

## **How to Fix a Country**

The United States is a great country to live in, but it has its issues, too. It has a strong economy, peaceful relationships, and miles upon miles of roadways. However, the environment is hurting, poverty overruns communities, and discrimination exists everywhere. As President of the United States, I would make sure these problems get resolved.

The United States struggles with pollution, just like any other country. However, the efforts to limit our environmental impact are minimal, resulting in the effects of pollution being seen everywhere. If you drive down the highway, you can't help but notice the trash littering the ditches. If you take a walk, there's a one in four chance the air you're breathing is full of pollutants. Additionally, climate change affects people around the country, through hurricanes, wildfires, and record-breaking temperatures. Everything we do relies on the environment, so we have to take better care of it. Unfortunately, though, some people still don't see this as a problem. They think that the extreme weather caused by global warming is just a natural occurrence and that pollution isn't a problem. If I were president, I would require fifty percent of our energy to be renewable by 2050. Solar fields, windmills, and hydroelectric dams would be constructed all over the United States, and seventy-five percent of transportation would run on green energy, with bike lanes and sidewalks as an alternative. Most importantly, I would make sure these issues are talked about in all places of education so people have a better understanding of what the world around them is really like. This may seem like an impossible goal, but with enough commitment, I believe we can make this a reality.

Whether we'd like to admit it or not, Americans are struggling to meet their everyday needs. Poverty and homelessness are present in all communities, and hunger impacts many families around the country. As of 2022, almost forty million Americans were living in poverty, and forty-four million were food insecure. These issues have been ongoing for decades but are

still a major problem. Many efforts have been made to help, like food and housing assistance, but they're not enough. If you compare the U.S. to twenty-six other OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries, it has the highest poverty rates of them all. This is happening because inflation rates keep increasing, making poverty rates go up, too. Many people are said to have felt "stressed" because of inflation, which has also been shown to affect low-income households the most. Here is what's essentially happening in our country: businesses are charging more for their products and making the rich wealthier, while people with fewer resources are struggling to pay for these goods, making them poorer. However, some people associate the homeless and poorer population of the U.S. with crime, violence, and substance use. They also think it's the homeless person's own fault they don't have a home, or they feel unsafe around them. These misconceptions only turn people away even more and add to the problem. To fix this, I would have a certain amount of homeless shelters created in all communities based on their population. I would also require at least one food bank in all communities and also donation centers where people can pick up used supplies for free. Unfortunately, this wouldn't solve the root of the problem, but it would definitely help people in need.

One of the biggest issues in the U.S. is also the one most people don't want to acknowledge: prejudice. Many Americans have preconceived notions about certain groups of people that affect their decisions and everyday lives. For example, racial profiling turns common mistakes into crimes, all because of the color of someone's skin. As a result, forty-one percent of Black Americans say they have been stopped or detained by the police because of their race. Also, bias in businesses leads to someone making less money or having less respect just because of their gender. Gender bias is described as being the "tendency to give preferential treatment to

one gender over another” and applies to thirty-eight percent of women at their places of work. Additionally, women in the U.S. are paid around eighty-three percent as much as men are. Certain people don’t think this is an issue, though, mainly because it doesn’t affect them. But they’re the minority, since only nine percent of workers say they haven’t faced discrimination in their place of work. Discrimination in my opinion is the worst issue in the United States because it flies in the face of what the U.S. was created for. America is called the “Land of the Free,” but this only applies to a select group of people. Furthermore, how can we call it the “Home of the Brave” if we are afraid to accept and embrace the differences between us? This issue will never be completely resolved, but I think teaching kids about different cultures, countries, and diversity in general from early on will make sure their generation is open-minded and inclusive towards everyone. I would also require certain percentages of ethnicities and genders to be in a workplace, so it’s an inclusive environment for everyone.

In conclusion, the United States is a great place to live, but we have our issues, too. Climate change has battered us down, not all of us have what we need to survive, and most importantly, our opinions drive us apart. We’ll have to set our differences aside and truly stand united with each other if we want to fix these problems. As president, I guarantee this is exactly what would happen when I’m in office.