Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

Legislative Policy Agenda

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2015 Legislative Session

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Priority of Policy Agenda Items

LPRAC to Prioritize These Issues

1. Reform Bilingual Education Programs to Improve Educational Outcomes
2. Increase Availability of Licensed Medical Interpreters for Spanish and Portuguese Speakers
3. Expand Contract Set Aside for Minority Business Enterprises to Include State Grants to Municipalities as Well as School Building Construction and Maintenance
4. Reduce Pregnancies to Hispanic Mothers Who are Age 17 or Younger
5. Expand Mobility Counseling for Subsidized Housing
6. Increase Availability of Low- and Moderate-Income Housing in High Performing School Districts.
7. Increase Number of Internships and Summer Jobs for Low-Income Youth Throughout Connecticut

LPRAC Endorses Work of Other Commissions

1. Reduce In-School Juvenile Arrests of Latino Children
2. Reduce Incidence of Obesity among Hispanic Children

Issues of Secondary Importance

1. Stop State Overfunding of Some Town Education Budgets
2. Require K-12 Education Accountability
3. Increase Economic Growth by Increasing Racial Diversity in the Workplace
4. Increase Number of Latinos on Public Sector Boards and Commissions
5. Promote STEM Courses among Latino Students in Middle and High School

Policy Agenda within LPRAC Legislative Statutes

C.G.S. § 2-120(c) (1)(A) states, "that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are **healthy**."

- Increase Availability of Licensed Medical Interpreters for Spanish and Portuguese Speakers
- Reduce Incidence of Obesity among Hispanic Children

C.G.S. § 2-120(c) (1)(B) states, "that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population are **safe**."

- Expand Mobility Counseling for Subsidized Housing

C.G.S. § 2-120(c) (1)(C) states, "that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state **achieve educational success**."

- Reduce In-School Juvenile Arrests of Latino Children
- Stop State Overfunding of Town Education Budgets
- Require K-12 Education Accountability
- Increase Availability of Low- and Moderate-Income Housing in High Performing School Districts
- Reform Bilingual Education Programs to Improve Educational Outcomes
- Promote STEM Courses among Latino Students in Middle and High School

C.G.S. § 2-120(c) (1)(D) states, "that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are **economically self-sufficient**."

- Expand Contract Set Aside for Minority Business Enterprises to Include State Grants to Municipalities as Well as School Building Construction and Maintenance
- Increase Number of Internships and Summer Jobs for Low-Income Youth Throughout Connecticut
- Reduce Pregnancies to Hispanic Mothers Who are Age 17 or Younger

C.G.S. § 2-120(c) (1)(E) states, "that all members of the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state are **free from discrimination**."

- Increase Number of Latinos on Public Sector Boards and Commissions
- Increase Economic Growth by Increasing Racial Diversity in the Workplace

Executive Summary

Demographics reveal that the Latino population in Connecticut is young and dramatically growing in size. Unfortunately, data also reveals that the population has too many low-income households and workers with high rates of unemployment, as well as too many teenagers who drop out of high school. Other troubling statistics show that many Latino families live in racially segregated and socially isolated areas throughout the state where they are not afforded the opportunity for a quality education. Nevertheless, there is now a once in a generation opportunity for Latinos in Connecticut to enter the middle-class and improve their socio-economic standing in large numbers as the state's Baby Boomer workforce is aging rapidly and entering into retirement; thus creating job openings for many of the state's Latinos to fill. Our Commission's 2015 policy agenda will break down barriers and create avenues for all Latinos in Connecticut to become fully integrated *Nutmeggers*.

All Latinos in Connecticut will be **healthy** when the prevalence of obesity among Latino children is reduced putting them on a path to good health and an improved quality of life. Latinos suffer high rates of diabetes, and tackling this issue early will help to reduce these numbers and the associated high medical costs. There is a shortage of medical interpreters for Spanish and Portuguese speakers seeking care in hospitals, which could result in non-English speaking residents failing to have serious medical conditions accurately diagnosed and treated.

All Latinos in Connecticut will be **safe** when they have greater access to affordable housing throughout the state and not just in areas with both disproportionately high rates of crime and poverty.

2015 Legislative Agenda

Health

- Increase the availability of licensed medical interpreters for Spanish and Portuguese speakers.
- Reduce the incidence of obesity among Latino children.

Safety

- Expand mobility counseling for subsidized housing.

Educational Success

- Reduce in-school juvenile arrests of Latino children.
- Stop state overfunding of some town education budgets.
- Require K-12 education accountability.
- Increase availability of low- and moderate-income housing in high performing school districts.
- Reform bilingual education programs to improve outcomes.
- Promote STEM courses among Latino students in Middle and High School.

Economic Self-Sufficiency

- Expand the contract set aside for Minority Business Enterprises to include state grants to municipalities as well as school building construction and maintenance.
- Increase the number of internships and summer jobs for low-income youth throughout Connecticut.
- Reduce pregnancies to Latino mothers who are age 17 or younger.

Free from Discrimination

- Increase the number of Latinos on public sector boards and commissions.
- Increase economic growth by increasing racial diversity in the workplace.

All Latinos in Connecticut will **achieve educational success** when Latino families have more opportunities to live in high performing school districts. Every dollar of K-12 education spending will be scrutinized to ensure monies are spent on improving tangible outcomes. Some school districts receive more state education funding than they should, while most receive less. Every school district in Connecticut should receive the state education funds they are entitled to – not more, not less. The number of Latinos arrested when in school will decline when administrators are required to enforce the same uniform school policies in all schools statewide, and not shift the responsibility to police. Changes will occur in the classroom as bilingual education is reformed and Latino students transition to English-only programs fully prepared to achieve high educational outcomes and with a solid foundation to pursue well-paid careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).

All Latinos in Connecticut will be **economically self-sufficient** as they obtain valuable job skills and early work experiences by increasing opportunities for Minority Business Enterprises. Latinos in high school will obtain a solid footing for career success when there are both more year-round internships and summer jobs for low-income youth. The number of teenage Latinas getting pregnant will be reduced so they can focus on their futures unhindered by family responsibilities best dealt with once they have good income and a steady job.

