



ASSET PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

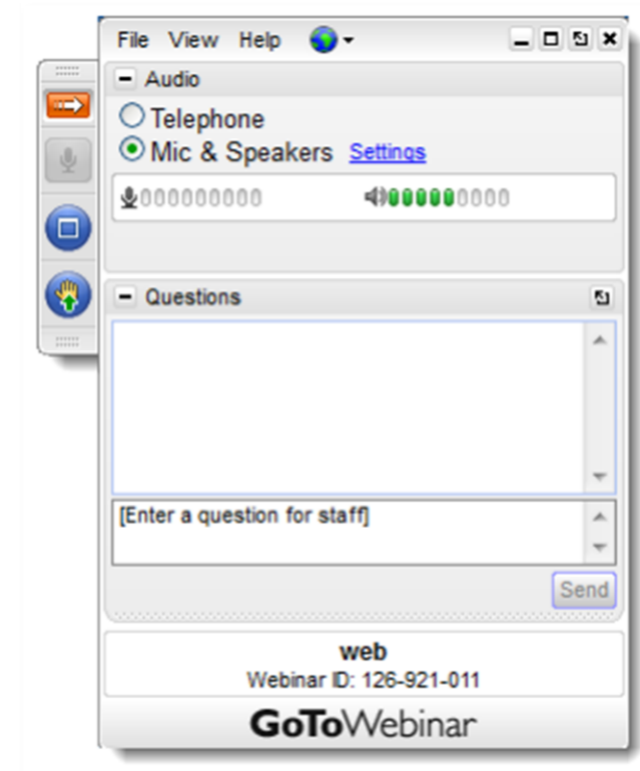
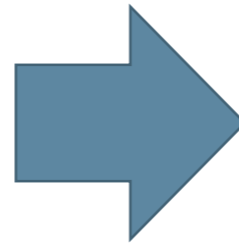
How Fines and Fees Strip Wealth from Low-Income Communities

JUNE 19, 2017
1:00PM EASTERN

WEBINAR CONTROL PANEL

PARTICIPATE

During the presentation –
Type your question in the
QUESTIONS BOX
to be addressed
during discussion breaks
or during Q/A



**WE
ARE**

Asset Funders Network (AFN)
is a membership organization of

**national, regional,
& community-based
foundations
and grantmakers**

advancing **economic opportunity** and **prosperity**
for low and moderate income people through
philanthropy.

AFN EMPOWERS

foundations and grantmakers to leverage their resources to make more **effective and strategic funding decisions**, allowing each dollar invested to have greater impact.

ISSUE
BRIEFS

GRANTMAKER
WEBINARS

REGIONAL &
NATIONAL
GRANTMAKER EVENTS

DISCUSSION AGENDA

➤ **WELCOME**

MONA MASRI
ASSET FUNDERS NETWORK

➤ **ENDING THE DEBT TRAP: STRATEGIES TO STOP
THE ABUSE OF COURT IMPOSED FINES AND FEES**

ALEXANDRA BASTIEN
SENIOR PROGRAM ASSOCIATE
POLICYLINK

➤ **LEADING BY EXAMPLE: CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO**

ANNE STUHLBREHER
DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL JUSTICE, OFFICE OF THE TREASURER
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

➤ **PHILANTHROPIC PERSPECTIVE**

JOSÉ GARCÍA
PROGRAM OFFICER, INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES
FORD FOUNDATION

➤ **MODERATED Q/A**

INTRODUCTIONS



MONA MASRI

WEST COAST REGIONAL
PROGRAM MANAGER
**ASSET FUNDERS
NETWORK**



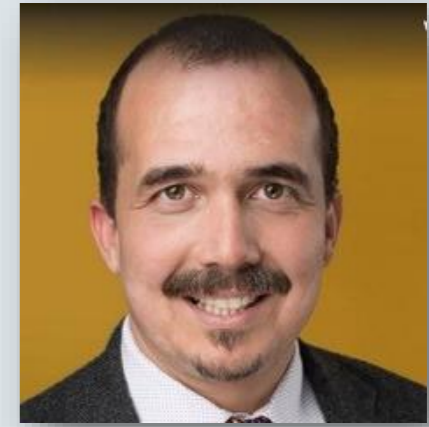
ALEXANDRA BASTIEN

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ANNE STUHLDTREHER

DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL JUSTICE
**OFFICE OF THE TREASURER
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN
FRANCISCO**



