



Legislative Briefing on Racial Justice and COVID-19 *Recovery*

ENSURING EQUITABLE AND IMMEDIATE
PANDEMIC RELIEF FOR ALL CALIFORNIANS

FEBRUARY 12, 2021 | 10 AM - 11:30 AM



The pandemic, political fractures, and economic recession continue to shed light on the disparate impact to Latinx, Black, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander (NHPI), American Indian, and Alaskan Native (AIAN) populations in deadly ways. The **Racial Justice and COVID-19 Legislative Briefing held on Friday, February 12th** provided specific examples of communities that have endured continued hardships. This document summarizes the recommendations shared during the briefing. We believe that together, we can make the bold change needed to ensure all Californians thrive.

Whole Child Equity Proposal

As we envision a better future for all Californians, especially our most impacted communities, we must reimagine how we fund our education, health care, and social systems and how those systems serve our children and families. It is paramount that our state's policy response to COVID-19 addresses the years of historic under-investment. Our proposal requires a \$245 Million Investment for the establishment of the Whole Child Equity Fund in the 2021-22 State Budget for young children and families. This fund would reimagine an outdated system that continues to exclude the highest-need communities by creating an Equity Index. An Equity Index is a research-based ranking of communities facing the most significant challenges. The index will shed light on communities with the highest concentration of children 0-8 who are less likely to have access to early care and education, health services, and programs that support families. The proposal would also establish a Whole Family Wellness Hubs pilot program in the highest need areas as determined by the Equity Index. Whole Family Wellness Hubs are place-based, community-driven centers that provide integrated and coordinated services across various areas such as health, mental health, youth services, child welfare, early learning, including dual language immersion programs, home visiting, and education for both children and families.

Resources

[Karla Pleitez Howell](#), Chief of Policy and Programs for the Advancement Project California
[Mayra Alvarez](#), President of the Children's Partnership

[Tonia McMillan](#), Family Child Care Provider, Early Childhood Policy Council Member

Equity Indexes target limited resources. For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District used the Student Equity Need Index to target additional resources to the highest-need schools. See more [here](#).

Equity Corps Proposal

Building on the successes of similar models like the state's partnership with community-based organizations for the 2020 Census outreach, the Equity Corps would channel funds to community based organizations working in current COVID-19 hotspots. Besides supporting the hardest-hit communities as they recover and rebuild from the pandemic, this program would also create jobs for residents in these communities and ensure that resources are flowing directly to the communities. This proposal calls on allocating at least \$225 M in this year's state budget to create a statewide Equity Corps program that would channel funds to community-based organizations serving residents highly impacted by COVID-19 to support their resident outreach efforts with \$200 million allocated to COVID hotspots. The remaining \$25 million would support outreach to communities of color not geographically clustered.

Resources

[John Kim](#), Executive Director for the Advancement Project California

[Mike Russo](#), Managing Director of Policy and Programs for the Advancement Project California

The [RACE COUNTS COVID-19: Statewide Vulnerability & Recovery Index](#) uses ZIP Code-level data, with an overlay of the legislative districts, to identify California communities most in need of immediate and long-term pandemic and economic relief interventions.

Office of Racial Equity Proposal

Despite being a beacon of hope, California continues to grapple with racial disparities. People of color in our state are less likely to have access to socio-economic and political opportunities and, correspondingly, experience dramatically less successful outcomes than their white counterparts. The existing deep racial inequities and disadvantages are not coincidental; they are the product of decades of explicitly racist and ethnocentric governmental and non-governmental policies and practices. We can do better for communities of color.

Resources

[Kimberly Chen](#), Consultant for the Senate Health Committee

[John Dobard](#), Director of Political Voice for the Advancement Project California

[Sadalia King](#), Manager of Government Relations for the Advancement Project California

Senate Bill 17 (Pan)

Establish a statewide Office of Racial Equity (ORE) to address structural racism, increase access to equitable opportunities, and improve outcomes.

For general information on this briefing, contact [Khydeejia Alam](#), Director of Government Relations for the Advancement Project California.