is recommended for hiring probation officers, which would reduce the caseload from 31 youth per officer to 20. A 2020 study indicated that incarcerated youth are 33% more likely to reoffend compared to youth kept in the community, making involvement with probation officers a priority.

Funds in unspecified amounts are also requested for mental health services, teams to reduce racial disparities, community-based correctional facilities, and elements of RECLAIM Ohio, whose mission reads similarly to Care First Cuyahoga.

Recommendations: Social Justice

The subcommittee also recommends tackling issues of injustice in a section titled “Advancing Racial Equity and Inclusive Practices.” While the other sections name specific programs and organizations that should be supported, this section takes a higher level approach. The action items encourage the County to “fund multidisciplinary teams to reduce racial disparity” and “address systemic discrimination.”

No specific plans are listed as to the accomplishment of those goals.

Recommendations: Gun Violence

The report includes statistical information about the increase in gun violence and gun-related offenses in Cuyahoga County. They note a 17% increase in homicides, a 12% increase in aggravated robberies, and a 31% increase in improper handling of a firearm, all by juvenile offenders.

In response, the committee says, “The County should adopt a public health approach to reducing gun violence among youth.”

The Committee encourages the County to “recognize social

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KEY ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS:

SAFETY, STAFFING & SUPPORT for YOUTH SUCCESS*

1. “**Smaller is Better**”: Transforming Built Environment to be Trauma-Responsive – replacing 3 JCFs with up to 4 regional 36-bed facilities designed for youth [Recs 1-3]
2. **Targeting JCFs for Deepest-End Population through State Statutory Changes & Supporting CCFs** in big counties [7-13]
3. **Improving Local Detention & Safety Measures** [14-16, 18]
4. Wholistic **Behavioral Health Supports with Cross-System Coordination** of Care [4, 17-20], Leveraging NEW mandatory & optional **Medicaid coverage** [23]
5. **Credible Messenger and Family Liaison Supports** [21-22]
6. **Staff Wellness, Recruitment & Professional Development** [24-26]

Recent Changes to Sexual Health Accessibility



By Amaya Dennis

When many people think of sexual health, Planned Parenthood comes to mind. This association is reasonable because, according to their website, Planned Parenthood is “the nation’s leading provider and advocate of high-quality, affordable sexual and reproductive health care for all people.” However, when some hear the name Planned Parenthood, they might immediately think of one thing: abortions.

Although abortions are important services offered at Planned Parenthood, the organization also specializes in testing for and treating sexually transmitted infections, mammograms, and Pap tests. All of these services are critical, but the creation of Planned

Parenthood actually began with contraceptives.

The History of Planned Parenthood

The first Planned Parenthood opened in 1916 in Brownsville, New York, as a birth control clinic, the first of its kind. Nine days after its inception, it was raided and shut down by the police. All three founders were charged with circulating obscene materials, as birth control education was considered at the time.

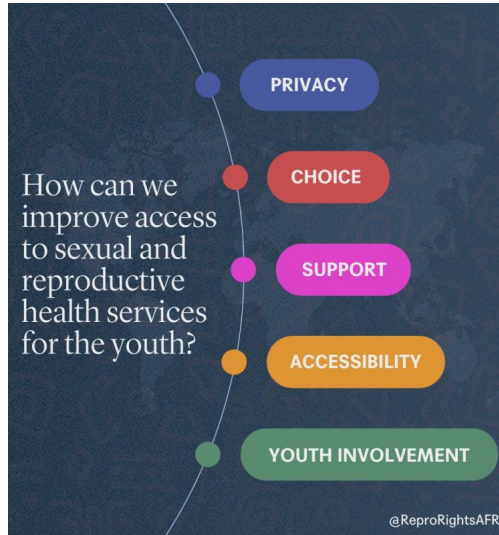
Planned Parenthood did not begin offering abortions until the 1970s, upon the legalization of the procedure. Since the 1970s, Planned Parenthood has offered all of these services. However, recent legislation may pan out in a way that prevents many of these services from being given.

If enacted, these legal changes may negatively affect not only Planned Parenthood clinics, but any of the 4,079 sexual health clinics nationwide, as reported by the National Institute of Health.

Current State of Sexual Health Clinics

The Defund Planned Parenthood Act of 2025 was introduced in January and includes plans to restrict funding to Planned Parenthood Federation of America Inc. and its affiliates for one year if they do not certify that they will not perform abortions for that year, except for rape, incest, and physical necessity. Other sexual health centers would receive additional funding, but would still be restricted in the resources they may offer.