All Latinos in Connecticut will be **free from discrimination** when local, regional, and state boards and commissions reflect the demographics of their constituents. State government will take an active role to reduce racial disparities by increasing diversity in state government jobs to match the state's changing demographics.

Obtaining these outcomes is the most important objective of the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission. The focus on these specific issues is a direct outcome of feedback from commissioners who took into account a myriad of considerations at their annual retreat held in September 2014. This is a living document and these priorities will likely change for future legislative sessions as new considerations arise.

Health

Increase Availability of Licensed Medical Interpreters for Spanish and Portuguese Speakers

The issue:

Connecticut state law encourages acute care hospitals to use medical interpreters "to the extent possible", but does not require it.[1]

Making an accurate medical diagnosis is complicated and nothing is more crucial than accurate communication between doctor and patient. Surprisingly, misdiagnoses may occur as often as 1-in-5 cases and have, "potential for 'considerable to severe harm' including 'inevitable death.'"[2] In Connecticut, the number of patients who died or suffered a serious injury from a medication error **doubled** between 2012 and 2013.[3]

> *"'There is probably nothing more cognitively complicated' than a diagnosis, he said, 'and the fact that we get it right as often as we do is amazing'."*
>
> *Internist Dr. Mark L. Graber,* Doctors' Diagnostic Errors Are Often Not Mentioned But Can Take A Serious Toll

In 2013, more than 136,000 state residents did *not* speak English well or did *not* Speak English at all, which is a 30 percent increase from 2000.[4] The largest growth was among residents age 65 and over, which grew by **54 percent**. Furthermore, the 65 and over age group is the largest consumer of healthcare services.[5]

Clearly, there is an increasing need for more medical interpreters (especially for Spanish speakers) in Connecticut to ensure that medical diagnoses are based on correctly translated information from patients and that costly, and sometimes deadly, misdiagnoses are avoided

Legislative recommendations:

- Amend General Statute § 19a-490i(2) to require that acute care hospitals *must* have on-site medical interpreters when at least 5 percent of residents in the hospital's geographic service area speak a primary language other than English.
- Amend General Statute § 19a-127*l*-n to require adverse event reporting specifically for patients with a primary language other than English.

Administrative recommendations:

- Perform a geographic analysis of hospital service areas to ensure that sizable populations of non-English speakers are not excluded by the 5 percent population minimum stipulated in General Statute § 19a-490i(2).

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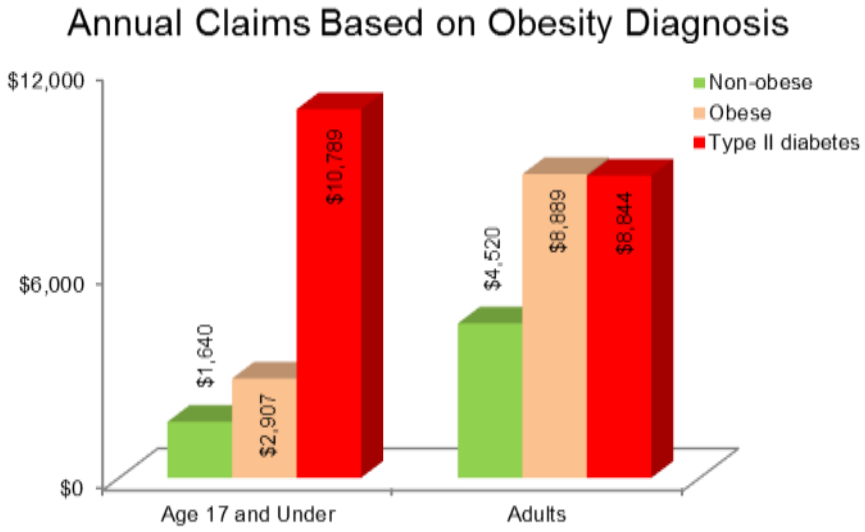
[1] Connecticut General Statute § 19a-490i(2)
[2] *Doctors' Diagnostic Errors Are Often Not Mentioned But Can Take A Serious Toll*
[3] October 2014, Adverse Event Reporting, Appendix B, NQF 4A
[4] Census 2000 SF3 table P019 and ACS 2009-2013 5-yr table B16004
[5] *CDC U.S. Personal Health Care Spending by Age and Gender 2010 Highlights*

Reduce Incidence of Obesity among Latino Children

The issue:

Concerns over childhood obesity in Connecticut led the General Assembly in 2013 to pass Public Act 13-173 creating the Task Force on Childhood Obesity, which delivered its findings on September 18th, 2014. [6,7]



Among the many negative consequences of obesity, a primary concern is that: "Obesity is considered the principal precursor to type II diabetes in adolescents."[8] Furthermore, 70 percent of overweight adolescents will become overweight adults.[9] There is added economic cost associated with obesity, as a child with type II diabetes will incur nearly $9,150 annually in additional healthcare costs.[10] Healthcare costs for obese adults are nearly double that for non-obese adults.

In Connecticut in 2003, diabetes cost **$1.7 billion** in direct and indirect costs.[11] Hispanic children (grades 9-12) have the 2nd highest rate of obesity among racial/ethnic groups and they will account for 25 percent of children in Connecticut by 2020.[12]

Legislative recommendations:

- Require more physical activity at all grade levels both during the school day and in after-school programs.
- Restrict marketing and access to unhealthy foods in schools.
- Institute the surveillance of body mass Index (BMI) in schools.
- Make pre-diabetes screening programs available to all at-risk children.

