

EQUITY WATCH

Policy, research, resources, and news related to minority and women's issues curated biweekly by the
Research, Policy & Impact Center **Feb 17, 2023**

HOUSING

Democratic governors pitch federal funds for housing, clean energy: Using the recent influx of federal funds to expand state and local clean energy infrastructure, affordable housing and workforce development will pay long-term dividends, a group of Democratic governors and mayors said Wednesday. [- Oregon Capital Chronicle](#)

Asheville's largest landlord stopped accepting rent assistance: As Asheville has become the worst rental market in North Carolina and one of the worst in the nation, corporate landlords' refusal of rent assistance in Asheville is potentially putting even more stress on tenants. [- Asheville Citizen Times](#)

Eviction filings rising in North Carolina: State court data shows that the number of eviction cases in 2022 rose sharply to the highest level since 2019, the year before the start of a COVID moratorium and federally boosted rental assistance programs. [- News & Observer](#)

Why Did Black and Latino Homeownership Increase During the Pandemic?: Researchers found that young, high-earning, highly educated Black and Latino households drove the rise in homeownership rates during the pandemic when interest rates were low, but faced more resistance in the market compared with white borrowers. [- Urban Institute](#)

U.S. EPA head announces grants to address "forever chemical" contamination in small town drinking water: "We talk about PFAS as a contaminant issue that impacts all of us, but we also see the disproportionate burden it has on Black and Brown communities." [- PRE](#)

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HEALTH

Medicaid expansion moving in NC House, but key negotiations remain: A GOP-backed Medicaid expansion bill is expected to move quickly through the state House. But even as Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper urges fast action, it remains to be seen if Senate Republicans will approve this plan or propose their own. - [WRAL](#)

ECU closes five health clinics, leaving gaps in eastern North Carolina: ECU's rural health system lost \$46 million last year. Four out of five of the counties where ECU is closing clinics are Tier 1, and four are in rural areas. - [Spectrum](#)

North Carolina AG won't defend abortion pill restrictions: North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein won't defend state restrictions on abortion pills that are being challenged in a lawsuit and instead will argue the restrictions are preempted by federal regulations protecting access. - [WFAE](#)

Strategies for improving North Carolina's struggling mental health system: Years of inadequate funding and patchwork services have severely limited community mental health treatment for uninsured adults. Leaders must address the systemic inequities in our behavioral health care system including the low reimbursement rates, poor provider networks, and workforce shortages. - [NC Policy Watch](#)

Gov. Cooper announces \$7.7 million to bolster mental health programs in NC colleges, universities: "There has been a troubling rise in mental health challenges for young people across our nation" UNC System President Peter Hans said. "These funds go a long way in helping us reach students who are struggling." - [CBS17](#)

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SMALL BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Biden-Harris Administration Provides \$262 Million to Improve Access to Jobs, Health Care and Infrastructure Across the Rural Partners Network: The Biden-Harris Administration established RPN to transform the way federal agencies partner with and serve rural people and places, including Native American communities. The funding will support 68 projects, including those in NC. [-USDA](#)

First New Black Bank In 20 Years Breaks The Mold For Raising Startup Capital: Adelphi Bank, the country's first Black bank since 2003, received support from the African American and wider community. While segregation is no longer an explicit policy for banks, research still shows that minority banks are more likely to serve more diverse communities. [-Next City](#)

These Behind-The-Scenes Bankers Are Joining Forces To Take On Racism In Banking: The Underwriting for Racial Justice National Working Group convenes underappreciated allies against racial inequities in access to credit. [-Next City](#)

Facilitating the Next Golden Age of Black Business: To combat the racial wealth gap and support Black business growth, companies and leaders can learn from lessons of early 20th century innovators. [-MITSloan](#)

Checking In With the Starbucks Union as a Supreme Court Labor Decision Looms: Glacier Northwest vs. Teamsters could drastically change how unions are able to strike and have huge ramifications for the wave of organizing within the food service industry. [-Eater](#)

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EDUCATION

North Carolina awarded Federal Preschool Development Grant to boost state's Family Child Care Home Network: NCDHHS was awarded \$4 million to support children's health, improve access to high-quality early care and learning for families, and invest in the state's early care workforce. - [The Southern Scoop](#)

New report says more investment is needed in educating North Carolina's Latino students: Latino students and families continue to face significant equity gaps in North Carolina's education system including underinvestment in culturally competent education, teacher diversity, and language access. - [WFAE](#)

N.C. Senate passes Parents' Bill of Rights: Senate Republicans argue the bill is needed to safeguard parents' role in their children's lives, while opponents say it is dangerous to LGBTQ+ kids & will damage teacher's relationships with students. - [EdNC](#)

The impact of intentional Native American education: 80% of NC's Native American children are enrolled in school districts that receive Indian Education Act funding, but 3,000 students are in districts without this funding. More intentional education is needed to make up for pandemic learning loss and high dropout rates. - [EdNC](#)

Students of Color May Be Disproportionately Harmed by States' Need-Based Aid Eligibility Requirements: Differences in grant eligibility requirements contribute to disparities: Only 39 percent of Black Pell grant recipients attending college in their state of residence received need-based grant aid in 2018-19, compared with 49 percent of Asian and 46 percent of white Pell students. - [Urban Institute](#)