Though this Act has not been enacted, sexual health clinics have been affected in other ways. Early in July, the Midtown Planned Parenthood closed, citing “[ongoing] attacks from the Trump administration.” Without funding from the National Family Planning Program, the center was forced to close its doors, effective immediately. Patients have been referred to far away locations on the outskirts of Cleveland. Some locations are as far away as a 40-minute drive, and an hour and a



half away on public transportation.

What’s to Come?

The Midtown location was just one of three local Planned Parenthoods to permanently close. Many that are still open have disclaimers on Google that say they may not be able to provide abortions. In the future, these clinics may also face closures or restricted funding if they provide abortions again. In general, these legal changes have led to negative effects on those seeking reproductive care and working in the reproductive care industry.

How Avoiding Feelings Impacts Health



By Jennifer Bailey, LCSW & RDT

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines emotions as “a conscious mental reaction (such as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as a strong feeling usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body”. In short, emotions are a response to something, and we feel them not only in our minds but in our bodies.

According to Six Seconds: The emotional intelligence network, “Emotions focus our

attention and motivate us toward a specific course of action. Each emotion has a purpose.” While emotions help guide us through life events and relationships, many people often avoid them by repressing or suppressing their emotions.

Emotional Repression

According to PositivePsychology.com, “Emotional repression can occur due to growing up in an environment where little or no room was given to experience and express emotions.” Growthery.com explains that repressing emotions is an unconscious act; it happens automatically and is pushed out of a person’s awareness because it is too painful.

Emotional Suppression

Growthery.com goes on to say that, “Suppression is a

conscious and deliberate effort to ignore, control, or push away certain emotions or thoughts.” Emotional suppression is an intentional choice to avoid experiencing discomfort associated with certain emotions.

Whether an active choice (suppression) or an automatic response (repression), emotions will find ways to be heard, often at the expense of our physical or mental health.

How it Hurts

In both emotional suppression and repression, Growthery.com notes harmful effects can include difficulty with forming and managing relationships, increased levels of anxiety and depression, chronic stress, gaps in one’s memory, nightmares or flashbacks, and unexplained physical symptoms.

Name it. Claim it. Tame it. Emotional Intelligence Practice

Once a day, pause and notice how you are feeling in that moment. If you’re having difficulty finding the emotion word, you can use the Wheel of Emotions. Start at the innermost circle and move outward or remain in the inner circle until you become more comfortable with identifying emotions.

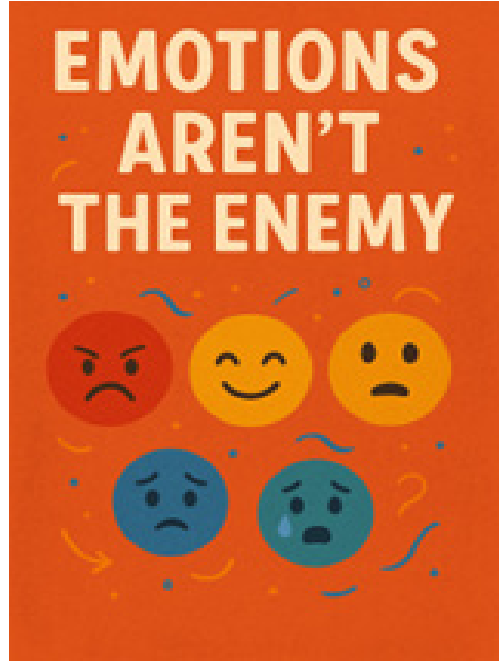
Takeaways

- Emotions focus our attention and motivate us toward a specific course of action. Each emotion has a purpose.
- Emotional Repression- an unconscious act, meaning it

happens automatically, that is pushed out of a person’s awareness because it is too painful.

- Emotional Suppression- Emotional suppression is an active choice to avoid experiencing discomfort brought on by certain emotions.
- Daily Practice: Name it. Claim it. Tame it. Try naming your emotions once a day this week.

Jennifer Bailey is a wife, mother of three, and therapist. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and Registered Drama Therapist (RDT).



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Credit: Happiful Magazine.

Feel, Don't Flee: How Emotions Show Up in Our Bodies



By Jennifer Bailey, LCSW & RDT

Let's play a quick round of "Name that Tune".

