

## [Policy and Advocacy Committee Progress](#)

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**MOBB UNITED**<sup>TM</sup>  
FOR SOCIAL CHANGE



The MOBB United for Social Change, Inc. (MUSC) Policy and Advocacy Committee sets the strategic policy priorities and drives advocacy initiatives for the organization. As a committee, we set and lead execution of MUSC's policy agenda, research policies that impact Black men and boys, identify opportunities to advocate on behalf of our sons, and guide MUSC's approach and responses to instances where Black men and boys have been victims of unjustified force and violence by police.

### **Legislative Platform Launched**

The Policy and Advocacy Committee finalized and recently launched a new advocacy resource, the organization's Legislative Policy Platform. The Legislative Platform outlines MOBB United for Social Change's policy priorities and equips members to be informed about our policy priorities when they engage with partners and policy makers across the country. Think of the platform as your quick reference fact sheet that you can use to quickly outline the concrete policy changes we seek. Since it has been launched, MOBB United moms have used the platform to engage with their state representatives and advocate on key criminal justice reform issues. In March, moms in Louisiana and New Jersey used the platform in meetings with their representatives. Additionally, leading up to the close of the state legislative session on April 9th, Maryland moms relied on the platform as they weighed in with their representatives on key initiatives. Moms in California may soon use the platform to engage with their representatives. Check out our new resource here: <http://www.mobbunited.org/page/MUSCPlatform>

## What's happening in your state

If you're not familiar with the state legislative process or state legislative advocacy, here's a quick overview. State legislatures operate on varying schedules and time periods within a year. Some states have part time legislators, others have full time legislators; each correlated with whether the state has a year-long legislative session or part-year legislative session. For example, California, New York and Pennsylvania have full-time legislatures; Alaska, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin have limited full-time legislatures. Other states have legislative sessions which are only in session for a few months of the year. For these states—Maryland, North Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, for example—typically the beginning of the calendar year, January through March, marks a very fast paced sprint to engage with a policymaker and have an impact on the process.

Over the past few months, Policy and Advocacy Committee members have been monitoring activities in various states across the country. In the spring, state legislatures typically start to introduce measures which go through the process of introduction, committee assignment, committee hearing, consideration by the main body, and, assuming passage, then signature by the state executive. When MOBB United engages on legislative policy issues at the state level, it can be during any of these stages. Sometimes when a measure is introduced, we reach out to state legislators and try to encourage them to sign on. In advance of a committee hearing, we urge members to attend to learn about a measure. Once a measure is adopted by the legislature, we often weigh in to try to impact budget negotiations so that the enacted measure is actually funded. Otherwise, we continue to apply pressure to ensure the state executive branch moves to implement the measure.

Below is an overview of some of the measures we have been following and advocating on this legislative season. Some of these measures have advanced and become law; others, have not advanced. All represent initiatives where MOBB United moms reached out to their representatives and weighed in on behalf of our sons.

- California
  - [SB1437](#) - [SUPPORT] will reform the felony murder rule and accomplice liability in certain types of second-degree murder. This act would abolish felony murder liability for an accomplice: a person who did not personally commit the homicidal act or intend that a homicide occur. **PENDING; April 24, 2018 hearing.**
  
- Louisiana
  - [HB560](#) - [SUPPORT] Creates the State Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct. **PENDING; April 13, 2018 hearing.**
  - [HB709](#) - [SUPPORT] Creates the State Commission on Prosecutorial Oversight and the Code of Prosecutorial Conduct
  
- Maryland

- [HB1801](#)- [OPPOSE] Requiring each public school to have an armed school resource officer present on school grounds during regular school hours on school days; requiring the Department of State Police to assign a State Police officer to a certain public school under certain circumstances; requiring a certain State Police officer to be present on school grounds during regular school hours on school days and to carry a firearm; and authorizing a private school to have an armed school resource officer present on school grounds. **Did not progress this session.**
- [HB1173](#) - [SUPPORT] Requiring a law enforcement agency to report beginning October 1, 2018, and every 2 years thereafter to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention on policies and procedures related to use of force, de-escalation training for law enforcement officers; requiring the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention to adopt procedures for the collection, analysis, and compilation of use of force de-escalation training information received from a certain law enforcement agency; requiring a certain report; etc. **Did not progress this session**
- [HB480/SB484](#) - [SUPPORT] Repealing a certain requirement that a certain defendant pay a certain fee to a certain private home detention monitoring agency; and providing that a defendant who is subject to pretrial release may not be required to pay for certain services provided or security measures taken by the State, a county, or another entity acting on behalf of the State or a county. **Did not progress this session**
- New Jersey
  - [S406](#) - [SUPPORT] Creates New Jersey Innocence Study and Review Commission.
  - [S428](#) - [SUPPORT] Provides for review of juvenile sentence of more than 30 years imprisonment without parole eligibility under certain circumstances.
- New York
  - [S3579A](#) - [SUPPORT] Bail Elimination Reform Act of 2018 - eliminates money bail, protects the presumption of innocence and the right to freedom, sets strong limits on when and how any pretrial conditions are instituted, and prohibits the use of biased risk assessment tools.

As these measures progress through the respective state legislatures, MOBB United needs pumps on the ground and moms on the front line who are willing to engage on behalf of their sons! We can train moms on how to be able and effective advocates. Join us! If your state is not represented and you are willing to send an email, make a call and take a meeting with a representative, email [policy@mobbunited.org](mailto:policy@mobbunited.org).

## Electoral Engagement

The Policy and Advocacy committee will soon shift to educating members about who will appear on their ballots when they go to the polls this fall, and engaging candidates for electoral office so that they are aware of the issues impacting black men and boys. This year across the country, many policy makers, who can affect the standards and measures of accountability for law enforcement when they interact with our sons, will be elected into office. Many MOBB United members will vote for these persons, without any idea or information about how the official feels about important issues that impact our sons. How does your member of Congress feel about structural reforms to criminal justice law such as bail reform, ensuring that juveniles are not unnecessarily charged as adults, teen life sentencing? How does your city council representative or mayor feel about the standards that apply to police officers wearing body cameras? Does your local police chief care that his/her officers are sufficiently trained on issues like implicit bias, de-escalation, and crisis intervention?

The Policy and Advocacy committee is developing Candidate Questionnaires and will soon shepherd a series of events where members can engage directly with those seeking offices to learn how they feel about these important issues. Specifically, we will be seeking answers from candidates for U.S. Congress, State Attorneys General, local prosecutors or District Attorneys to survey their views on our organizational priorities. We will be seeking answers from the candidates in seats that are up for election this year. We will develop a questionnaire that will be available on our website that you can download and send directly to candidates, to find out their position on issues impacting our sons. If you are interested in helping or participating in this initiative, email: [policy@mobbunited.org](mailto:policy@mobbunited.org).



*If you have the drive to seek policy solutions and be an advocate for your son(s), then please join the Policy and Advocacy Committee. If you have a background in law or policy, then the committee especially needs YOU! We meet every other week on Thursdays via conference call at 10 PM ET. For more information contact: [policy@mobbunited.org](mailto:policy@mobbunited.org).*