

Racial inequality and worker exploitation is real and it's even more prevalent in the South.

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Hi Lauren,

It's Black History Month, when we honor the contributions and struggles of African-Americans in this country. But despite the progress we have seen in the fight for equal rights, we still have a long way to go. We need to ensure that opportunities are available to help balance the scale of racial equity. This includes the availability of and access to good jobs in communities of color.

Racial inequality and worker exploitation is real and it's even more prevalent in the South. As [someone who grew up and currently lives in Mississippi](#), I see it firsthand through my work with Jobs to Move America.

Manufacturing companies choose the South for its generous tax incentives and subsidies, then turn around and exploit the same communities that are subsidizing their existence. That sounds like a sick joke if it wasn't true. That's why we still have so much work to do and policies to change.

But all is not grim. Jobs to Move America has made great strides in Alabama, where we won a [Community Benefits Agreement with New Flyer](#), the largest manufacturer of electric buses in the U.S. The agreement—which includes its facilities in Anniston, Alabama and Ontario, CA—commits to hiring and promoting people of color and women, hosting debt clinics for workers, and starting pre-apprenticeship programs. This agreement will help level the playing field for historically marginalized workers. I'd like to see more community benefits agreements in the South, including my home state of Mississippi.

Another promising area of our work in the South is the development of academic reports highlighting workers' perspectives. On February 24, 2023 (11 a.m.-1 p.m. CST), Jackson State University is hosting, "[Southern Manufacturing's Impact on Jobs and Community](#)," an event discussing a new report on workers and conditions at manufacturing facilities in Alabama and Mississippi. The panel of academics and community advocates, including JMA's Co-Executive Director Erica Iheme and Board Member Scott Douglas, will discuss report findings and ways to move forward. This will be an exciting event and we hope you will attend in person or virtually!

[RSVP for Southern Manufacturing's Impact on Jobs and Community Event](#)

Lastly, we are only able to do such profound work in the Deep South through the continued partnership with and investment from supporters like you. Join JMA in May 2023 for an educational and transformative [group trip](#) to Alabama, the center of the civil rights movement and the growing Black-led worker justice movement. This tour is both a way to significantly contribute to the worker organizing and corporate accountability fight in the Deep South, and an opportunity to take a deeper dive into the history, culture and community building of the Southern labor movement. Space is limited, so make sure you sign up soon! For details please contact Development Director [Jena Brown](#).

In solidarity,



Angela Dawson

Mississippi Community Engagement Coordinator

What We're Reading

- [Let's Honor Rosa Parks by Creating Equity in Transit—For Riders and Workers:](#) We celebrated last Friday, February 3, Rosa Parks' birthday, but we honor her legacy every day by creating equity in public transit—both for riders and workers.
- [Electric School Buses Can Fight – or Further – Inequity in the U.S.:](#) World Resources Institute highlighted our electric school bus campaign to ensure that the electrification of our nation's school bus fleet quickly delivers on its full potential: cleaner, healthier air for kids and neighborhoods, and good, inclusive, family-sustaining jobs—especially in low-income and communities of color.
- Our Senior Policy Coordinator Mike Lawliss joined Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and others at a [Public Money for the Public Good event](#). As a follow-up to the event, we encourage you all to [sign a petition](#) telling the Biden Administration to use every tool in the executive action toolbox to incentivize business practices that will shift our economy towards greater equity and sustainability.

Join us in the fight for good jobs and healthy communities.

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Proof - How do we advance racial equity?

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