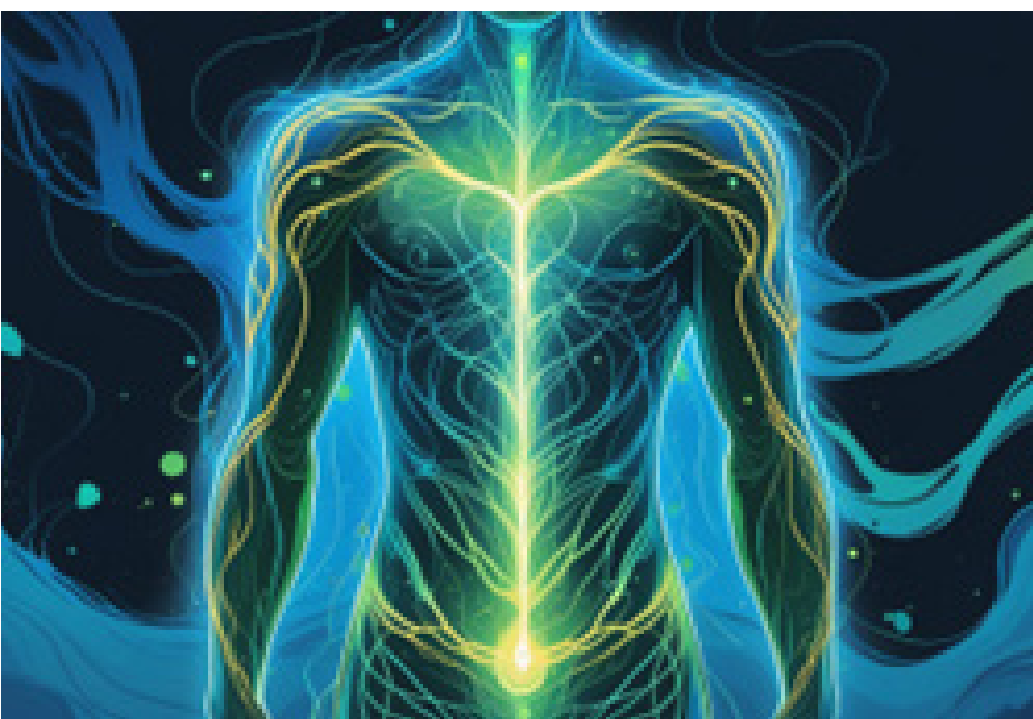
"His palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy. There's vomit on his sweater already, Mom's spaghetti."

You probably guessed it, Eminem's song "Lose Yourself". From these first two lines, it's clear the person described is anxious. Have you ever felt butterflies in your stomach or noticed your heart racing? These sensations are examples of the body's response to emotions.

To better understand our emotions, we need to know where emotions live in our bodies. According to Six Seconds: The Emotional Intelligence Network, emotions are "based on our interpretation of an event, a chemical response from the brain is created and goes to the rest of the body, lasting about six seconds." Building a strong foundation of emotional intelligence starts with an understanding of how emotions are generated, where they travel in our bodies, a process rooted in the nervous system.

Emotions and the Nervous System

Your nervous system is made up of your brain, spinal cord, and nerves. According to the Cleveland Clinic's nervous-system web page , its "main function is to send messages from various parts of your body to your brain, and from your brain, back out to your body, to tell your body what to do." It controls everything from digestion to emotional responses.



The Polyvagal Institute explains that when there is a perceived threat, the nervous system engages in at least one of three survival reactions: fight, flight, or freeze. PsychCentral.com adds a fourth: fawn. These responses are automatic, not consciously chosen.

For example, imagine walking down the sidewalk and seeing a dog growling at you, and its body language suggests it's ready to attack. In that moment, your body may react by fighting back (fight), running to safety (flight), freezing in place (freeze), or offering the dog a treat or toy to reduce the threat (fawn).

For individuals with a history of trauma, especially generational trauma, survival mode can become a daily way of functioning, not just a reaction to emergencies.

When the brain and nervous system remain in a constant state of survival mode, the body prioritizes protective measures. This often limits emotional awareness, insight, and connection with others. In the moment, survival mode may appear as:

- Fight may look like anger, control, or defensiveness.
- Flight may look like panic, avoidance, or anxiety.

- Freeze may look like dissociation (spacing out/getting distracted), procrastination, or "shutting down".
- Fawn may look like people pleasing, codependency, or a lack of boundaries.