[6] Website of the Task Force on Childhood Obesity
[7] Report of the Task Force on Childhood Obesity
[8] *Epidemiology of Childhood Obesity* by Sally S. Wong
[9] *Epidemiology of Childhood Obesity* by Sally S. Wong
[10] *Impact Of Childhood Obesity On Employers*
[11] *The Connecticut Diabetes Prevention and Control Plan 2007-2012*
[12] *Epidemiology of Childhood Obesity* by Sally S. Wong

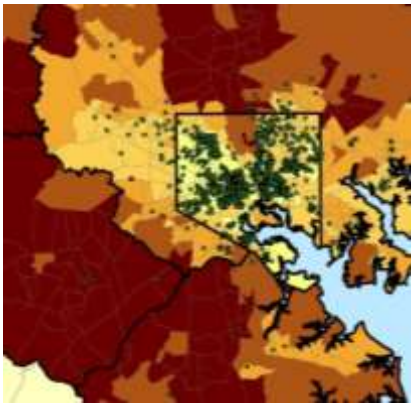
Safety

Expand Mobility Counseling for Subsidized Housing

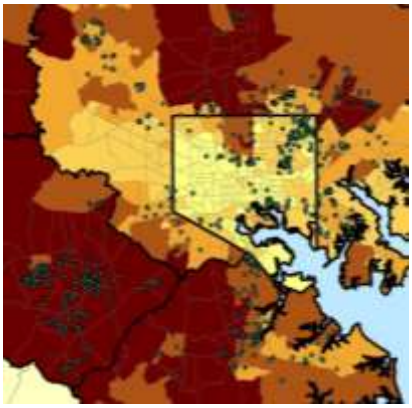
The issue:

Low- and moderate-income families are concentrated in the state's urban areas in part because local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) can only recommend housing options within their town. This limits the information given to families wanting to move to another town because they want (1) better performing schools, (2) less neighborhood crime, and/or (3) to be closer to their workplace - among other needs.

Baltimore
Before Mobility Counseling



Baltimore
After Mobility Counseling



Maps provided courtesy of Professor Stefanie Deluca of Johns Hopkins University.

When looking at where Hispanics live, Connecticut is the 5th most racially segregated state in the country.[13] In fact, Hispanics in Texas are less residentially segregated than in Connecticut. Furthermore, the Bridgeport metropolitan area is the 6th most segregated in the country for Hispanics and the Hartford metropolitan area ranks 7th.[14]

In 2013, the Connecticut Fair Housing Center reported: *State housing regulations are not in compliance with current fair housing laws*.[15]

Legislative recommendations:

- Require all PHAs in Connecticut to provide comprehensive mobility counseling to their clients for all housing options, for which they are eligible, throughout the state regardless of their current town of residence.
- Eliminate the use of current town residency status to restrict eligibility for subsidized housing.

Administrative recommendations:

- The Connecticut Department of Housing must release its overdue report on impediments to fair housing choice in Connecticut.

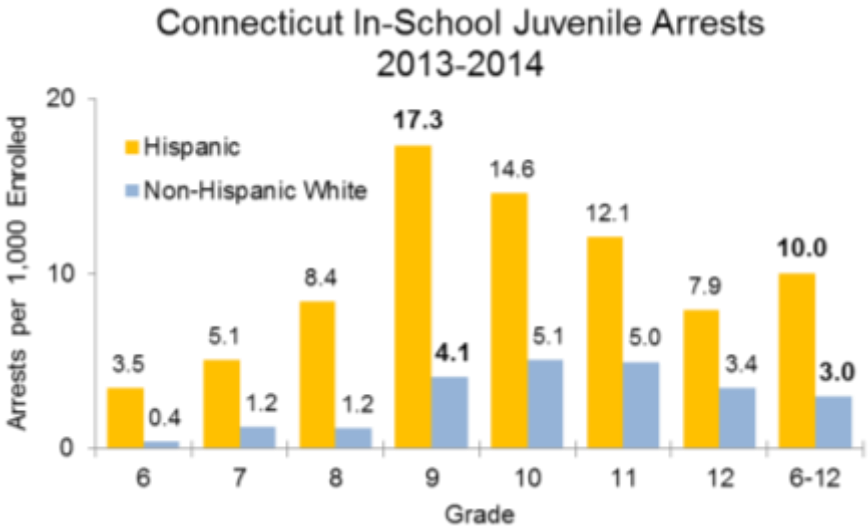
[13] Downloaded 09oct2014 from http://censusscope.org/2010Census/
[14] Downloaded 09oct2014 from http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/dis/census/segregation2010.html
[15] Overcoming Impediments to Fair Housing presented to Task Force to Study Impediments to Fair Housing Choice on 18dec2013 at http://cga.ct.gov/pd/tfs/20131030_Impediments%20to%20Fair%20Housing%20Choice%20Task%20Force/20131218/Overcoming%20Impediments%20to%20Fair%20Housing.pdf

Educational Success

Reduce In-School Juvenile Arrests of Latino Children

The issue:

During the 2013-2014 academic year for grades 6 to 12 in Connecticut, the rate of in-school arrests of Hispanic juveniles (10 per 1,000 enrolled) was more than three times the rate for non-Hispanic white juveniles (3 per 1,000 enrolled).[16] The greatest disparity is in 9th grade where arrests of Hispanic juveniles (17.3 per 1,000 enrolled) was more than 4 times the rate for white juveniles (4.1 per 1,000 enrolled).



Arrest rates vary dramatically among schools in the same district as well as between districts. [17,18] During 2010-2011, the arrest rate for Hispanic juveniles in Hartford Public Schools was **3.5** per 1,000 compared to **37.1** per 1,000 in Meriden Public Schools.

A major contributor to these disparate arrest rates is the lack of a statewide standard that specifies criteria for in-school "arrestable" offenses. Furthermore, the implementation of "no tolerance" policies varies both from school-to-school and between school districts.

Research on juvenile arrests clearly shows that when a juvenile is arrested it sets into motion a series of events resulting in a downward spiral in the life of the child leading to, "… repeat offenses and unemployment."[19] These negative consequences result in part from how juveniles are treated by the school system after they are arrested, and not the arrest itself.

Legislative recommendations:

- We must ensure that police departments and school boards have criteria to identify incidents that require police assistance. This standard should be implemented with equal enforcement in all schools throughout the state.
- There needs to be a common standard for "arrestable" offenses.
- All school districts must have policies in place to deescalate confrontations among students and between students and staff.

Administrative recommendations:

- Professional development training should be provided to all school staff on best practices to deescalate confrontations among students and between students and staff.
- Particular focus should be placed on identifying "at risk" children and on decreasing arrests in 9th grade, which has the highest number of arrests statewide.

