



2015 Legislative Summary

By any measure, the 2015 legislative session was a major success for Latinos in Connecticut. Reforms were made to improve the education of English Language Learners. Millions of dollars in new contracts were set aside for minority businesses. State labor laws now protect domestic workers. Hospitals must provide interpreters for patients who do not speak English. In addition, police officers will be trained to reduce the use of excessive force.

Connecticut Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission

August 11th, 2015



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Executive Summary

The members of the Priorities and Legislation Committee submit their review of 2015 legislative outcomes to the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC).

On Saturday, September 13th, 2014, LPRAC commissioners, and staff, met to establish the commission's policy agenda for the 2015 legislative session. Twelve commissioners attended a daylong meeting at Water's Edge, in Westport, Connecticut. Commissioners were separated into small groups to discuss issue areas within the organization's statutory mandate. The result was a list of issues considered to be of primary importance to Latino communities in Connecticut. These included short-term and long-term goals:

Economic Self-Sufficiency and Non-Discriminatory

Short-term

- ✓ Increase the number of minority business contracts
- Increase the number of summer jobs for youth
- Increase the participation of Latinos on state, regional, and local boards and commissions

Long-term

- Increase racial diversity in the workplace and within the higher education system
- Promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) among Latino students
- Reduce racial segregation in housing

Education

Short-term

- ✓ Improve education outcomes for English Language Learners (ELLs)
- ✓ Reduce in-school juvenile arrests
- ✓ Reduce chronic absenteeism

Long-term

- Increase education accountability

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Clarisa Cardone

Report Author

Orlando Rodriguez, MA

Health

Short-term

- ✓ Reduce births to teenage mothers among Latinas
- ✓ Increase availability of medical interpreters
- Increase the number of community schools with wrap-around services
- Reduce the suicide rate among Latinas

Long-term

- Reduce juvenile obesity

The Priorities and Legislation Committee is pleased to report that many of these goals were achieved (✓) during the 2015 legislative session.

Roughly, \$35 million in additional contracts were set aside for minority businesses. A long-awaited state-approved apprenticeship program for barbering was enacted. Labor laws were extended to domestic workers and more severe penalties were enacted for employers that fail to pay their employees the legal wage. A new program for housing mobility aims to improve access to communities with good schools and low crime for low-income households.

Major legislative reforms were enacted with the aim of improving K-12 education outcomes for ELLs. An additional \$11 million in state education funding was targeted at towns with the largest Latino populations. Legislation was passed that should result in fewer in-school juvenile arrests. New truancy courts will operate in urban school districts to reduce chronic absenteeism.

Funding for pregnancy prevention programs was restored. Hospitals are now required to provide medical interpreters when they are located in areas where foreign languages are more commonly spoken. Unexpectedly, legislators reduced criminal penalties for drug possession and required more training for police officers with the aim of reducing the excessive use of force by police.

Commissioners will meet again for another full day on September 12th, 2015, to set legislative priorities for the 2016 legislative session. LPRAC's policy agenda will be updated to: (1) remove those legislative goals that were achieved in 2015, (2) add new goals for 2016, and (3) reprioritize goals within the overall legislative agenda.

We look forward to another successful legislative session in 2016 and ask for continued support from all our commissioners.

Sincerely,



Agnes Quiñones, Ed.D.
 Committee Chair/Priorities and Legislation Committee
 LPRAC
 July 8th, 2015

Summary of 2015 Legislative Session

Non-Discriminatory

 This legislative session made significant progress in reducing discrimination in the work place. Some domestic workers are now recognized as a legal type of worker in Connecticut, which gives them protections under employment-related anti-discrimination laws. Separately, all employees can now share their wage information with other workers and employers can no longer require employees to disclose their personal online accounts (such as Facebook). Furthermore, to incentivize employers to pay their employees fair wages, fines are doubled for employers who do not provide their employees with the minimum wage and fringe benefits as required by state law.