Acknowledging feelings in your body is not a weakness, It's an act of wisdom and self-awareness. This practice builds resilience, making it easier to navigate life and deepen the connection with ourselves and our relationships with others. Over time, we can deepen the link between brain and body, increasing our awareness of emotional states.

Tips for Building Emotional Connection:

- Breathing: Mindful breathing can help calm your nervous system when in survival mode.
- Movement: Movement is a

- helpful way to release emotions living in the body.
- Mindfulness: The practice of staying present in the moment helps with emotional regulation and keeping your nervous system calm.
 - Expressive arts: Painting, dancing, music, and other forms of art can help bring about emotional awareness when we can't find the words.
 - Journaling: Reflecting on your thoughts and feelings at the end of your day will help build emotional awareness.
 - Therapy: Seeing a therapist can help you with building emotional awareness and expression.

Takeaways:

Intense emotions can generate strong physical sensations, but they remain internal processes we can choose not to express outwardly.

The nervous system's purpose is to send messages between the body and brain, directing how the body responds.

When facing a perceived threat, the nervous system engages in one of four survival reactions: fight, flight, freeze, or fawn. Constant survival mode shifts the body's focus to protection, reducing emotional awareness, insight, and connection with others.

Jennifer Bailey is a wife, mother of three, and therapist. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and Registered Drama Therapist (RDT).

Juvenile Justice Recommendations

From page 4

determinants" and "strengthen social and economic protective factors." This section also includes another call for direct funding to the RECLAIM program.

Response to the Subcommittee's Report

Per Cleveland.com, the final report was submitted to the Cuyahoga County Council Public Safety and Justice Affairs Committee on June 17, where it was discussed for roughly 20 minutes.

"I'm eternally grateful to you and the committee for doing what you did," Councilman Michael Gallagher said. "Now the work

begins. Now the heavy lifting begins, and now that's on us, and let it be. So we stand ready to help you."

Councilman Gallagher indicated that the subcommittee's recommendations would be revisited when the Council looks at the budget in October.

The Cleveland Observer contacted several organizations involved in the original community meeting for their thoughts on the completed report, but we did not receive a response in time for this publication.

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Supreme Court to Decide Fate of Trump’s Citizenship Order, With Historic Stakes for African Americans



By Staff Writer

The U.S. Supreme Court’s forthcoming ruling on President Donald Trump’s Executive Order 14160 could determine whether birthright citizenship remains protected under the Constitution, a decision with historic implications for African Americans, whose citizenship was secured after the Civil War.

From Dred Scott to the Fourteenth Amendment

The Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, was written to overturn the Supreme Court’s 1857 Dred Scott v. Sandford decision, which ruled that people of African descent were not U.S. citizens. By declaring that “all persons born or naturalized in the United States ... are citizens,” the amendment established a clear constitutional guarantee of birthright citizenship, regardless of race or ancestry.

Reviving Dred Scott’s Shadow

Opponents argue that denying citizenship based on a parent’s immigration status revives the same legal principle from Dred Scott v. Sandford that the Fourteenth Amendment was meant to abolish.

New York Attorney General Letitia James, who joined a multistate lawsuit against the order, condemned it in a statement:

“Our Constitution is not open to reinterpretation by executive order or presidential decree. President Trump’s attempt to

undermine the fundamental right to birthright citizenship is not just unconstitutional, it is profoundly dangerous.”, according to James published in the New York Post.

A coalition of Democratic attorneys general echoed this view, filing lawsuits that argue the executive order violates the Fourteenth Amendment’s Citizenship Clause. They warn that such a policy could create a “caste-based system,” imposing “second-class status” on children because of their parents’ background.

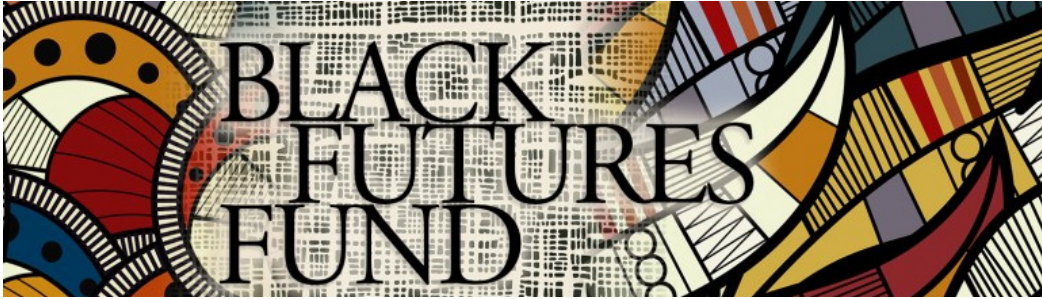
Critics describe this as a return to the “reprehensible conception of hereditary birthright citizenship” espoused in Dred Scott. The amendment’s original intent was to reject any notion that citizenship could depend on race, lineage, or parental status.