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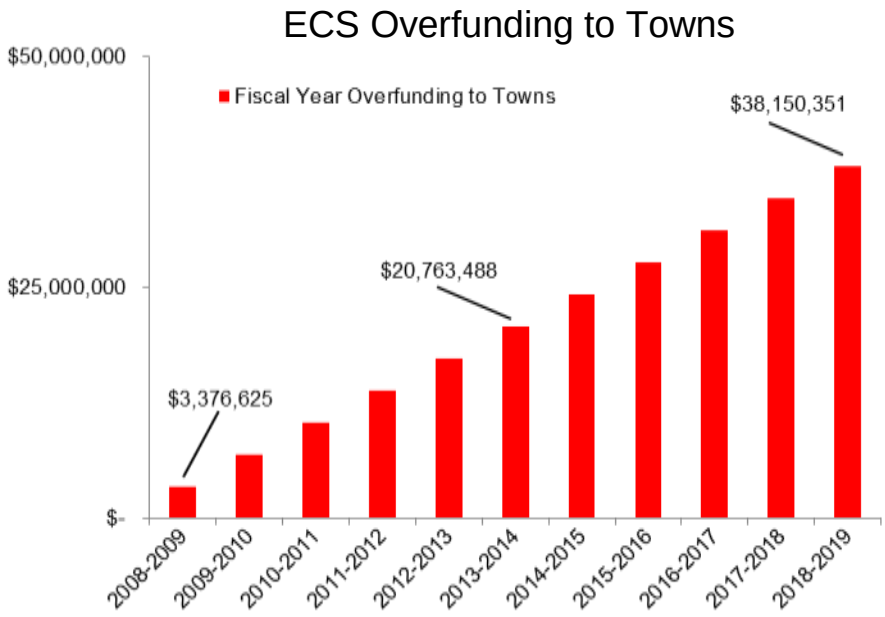
[16] Email from Angela Gambaccini-May (SDE) received on 13nov2014.
[17] CT Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee
[18] *Arresting Development: Student Arrests in Connecticut;* arrest rates per 1,000 are within racial/ethnic group
[19] *Consequences of Juvenile Arrests on Education: How Law and Educational Policies Hurt More than Help*

Stop State Overfunding of Some Town Education Budgets

The issue:

The state's Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant gave nearly $2 billion to towns for K-12 education in fiscal year 2013-2014.[20] The amount of ECS funding to towns is supposedly based on a formula with several variables that weigh a town's need versus its ability to pay. However, the state does not adhere to the formula as some towns get more funding than the formula requires while most towns receive less.[21,22]



The underlying cause of overfunding is that towns have not had their ECS funding reduced even when enrollments declined and/or the wealth of the town increased.

If the current trend continues, the state will have overfunded K-12 education in 93 towns by a total of **$228 million** in the decade from fiscal year 2008-2009 to 2018-2019.[23] When formula-based declines in ECS funding are not carried out (i.e. towns held harmless), the subsequent overfunding of some towns results in the underfunding of others.

Legislative recommendations:

- ECS funds to towns that are currently overfunded should be shifted to towns most underfunded based on the ECS formula, using the most currently available data, over a three-year period.

Administrative recommendations:

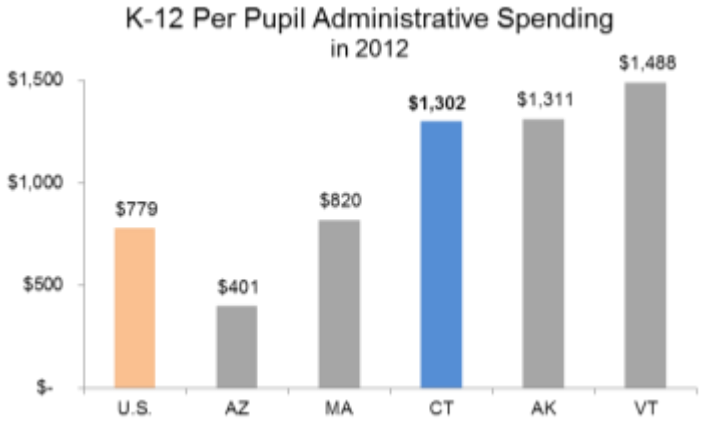
- The ECS formula must be updated every year with the most current data available with funding to towns adjusted accordingly.

[20] Grants Summary (Connecticut Office of Fiscal Analysis) at http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa/dashboard1.asp
[21] *Problems with Connecticut's Education Cost Sharing Grant*
[22] *A Primer About Education Finance in Connecticut*
[23] Estimate based on interpolation/extrapolation of 2008-2009 and 2013-2014 ECS data from the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Require K-12 Education Accountability

The issue:

On average in 2012, Connecticut spent $16,274 per pupil on K-12 education, which was the **4th** highest per pupil spending among the states.[24] For K-12 administration (school administration + general administration), Connecticut spent $1,302 per pupil ranking **3rd** highest.



Contrary to opinions that cost savings can be derived from K-12 regionalization, empirical studies have shown that there can be diseconomies of scale (costs go up) when school districts get too large.[25] Estimates show that Michigan would save $363 million annually in K-12 education costs if larger school districts were broken up into smaller districts with an optimum enrollment of 2,900. A study by *The Connecticut Economy* suggests that a high school district enrollment of about 2,800 students is the most cost-effective for obtaining high educational outcomes in Connecticut.[26]

In Connecticut, over 75 percent of public school districts have declining enrollments.[27] While the overall population of children is declining, the population of Hispanic children is growing and Hispanics are forecast to account for over 20 percent of the state's working-age population by 2030. [28,29]

In 2013, Connecticut had the **highest** achievement gap in 8th grade **math** and the **3rd** highest in 8th grade **reading** between white and Hispanic students nationwide.[30] If the state is to fill employer demands for skilled and educated workers, and keep businesses in Connecticut, the achievement gap among Hispanic children must be eliminated.

The National Bureau for Economic Research (NBER) estimates that Connecticut could generate an additional net benefit worth about $2.6 billion yearly "forever" by raising the lifetime earning potential of children from low-income households.[31] Raising the educational attainment of the state's low-income children, who are disproportionately Hispanic, is the surest way of growing the state's economy.

Administrative recommendations:

- Ensure that K-12 education funds are spent effectively on programs that provide tangible improvements in outcomes for children in the lowest performing school districts.
- Fully fund and expedite the reporting of municipal school finance data via the Uniform Chart of Accounts.
- Fund a study to determine the optimal school district enrollment that would result in reduced K-12 education costs while improving educational achievement in Connecticut.

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[24] American Community Survey, 2012 Annual Survey of School System Finances, Table SSF008
[25] Spradlin, Terry E., Fatima R. Carson, Sara E. Hess, and Jonathan A. Plucker, "Revisiting School District Consolidation Issues." (2010): 8. Center for Evaluation and Education Policy. Web.
[26] Heffley, Dennis, and Can Bekaroglu, "Getting More From Less, Measuring Efficiency in Connecticut High School Districts." (2010): Winter. The Connecticut Economy, p.7. Web.
[27] State Dept. of Education at http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2758&q=334898; 2013-2014 vs. 2009-2010; 78% districts declining
[28] 2005-2030 Population Projections for Connecticut at http://web2.uconn.edu/ctsdc/projections/2005_2030_projections.html
[29] *Connecticut's Changing Demographics Foreshadow Declining Workforce Income*
[30] The Nation's Report Card 2013
[31] *Investing in Poor Children Makes Economic Sense*

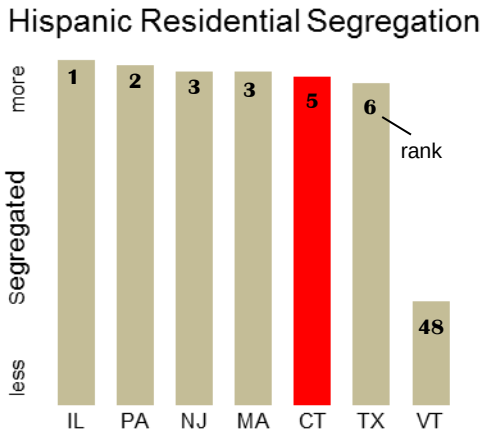
Increase Availability of Low- and Moderate-Income Housing in High Performing School Districts

The issue:

Closing the achievement gap between Hispanics and whites in Connecticut requires a comprehensive approach that improves the lives of Latino children 24/7.[32] The current emphasis on the Common Core should not distract from issues of equal importance such as increasing the availability of **affordable housing in high performing school districts** and creating stable home lives in safe communities for low-income children.

The educational achievement of a child is equally dependent on both the quality of their life outside the classroom as well as the quality of instruction inside the classroom.

Among the states, Connecticut ranks **5th highest** in housing segregation between whites and Hispanics.[33] In fact, Latinos in Connecticut live in communities that are more segregated than in Texas. Furthermore, the Bridgeport metropolitan area is the 6th most segregated in the country for Hispanics and the Hartford metropolitan area ranks 7th.[34] Based on criteria from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, 30 percent of Hispanics and 10 percent of all children in Connecticut live in a Racially Concentrated Area of Poverty (RCAP).[35]



Last year, the Connecticut Fair Housing Center reported: *State housing regulations **are not in compliance** with current fair housing laws*.[36]

Eliminating the achievement gap between Hispanics and whites in Connecticut requires that Hispanic children live in communities that are safe, racially diverse and income diverse, and where all children are optimistic about their future and are regarded as an important asset for the state's future.

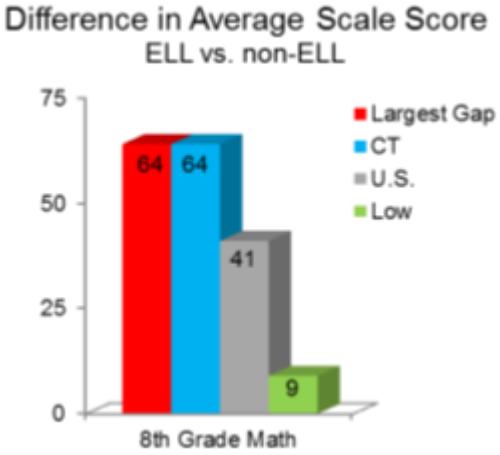
Legislative recommendations:

- More housing for low- and moderate-income families with children is needed in high performing school districts.
- No additional multi-unit housing (targeted at families with children) should be built in census tracts where the minority population is greater than the statewide percentage (31 percent) and/or where the poverty rate is above the statewide rate (10.7 percent).[37]

[32] A Master Plan to Eliminate the Achievement Gap in Connecticut, April 16, 2014
[33] Downloaded 09oct2014 from http://censusscope.org/2010Census/; data for New York and Louisiana is not available.
[34] Downloaded 09oct2014 from http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/dis/census/segregation2010.html
[35] Sources: ACS 2006 to 2010 table B17019, Census 2010 SF2 table PCT5, RCAP formula from HUD
[36] Overcoming Impediments to Fair Housing presented to Task Force to Study Impediments to Fair Housing Choice on 18dec2013 at http://cgalites/pd/taskforce.asp?TF=20131030_Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Task Force
[37] ACS 2013 1-yr tables B03002 and B17020

Reform Bilingual Education Programs to Improve Outcomes

The issue:



While overall K-12 enrollment in Connecticut is declining, the population of English Language Learners (ELLs) in Connecticut public schools increased by nearly 50 percent from 21,305 (3.7 percent of enrollment,) in academic year 2001-2002, to 31,380 (5.9 percent of enrollment), in 2013-2014.[38,39]

Unfortunately, the state's public education system has not dealt adequately with the growing number of non-English speaking students. When comparing 8th grade math scores between ELL and non-ELL students, the state has the **worst** outcomes in the country.[40] For 8th grade reading, Connecticut has the 2nd highest gap between ELL and non-ELL students. It is not surprising then that the five-year graduation rate in Connecticut for ELLs is 70 percent versus 88 percent for non-ELL students.[41]

In 2012, state government in Connecticut spent $7,150 per pupil (12th highest) on K-12 education[42], but was among the lowest in state spending per ELL student at $64[43]. In comparison in Arkansas, which has the 2nd best ELL outcomes in the country, the state spent $299 per ELL student.

Currently, Connecticut law requires school districts to have a minimum of 20 ELL-eligible students before bilingual instruction must be provided to those students and before a district can receive state funding for bilingual instruction.[44] Furthermore, there is a one-year delay before school districts receive state funding after they have met the 20-student threshold. Currently, the state will fund bilingual education for a maximum of 30 months[45], which academic research shows is insufficient to develop cognitive skills in a second language[46].

Legislative recommendations:

- Eliminate the 20-student minimum for school districts to qualify for state bilingual education funding and study the feasibility of having the Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) provide bilingual education services for school districts with a low enrollment of ELL students.
- Increase the maximum number of months for bilingual instruction to 60 months.
- Eliminate the 1-year delay in bilingual education funding to school districts.

Administrative recommendations:

- Require the Uniform Chart of Accounts to report bilingual education revenues and expenditures from all sources for each school.
- Focus on programs with proven efficacy such as dual language.
- Allow students to take standardized testing in their native language.

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[38] Downloaded 28oct2014 from http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/DTHome.aspx
[39] Email from Michael Sabados (SDE) dated 06nov2014
[40] The Nation's Report Card 2013 math scores at http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/#/
[41] http://www.governor.ct.gov/malloy/cwp/view.asp?A=4010&Q=545016
[42] American Community Survey , 2012 Annual Survey of School System Finances, Table SSF11C
[43] U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Public School System Finances, table elsec12.xls variable C07 (in 1,000s); 2012 ELL enrollment from NCES Digest of Education Statistics table 204.20
[44] Connecticut General Statute § 10-17f(b)
[45] Connecticut General Statute § 10-17f(d)
[46] Memorandum from W. Oyanadel to State Senator Stillman dated 18mar2014 re: Bilingual Education Questions for SB 476.

Promote STEM Courses among Latino Students in Middle School and High School

The issue:

The future workforce will need "critical thinking" and "problem solving" skills that can be taught in courses that focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).[47] In particular, Connecticut's manufacturers are highly dependent on a workforce with a strong STEM skill set.

International Space Station image from nasa.gov.

> "…the state [Connecticut] is a leader in industries such as **aerospace, hydrogen fuel cells, signal processing, advanced propulsion, medical devices, and biotechnology**. Manufacturing accounts for over $24 billion of the state's gross [domestic] product. With almost 4,400 manufacturers employing over 150,000 workers, manufacturing companies pay nearly $10 billion in wages per year. Workers in the state's manufacturing sector receive an average of almost $64,000 in annual total compensation."[48]

Currently, 8th grade Latino students in Connecticut have the highest achievement gap in math nationwide and are therefore not prepared to take advantage of the many STEM jobs that will be available in the state's manufacturing sector as Baby Boomers enter retirement.[49] While Hispanics have disproportionately high rates of unemployment, nationwide Hispanics with a degree in science or engineering have an unemployment rate below 5 percent.[50] Connecticut is going to depend increasingly on Hispanics to fill the state's workforce needs but Hispanics are significantly underrepresented in STEM careers.

Legislative recommendations:

- Provide financial incentives (e.g. student loan forgiveness) to increase the number of math and science teachers working in Alliance Districts.

Administrative recommendations:

- Provide professional development training to middle school and high school counselors on the need for STEM skills in the workforce, and the underrepresentation of Latinos in STEM careers.
- Offer a comprehensive curriculum of STEM courses in middle schools and high schools that serve Latino communities.

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[47] *CBIA 2014 Survey of Connecticut Manufacturing and Workforce Needs*
[48] *Reaching Future Manufacturers in Middle School*
[49] The Nation's Report Card 2013 achievement gap between Hispanics and whites
[50] *Disparities in STEM Employment by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin*

Economic Self-Sufficiency

Expand Contract Set Aside for Minority Business Enterprises to Include State Grants to Municipalities as Well as School Building Construction and Maintenance

The issue:

School construction image from myrecordjournal.com 08mar2014

The *Great Recession* in Connecticut was particularly difficult for Hispanic workers. While the unemployment rate for whites peaked at 7.5 percent in 2010, unemployment among Hispanics peaked at a dramatically higher 17.8 percent in 2011.[51] Currently, Connecticut has the 6th highest unemployment rate for Hispanics nationwide even as Hispanics will be needed to fill thousands of job openings created by the state's retiring Baby Boomers.[52]

In fiscal year 2013-2014, **$430 million** of state grants to municipalities[53] (excluding ECS and Adult Ed from statutory grantee-specific programs) and more than **$220 million** in state grants for school building projects[54] were excluded from the Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) set aside.

In 2013, working-age Hispanics (18-64) accounted for 15 percent[55] of the state's working-age population, which will grow to over 20 percent[56] by 2030. Furthermore, in 2014 Hispanics accounted for only 10 percent of the state's executive branch employees[57] and only 6 percent[58] of non-partisan legislative branch employees. It is vital for the state's economic future that Hispanic workers start entering the workforce now in large numbers to gain the skills for the workforce needs of Connecticut businesses.

Legislative recommendations:

- Increase total funds set aside for MBEs by including:
  - State grants to municipalities including the State-Owned Property PILOT Grant, Colleges and Hospitals PILOT Grant, Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Grant, Town Aid Road Grant, LoCIP Grant, and Grants for Municipal Projects.[59]
  - State grants for school building projects.
- State grant funds used for *maintenance* of municipal school buildings.
- Implement recommendations from the Connecticut Disparity Study: Phase 2.[60] In particular, fully fund the development of a Diversity Data Management System, which is a requirement for the study to be completed.