JOSÉ GARCÍA

PROGRAM OFFICER
INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES
FORD FOUNDATION

Ending the Debt Trap: Strategies to Stop the Abuse of Court Imposed Fines and Fees

Alexandra Bastien

Ending the Debt Trap: Strategies to Stop the Abuse of Court-Imposed Fines and Fees

PolicyLink

Alexandra Bastien
March 2017



PolicyLink is a national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity by **Lifting Up What Works**®. www.policylink.org

Introduction

In 2014, Michael Brown, an unarmed African American teenager, was shot and killed by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. The U.S. Department of Justice's investigation of the incident awakened the nation to the long-standing practice of local courts and police departments criminalizing the activities of low-income people and people of color in order to generate revenue. Ferguson police routinely and disproportionately charged African Americans fines and fees for parking violations, traffic violations, housing code infractions, and more. These charges did not promote public safety—the local justice system instead employed this tactic to fund its activities by using residents as a cash source. If the fines and fees charged to residents were not paid, the threat of jail loomed over them.

Road Map

- Criminalization of Poverty
- Impact on Low-Income People & People of Color
- Impact on Youth & Families
- Ineffective Revenue Strategy
- What States and Cities Can Do
- What You can Do

Fines are, technically, punishment. In other words, you trespass, therefore, you are fined \$100. The fees are the way that the criminal system maintains itself...

Those fees are really taxes.....I would locate fines and fees as part of that sort of vicious cycle, a regressive burden imposed on individuals who come into contact with the criminal system.