Economic Self-Sufficiency

 For Latino workers, the most consequential outcome was the expansion of the state contract set-aside for Minority Business Enterprises (MBE). Public works contracts awarded by municipal and quasi-state agencies are now included in the MBE set-aside, which results in 175 more local, regional, and state government entities looking for minority contractors and millions of additional dollars targeted at minority businesses.

Legislators created a long-awaited state-approved apprenticeship program for barbering, which will significantly reduce the cost of becoming a barber in Connecticut. Separately, a pilot program aimed at providing education and job readiness services to both children and their parents will operate in several towns.

Education

 This legislative session was a watershed for English Language Learners (ELLs) in Connecticut. New legislation was passed to (1) increase the maximum number of months for bilingual education from 30 to 60 months, (2) increase the supply of bilingual education teachers, (3) increase accountability of school districts for educating ELLs, and (4) allow ELLs to take mastery tests in their native language, among others.

Also of great importance to Latinos, new legislation aims to reduce the disproportionately high rate of in-school juvenile arrests among Hispanic youth. Separately, truancy courts will operate in the state's largest population towns with the aim of reducing chronic absenteeism in K-12. Changes were made to charter schools making them more accountable and transparent in their operations. An additional \$11 million dollars in state funding for K-12 education was approved for towns with the largest Latino populations.

This legislative session gave Latinos several long needed reforms in K-12 education; however, Latino communities have to become informed and engaged with their school district administrators to ensure that laws enacted to help ELLs and Hispanic youth are implemented in their community's schools as required by state law.

Health

Progress was made to improve the health of Latinos in Connecticut. Lower thresholds were established for when parents must be informed that their children have lead in their blood. State funding for teen pregnancy prevention programs was approved at \$1.7 million for 2015-2016 and \$1.8 million for 2016-2017. In addition, hospitals must now provide interpreters for foreign-language patients.



However, Latino communities have a disproportionately high incidence of lead in their surroundings and more state funding is needed for lead abatement. Legislation to reduce the level of toxic cadmium in children's jewelry was not adopted. Several bills that aimed to reduce the incidence of obesity among Latino children were not approved.

Housing

Without a doubt, housing legislation was the least fruitful for Latinos in the 2015 session.



Only one bill passed with the aim of increasing access to housing for low-income families in high-opportunity areas with good schools and low crime. Several bills that would increase the availability of low-income housing outside of urban areas did not get past the public hearing phase. Fortunately, legislation was defeated that would have made affordable housing open to only the elderly, which would have negatively affected Latino households.

Latino communities in Connecticut are among the top 5 most residentially segregated in the country. It should be a top priority to increase the availability of housing outside of urban areas for low-income families.

Public Safety

A surprise during this session was the success of legislation that decreases criminal penalties and increases parole eligibility when convicted for a crime before age 18. Criminal penalties for drug possession were also reduced, and the parole process was expedited for those convicted of a nonviolent crime. In addition, requirements that are more restrictive were put in place to reduce the transfer of cases from juvenile court to criminal court. More good news came with the passing of legislation aimed at reducing the excessive use of force by police officers by required training on: (1) using physical force, (2) using body-worn recording equipment, and (3) bias-free policing, among others.



Approved Legislation

Non-Discriminatory

EMPLOYEE ONLINE PRIVACY

[Public Act 15-6](#)

[Prohibits employers](#) from requesting or requiring an employee or job applicant to: (1) provide the employer with a user name, password, or other way to access the employee's or applicant's personal online account (such as Facebook), (2) authenticate or access such an account in front of the employer, or (3) invite, or accept an invitation from the employer to join a group affiliated with such an account. It bars employers from retaliating against employees or applicants who refuse to provide this access.

EMPLOYERS MUST PAY LEGAL WAGE*

[Public Act 15-86](#)

Employers are required to pay employees the legal minimum wage and provide fringe benefits as required by Connecticut law. Employers that [violate the law](#) will be fined double damages plus attorney's fees. Furthermore, an employer cannot claim that an employee agreed to work for a lower wage than required by law.

