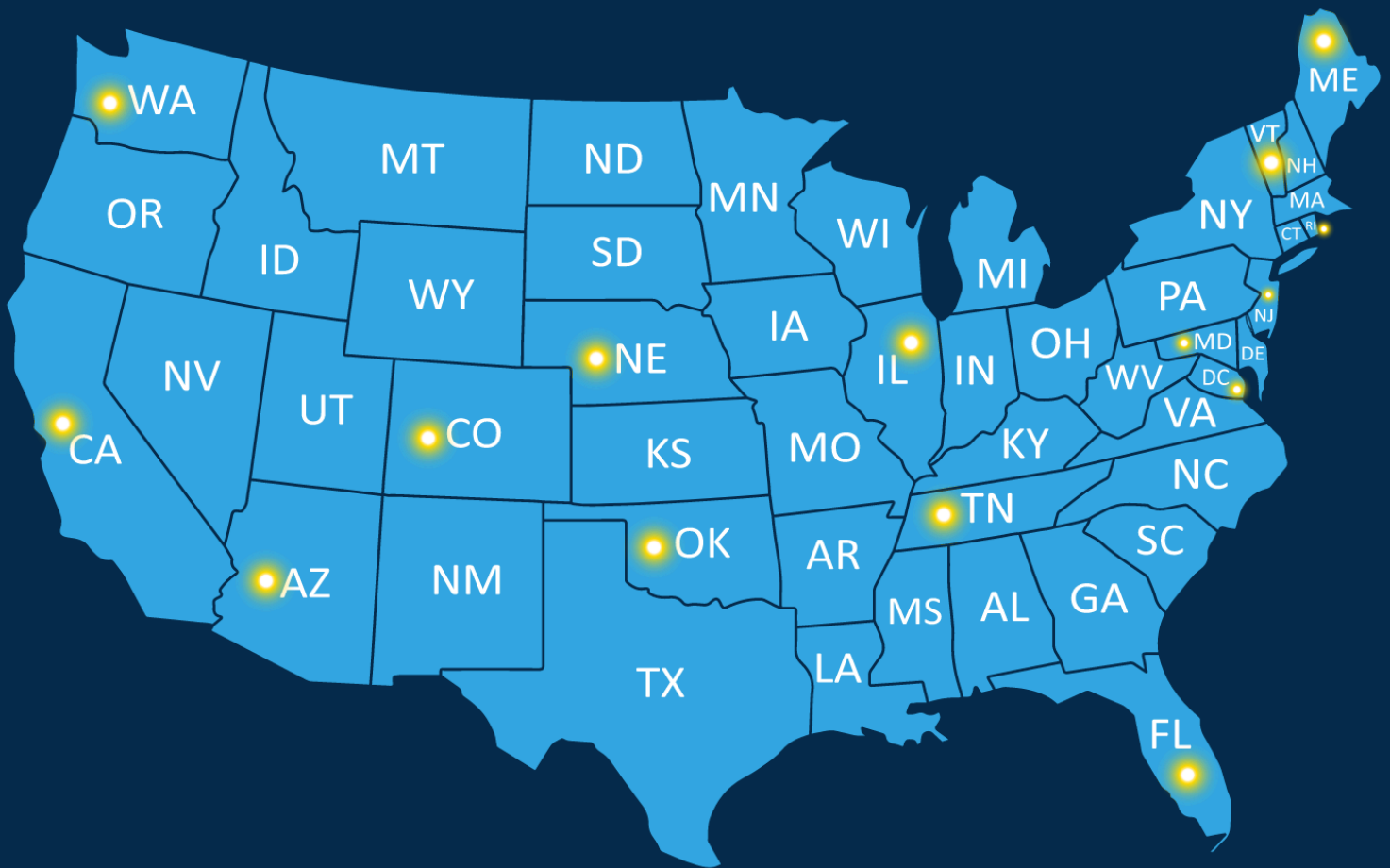


TRASH & TREASURE RECAP

Hosted on: Thursday, August 29 @ 2:00 P.M. ET





Purpose: The purpose of this document is to provide a recap for both those who were in attendance and those who were unable to attend.

