



PRESS STATEMENT

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Clevelanders chose change. Now city government must deliver

Yesterday, Clevelanders elected Justin Bibb, a nonprofit executive, to serve as the city's next mayor. They also elected several new people to serve on city council and passed a transformative ballot initiative that will increase community oversight of police. Policy Matters Ohio Executive Director Hannah Halbert releases the following statement:

“Clevelanders from all corners of the city chose change yesterday. A grassroots-driven campaign to ensure the community has a say over police discipline passed by a wide margin. Issue 24 will transform policing in Cleveland and ensure that if an officer behaves recklessly or uses unnecessary force, they can be held accountable. Survivors of police violence and their families were the driving force behind the [Safer Cleveland](#) campaign which once again proves that when a committed group of regular people comes together, they have the power to make their communities better. Mayor-elect Justin Bibb built a multiracial coalition that bridged the west side / east side divide with a vision for a more responsive, innovative city government. With the passage of Issue 24, Bibb has a generational opportunity to forge a new relationship and conversation between law enforcement and the community — with the goal of safety for all — for all Clevelanders and for the police themselves.

“When he takes office, Bibb will preside over the nation’s poorest big city where many residents have lost faith in their city government to protect their interests. A recent poll commissioned by [Policy Matters Ohio and Cleveland Votes shows](#) that infrequent Cleveland voters and nonvoters alike care deeply about their communities, but don’t believe city government can make their lives better. With fewer than 60,000 Clevelanders casting a vote, civic leaders still have a lot of work to do to rebuild trust. Our poll showed that Clevelanders are especially concerned about health care, policing and public safety, and education. These issues are interconnected. Safe communities are ones where all residents have good schools, clean air and water, well-paying jobs, health care and greenspaces to enjoy.

“Mayor-elect Bibb and the members of city council can usher in a new era for Cleveland by listening to the people and working with trusted organizations. [The Northeast Ohio Worker Center](#) developed a worker bill of rights alongside some of Cleveland’s lowest-paid working people. They are fighting to protect working peoples’ paychecks and ensure employers respect workers’ time with fair scheduling. The new administration can work with them to reimagine an economy that values Cleveland’s working people. [PB Cle](#) is showing how city officials can use participatory budgeting to rebuild trust by listening to the people most directly impacted by the pandemic recession about how to use American Rescue Plan funds. [The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition](#) offers unique expertise about how sustainable food systems can advance health for Clevelanders of all races and in all communities.

“With the passage of Issue 24, and the transformative potential of American Rescue Plan funding, Bibb and newly elected council members have an opportunity to alleviate poverty, improve health, and create a safer, more vibrant city—for all.”