



HISPANAS
ORGANIZED
for POLITICAL
EQUALITY

NEWS RELEASE

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HOPE UNVEILS FOURTH ECONOMIC STATUS OF LATINAS IN CALIFORNIA REPORT, UPLIFTING LATINA CONTRIBUTIONS AND A ROADMAP TO ADVANCE PARITY

- California stands as the state with the largest Latino population in the nation, with Latinas comprising 20% of the state's total population and 40% of all women.
 - The Latino homeownership rate in California increased by 3.7 percentage points between 2021 and 2022. Only 41% of Latino households in California hold retirement accounts compared to 68% of White households.
 - Latina-owned employer businesses increased by 26.5% increase in between 2018 and 2021, generating nearly 147,000 jobs with an annual payroll of \$5.92 billion.
 - In 2022, over 18% of Latinas aged 25 and older in California had obtained at least a bachelor's degree, a significant increase from 14.9% in 2018.
 - Latina interview respondents voiced concern over their limited financial literacy regarding retirement savings and budgeting for California's high cost of living, and ongoing worry about the impact of inflation on both their household finances and the broader economic health of their communities.
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LOS ANGELES, CA (May 2, 2024) — Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE) proudly presents its latest findings in its ongoing pursuit of equality and opportunity for Latinas in California. The fourth installment of the "Economic Status of Latinas in California" report is a comprehensive analysis that sheds light on the strides made and the challenges faced by Latinas in achieving economic parity.

This report, a culmination of rigorous research and interviews, not only illustrates Latina progress but also underscores the barriers hindering their path to a better quality of life and financial security. By examining national, state, and regional indicators, HOPE's report offers crucial insights into the economic, leadership, health, and educational landscape of Latinas in California, juxtaposed against their White counterparts.

HOPE's report serves as a call to action, urging policymakers, community leaders, and stakeholders to address systemic inequities and provide targeted support to uplift Latinas in California. Through collaborative efforts and inclusive policies, we can pave the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

In the words of HOPE CEO Helen Torres: "This report underscores the urgency of addressing the persistent economic disparities faced by Latinas in California. By acknowledging these challenges and working together to implement equitable solutions, we can create a more inclusive society where every Latina has the opportunity to thrive."

The Report will be the central topic of discussion at an upcoming informational hearing for the State Assembly's Select Committee on Latina Inequities, chaired by Assemblywoman Wendy Carrillo. The hearing will take place on May 8th at 11:00 a.m. at the State Capitol, Room 127.

Assemblywoman Wendy Carrillo commented, "I am deeply grateful to HOPE for its tireless dedication to shining light on the challenges that Latinas face in California. Latinas are the economic engine of our state and the largest majority, yet we face some of the deepest inequities when it comes to economic, educational and health outcomes and we are severely underrepresented in various sectors from c-suite, public office, and executive leadership roles. As Chair of the Select Committee on Latina Inequities, I am committed to ensuring these issues are brought to the forefront of legislative discussions by fostering public discourse around the report's findings, some of which are concerning and underscore the urgent need for policy action to address these challenges."

Key Findings of the Report Include:

