

2021 CONSENSUS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



46% of Florida households struggle to afford the basic necessities of housing, child care, food, technology, health care and transportation.



In 2014, the United Way's groundbreaking **Florida ALICE Report** put a disturbing new spotlight

on workers who collectively form the backbone of Florida's economy. **ALICE** is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed. "Employed" is the critical word. **ALICE** represents households that have incomes above the Federal Poverty Limit, but consistently struggle to afford basic needs, such as housing, food, healthcare, child care, and transportation.

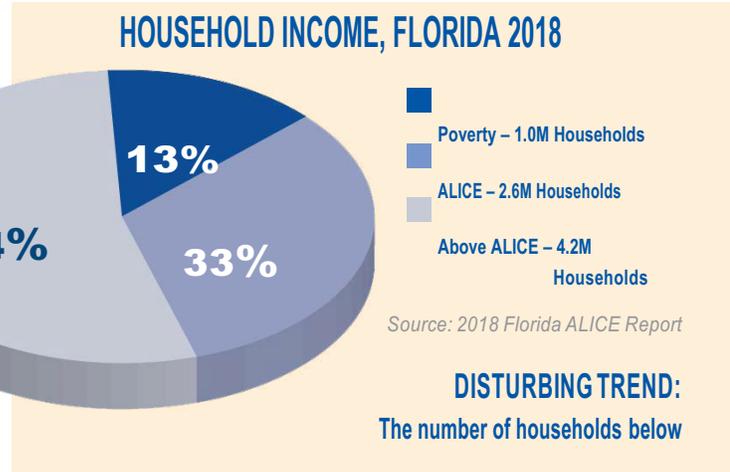
Of Florida's 7.8 million households, 13% (1.0 million lived) in poverty in 2018 and another 33% (2.6 million) were **ALICE**, including nearly 60% of Florida's black and brown families. These numbers have skyrocketed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ALICE families live on the brink of financial disaster every day; just one car breakdown, medical emergency, or other unanticipated expense away from falling into poverty.

Between 2010 and 2018 basic household expenses increased by 20% for a Florida family of four while median wages increased 13%.

The "ALICE Threshold" is the conservative cost, calculated by county and statewide, of the six basic necessities for a household to survive: housing, transportation, child care, health care, food, and technology.

Florida United Way 2021 Consensus Legislative Agenda provides policy makers opportunities to help ALICE become more financially stable and self-sufficient; opportunities that will improve the quality of life and the economy for all of us in the Sunshine State.



ALICE workers of all races and ethnicities are essential to the fabric of our society and our economy. **ALICE** have been on the frontline during COVID-19. The healthcare professionals, child care educators and teachers, mechanics and hospitality staff we rely on every day. The future success of our communities is inextricably connected to the financial stability of Florida's **ALICE** households. When **ALICE** suffer and are forced to make difficult choices, we all face serious consequences.

 46% of Florida households struggle to make ends meet	 63% of Black households and 56% of Hispanic households live below the ALICE threshold	 78% of single female-headed households live below the ALICE threshold	 46% of all Florida families with children live below the ALICE threshold.
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FINANCIAL STABILITY

Support

INCREASE access to affordable housing by appropriating all Sadowski Housing Trust Funds for their intended purpose

SUPPORT keeping Floridians in their homes and mitigating the long-term impact facing people who are evicted from their homes

CAPITALIZE on opportunities to enhance Florida workforce development activities and initiatives



QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

Priority

IMPROVE transparency, accountability, and performance of the state's early learning programs (School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten), thus benefiting those who fall within the ALICE population, with a focus on equitable outcomes for children

Support

INCREASE professional development opportunities and incentives for early learning educators including Pre-Kindergarten Instructors and School Readiness teachers and providers

EXPAND access to family support services that link families to local resources



ENSURING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Support

IMPROVE access to affordable healthcare for Floridians, with a focus on vulnerable low-income populations.

MAINTAIN targeted funding for prevention and treatment services for all behavioral health services

MAXIMIZE home and community-based services for older adults to reduce nursing home costs and waitlists



SUPPORTING FLORIDA'S VETERANS

Priority

SUPPORT a MISSION UNITED initiative to enhance system navigation utilizing peer support to ensure every Veteran and their family that needs assistance has an in-person contact that they can utilize to access services beyond the referral process to align with the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs

Support

SUPPORT recommendations of the 2019 FDVA Forward March report to reinforce best practices, reduce redundancies and implement solutions to fill gaps