Public Opinion and Racial Equity

Public opinion data show strong opposition to the order, especially among Black Americans. A Pew Research Center survey found that 74% of Black adults disapprove of the order, compared with 51% of white adults who approve. This division underscores the deep historical link between the struggle for racial equality and the establishment of birthright citizenship in the U.S. Constitution.

Civil rights advocates have also raised alarms. The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association argued that Executive Order 14160 fundamentally disrupts constitutional precedent, stating it,

“refuses to recognize the birthright citizenship of any child born in the United States to a mother who is lawfully present on a temporary basis ... and a father who is neither



a U.S. citizen nor a lawful permanent resident.”

In Houston, community leaders voiced similar concerns. Cesar Espinoza, director of immigrant-rights group FIEL, called the ruling “a devastating blow to our democracy.” Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, described the order as “cruel and un-American,” warning that it risks leaving children without citizenship. Harris County Attorney Christian D. Menefee criticized the outcome as a patchwork system that could leave constitutional protections varying by geography as reported in the Houston Chronicle.

Supporters Cite Constitutional Limits

Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost, joined by several Republican attorneys general, publicly defended the order. On X, formerly known as Twitter, Yost wrote:

“Birthright citizenship in the United States is limited by the Constitution to those persons who are ‘subject to the jurisdiction thereof.’ Those words must mean something, and they mean at least this: it doesn’t include those who are



Credit: Facebook

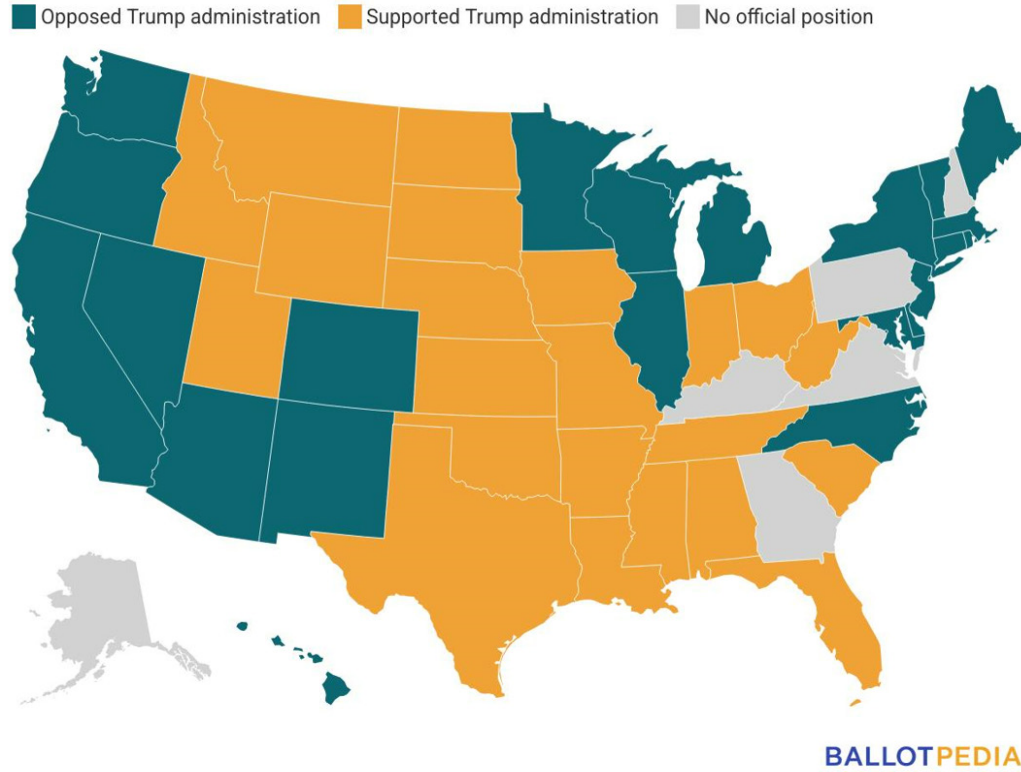
here illegally.” (Ohio Capital Journal)

America First Legal also backed the executive order, arguing that “no other branch of the U.S. government ... has the authority to confer birthright citizenship.” The group said the order reinforces that the executive branch cannot grant citizenship to those illegally present in the country.