Methodology: This year, AWWHA Policy staff and Youth Policy Team members used various key word searches relative to each AWWHA policy recommendation in [Legiscan](#), a free and easy-to-use legislative tracker system. Below is a list of how many pieces of legislation were introduced in each state, relative to [AWWHA's 118th Congressional Policy Agenda](#).

Content: Without naming specific bill numbers, legislators, and status of said legislation, below is the substantive legislative content shared. For details regarding what was shared during the conversation with our respective speakers, we would invite you to watch/listen to the recording.

In order of # of bills introduced:

5 – AR	189 – NE
8 – WY	195 – KY
10 – SD	201 – DC
25 – ID	203 – AZ
33 – AL	212 – PA
47 – NH; OR	221 – FL
57 – NM	229 – OH
67 – ME	241 – OK
68 – AK	243 – MO
76 – CO	248 – IA
77 – IN	284 – UT
92 – LA	309 – MI
93 – CT	344 – HI
95 – RI; SC	378 – MA
101 – DE; NC	393 – VA
105 – WI	439 – KS
110 – VT	544 – NJ
116 – WV	598 – NY
127 – TN	724 – WA
135 – MD	978 – MN
144 – GA	1,074 – IL
183 – MS	1,251 – CA

*The following states did NOT have a legislative session in the 2024 calendar year: MT; NV; ND; and TX

Total # of relative bills: 11,515

What is Trash and Treasure?

Disclaimer: We did not mention any specific bill #s or the legislators who authored them; rather, we had a high-level conversation about proposed legislation that would either be helpful - what we call “treasure” - or harmful - what we call “trash” - for Youth and Young Adults (YYA) experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. If you are having a visceral reaction to the title, we invite you into a space of partnership with us to focus on preventing and ending youth homelessness and we can’t do that unless we have an honest conversation about what proposed policies are working or not. Honorable mentions include a plethora of proposals that either (a) have a *mix* of “trash” and “treasure” in the same bill(s); or (b) do not explicitly mention YYA/are not the lowest access point.

Using our [118th Congressional Policy Agenda](#) as the foundation, we hosted a conversation with various speakers on introduced legislation that we found helpful (“treasure”) or harmful (“trash”) for YYA experiencing/at-risk of experiencing homelessness. Finally, as AWWHA predominately focused our advocacy efforts on Recommendations 4–6 of the Policy Agenda this year, we started this year’s webinar off with these.

Rec #4: Actualize reparations for Black and Indigenous Americans — Senator Terrell McKinney, Nebraska State Senate, District 11

Treasure:

NE; NJ; MD; & TN — Though our fourth policy recommendation also provides for the intersectionality of land stewardship of stolen land from Indigenous peoples, the states of Nebraska, New Jersey, Maryland, and Tennessee each had transformative visions of actualizing reparations for Black Americans in their respective states.

Trash:

OK — This state introduced legislation that would allow institutions of higher education to remove any requirements and/or standards related to students learning about history relative to anything considered to be under the DEI-CRT (that is, “diversity, equity, inclusion, and critical race theory”) umbrella. We believe this is in direct opposition to a transformed future state, which must include the education of communities surrounding the naming and challenging of white supremacy and how, since our country’s earliest beginnings, this has systemically harmed Black and Indigenous communities.

Honorable Mention:

CA — There were a few pieces of legislation introduced that are well-intended first steps. However, one particular item of note did not account for the generations of harm nor the breadth and depth of policy that has blatantly, systematically, and disproportionately impacted Black communities outside of home displacement, specifically relating to eminent domain.

Rec #5: Abolish laws and policies that criminalize and end institutionalization and incarceration in addressing homelessness — Representative Jennifer Stewart, Rhode Island State House, District 59

Treasure:

RI — Though we would prefer no evictions of encampments without a safe and stable home for folks to go to, creating a bill of rights for our homeless neighbors that also mandates police department compliance regarding privacy in a tent and unreasonable searches is a solid step towards transformation!