COMMISSION ON RACIAL & ETHNIC DISPARITIES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

[Public Act 15-109](#)

Existing governing statutes are changed for the [Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System](#) including, among others: (1) requiring the commission to meet quarterly, (2) establishing the commission's mission, and (3) changing duties of the commission.

EMPLOYEES SHARING THEIR WAGE INFORMATION

[Public Act 15-196](#)

A new law prohibits employers from penalizing their employees for: (1) disclosing or discussing their own wages or a co-employee's voluntarily disclosed wages, or (2) asking about a co-employee's wages. It also bars employers from requiring an employee to sign a document that waives these speech rights.

BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS*

[Public Act 15-249](#)

Employment-related anti-discrimination laws are extended to some "domestic workers." This includes: (1) protections against employment-related discrimination based on their race, color, religion, age, sex, gender identity, marital status, national origin, ancestry, and mental or physical disability, (2) a right to a reasonable leave of absence for a disability resulting from a pregnancy and other pregnancy-related protections, and (3) protections against sexual harassment, among other protections.

**REDUCED PENALTIES
FOR DRUG
POSSESSION AND
EXPEDITED PAROLES**

[Public Act 15-2](#)

The criminal penalty for 1st and 2nd convictions on illegal drug possession is reduced from a felony to a Class “A” misdemeanor. The penalty for possession of an illegal drug near a school or day care center is reduced to a Class “A” misdemeanor and requires imprisonment and probation that includes community service. This does not apply to individuals classified as persistent offenders and it does not apply to manufacturing, distributing, selling, etc... with the intent to sell, dispense, or give a person illegal drugs. An expedited pardons review is available to anyone convicted of a nonviolent crime.

**REDUCE EXCESSIVE
USE OF FORCE BY
POLICE OFFICERS**

[Public Act 15-4](#)

Training of police officers is required on (a) using physical force, (b) using body-worn recording equipment, and (3) bias-free policing, among others. The Office of Policy and Management is to provide grants for municipal police departments to purchase body-worn recording equipment. An investigation is required when *any* use of physical force by a police officer results in a death. Law enforcement units are required to promote the goal of having police departments that are racially, ethnically, and gender diverse.

Economic Self-Sufficiency

**BARBER
APPRENTICESHIPS***

[Public Act 15-31](#)

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) is authorized to grant a barber license to an applicant who successfully completes a Connecticut Labor Department-approved [apprenticeship program](#) and meets other requirements. Completing an approved barber apprenticeship can substitute for the 1,000-hour course of study otherwise required.

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TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION*

[Public Act 15-244](#)

Latino females account for over half of all births to teenage mothers in Connecticut. LPRAC testified in support of teen pregnancy prevention programs. The legislature approved total funding for teen pregnancy prevention programs at \$1.7 million for 2015-2016 and \$1.8 million for 2016-2017.

BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS*

[Public Act 15-249](#)

Employment-related anti-discrimination laws are extended to some "domestic workers." This includes: (1) protections against employment-related discrimination based on their race, color, religion, age, sex, gender identity, marital status, national origin, ancestry, and mental or physical disability, (2) a right to a reasonable leave of absence for a disability resulting from a pregnancy and other pregnancy-related protections, and (3) protections against sexual harassment, among other protections.

EXPAND STATE SET-ASIDE PROGRAM FOR MINORITY BUSINESSES*

[Public Act 15-5](#)

The set-aside for the Minority Business Enterprise Program (MBE) is expanded to include public works contracts awarded by municipalities and quasi-public agencies funded with state grants. This will result in 175 more local, regional, and state government entities participating in the state's MBE set-aside program and millions of additional dollars in state-funded contracts targeted at minority businesses.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS

[Public Act 15-5](#)

[Two-generational](#) pilot programs will operate in Bridgeport, Colchester, Greater Hartford, Meriden, New Haven, and Norwalk. These programs will foster economic self-sufficiency in low-income households by delivering education and job readiness services across two generations in the same household. Connecticut is the first state to create a two-generational policy for reducing poverty. By focusing on readiness—for school in the case of children, for work in the case of parents—the policy aims to ensure the success of not just individuals, but families.