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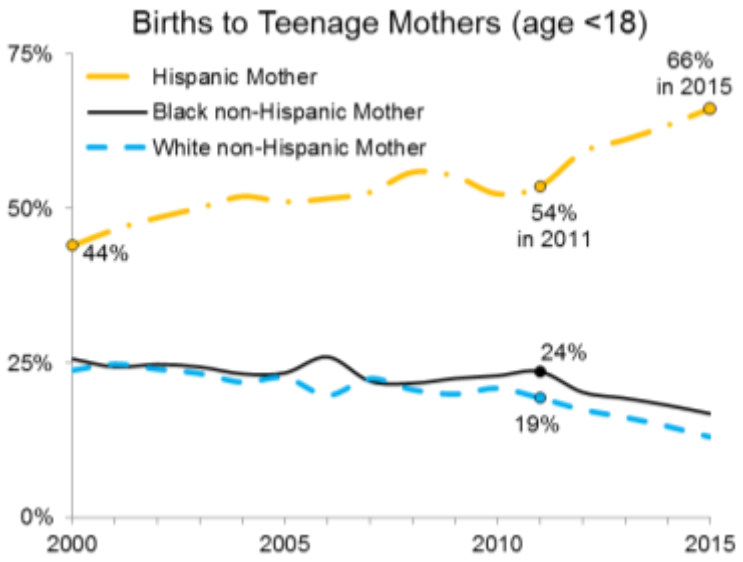
[51] http://www.ctvoices.org/sites/default/files/econ14workingct.pdf
[52] ACS 2013 1-yr table S2301.
[53] FY 2013, FY 2014 AND FY 2015 Estimates of State Formula Aid to Municipalities, $430,442,312 = ($2,441,041,566-($20,613,915+$1,989,985,339))
[54] 2014 DAS School Building Project Priorities, tables 3 & 4 excluding the CT Technical High School System ($220,579,041=$180,715,092+$39,863,949)
[55] ACS 2013 1-yr tables B01001 and B01001I.
[56] *Connecticut's Changing Demographics Foreshadow Declining Workforce Income*
[57] Email from Cindy Rusczyk (DAS) dated 29july2014.
[58] Email from Jim Tamburro (OLM) dated 21july2014.
[59] Estimates of State Formula Aid to Municipalities
[60] Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering

Reduce Pregnancies to Latino Mothers Who are Age 17 or Younger

The issue:

While teenage births have declined among all racial/ethnic groups in Connecticut, the declines have not been as significant among Latino females. In Connecticut in 2011, Latino females were 20% of the population of females under age 18.[61] However, Latino females accounted for 54% of births to teenage mothers (<18).[62] Latino females are forecast to account for 66% of teenage births in 2015.[63]



In 2011, teen pregnancy and childbirth cost U.S. taxpayers $9.4 billion and was a significant contributor to higher high school dropout rates among teen mothers.[64]

There are various causes for the higher rate of teenage births among Latino females (relative to whites and African Americans). Racial and economic isolation create barriers to positive youth outcomes and reinforce perceptions that there are few life choices available to teenage Latinas living in poverty. There is also the cultural outlook of families coming to the U.S. from Latin America who are not aware of the loss of economic opportunities for teenage mothers in the U.S. High poverty among Latinos also contributes to less access to contraception and an increase in the likelihood of an unstable home life.

Legislative recommendations:

- Comprehensive and developmentally appropriate school-based sexual health education should be ***required*** **starting in elementary school**, for girls as well as boys.[65]
- Increase access to contraception for low-income teens and provide ***consistent year-to-year funding*** for evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs with proven efficacy.
- Increase the availability of **licensed maternity group homes** with comprehensive resources for homeless teen mothers to graduate from high school and become economically self-sufficient.
- Teen mothers should be given support to graduate from high school including transportation to/from school and childcare, as well as other services to make them economically self-sufficient and **reduce the incidence of second births** to teenage mothers.
- More youth employment programs are needed that would increase the feeling of self-worth among teenage Hispanic girls and lead to **economic self-sufficiency**.

[61] ACS 2011 1-yr tables B01001 and B01001I.
[62] CT DPH downloaded 18sept2014 from http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3132&q=394598. Table 4.
[63] 2012-2015 births using forecast function in Excel based on 1998 to 2011 data from DPH.
[64] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - About Teen Pregnancy
[65] CT State Dept. of Education, Section 1 - Overview of Sexual Health Education

Increase Number of Internships and Summer Jobs for Low-Income Youth Throughout Connecticut

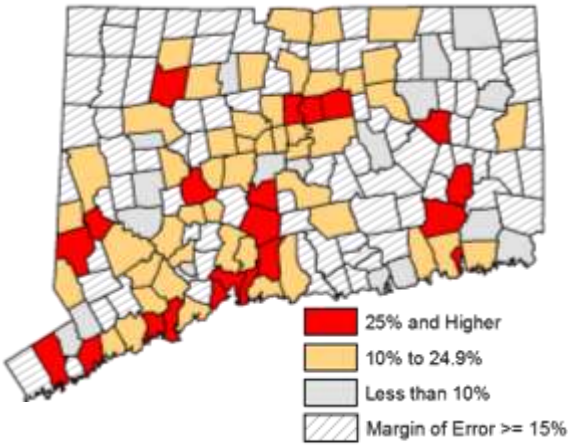
The issue:

Connecticut has very high unemployment rates for its young workers looking for their first job.[66] In many of the state's towns, unemployment for those ages 16-19 is over 25 percent, which is more than double the statewide unemployment rate of 9 percent in 2012.[67]

> *You cannot get hired for a second job until you have had a first job.*

Historically, young workers from low-income households obtained their first job through federal summer jobs programs; however, funding for these programs has been cut.[68]

Unemployment in 2012
Ages 16-19



Each year a young adult does not get their first job, they become harder to employ and it increases their chances of becoming dependent upon social services for much of their life. It has been estimated that each *opportunity* youth (i.e. idle or disconnected; not working and not in school) results in, *"… an immediate taxpayer burden of $13,900 per year and an immediate social burden of $37,450 per year."*[69] After age 25, each opportunity youth will, *"… impose a future lifetime taxpayer burden of $170,740 and a social burden of $529,030."*

In addition to increasing workforce readiness, some summer job programs for low-income youth have resulted in (1) increased school attendance, (2) decreases in violent crime arrests, and (3) decreases in drug and alcohol use.[70]

Legislative recommendations:

- Increase the number of federal- and state-funded summer jobs for low-income youth in urban and rural areas with the highest youth unemployment rates.
- Increase the number of low-income youth participating in paid internships during the school year.
- Implement a lottery system for summer jobs programs to ensure there is no nepotism in who gets a job.