Supporters maintain that the Fourteenth Amendment’s Citizenship Clause does not automatically cover children born to undocumented immigrants or temporary visa holders, and they view the executive order as an effort to restore the Constitution’s original meaning, not expand rights.

States' positions in Trump v. CASA

This map shows which states sued to block President Trump’s 2025 executive order on birthright citizenship and which states filed a brief supporting it in Trump v. CASA.



Gold support Trump’s Childbirth Citizenship Excutive Order. Green Oppose. Grey have no offical position. Credit: Ballotpedia

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OUR BLOCK, OUR BALLOT

Community Forum on Voter Engagement & Health

VOTE

Featured Speaker

Frances Mills, Health Commissioner
Cleveland Department of Public Health

Tuesday, September 16, 2025
Doors open at 5:30p, event ends at 8p

Mt Olive Baptist Church
3290 E. 126th St. Cleveland, OH 44120

Event Highlights

- Voter registration on site
- Light refreshments will be served on a first-come, first-served basis
- Interactive health and voter engagement discussions

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Ohio's Demographic Shift and Long-Term Care Challenges

Types of Long-Term Care and What's Provided



Home-Based Care

Medical, personal and support services that allow you to continue living in your home.



Residential Care Facilities

Housing with medical, personal, and support services.



Nursing Home

24/7 medical, personal and support services in a nursing facility.



Adult Day Care

Daytime personal and support services to provide relief for a primary caretaker.



Scan to Listen

By Staff Writer

Ohio's aging population is putting a growing strain on the state's long-term care system, highlighting challenges with rising costs and uneven access to services. With an estimated 18.7 percent of residents age 65 or older, Ohio's senior share is higher than the national average, according to America's Health Rankings, which tracks state-by-state demographics and health indicators.

This demographic shift is colliding with a system that has long relied on institutional care, a pattern advocates say is costly and often runs counter to what most people prefer.

Systemic Issues and Cost Pressures

Ohio ranked 32nd nationally in AARP's 2023 Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) State Scorecard, which flagged particularly low marks on support for family caregivers, according to the Scorecard's Ohio profile.

Ohio's rebalancing toward home and community-based services has lagged the U.S. average. In fiscal year 2020, 57.6 percent of Ohio's Medicaid LTSS spending went to Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) compared with 62.5 percent nationally, as published in the federal Medicaid LTSS Expenditures Report.

Financial pressure is expected to build. Inflation-adjusted Medicaid spending for long-term care is projected to rise from about 130 billion in 2020 to 179 billion by 2030, according to the Penn Wharton Budget Model.

Workforce shortages further

constrain in-home options. In 2020, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities reported that vacancy rates reached 17 percent for full-time and 27 percent for part-time direct support professional positions.

What Is Working in Other States

Other states have tested strategies Ohio could study.

Public LTC trust: Washington's WA Cares Fund provides a universal long-term care benefit funded by a 0.58 percent payroll contribution, with a lifetime benefit that is indexed to inflation and slated to be payable starting July 2026, according to the program's official materials and employer guidance.

Expanded PACE access: California has significantly broadened the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (CalPACE) industry and state sources note more than two dozen counties served and statewide expansion efforts to help people remain at home, according to CalPACE and related presentations.

Workforce investments:

To combat shortages, Minnesota established tiered wage floors for personal care and CFSS workers beginning in 2024–2025, and set wage steps tied to experience, according to the Minnesota Department of Human Services and state announcements. New York increased its home care worker minimum wage by \$2 per hour beginning October 1, 2022, per New York State Department of Health guidance.

Nurse delegation: Oregon permits registered nurses to delegate certain tasks to unlicensed caregivers in assisted living and other community-based settings under Division 47 of the state's Nurse Practice Act, as published by the Oregon State Board of Nursing and Secretary of State.

Public dashboards: Wisconsin publishes Family Care managed care scorecards, while Maryland's Longevity Ready Maryland plan features a public data dashboard to track progress on aging-related goals, according to state program sites.

Potential Reforms for Ohio

Policy experts and advocates suggest several reforms Ohio could consider to improve long-term care services, stabilize the workforce, and manage costs.