PROFESSOR ALEXANDRA NATAPOFF
LOYOLA LAW SCHOOL, LOS ANGELES

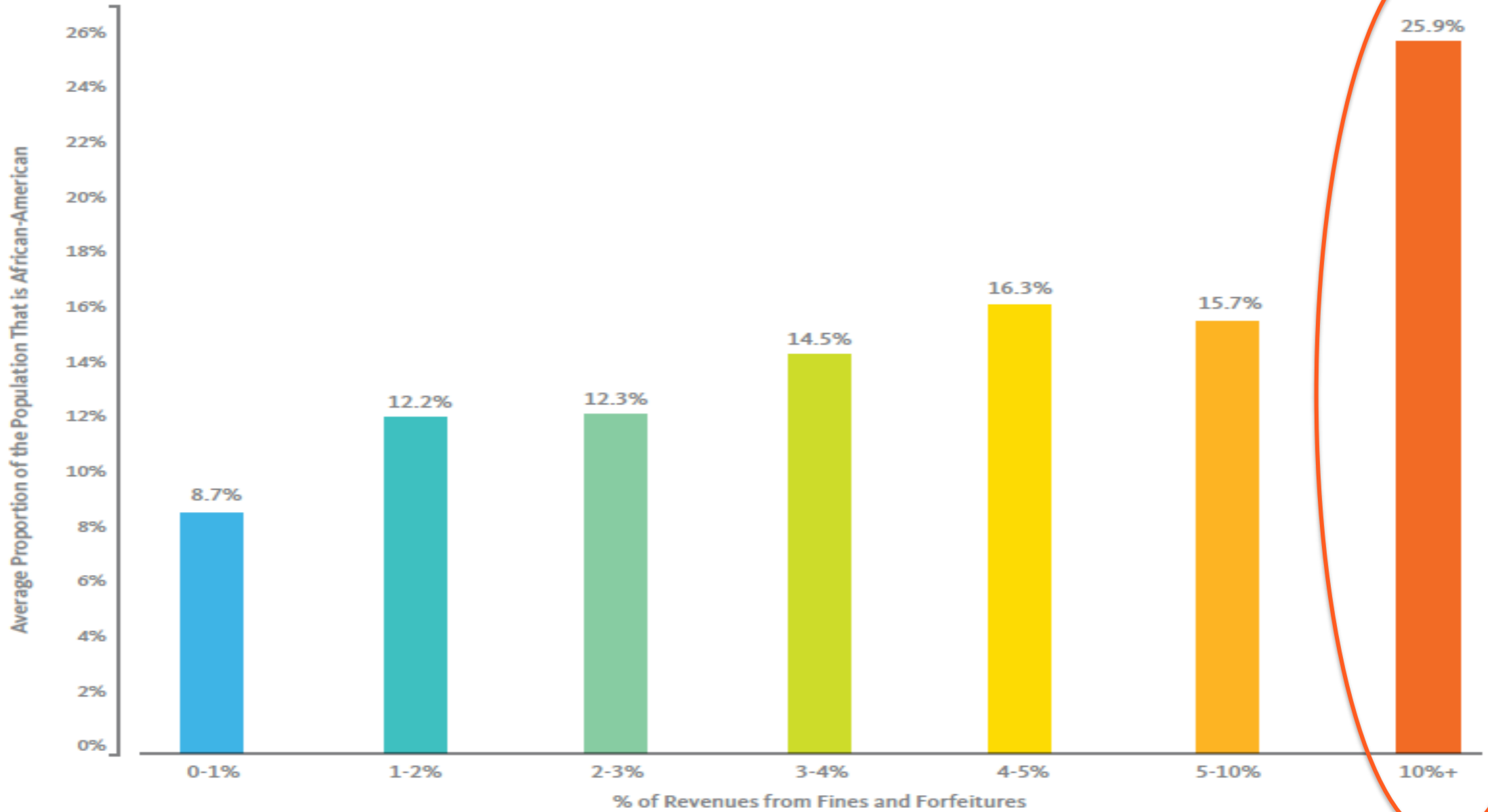
Impact on Low Income People

- **Average post-incarceration debt is approximately \$13,000.**
- **Accumulated debt follows people over time**
- **Can be subject to wage garnishment**
- **“Ban the Box” does not affect what appears on credit checks**

Impact on People of Color



Cities with High Proportions of African Americans Rely More Heavily on Revenues from Fines and Fees



Impact on Youth & their Families

- **Unpaid court debt can follow into adulthood**
- **29 states require parents pay some portion**
- **Turned into civil judgement at 18**
- **African American youth most vulnerable, paying up to twice as much than white youth**

What **states** can do

Cease Warrant Issuance for Unpaid Debt - *Ohio*

Require “Ability-to-Pay” Hearings for All Defendants - *Colorado & Michigan*

Eliminate Debt for Juveniles - *Washington*

Enact Amnesty Periods - *California*
In 2015, Governor Jerry Brown instituted an 18-month traffic ticket amnesty program

What **cities & counties** can do

Prohibit Warrants and Jail Time for Unpaid Fees - *Leon County, Florida*

Provide Relief for Indigent Defendants - *Montgomery, Alabama*

Provide Free Public Defender Services for Debt Hearings - *Montgomery, Alabama, & Biloxi, MS*

Eliminate Private Collection Services for Court Debt - *Biloxi, Mississippi*

Connect Indigent Defendants to Workforce Development Programs - *Suffolk County, Massachusetts*

Recommendations

- **Define the Scope of the Problem**
- **Analysis: Ensure Fairness and Proportionality**
- **Restore Financial Security**
 - **Connect indigent defendants to financial coaching**
 - **Provide restitution**