Education

EXPAND IN-STATE TUITION ELIGIBILITY [Public Act 15-82](#)

In-state tuition at the state's public higher education institutions is extended to students who have completed [at least two years of high school](#) in Connecticut. Furthermore, in-state tuition eligibility is granted to nonimmigrant aliens who (1) are human trafficking victims or (2) have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of certain criminal activity.

PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE TWO SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION [Public Act 15-96](#)

A new law prohibits local and regional boards of education, inter-district magnet schools, and charter schools from imposing out-of-school [suspensions or expulsions](#) on students enrolled in preschool programs or in grades kindergarten through two, with exceptions.

MORE MINORITY AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN K-12* [Public Act 15-108](#)

Modifications are made to laws governing K-12 education to, among others: (1) increase the supply of teachers in [teacher shortage areas](#), (2) improve minority teacher recruitment and retention, (3) require the State Dept. of Education to enter into agreements on certification reciprocity with other states, and (4) require cultural competency training.

LIMIT SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT IN SCHOOLS [Public Act 15-141](#)

Teachers, administrators, and other public school employees are prohibited from using life-threatening physical restraints on any student. In addition, limits for how long students can be kept in allowable physical restraints or seclusion are set and the types of locations in which a student may be secluded are specified.

A STUDENT LOAN BILL OF RIGHTS [Public Act 15-162](#)

A new position of [student loan borrower ombudsman](#) is created. Licensure requirements and standards of conduct are created for student loan servicers and the scope of services that are subject to licensure are specified. The ombudsman will conduct investigations and examinations, and take enforcement action against violators.

REDUCE IN-SCHOOL JUVENILE ARRESTS*

[Public Act 15-168](#)

[Public Act 15-5](#)

Aimed at reducing [in-school juvenile arrests](#), local and regional school boards having a sworn police officer in a school must enter into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with their local police department to define the officer's role and responsibilities. The MOU must address daily interactions among students, school personnel, and police officers, and must include a graduated response model for student discipline.

REDUCE CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IN K-12

[Public Act 15-225](#)

New mandates call for the creation of [children's probate court truancy clinics](#) in towns designated as alliance districts based on specific thresholds for chronic absenteeism. The Connecticut State Department of Education, along with the Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap, are required to develop a chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan by January 1st, 2016, for use by local and regional school boards.

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

[Public Act 15-238](#)

Among other requirements, this law establishes the Mastery Examination Committee within the State Department of Education and charges it with studying Connecticut's mastery test system and issuing a report and recommendations to the Education Committee.

REFORM CHARTER SCHOOLS*

[Public Act 15-239](#)

Includes [changes to laws](#) governing charter schools including, among others: (1) greater accountability for student performance, (2) more transparency of fiscal matters, (3) redesign of the approval process for charter schools, and (4) background checks for individuals working in a charter school.

K-12 EDUCATION FUNDING FOR TOWNS*

[Public Act 15-244](#)

There is an increase of \$22.9 million to towns in the Education Cost Sharing Grant (ECS) in fiscal 2016. Of this, the ten towns with the largest Latino populations received more than \$11 million in additional ECS funding.

IMPROVE EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN K-12*

[Public Act 15-5](#)

The maximum number of months of bilingual education increases from 30 to 60 months with approval from either the local board of education or the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE). Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) are to study the feasibility of RESCs providing English Language Learner (ELL) services and bilingual education for school districts with a low enrollment of ELLs. The mastery test scores of ELLs who have been in school for less than 2 years will not be used in calculating neither a school's nor a district's performance index. Mastery tests must be provided in an ELL's native language for the most common foreign languages and other foreign languages as approved by the U.S. Department of Education. An ELL pilot program will be implemented in four school districts. School districts are required to meet with parents of ELL students and explain the availability of native language accommodations for mastery tests. SDE must report yearly to the legislature's Education Committee on academic progress and the quality of bilingual education programs of local and regional school districts. Several changes are made to bilingual teacher certification requirements to increase the supply of bilingual education teachers.

