



A National Agenda for Black Girls

A Project of Girls for Gender Equity

Presidential Candidate Questionnaire

ABOUT GIRLS FOR GENDER EQUITY

Girls for Gender Equity (GGE) is an intergenerational organization committed to the physical, psychological, social and economic development of girls and women, particularly cisgender and transgender girls and gender non-conforming/non-binary (GNC/NB) youth of color. Through direct service, policy & organizing, and culture change, GGE encourages communities to remove systemic barriers and create opportunities for girls and women to live self-determined lives. GGE works to create the conditions for cis and trans girls and young women and GNC/NB youth of color to lead strategies to solve the injustices they face. We ultimately believe in and work toward a world where they are free.

ABOUT A NATIONAL AGENDA FOR BLACK GIRLS

As we approach the 2020 election, GGE is centering the needs of cis and trans Black girls and GNC Black youth. [A National Agenda for Black Girls](#) is a collaborative project engaging organizations across the United States who are committed to the well-being of Black girls.

Black girls, like all communities, are not a monolith. We recognize and center the full spectrum of gender identity of Black young people, including cis and trans Black girls, and all young people who have experienced Black girlhood. We recognize in doing gender and racial justice work that by bringing Black girls and Black young people along the gender spectrum from margin to center, we are actively working to liberate and uplift all experiences of Black girlhood and femmehood, acknowledging that language is constantly evolving.

GGE has convened a national [steering committee](#) of youth activists from partner organizations across the country collaboratively developed the list of questions outlined below and align with the six national policy priorities that speak to their needs.

The six national policy priorities are the following:

- ❖ Passing a national Black Girl Bill of Rights
- ❖ Expanding education justice and opportunity, specifically ending school pushout
- ❖ Expanding democracy for young people
- ❖ Healing, well-being and reproductive justice
- ❖ Ending sexual and gender-based violence and building cultures of consent
- ❖ Immigrant and racial justice

CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:	Michael Bloomberg
Campaign Point of Contact:	Garnesha Ezediaro
Campaign Point of Contact Email:	garnesha@mikebloomberg.com
Campaign Point of Contact Phone:	(929) 801-0415
Campaign Website:	www.MikeBloomberg.com
Candidate Twitter:	@MikeBloomberg
Candidate Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/mikebloomberg/
Candidate Instagram:	@MikeBloomberg

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete answers to all questions (250-word limit per question) by the close of business on Friday, February 28, 2020. Your responses to the questions below are considered on the record and will be made available on our website. After your completion of the presidential questionnaire, we will offer the opportunity to engage each presidential candidate in a Twitter digital townhall where you will have the opportunity to speak to the policy platforms uplifted in this project.

1. How will you and your campaign engage with and prioritize the needs of cisgender (cis) and transgender (trans) Black girls and gender nonconforming (GNC) Black youth?

I have long been a supporter of LGBTQ+ rights, and I have a [comprehensive plan](#) to promote equality for all Americans, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. As president, I will launch a federal “Respect for All” initiative to combat bullying, harassment and discrimination in public schools. I will also promote school-based mental health programs, including suicide prevention efforts, and protect LGBTQ+ youth from the harmful practice of conversion therapy. And I will expand support for shelters and services for homeless and runaway youth. Finally, I will also take a comprehensive approach to addressing the epidemic of violence against transgender women of color by making hate crimes a top federal priority, mandating oversight, accountability and training for federal law enforcement, and funding training in de-escalation and implicit bias.

2. Do you support the [Black Girl Bill of Rights](#)? If so, how will your administration seek to ensure these rights for Black girls?

Yes, I will support the Black Girl Bill of Rights. I will support the aspirations of all black girls to fulfill their potential, free from any threats of discrimination, prejudice or abuse, and will

vigorously defend the rights of black girls and will enforce laws to protect the safety of all girls and women.

3. Black girls are more likely to attend schools that are poorly funded or funded at inequitable rates; how will your administration work to ensure Black girls have all of the resources they need to learn?

As mayor of New York City, I fought to ensure that all students received a high-quality education that prepared them for success – regardless of race, gender or zip code. Too many girls of color are denied equal access to educational opportunities due simply to the communities they live in. As president I will increase funding for schools in underserved areas and will provide incentives to states to promote equity between affluent and low and moderate-income districts and within mixed-income districts.

4. Blacks girls experience disproportionate rates of school exclusion, school-based arrests, and surveillance. How will you enhance and protect the civil rights of Black girls in school?

First, I want to recognize that black girls are punished more frequently and more severely than their white peers. I will appoint an attorney general who will prioritize the enforcement of civil-rights laws, to ensure that all students are treated fairly and receive equal protection.