Resources & Contact Info

Ending the Debt Trap: Strategies to Stop the Abuse of Court-Imposed Fines and Fees

PolicyLink

Alexandra Bastien
March 2017



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Breaking the Cycle: From Poverty to Financial Security for All

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Building Financially Secure Futures An Approach for Boys and Men of Color

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Brittaney Carter and Alexandra Bastien



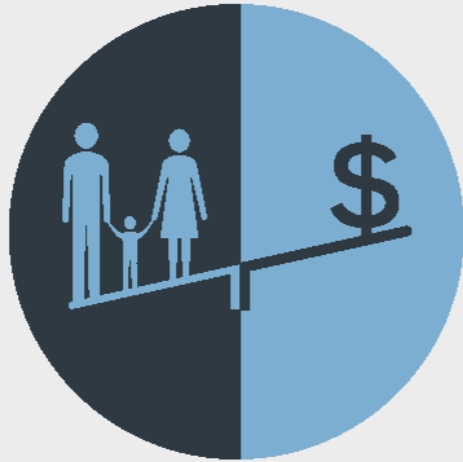
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Introduction

When President Barack Obama announced the launch of the My Brother's Keeper initiative in February 2014, it represented a national effort to address opportunity gaps that men of color face by lifting up programs that help them improve their educational and economic outcomes.¹ The framework of the initiative emphasizes the milestones along the path to success that many men of color have difficulty reaching, from an early age into adulthood. By emphasizing how early childhood education influences high school outcomes, which in turn influence college and career readiness,² My Brother's Keeper constructs a clear pathway forward and makes it easy to see that educational and career roadblocks can profoundly affect a young man's ability to secure quality jobs and build long-term financial security.

Alexandra Bastien

Alexandra@policylink.org | www.Policylink.org



THE FINANCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT

S A N F R A N C I S C O

Anne Stuhldreher

Director of Financial Justice
Office of the Treasurer for the City and County of San Francisco

The Financial Justice Project

A first-in-the-nation citywide effort to alleviate the inequitable burden of financial penalties on struggling San Franciscans.

Our goal:

Assess and reform how fines, fees, and financial penalties impact struggling San Franciscans.

- Build our understanding of the problem and potential solutions.
- Advance reforms that work for San Franciscans, the City, and our community.
- Tell the real life stories of how people suffer from financial injustice.
- Share our financial justice agenda for San Francisco with others

Top Lessons



Fines and fees are spreading when people can least afford them.



Steep fines and fees that are beyond people's ability to pay can dig people into financial holes



Steep fines and fees can be “high pain” and “low gain” and a lose-lose for citizens and government



Solutions exist that work for both government and citizens.

We are not advocating to get rid of consequences, but the consequence should fit the offense, and not hit the poor or people of color harder.

Policy Areas for Reform



Solution: Ability To Pay and Proportional Consequences

Population	Proportional Consequence			
	Get help. Fine resolved if person receives X hours of help (counseling, addiction services, health services, etc.)	Perform community service	Fine payment based on ability to pay. Payment plan offered.	Regular fine
Youth under 18				
People struggling with homelessness				
Very low-income				
Working Poor				
Middle-income				
Upper-income				

