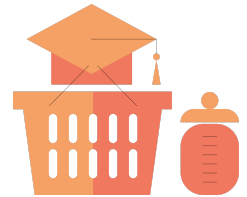


The Good Life Fact Sheet

Making Life's Essentials Affordable

A good life requires more than the essentials. But when those essentials—like housing, education, and care for loved ones—are out of reach, it's hard to think beyond them.

Our agenda for affordable essentials establishes the foundation we need to have agency in our lives. We should be able to live near the people we love, not struggling to secure an apartment a hefty commute away, at rents that leave little left for saving. We should have more time to consider what makes our place feel most like home, rather than whether we can afford to heat it.



The Good Life Agenda focuses on the major costs that Americans worry about most and that have consistently risen faster than wages. Policymakers have tools to control those costs, and they should use them.

Policies to Get the Job Done

- **Housing.** The choice of where to live is one of the most important we make. When we worry less about how much housing costs, we can make that choice based on what really matters to us.
 - Industrial policy tools, like a national construction financing fund to stabilize housing production and federal subsidies to incentivize local zoning reform, could help us build more homes where they're needed most.
 - Policymakers must also engage labor and tenant unions to build countervailing power and ensure that new housing is both high-quality and equitably constructed.
- **Medical Care.** The American healthcare system fails to deliver on its most basic duties.
 - A public option for health insurance, which could take many forms, would drive down costs and force private insurers to lower premiums, reduce administrative waste, and negotiate better provider contracts.
 - Policymakers could also invest directly in care itself by funding community clinics, regional public hospitals, and other public providers.

- Policymakers should use antimonopoly policy to rein in consolidation and market power in the healthcare industry, including by breaking up vertically integrated entities and conducting stronger merger reviews.
- Public policy expanding access to healthcare should deliberately foster the building of membership organizations as a long-term counterweight to corporate power in the medical industry.
- **Childcare.** Stable, high-quality childcare is essential for children and parents, but today's childcare market has strained both families and providers to a breaking point.
 - A universal public option for childcare could give families the care they need while providing a family-sustaining wage for workers. It should be structured to build countervailing power for families and workers.
- **Higher Education.** The choice to pursue higher education should not require two generations of long-term financial planning.
 - We must work toward developing a public option for tuition-free college, including technical and community colleges.
 - As long as government-backed student loans and grants help fund higher education, policymakers should use funding requirements to limit trustees' power and build countervailing power among students and faculty in university governance.
- **Energy.** Cost pressures in the energy sector aren't going away, and US energy policy offers little insulation against global cost shocks.
 - We should deploy industrial policy tools, investing public funds in clean energy to lower costs and make them more predictable for families, while generating better-paying, more stable jobs.
 - We should also use antimonopoly policy to regulate utilities, such as by breaking up utilities that own power lines and generate electricity, to make the electric system more competitive and lower consumer costs.

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