In 2014, the United Way’s groundbreaking Florida ALICE Report put a disturbing new spotlight on workers who collectively form the backbone of Florida’s economy. ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. “Employed” is the critical word. ALICE represents households that have incomes above the Federal Poverty Limit, but consistently struggle to afford basic needs, such as housing, food, healthcare, childcare, and transportation.

Of Florida’s 7.6 million households, 14% (1.1 million) lived in poverty in 2016 and another 32% (2.4 million) were ALICE. Combined, 46% (3.5 million) of Florida households had income insufficient to consistently afford their basic needs, an increase of 10% since 2010.

ALICE families live on the brink of financial disaster every day, just one car breakdown, medical emergency, or other unanticipated expense away from falling into poverty.

ALICE workers are essential to the fabric of our society and our economy. ALICE works in jobs that are integral to our communities, from childcare educators and home health aides to mechanics and hospitality workers; workers we rely on every day. The future success of our communities is directly tied to the financial stability of ALICE households. When ALICE suffers and is forced to make difficult choices, we all face serious consequences.

Between 2010 and 2016 basic household expenses increased by 20% for a Florida family of four while median wages increased 13%.

The 2020 Florida United Ways Consensus Legislative Agenda provides policy makers opportunities to help ALICE become more financially stable and self-sufficient; opportunities that will improve the quality of life and the economy for all of us in the Sunshine State.
2020 CONSENSUS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Priority
INVEST $1.2 million in state funding to expand the capacity of income tax consulting and preparation assistance programs statewide.

Support
INCREASE access to affordable housing by appropriating all Sadowski Housing Trust Funds for their intended purpose.
CAPITALIZE on opportunities to enhance Florida workforce development activities and initiatives.

QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

Priority
SUPPORT quality and accountability provisions of HB 1091.

Support
IMPLEMENT a coordinated child assessment system for VPK and kindergarten.
EXPAND Early Childhood Educator INCENTIVE$ Florida statewide at $750,000.
MAINTAIN T.E.A.C.H. funding at $10 million.
EXPAND Help Me Grow statewide by increasing its budget to $4.5 million.

ENSURING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Priority
SUPPORT the allocation of $500,000 to the Broward Zero Suicide Initiative for targeted prevention, intervention and postvention services.

Support
DELETE statutory language which restricts access to federal dollars for school-based mental healthcare.
INCREASE targeted funding for prevention and treatment services for substance use disorders and mental health services.
MAXIMIZE home and community-based services for older adults to reduce nursing home costs.

SUPPORTING FLORIDA’S VETERANS

Priority
SUPPORT the creation of a centralized portal and peer support referral network through 2-1-1.
SUPPORT addition of language in the Military and Veterans Active Duty charter to standardize transfer of college credits.

For additional information, please contact United Way of Broward County at (954) 308-9277 • unitedwaybroward.org