Health

LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS IN HOSPITALS*

[Public Act 15-34](#)

Acute care hospitals must provide interpreter services for foreign-language patients whose primary language is spoken by at least 5 percent of the population residing in the hospital's geographic service area.

CHILD LEAD POISONING AWARENESS

[Public Act 15-172](#)

Local health directors must inform parents or guardians when the level of lead in the blood of their child is 5 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood (5 µg/dL), or higher. Specifically, the local health director must inform parents of: (1) the child's potential eligibility for the state's Birth-to-Three program, (2) lead poisoning dangers, (3) ways to reduce risks, (4) and lead abatement laws.

CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS

[Public Act 15-174](#)

A new law requires more certification to exempt a child from immunizations. It exempts from immunizations only children who present a statement that the immunization would be contrary to the parent's or guardian's religious beliefs. In addition, it requires the statement to be officially acknowledged by a notary public, Connecticut-licensed attorney, judge, family support magistrate, court clerk or deputy clerk, town clerk, justice of the peace, or school nurse.

E-CIGARETTES

[Public Act 15-206](#)

A new law imposes restrictions on the use of e-cigarettes in certain establishments and public areas that are similar to existing restrictions on smoking in these areas. For example, it bans the use of e-cigarettes in state buildings, restaurants, places serving alcohol, schools, and child and health care facilities, among others.

COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH CARE SERVICES

[Public Act 15-5](#)

The Connecticut Department of Social Services and the Connecticut Department of Public Health will produce a study on the effectiveness of providing community-based health care services in Connecticut.

TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION*

[Public Act 15-244](#)

Latino females account for over half of all births to teenage mothers in Connecticut. LPRAC testified in support of teen pregnancy prevention programs. The legislature approved total funding for teen pregnancy prevention programs at \$1.7 million for 2015-2016 and \$1.8 million for 2016-2017.

Housing

INCREASE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN HIGH OPPORTUNITY AREAS*

[Public Act 15-153](#)

The Connecticut Department of Housing must create a residence mobility-counseling program to help certain individuals or families relocate to *higher opportunity areas*. Counseling, education, and support services must: (1) provide information on communities, schools, employment opportunities, and services in various areas, (2) help to locate rental housing that meets the individual's or family's needs, (3) facilitate negotiating with landlords, and (4) act as a liaison between the individual or family and the landlord

Public Safety

PROOF OF IDENTITY FOR DRIVE-ONLY LICENSES

[Public Act 15-79](#)

A foreign national identification card and an original foreign birth certificate with a raised seal are now accepted as a valid proof of identity. A consular report of birth, a foreign voter identification card, certified school transcript, and baptismal certificate are no longer valid proof of identity. Photocopies, notarized photocopies, and noncertified documents cannot be used to prove identity or residency. [Drive-only licenses](#) will have language on the back indicating they cannot be used for voting purposes.

JUVENILE SENTENCING

[Public Act 15-84](#)

A new law makes a number of [changes related to sentencing](#) and parole release of offenders who were under age 18 at the time they committed crimes.

ACCESS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT RECORDS

[Public Act 15-164](#)

A new law expands law enforcement agencies' disclosure obligations under FOIA for records relating to a person's arrest. The new law also requires that, during the period when a person's prosecution is pending, law enforcement agencies disclose under FOIA any public record that documents or depicts a person's arrest or custody, unless there is an applicable statutory exemption from disclosure.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

[Public Act 15-183](#)

A new law changes when juvenile cases may or must be transferred to adult criminal court, including (1) eliminating automatic transfers for children aged 14 through 17 charged with certain class B felonies and (2) raising the minimum age, from 14 to 15, for the (a) automatic transfer for other class B felonies or more serious crimes and (b) discretionary transfer for felonies not subject to automatic transfer.