Trash:

AZ; CA; & OK — Arizona, California, and Oklahoma all receive the “trash” award for our fifth recommendation this year. Unfortunately, in the wake of the *Grants Pass v. Johnson* decision, we will most likely continue to see state legislation that directly criminalizes those experiencing homelessness. Though not signed into law this session, one of these states even went a step further to create a measure that would authorize law enforcement to create a database of such orders that uses photo-matching software, to track those living in encampments.

Rec #6: End the use of police and all forms of punishment, retribution, and control in homeless services, education, and child welfare settings — Representative Jennifer Bacon, Colorado State House, District 7

Treasure:

CO — There there were two particular pieces of legislation that were both signed by the Governor: one that will take a really solid first step towards shifting from policing and punitive measures to addressing justice-engaged students’ full-range of emotional and psychological needs, and another one that is in alignment with Rec #6’s proposed solution of “Comprehensive funding to provide extensive support for youth aging out of the child welfare system and other youth-serving systems, including housing assistance, educational support, and mentorship programs.”

Trash:

FL — With no “honorable mention” award for this recommendation, our “trash” award goes to the state of Florida for legislation, approved by the Governor and made into law this legislative session, that not only blatantly attacks migrant and undocumented communities – in direct opposition of the New Deal to End Youth Homelessness’ Immigration Justice pillar – but also opens potential avenues to blatantly discriminate homeless and/or housing insecure folks who may not have proper identification.

Rec #1: A nationally funded low/no-barrier cash transfer program — Kazmyn Ramos, GiveDirectly, U.S. Program Manager

Treasure:

WA — There was introduced legislation that would be accessible to residents of the state of Washington, 18 years or older or who have been emancipated, and has important alignments of assuring those who are emancipated, exiting foster care, juvenile justice or criminal justice, and with the status of being an immigrant, asylee, or refugee are still eligible for this program, while also taking account of the fair market price in rent to determine the monthly payments.

Trash:

AZ & ID — Both states had similar legislation, one of which was vetoed and the other signed by their respective governors, with the same aim of prohibiting guaranteed income programs by any local governance.

Honorable Mention:

IL — While there are components of introduced legislation that pave a path towards transformation, such as mandating that two members of the Implementation Board have had or currently have experience with direct cash transfers, there unfortunately is no compensation for these board members, nor is there any solid confirmation as to whether or not this program would count as income and a process to assure participants will keep other benefits or some form of support for the potential loss of them.

Rec #2: Long-term and emergency housing vouchers for YYA — Kahran LaTourette, AWHAPolicy Analyst

Treasure:

ME — Though not explicitly focused on youth or young adults, there were tangible actions to make housing vouchers more accessible and removing barriers, such as making waivers for expirations for participants to have more time to find housing, allowances for folks to look outside the area they received the voucher for housing, and the ability to create educational and strategic initiatives for more landlords to accept housing vouchers.

Trash:

NJ — However, the “trash” award here goes to the state of New Jersey for falling short of transformation with required case management, with the allowance of the administering department to terminate the voucher should the participant fail to participate in the required services.

Rec #3: Investment in BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities — Destiny Wiley-Yancy, AWhA Youth Policy Team (YPT) Member; and Council Member Zachary Parker, DC Ward 5
(submitted video)

Treasure:

DC — The “treasure” award here goes to the District of Columbia, with an intentionally transformative effort to invest in the Black LGBTQIA+ community by the preservation of their history in D.C. through a report produced by the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Affairs, specifically centering lived experts and community members throughout this process of the restoration of their own history.

Trash:

VT — The “trash” award, however, went to Vermont, as the planning and design of the proposed program lacks intentional engagement with the communities it’s aiming to serve.

Closing and Next Steps:

As A Way Home America works toward increasing and implementing our policy footprint, at both the federal and state/local levels, we need YOU! Here are a few ways you can engage with us as we transform systems through public policy to end homelessness for Black, Indigenous, youth of color, and LGBTQIA+ youth, on a path to housing justice for *all*.

- Check out our New Deal to End Youth Homelessness
 - www.AWayHomeAmerica.info
- Sign up for Advocacy Alerts
 - www.bit.ly/awhaadvocacy
- Sign up for our newsletter
 - www.bit.ly/awhanewsletter