Public LTC trust: Creating a public long-term care trust could help middle-income families finance nonmedical support at home and delay Medicaid reliance, according to early lessons from Washington's WA Cares Fund. WA Cares Fund

Expand PACE: Expanding the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly into more metro areas and rural counties could reduce hospitalizations and support aging in place, as reported by California's PACE association and state partners. CalPACE

Workforce plan: A statewide

workforce plan with wage floors, tiered experience ladders, and retention incentives could improve recruitment and retention, as seen in Minnesota's multi-year wage framework, according to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (MDHS).

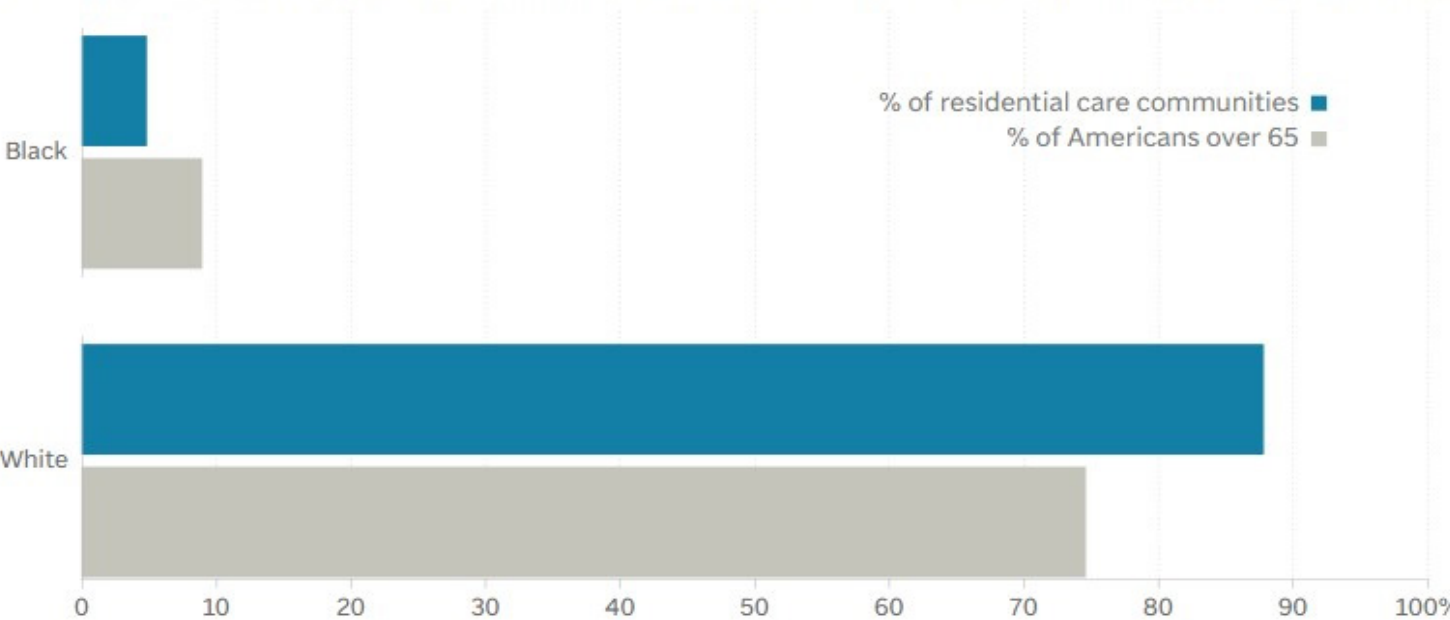
Medicaid managed care: Moving long-term services and supports into a managed care model with strong quality guardrails could improve coordination and control costs. Arizona's ALTCS program has reported costs roughly 16 percent lower than a traditional fee-for-service baseline, as cited by the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) state's 1115 waiver renewal.

Public dashboard: A statewide dashboard to track wait times, quality, and caregiver support would increase transparency and accountability, following examples from Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Maryland Department of Aging, according to those states' public reporting.

A number of states have shown it is possible to expand in-home access, stabilize the care workforce, and slow cost growth simultaneously, according to the sources cited above. With a clear plan and targeted reforms, Ohio could reshape its long-term care system to better serve an aging population in the coming decade.

Disparity in long-term care

Black Americans make up 9.1% of the U.S. population over 65, but only 4.9% of those in residential care communities.



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau

AP