PROTECTING SCHOOL CHILDREN

[Public Act 15-205](#)

This new law increases, from a class "A" misdemeanor to a class "E" felony the penalty for a mandated reporter who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect to DCF, if: (1) the violation is a subsequent violation, (2) the violation is willful, intentional, or due to gross negligence, or (3) a mandated reporter had actual knowledge of the abuse, neglect, or sexual assault.

**PROMOTING SAFE
HAVEN FOR
NEWBORNS***

[Public Act 15-241](#)

This legislation proclaims April 2nd of each year as Safe Haven Day to heighten awareness about the state's [safe haven for newborns law](#) by which a parent, or his or her lawful agent, may voluntarily surrender custody of an infant 30 days or younger to designated hospital staff. If there is no abuse or neglect, the parent or agent is not criminally liable for abandonment or risk of injury to the child. The Department of Children and Families assumes custody of surrendered infants.

**REDUCED PENALTIES
FOR DRUG
POSSESSION AND
EXPEDITED PAROLES**

[Public Act 15-2](#)

The criminal penalty for 1st and 2nd convictions on illegal drug possession is reduced from a felony to a Class “A” misdemeanor. The penalty for possession of an illegal drug near a school or day care center is reduced to a Class “A” misdemeanor and requires imprisonment and probation that includes community service. This does not apply to individuals classified as persistent offenders and it does not apply to manufacturing, distributing, selling, etc... with the intent to sell, dispense, or give a person illegal drugs. An expedited pardons review is available to anyone convicted of a nonviolent crime.

**REDUCE EXCESSIVE
USE OF FORCE BY
POLICE OFFICERS**

[Public Act 15-4](#)

Training of police officers is required on: (a) using physical force, (b) using body-worn recording equipment, and (3) bias-free policing, among others. The Connecticut Office of Policy and Management is to provide grants for municipal police departments to purchase body-worn recording equipment. An investigation is required when *any* use of physical force by a police officer results in a death. Law enforcement units are required to promote the goal of having police departments that are racially, ethnically, and gender diverse.

Unapproved Bills

Non-Discriminatory

[SB-106*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING RETALIATION AGAINST IMMIGRANT WORKERS

[SB-980](#) AN ACT CONCERNING PRISON GERRYMANDERING

Economic Self-Sufficiency

[SB-101](#) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM TO INCREASE DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE OF STATE CONTRACTORS

[SB-383*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION THRESHOLDS FOR PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

[HB-6877](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A MINIMUM WORK WEEK FOR PERSONS PERFORMING JANITORIAL WORK

Education

[SB-398](#) AN ACT ASSISTING STUDENTS ACCEPTED INTO THE DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS PROGRAM WITH THE COST OF COLLEGE

[HB-6953](#) AN ACT REQUIRING INFORMATION ON THE BIFURCATION OF MUNICIPAL TAX BILLS

Health

[HB-5435](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE COMMISSION ON HEALTH EQUITY

[HB-5461*](#) AN ACT IMPOSING A TAX ON SUGARY SOFT DRINKS

[HB-5653*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING CHEMICALS OF HIGH CONCERN FOR CHILDREN

[HB-5734*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING FARMERS' MARKET COUPONS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

[HB-6741*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING CADMIUM IN CHILDREN'S JEWELRY

[HB 6898*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE MARKETING OF UNHEALTHY FOODS IN SCHOOLS

Housing

[HB-6136*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING URBAN ACTION BONDS TO DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITIES

[HB-6137*](#) AN ACT STREAMLINING THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

[HB-6143*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A CENTRALIZED WAIT LIST FOR PUBLIC HOUSING

[HB-6461*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

[HB-6462*](#) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RENTAL ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM

[HB-6640*](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE ALLOCATION OF LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS