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Council Candidate Crystal Hudson Releases Comprehensive Policy Plan to Improve the Lives of Black New Yorkers

“A Black Agenda for New York City” Includes Bold Proposals on Health, Education, Dismantling the Carceral System, Building Generational Wealth, and More

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — As we celebrate Black History Month, Crystal Hudson, candidate for City Council in the 35th district, today released a comprehensive policy agenda to tangibly improve the lives of Black New Yorkers. In the midst of a pandemic that is killing Black people [at more than twice the rate](#) of other Americans and a powerful multiracial movement defending Black lives, “**A Black Agenda for New York City**” provides policy recommendations for New York City leaders in the areas of Health and Wellbeing; A Green City; A World-Class Education; Housing for All; Dismantling the Carceral System and Ending Violence in Our Communities; and Economic Opportunity and Building Generational Wealth.

The full plan [can be found here](#).

“Black New Yorkers are experiencing loss on multiple fronts, from the global pandemic that is killing us at more than twice the rate of other Americans to a lethal form of racism at the hands of law enforcement. This, on top of years of disinvestment in our communities and a legacy of racist policymaking that has left us with an inequitable education system, a lack of affordable housing, and an inadequate social safety net,” **said Hudson**. “This has to change. We need to meet this moment with bold, transformational change and unapologetically progressive leadership fighting for Black people across all five boroughs.”

“As a first-generation Haitian immigrant born in NYC, this Black Agenda for New York City reflects a pivot towards the American dream that my family is still working hard to obtain,” **said Joanne N. Smith, President of Girls for Gender Equity**. “The dream that our humanity

matters enough for our lives to be valued, protected, healthy, safe, and abundant. This Agenda offers a blueprint for NYC that I can believe in and am excited to help build."

"As we fight for racial, social, and economic justice and work to build a society where all people can work and live with dignity, we need a bold vision for our collective future. Black women have always been leaders in the fight for justice, and with this agenda, Crystal is setting the goalposts for our City's policymakers. I look forward to continuing our fight to strengthen our communities and ensure all Black New Yorkers are able to thrive," **said Afua Atta-Mensah, Esq. Executive Director Community Voices Heard**

"Communities, especially Black communities, can and should be the architects of our own solutions," **said Max Markham, Policy Director of March For Our Lives**. "Gun violence disproportionately impacts young, Black New Yorkers, but so frequently their voices are not centered in our policy solutions. As a native New Yorker, it gives me great pride to see an unabashedly pro-Black, pro-queer, pro-justice, and pro-community agenda for Council District 35, and I thank Crystal for her leadership. The Black Agenda should be required reading for every City Council candidate in New York."

Hudson, who is running to represent the historically Black neighborhoods of Crown Heights, Prospect Heights, Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, and Bedford-Stuyvesant, would be the first openly gay Black woman elected to the New York City Council.

"Every February we observe Black History Month and celebrate the Black people who have made our city great. To truly uplift Black New Yorkers — right now — we need to advance a forward-thinking, explicitly anti-racist and pro-Black vision for our City's future. This Agenda is a starting point, and informs the way we recover, rebuild, and reimagine a New York City that truly works for all of us," **said Hudson**.

The plan includes **six bold, urgent recommendations** for Black New Yorkers that speak to the gravity of this moment:

1. **Put money directly in the hands of Black New Yorkers with baby bonds and a guaranteed paycheck.** With baby bonds — or publicly-funded investment accounts starting at birth — for all children born into families with household incomes of 0 percent to 30 percent Area Median Income (AMI), and a paycheck guarantee — both upheld by public banks and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), our city can set Black families up for success in the long-term, while repairing the ills of the past.
2. **Create a pipeline for non-law enforcement union jobs for Black New Yorkers.** Unionized public sector employment has been a reliable pathway to the middle class and wealth-building for so many Black Americans. New York must create a new pipeline for sustainable, unionized employment within city government for Black New Yorkers.

3. **Pilot a basic income program in zip codes with the highest rates of gun violence.**
A basic income program in communities whose fabrics have been frayed by gun violence would provide an additional opportunity for families to secure housing, put food on the table, and reduce the anxiety associated with being unable to afford daily necessities that so frequently leads to violence and cycles of trauma.
4. **Launch a citywide truth and reconciliation process focused on race and reparations.** While we hope for a national truth and reconciliation process as a country to heal from the enduring nationwide legacy of genocide and slavery, we can start this process as a city. From the ills of the racist and misguided War on Drugs and widely practiced policies like 'Stop, Question and Frisk' to the surveillance and removal of Black children from Black parents and families, our city's own government has committed undue harm to Black New Yorkers.
5. **Build Black generational wealth and prevent displacement through community home ownership.** Countless Black homeowners across the five boroughs are struggling to maintain their homes due to systemic barriers, predatory practices, and rising costs. New York City must pilot a program that allows Black homeowners who are interested in passing their homes onto prospective Black buyers — who, more often than not, may be longtime local residents — into a rent-to-buy program.
6. **Create a city racial equity commission to evaluate every new policy and piece of legislation.** We must fully fund and create a racially diverse commission of social science experts who can collect germane data and evaluate every new rule change and bill, and specifically detail both the new policy's potential impact on various racial groups and how to ensure equitable enforcement.

Crystal Hudson is a public servant and community organizer committed to fighting for the neighborhoods of Prospect Heights, Crown Heights, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, and Bed-Stuy. Crystal was called to public service when she became the primary caregiver for her mother, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, and experienced first-hand how difficult it is for working families to access necessary services and resources. After a decade working in marketing and advertising, she went on to senior roles in the City Council and the NYC Public Advocate's office. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Crystal created Greater Prospect Heights Mutual Aid (GPHMA) to support neighbors and provide information and resources. Crystal lives in Prospect Heights, where her family has been for three generations and is deeply committed to the residents of the 35th District — and all New Yorkers. If elected, Crystal would be the first openly gay Black woman elected to the New York City Council.

Hudson has been endorsed by the [United Federation of Teachers](#), 1199 SEIU, the NY State Nurses Association, DC 37, 32BJ SEIU, the Hotel Trades Council, [Sheet Metal Workers Local 28](#), [Victory Fund](#), [Road to Justice NYC](#), [NYIC Action](#), [CUFFH Action](#), [Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn](#), [New York State Senator Jessica Ramos](#), [New Kings Democrats](#), [21 in '21](#), [Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas](#), and [Council Member Brad Lander](#).

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