5. Do you believe police officers belong in schools?

I believe that our schools must be safe spaces in which students can learn without fear of violence of any kind. I'm committed to ending the scourge of school shootings by passing and enforcing common-sense gun-safety measures, including a ban on firearms in all K-12 public schools, with the exception of peace officers. I believe that by taking action against gun violence, we can reduce the need to station police officers inside schools.

6. In December 2019, Representative Ayanna Pressley introduced a bill titled, The End School PUSHOUT Act, directly addressing the racial gender biased experiences Black girls and girls of color are having in school. This bill acknowledges that Black girls deserve schools and learning environments free from racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, and all things that prohibit school from being a true protective factor for a young person. How will your administration work towards ending School Pushout, also known as School to Confinement Pathways?

In order for America to continue to thrive, it's imperative that we harness the talents of all our people. That means providing black girls with environments that allow them to learn and excel, which I commit to do. I will expand programs to provide age-appropriate health education for girls, including anti-bullying and anti-harassment instruction. I will invest in creating a highly-qualified teacher workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities our public schools serve and increase funding for school counselors to help black girls get the supports they need.

7. The United States Department of Education plays a significant role in setting education policy and protecting the civil rights of students all over the country. How will you re-establish the protections afforded to students in school, and ensure that the Office of Civil Rights can enforce the existing protections for young people?

I will empower the Department's Office of Civil Rights to investigate all complaints of discriminatory treatment of students based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability. We must ensure that the civil rights of students everywhere are protected.

Under my Administration, the Department of Education's office of civil rights will once again

8. How will your administration work to remove barriers to voting for people of color, women, and young people, particularly those who have not yet reached voting age?

I have a [comprehensive plan to protect the voting rights of all Americans](#). I will change practices that make it more difficult for Black and Latino voters, Native Americans, transgender people, the elderly, those in rural areas, and people with disabilities to vote, and I will make it more convenient for all eligible Americans to register and vote by expanding policies like Automatic Voter Registration, early voting, voting by mail, and pre-registration of 16 and 17 year olds.

9. How will your administration work to undo the voting barriers that exist for Black people (voter roll purges, new ID laws, felony disenfranchisement, etc.)?

As part of my [plan to protect voting rights](#), I will end voter suppression by banning unwarranted voter purges and establish a new Voting Rights Act formula for determining pre-clearance requirements for certain jurisdictions in order to stop discriminatory voting laws before they are enacted.

10. There are growing state-level attacks on reproductive rights, including potential challenges to *Roe v. Wade*. What will you do to protect reproductive rights?

I will oppose states' bans on private insurance coverage of abortion, which 11 states have passed, and unnecessarily restrictive and often frivolous regulations on reproductive health clinics and doctors that limit women's access to safe abortions. I will empower the FDA to make decisions based on science, including a review of its current guidelines for mifepristone, which cannot currently be sold without a prescription. I will also appoint federal judges who respect established legal precedent.

I will solidify women's rights to reproductive health services by working with Congress to codify *Roe v. Wade* and I will repeal the Hyde Amendment, which bars federal funding for abortion except to save a woman's life. I will also abolish both the domestic and global gag rules the Trump administration has applied to organizations that receive funding for family planning.

While mayor of New York City, I supported a program that trained all NYC OB-GYN residents in pregnancy termination to improve availability and access to women across New York. I made Plan B pills available at NYC schools in an effort to reduce teen pregnancy and help girls avoid dropping out of school.

I have worked to earn the support of prominent reproductive rights organizations for my work to ensure a woman's right to choose. I was endorsed by NARAL in 2005 and 2009, and won NARAL's "Champion of Choice" Award in 2005, Planned Parenthood's "Walk the Talk" Award in 2012, and Planned Parenthood's Global Citizen Award in 2014.

11. Many Black girls attend schools in states that do not offer comprehensive sexual health education, which is an important tool for preventing sexual violence and developing the overall health and wellness of young people. What will your administration do to ensure federal funding for sexual health education?

I will direct federal funding to comprehensive and science-based sexual health education.

12. Studies have shown that Black women, even when we control for education and income, face higher rates of postpartum mortality, in part due to racism in healthcare. What will your administration do to address this issue?

The simplest way to minimize health disparities is to expand health insurance coverage. The Affordable Care Act was a great first step, because it greatly reduced the uninsured rate across all groups. Much more improvement is needed, however, especially in the 14 states that have yet to expand Medicaid under the ACA. Cost is the main reason people remain uninsured. By introducing a public insurance plan, caps on medical care prices, and greater subsidies for insurance premiums, I will make insurance more affordable for all Americans. And I will allow low-income people who would be eligible for expanded Medicaid if they lived in expansion states to enroll in the public insurance plan free of charge.