Draft as of July 5, 2017

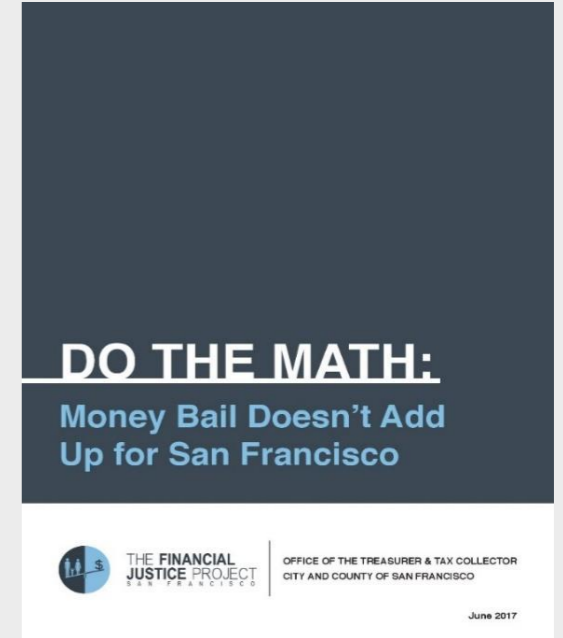
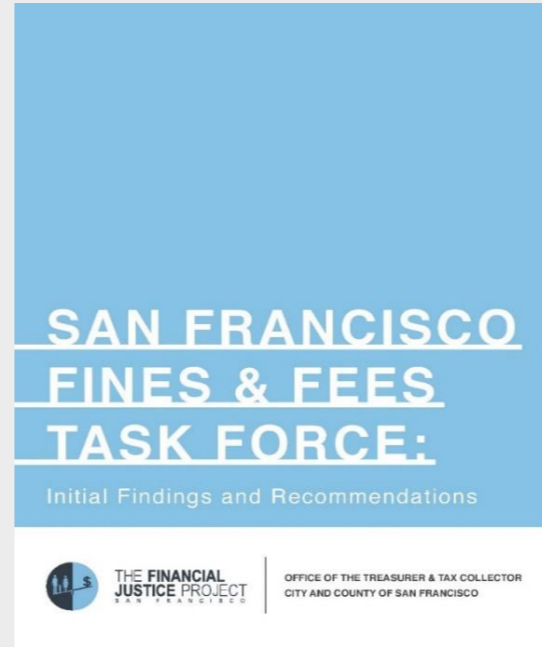
Reports & Media Coverage



[@FairFinesFees](https://twitter.com/FairFinesFees)

WEBSITE:

sftreasurer.org/financialjustice



FUNDER PERSPECTIVE



JOSÉ GARCÍA

PROGRAM OFFICER, INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES
FORD FOUNDATION

WHAT'S DRIVING INEQUALITY

We have identified five underlying drivers of inequality—*common factors that, worldwide, contribute to inequality's many manifestations.*



ENTRENCHED CULTURAL NARRATIVES

that undermine fairness, tolerance,
and inclusion



FAILURE TO INVEST IN AND PROTECT VITAL PUBLIC GOODS

such as education and natural
resources



UNFAIR RULES OF THE ECONOMY

that magnify unequal opportunity
and outcomes



UNEQUAL ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT

decision making and resources



PERSISTENT PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

against women, people with
disabilities and racial, ethnic, and
caste minorities

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION



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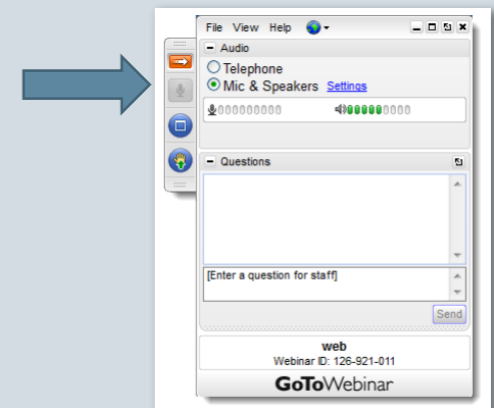


JOSÉ GARCÍA
FORD FOUNDATION

CONTROL PANEL

QUESTIONS

Click the **QUESTIONS** box to share a question for the presenters.



Thank you for attending today's
Asset Funders Network
presentation

PLEASE FILL OUT OUR SURVEY

The survey will pop up on your screen momentarily
and will also be sent to you via email

**WE VALUE YOUR TIME,
AND YOUR RESPONSES WILL INFORM
OUR FUTURE PLANNING**

THE WEBINAR HAS CONCLUDED