[66] *The State of Working Connecticut 2013: Young People in the Workforce*
[67] ACS 2008-2012 5yr S2301; 2013 margin-of-error was much higher than for 2012
[68] *The Continued Collapse of the Nation's Teen Summer Job Market: Who Worked in the Summer of 2011?*
[69] *The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth*
[70] *Expanding Summer Employment Opportunities for Low-Income Youth*

Free From Discrimination

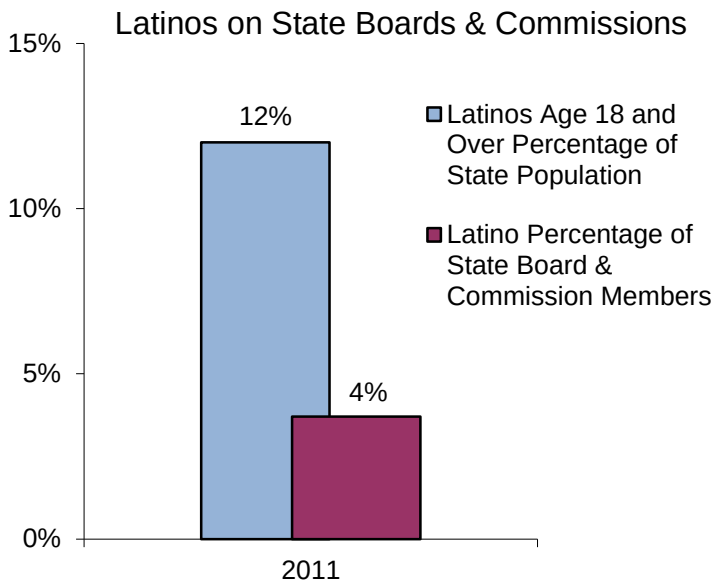
Increase Number of Latinos on Public Sector Boards and Commissions

The issue:

In 2011, 12 percent of the state's adult population, age 18 and over, was Latino, but only 4 percent of appointees to state boards and commissions were Latino.[71]

In Connecticut, Latinos have the lowest rate of involvement as *local* community leaders so it is not a surprise that Latinos are also the most underrepresented racial/ethnic group on *state* boards and commissions.[72,73]

We need to know more about the ethnic and racial diversity of regional and municipal boards and commissions, which are the pathways to state-level participation.



Legislative recommendations:

- Towns and other municipal organizations should be required to report the age, race, and sex of elected and appointed officials annually. Data is needed to identify regional and municipal organizations that do not reflect the diversity of the community they serve so that more targeted efforts can be made to recruit individuals from diverse backgrounds to become civically involved.

Administrative recommendations:

- A determined and visible effort must be made by public and quasi-public organizations at all levels of government (state, regional, and municipal) to recruit individuals that reflect the diversity of the communities they represent. Latinos working in both the public sector and private sector should be encouraged to become more civically active.
- We must ensure Connecticut increases its stock of state-level Latino leaders by eliminating barriers to *local* civic involvement, which is often the initial pathway to state-level civic engagement. To this end, the state should fund LPRAC's proposed analysis An Inventory of Barriers to Local Civic Engagement for Latinos in Connecticut's Municipalities, which will (1) identify municipalities where Latinos are underrepresented on local boards and commissions, and (2) where applicable, highlight the barriers that hinder Latino civic participation at the municipal and regional levels.

[71] ACS 2011 1-yr tables B01001 and B01001I
[72] *2011 Connecticut Civic Health Index*
[73] 2011 report *Gender and Racial Composition of Connecticut State Boards and Commissions*

Increase Economic Growth by Increasing Racial Diversity in the Workplace

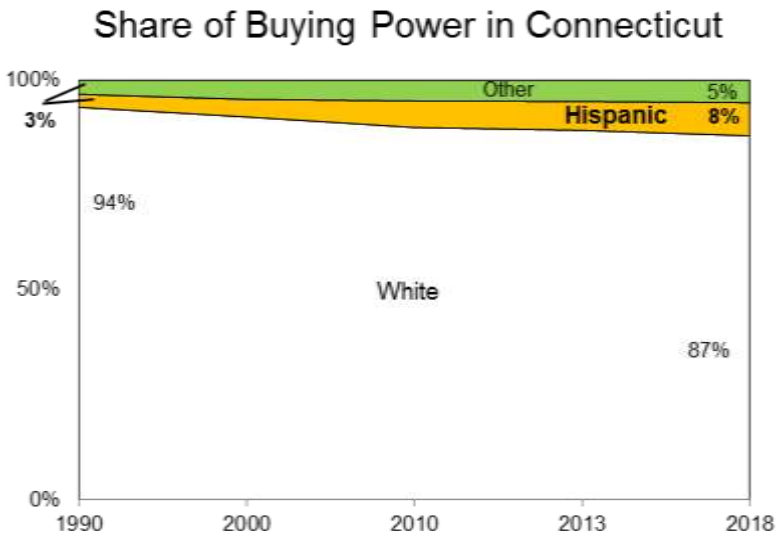
The issue:

Hispanics account for 15 percent of the working-age population (age 18-64) in Connecticut, but only 6 percent of employees working for the General Assembly and 10 percent of employees in the executive branch self-identified as Latino.[74,75] Furthermore, statewide unemployment among Latinos was 12.2 percent compared to 7.6 for non-Hispanic whites, in 2013.[76]

The demographics of the state's workforce is changing as the Baby Boom generation, which is predominately white and older, enters into retirement and are replaced by a workforce that is increasingly Latino.[77] In fact, the state's working-age population is forecast to be over 20 percent Latino by 2030.

Hispanic buying power will have increased from 3 percent of the state's buying power, in 1990, to 8 percent, by 2018, while the buying power of whites declines due to a declining population and aging. Between 2013 and 2018, Latino buying power in Connecticut is forecast to increase 35 percent, compared to 17 percent for the non-Hispanic population.[78]

Simply put, the future of the state's economy is inextricably linked to the future economic success of Connecticut's Latino residents.



Legislative recommendations:

- All positions in the executive branch that are open only to current state employees must be open to the public and not restricted to only the current pool of state employees, which does not reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the state's workforce.
- Practices that deter the employment of unemployed workers or discriminate against legal resident workers must be stopped.

[74] Race/ethnicity of workforce based on ACS 2013 1-yr tables B01001 and B01001I
[75] State employee data provided by OLM and DAS via email in July 2014
[76] ACS 2013 1-yr tables S2301
[77] *Connecticut's Changing Demographics Foreshadow Declining Workforce Income*
[78] *The Multicultural Economy 2013*