

# Systems Change/Economic Justice

## WHAT ARE "SYSTEMS?"

### Systems that Affect Us All

#### 1. **Housing** - Everyone needs a place to live

- Are there enough houses or apartments for everyone?
- Can people afford to buy or rent them?
- Are they safe and decent places to live for people of all ages?
- Are there enough places to live for people with special needs?

#### 2. **Employment/Jobs/Wages** - Everyone needs an income to live

- Are there enough jobs for everyone?
- Can people get to the jobs?
- Are they paid enough to be able to provide for their families' basic needs?
- Are they treated fairly at work?
- Do people get a fair share of the wealth they help create?
- What happens to people if they are hurt on the job?

#### 3. **Banking/Financial System** - It can help create jobs, businesses and houses for whole neighborhoods

- Do people get treated equally and fairly?
- Do people from different parts of the state or city get the same treatment?
- How do people with less money get the loans they need?

#### 4. **Health Care** - Everyone gets sick. Some get REALLY sick.

- Can people get the health care they need?
- Does everyone have insurance?
- Can people afford the health care that is available?
- What happens when a person can't pay?
- What happens when a person can no longer work, either because of their own sickness or a child or other family member?

#### 5. **Transportation** - Everyone needs a way to get around

- Can EVERYONE get around in the community?
- Can people get to work, even if they can't afford a car?
- Can people get to the doctor and to the grocery?
- Can people who can't drive (blindness, disability) get around to where they need to go?

#### 6. **Taxes** - Taxes pay for all kinds of things: roads, schools, libraries, sewers, police departments, fire departments, prisons, the armed forces, business

incentives and loans, government programs to assist people in trouble, etc.

- Are people's taxes fair, considering how much they make and what services they receive?
- Do people who make a lot from the community pay a fair share of taxes to sustain the community?
- Do we make sure that taxes don't cause people to fall into poverty?

**7. Education** - A good education is one of a person's best tools for success

- Does everyone get an education that prepares them for the future?
- Does every child get a quality education, regardless of where they live or how much money their parents have?

**8. Unemployment** - Lots of people are out of work at some point in their lives because their jobs come to an end. In fact, at any given time, from 5 to 15% of all people are out of work and lots more can't find a single, full-time job that will pay their bills. That also involves labor costs, the stock market and fears about inflation.

- What happens to people who are out of work for a short time?
- What do we do about the fact that at any given time, many people are out of work and can't find a job that will pay their family's bills?
- What happens when there are no jobs in a particular area, but they cannot afford to move to where jobs are?

**9. Voting and Law** - Everyone should have a say in the governments that affect us all and be treated fairly under the law

- Can a typical, qualified person run for office and win?
- If a person can't or chose not to make a campaign contribution, are they still respected and heard?
- Do our laws, courts and government officials treat people fairly and equitably?

**10. Retirement and Disability** - There comes a time when people can no longer work

- What happens to people too old or too sick to work?

What happens when it is clear a person will never be able to work again, but they will continue to have living expenses?