

Housing Justice Narrative



The high-level findings are a result of the research conducted from 2019-2020. It included:

- language analysis of discourse on housing in 2019;
- focus groups in Hattiesburg, MS; Denver, CO; Richmond, VA; Chicago, IL; San Francisco, C; and
- an online dial survey from April 2020.

Top Line Findings

- America is ready for a national conversation on housing.
- 8 in 10 people polled gets that housing is a huge challenge for too many of us. People also get that housing is basic need we all need to thrive.
- The majority of people see a role for government to intervene to address the housing crisis.
- Our issue with activating the public is intensity of support.
- The framework of housing as a basic human needs is deeply resonant.
- Link housing policies to economic security and speak from a holistic lived experience place.
- Talk about jobs and wages as lead in to housing costs.
- We don't need to say "affordable" to increase support for housing or define the crisis – it is baked in already.
- Adults, especially people of color, those in urban areas, and Democrats, see a role for government, both federal and local, in ensuring affordable housing. The base and persuadables support a role for both, but lean toward a role for local government.
- People react negatively to absolutes, especially persuadables, so avoid using language like "guarantee," "all" or "everyone."

Three keys to increasing intensity of support:

Center race in messaging & narrative: People want to action to address existing inequities, and people need to see themselves in the story

Use tested, values based messages to break through the dominant "housing as commodity" frame, frame home holistic

Engage base and persuadables in solution oriented campaigns

Top Value Based Messages to Use

- **All children deserve a roof over their head and a safe place to live.** 75% strongly agree, 93% agree
- **Like air to breathe and food to eat, safe shelter is a basic human need.** 65% strongly agree, 92% agree
- **Without a job, you are likely to struggle holding down housing.** 64% strongly agree, 90% agree
- **Being denied where to live because of race, family status, or disability is discrimination.** 62% strongly agree, 84% agree
- **Everyone should have a safe, stable place to call home.** 62%strongly agree, 84% agree