- **Population Dynamics:** California stands as a beacon of diversity with the largest Hispanic population in the United States. Latinas constitute a significant portion, comprising 20% of the state's total population and 40% of all women. Despite overall population declines, the Hispanic community remains resilient, experiencing stable growth in most metropolitan regions. The Los Angeles metropolitan region, the Inland Empire, and the San Diego metropolitan region have the largest Latino/a populations. Of the top five regions by population of Latinos/as, the Fresno region has the highest concentration at 55%.
- **Economic Landscape:** Despite strides, economic disparities persist. Latinas in California earn only 42 cents for every dollar earned by White, non-Hispanic men, compared to 71 cents for White women. Household income, homeownership rates, and retirement savings, while improving, still lag those of their White counterparts. In 2022, Latino household income in California was only 73% of White household income. The Latino homeownership rate in California increased by 3.7 percentage points between 2021 and 2022, while it remained unchanged for the White homeownership rate. Only 41% of Latino households in California hold retirement accounts compared to 68% of White households, and the median value of those accounts is \$30,000 and \$115,00, respectively.
- **Business and Financial Literacy:** Entrepreneurial spirit thrives among Latinas, with a 26.5% increase in Latina-owned employer businesses between 2018 and 2021, generating nearly 147,000 jobs with an annual payroll of \$5.92 billion. However, interview findings show there's a crucial need for improved financial literacy to navigate the state's high cost of living and ensure sustainable growth.
- **Education Outlook:** Educational attainment is on the rise, yet challenges remain. While more Latinas are enrolling in schools, graduation rates and access to advanced placement courses still trail behind those of White students. Despite a slight dip to 87% in the 2022-23 academic year, California's Latina high school graduation rate remained higher than the state's overall rate of 86%. In 2022, over 18% of Latinas aged 25 and older in California had obtained at least a bachelor's degree, showing a positive trend compared to the 2018 figure, but significantly lower than the nearly 48% rate for White women.
- **Health Challenges:** The health disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic are evident. Life expectancy at birth declined by 4.1 years for Latinas and 3.1 years for Black women between 2019 and 2021, compared to 1.8 years for White, non-Hispanic women. Latinas and Black women faced disproportionate impacts, with higher mortality rates and disparities in maternal care. The uninsured rate for Latinas in California was a historic low of 8.8% in 2022, compared to the total rate of 6.5%, but both are expected to rise as pandemic-era policies expire.
- **Representation in Leadership:** Despite a doubling in Latina representation on California corporate boards between 2020 and 2021, Latinas held only 3.3% of board seats in 2023. In government board and commission appointments made by the Governor, Latinas made up 9% of all appointments in 2023. Although there's been a significant increase in Latina representation in statewide office since 2015 with Latinas representing 25% of the state legislature, the presence of Latinas in national office remains low, with only 4 Latina congressional members out of 52 U.S. House of Representatives seats filled by Californians.

To foster the positive economic trends experienced by Latinas and to remedy areas where persistent inequities exist, HOPE offers policy recommendations to decision makers to address the barriers that impact Latinas' economic mobility across education, health care, representation, and access to economic capital.

Key Policy Recommendations Include:

- **Financial literacy and building wealth:** Expand tax credits or subsidies for individuals who support parents and older relatives, continue pandemic-era investments in social safety net programs for low-income and undocumented Californians and conduct a targeted education campaign about California's CalSavers Program.
- **Wage Inequality:** Establish mechanisms to reward Equal Pay Pledge signatories for upholding their commitment and invest in workforce diversity programs that pipeline programs to expand occupational opportunities for Latinas.
- **Small business investments:** Expand financing opportunities and resources that provide tailored technical assistance for women-owned and minority-owned small businesses and improve current mechanisms to evaluate data on minority-owned and women-owned small businesses.
- **Closing educational outcome gaps:** Increase oversight of Local Control Action Plans to ensure fidelity to the goals of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and ensure the needs of English Language Learner students are incorporated into the 2023 Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools. Diversify the Teacher Workforce by maintaining ongoing preparation and professional development programs and increasing the representation of bilingual educators.
- **College Access and Affordability:** Remove systemic barriers to participating in Dual Enrollment programs and maximize the benefits of participating in such programs and connect dual enrollment coursework with career pathway certificates. Reform California's Cal Grant system to make it more equitable and Encourage participation in the income-repayment plan for student loans.
- **Healthcare:** Protect current state investments to expand Medi-Cal coverage to undocumented adults and expand other coverage opportunities for those who exceed income-eligibility thresholds. Strengthen enforcement mechanisms for existing laws requiring implicit bias training in healthcare to address disparities in health outcomes based on race and ethnicity, as exhibited through the stark racial disparities in maternal health outcomes.
- **Leadership and Representation:** Publish the demographic data currently being collected on gubernatorial appointments to ensure transparency and equity on the state's boards and commissions and continue working with corporations to add more Latinas to their boards.

HOPE analyzed data from various government sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics, to compare demographic and economic metrics of Latinas with other groups nationally, statewide, and regionally. Additional data from reports and interviews with Latina women from diverse regions, work sectors, and age groups were conducted to contextualize the data and gain insights into supporting their economic advancement and career trajectories. Adjustments were made for the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on 2020 Census data, cautioning against direct comparisons with previous years.

The Economic Status of Latinas in California report was made possible by a foundation grant from Wells Fargo. The report will be available for download at <https://www.latinas.org/eslrca24/>.

About Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE)

HOPE® is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has empowered our communities through advocacy, Latina leadership training, and increasing knowledge on the contributions Latinas have made to advance the status of women for the past 35 years. To date, HOPE's innovative programming has served 65,000 Latinas and touched the lives of several thousand more through our advocacy. For more information on HOPE, please visit [Latinas.org](https://www.latinas.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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