But insurance coverage alone is not enough to equalize health in the U.S. Health care experts have long understood that health status is determined by much more than medical care – things like housing, education, transportation, and nutrition all impact health outcomes. I will direct federal agencies like the departments of education, health, transportation and housing to collaborate to create new programs to ensure that people get not just health care, but also the housing, education, transportation and other things that good health depends on. I will also allow greater flexibility for Medicaid and other health-care dollars to be spent directly on housing where it is likely to reduce medical expenditures.

Finally, health care workers need to understand the ways in which implicit and explicit bias can affect the care they give. I will fund training in racial bias, diversity, equity and inclusion

strategies. Finally, I will make sure that better data is collected on the extent of health-care disparities in the U.S. – to help improve standards of care for vulnerable populations.

13. Since the #MeToo Movement has become a part of the international conversation, many survivors have come forward to say that they've experienced gender-based violence at the hands of their employers, teachers, peers, police, clergy, and more. What will your administration do to prevent sexual violence in communities?

I know that violence against women has no place in our society and that the leader of this country must take a stand against all forms of abuse against women. I will ensure that survivors are safe, supported, and given the tools to establish their economic independence. I will give law enforcement and judges the tools they need to hold perpetrators accountable where appropriate. And I will stand up for our most vulnerable communities: women who are the most in danger of gender-based violence. As mayor, I made New York City a national leader in the fight against domestic violence, overseeing a 41% drop in domestic violence homicides while in office. I pioneered family justice centers, which provide multiple services to victims and survivors of domestic violence and had nearly 250,000 client visits in their first nine years. As president, I will:

- **Lead the effort to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.** The Violence Against Women Act is the primary tool that the federal government has to protect women against domestic and sexual violence. VAWA funding is currently not authorized due to resistance from Senate Republicans. I will work with senators to get VAWA passed, and support a 200% increase in funding for rape prevention services and youth violence prevention education, as well as stronger housing protections for survivors, who are four times more likely to face housing instability.
- **Restore the clout of Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women** and increase funds for critical supportive services for survivors.
- **End the federal statute of limitations for sexual abuse** and amend the federal rules of evidence to allow for broader evidence of "prior bad acts" in domestic violence cases, encourage federal judges to update their rules, and encourage state courts to follow suit.
- **Eliminate the national rape kit backlog.**
- **Help law enforcement work with survivors of sexual violence.** Sexual assault incidents require mental health and social service professionals as much as they do police. I will help build a model for dispatching help and teaming social service professionals with police, so cities and towns can effectively respond to incidents in a way that supports survivors. I will support the national expansion of the one-stop-shop Family Justice Centers, which I pioneered as mayor of New York City.
- **Divert violence survivors away from the criminal justice system and into the support they need.** Women's incarceration [outpaces](#) the growth of male incarceration. Sexually-abused girls have a higher likelihood of becoming justice-involved than those who weren't. I will increase training for educators, law enforcement and judges to better identify the signs of abuse and trauma in young girls and how to divert them from the justice system. I will encourage states to adopt laws similar to the [Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act](#) (DVSJA) passed in New

York, which allows judges to consider domestic violence in sentencing recommendations. And I will require states to screen women at intake for commercial sexual exploitation and divert identified victims away from the justice system whenever possible.

- **End the abuse of women in prison.** [At least 200,000](#) inmates are sexually abused in prisons annually, though it's likely that many women do not come forward and file reports. In 2003, Congress passed the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), which established a zero-tolerance for sexual abuse in custody. Though an improvement, the law has been insufficient: investigations are often drawn out, inconclusive, and corrections administrators usually rule against the victims. I will strengthen PREA, adding new investigatory timing and quality requirements, and eliminating the credibility matrix that considers non-relevant facts like disciplinary action in determining the legitimacy of an accusation. I will also create a federal prison oversight function with regional DOJ observers who are empowered to take complaints from women, ensure PREA data is reported in full to the federal government, investigate cases of violence and seek to separate abusive officers from the prison population.
- **Support Native Women.** Over half of American Indian and Alaska Native women have [faced sexual violence](#), and roughly one-third have been raped – almost double the rate for white women. I will work with Congress to expand tribal jurisdiction over crimes committed on tribal lands. I will also pass [Savanna's Act](#). It will improve [the reporting of crime data on reservations](#), require closer cooperation between tribes and U.S. attorneys on sexual violence, and train and assist tribal police. In addition to supporting Savanna's Act, I will direct the Justice Department to work with tribes to investigate crimes against indigenous women.
- **Undocumented women.** Many undocumented Latino women may be afraid to report sexual assault and domestic violence to local authorities or seek help for fear of deportation. I will make it clear that undocumented residents should seek critical health care, preventative health services and police protection when their lives are in danger.

14. What will your administration do to ensure that federal funding is allocated for survivors of sexual violence?

Instead of working to end violence against women, the Trump administration is weakening the government's ability to respond. The President's Republican colleagues in the Senate have stalled the reauthorization of the [Violence Against Women Act](#) (VAWA) – the federal government's primary tool to end violence and support survivors – reversing the decades-long legacy of bipartisan support for the bill. The administration's FY19 budget request called for a [decrease in funding](#) to the Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women, which administers VAWA, by \$100 million less than what was authorized by Congress. The administration narrowed the definition of domestic violence and sexual violence, denying support services to countless women who have been abused.

As noted in my response to #13, I will:

- **Reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.** The Violence Against Women Act is the primary tool that the federal government has to protect women against violence perpetrated by partners, acquaintances, and strangers. I will work with senators to get VAWA passed, and I will include a 200% increase for rape prevention services and youth violence prevention education, grants focused on understanding communities and stronger housing protections for survivors, who are four times more likely to face housing instability.
- **Restore the Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women and increase funds for critical supportive services for survivors.** VAWA established the DOJ's Office of Violence Against Women to lead federal efforts to combat domestic and sexual violence. The office's last report to Congress was completed in December 2016 and in Trump's 2021 budget plan, I propose cutting funding for OVW by \$4 million. In 2018, the office narrowed the definition of domestic violence from the Obama administration's definition, which included "emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions." Domestic violence places an immediate and long-term strain on survivors. The [most immediate needs](#) are for physical safety, housing, information on services, and help with children. Housing is especially important - DV victims are [four times](#) more likely to face housing instability. Since it was founded in 1994, the OVW has administered over [\\$8 billion](#) in grants to on-the-ground organizations. I will increase funding for domestic violence organizations that provide these critical community-based services as well as programs that provide civil and legal services.

15. What will you do within your administration to ensure that your office is a space of safety and maintains a culture consent?

I will lead by example and insist that all of my employees feel welcomed and safe in the White House and in federal offices across the country. As mayor of New York City, I appointed women to numerous senior positions; I listened to their viewpoints and followed their advice as valued members of my team. These leaders were the driving forces behind many of my mayoral administration's signature accomplishments, many of which benefited women throughout the city.

I also will work to make the federal government an example on issues such as pay equity and other policies that narrow gender inequity. I will also restore the Obama administration's Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces executive order and other pay equity requirements of federal contractors and subcontractors.

- 16. We have all seen headlines of migrant people being held in detention camps along the southern U.S. border and being subjected to horrific conditions. What will your administration do to end the criminalization of migrants and free the people being held in camps along the southern border?**

Since 2017, there have been more than [400 allegations of sexual assault or abuse](#) and [at least 29 fatalities in detention facilities overseen by ICE](#), and the Department of Homeland Security's own Inspector General has [found "egregious violations" in detention centers](#), including conditions that pose a danger to the health of detainees. As president, I will order the Department of Justice to launch an investigation into abuse at ICE and CBP, and will reform the agencies—implementing sensible enforcement priorities, targeting their efforts on true homeland security objectives, significantly reducing immigrant detention for those who do not pose a threat to public safety, and establishing clear and effective oversight—to ensure transparency and accountability. I will also end prolonged child and family detention and promote humane and cost-effective alternatives to detention. I will observe the Flores agreement and end the prolonged detention of children, placing them in community-based alternatives to detention as quickly as possible.

17. Black immigrants are disproportionately deported in this country. What will your administration do to stop deportations and keep families together?

The Trump administration [eliminated immigration enforcement priorities](#) that focus on threats to public safety and national security, and Immigrant detention has now [reached an all-time high, with most of the growth attributable to immigrants who have no criminal convictions](#). My administration will direct the Department of Homeland Security to establish sensible enforcement priorities that promote public safety and national security—and make the smartest, most efficient use of taxpayer resources. As mayor, I signed landmark executive orders [protecting immigration status as confidential](#) and [maintaining a measure of separation between federal immigration enforcement and local law enforcement](#) when public safety was not at risk. I will replace the practice of workplace raids with smart enforcement that holds employers accountable and protect schools, places of worship, and other sensitive locations while focusing taxpayer resources on keeping all Americans safe.

18. What will your administration do to change our unjust immigration system?

I have a [comprehensive plan](#) to reform America's broken immigration system, which includes: 1) Restoring fairness, transparency and accountability to the immigration system: I will protect Dreamers and TPS holders and create an earned pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented; reform Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), implementing sensible immigration enforcement priorities that promote public safety and national security; end construction of Trump's ineffective wall, invest in smart security measures and upgrade our ports of entry to protect the border and increase efficiency; and 2) ending policies that run counter to our deepest values as Americans: I will rescind President Trump's disgraceful travel ban, end family separations at the border, establish rigorous safeguards for children, and promote alternatives to detention for individuals and families who pose no threat to public safety; set the annual refugee resettlement target at 125,000 and also restore fairness and timeliness to the asylum process; and honor and protect immigrant service members, veterans and their families.