



LATINO

POLICY INSTITUTE

Research | Advocacy | Education

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2023, the Latino Policy Institute embarked on a transformative journey of transition, growth, and newfound opportunities. After thirteen years, we bid farewell to our longstanding affiliation with Roger Williams University, embracing our independence as an organization. Throughout the planning of this transition, we were deeply moved by the outpouring of love, support, and unwavering dedication from our cherished partners, funders, and community.

Over the past year, the Latino Policy Institute has taken immense pride in spearheading and championing initiatives focused on pivotal areas such as healthcare access, civic engagement, education, and workforce investments. Our unwavering commitment to forging alliances with community members and thought leaders from diverse sectors has enabled us to broaden our scope and deepen our understanding of the interconnected challenges facing Latinos and other communities.

Our efforts in education and workforce investments to support mental and behavioral health providers are poised for continued expansion, thanks to the groundwork laid in the past year. Upholding the significance of civic engagement and fostering community involvement remains at the forefront of our priorities.

As we venture into this new chapter, the Latino Policy Institute remains committed to uplifting the incredible strength and resilience of the Latino community while tirelessly endeavoring to dismantle systemic barriers that impede our collective growth and prosperity. Along with our partners, stakeholders, and community members, we eagerly anticipate the ongoing collaboration and shared efforts that lie ahead.



Marcela Betancur

Sincerely,

Marcela Betancur
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marcela Betancur', written in a cursive style.





ADVOCACY

In 2023, the Latino Policy Institute (LPI) played a pivotal advocacy role through various coalitions during the General Assembly session. Our collaborative efforts led to significant achievements, including increased funding for child care, the expansion of free college education access at Rhode Island College, and access to healthcare for thousands of Rhode Islanders.

As a member of the Equality in Abortion Coverage Act (EACA) Campaign Steering Committee, LPI collaborated with advocates and legislative leaders and successfully contributed to the passage of the EACA. This critical initiative ensures that individuals covered by Medicaid and state employee health plans do not face denials of coverage for abortion services in their respective state health plans.

Furthermore, LPI's involvement in the steering committee of the Right from the Start Coalition proved impactful for Rhode Island families. The General Assembly approved \$7 million in new funding for early childhood programs through dedicated advocacy efforts. Of this allocation, \$3 million will be utilized to preserve Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms. In comparison, \$4 million will fund a pilot program expanding eligibility for child care, at no cost, to specific childcare workers in the FY 2024 State Budget.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



Following the successful passage of the Safe Roads Act in 2022, LPI collaborated with the Immigrant Coalition of RI, the Department of Revenue, and the Department of Motor Vehicles to implement and conduct outreach efforts for driving privilege cards (DPC). During the spring, LPI organized training sessions for Coalition members to enhance their understanding of supporting community members throughout the outreach and implementation process.

Comprehensive training materials were developed in English and Spanish for organizations and government agencies to utilize during the outreach and education efforts. In late spring and early summer, the Immigrant Coalition and numerous partners organized community events to provide information and assistance to individuals interested in applying for DPCs, available from July 1, 2023. Over five months, LPI, alongside government partners, visited communities across Rhode Island, reaching out to more than one thousand individuals—from Central Falls to Newport.

Since the official launch in July 2023, thousands of undocumented Rhode Island residents have successfully obtained DPCs. LPI and the Immigrant Coalition remains dedicated to the ongoing education and support of individuals in this process.

PARTNERSHIPS

Demystifying Democracy

LPI has been a proud member of the Rhode Island Voting Coalition, which has been working to advance voting rights in Rhode Island since 2020. Our organization recognizes that civic engagement and access to the ballot is an imperative issue for Latinos and other historically marginalized communities, so in the last few years, it has become a priority for LPI to be engaged in work and advocacy that advances these efforts in our communities.



In 2023, LPI partnered with Common Cause Rhode Island to cohost their annual Demystifying Democracy Series. This series aims to engage participants in learning about the local and state democratic processes and practices. The two-part series focused on the legislative process, aptly named “How a Bill Really Becomes Law,” and the second event focused on local government. This partnership with Common Cause allowed our organization to remove many barriers for non-English-speaking Rhode Islanders and those from immigrant communities who may not know or understand how these processes work at a local and state level.

BY THE NUMBERS



7

LPI is a part of 7 different coalitions.

Over 100 coalition members combined within all coalitions representing different communities and stakeholders.



CITIES TRAVELED & IMPACTED

Traveled to Central Falls, Pawtucket, Newport, Providence so many times, Cranston, Warwick, and Bristol.

2

Hosted 2 Demystifying Democracy Events

40 guests at each.

2

Hosted 2 Policy Panels about Mental Health

40 guests at each.

8

Hosted 8 Community Events for Driving Privilege Cards

60 guest average, largest Driving Privilege Card event had 300 guests.



PRESENTATIONS

A presentation for Progreso Latino about Cover All Kids, and one to community health workers about the work that LPI does.

LEADERSHIP

Latino Mental Health Pipeline

In 2022, LPI, in partnership with the Latino Mental Health Network (LMHN) of Rhode Island through the support of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI,) began a year-long project aimed at understanding and supporting the complex issues that Latino and multicultural providers face within the mental and behavioral health workforce. Throughout the year, our organizations hosted multiple policy forums, community conversations, and focus groups to discuss the gaps and opportunities in the field while elevating innovative ideas and investment opportunities.



In November 2023, LPI published a final report with a comprehensive outline of our findings throughout the year, specifically highlighting the voice and first-hand experiences of Latino mental and behavioral health providers in Rhode Island. Additionally, the report outlines policy and financial investments necessary to address many of the issues and barriers mental and behavioral health providers face.

LATINO POLICY INSTITUTE

Research | Advocacy | Education



Thank you to all who supported us in 2023!



Make a Gift today!



Adam Isaacs-Falbel
Alan Krinsky
Allen Hance
Ana Velez
Angela Ankoma
Anna Morales
Antonieta Falconi
Ariana Wohl
Benjamin Evans
Brenda Clement
Carolyn Belisle
Chanda Womack
Charon Rose
Christopher Parisi
Christopher Rotondo
Cortney Nicolato
Dianne Curran
Divya Nair
Donovan Tinsley
Elizabeth Burke Bryant

Elliot Rivera
Emily Gonzalez
Emily McHugh
Erich Haslehurst
Erin Stephens
Gregory Perry
Hannah Reale
Helena Moronta
Janie Segui Rodriguez
Jennifer Gaviria
Jennifer Johnson
Jennifer Wood
Jenny Pereira
Jessica Saenz Gomez
Joaquin Martinez
Jocelyn Foye
John Marion
Jordan Day
Jordan Smith
Jorge Elorza

Joseph Flynn
Joshua Segui
Juanita Montes de Oca
June Speakman
KERRI MCLAUGHLIN
Kaitlynn Castillo
Karen Alzate
Katherine West
Keith Catone
Lidia Lopez
Lisa Guillette
Lisandro Guevara
Lizbeth Lucero
Lynn Corwin
Magali Angeloni
Marcela Betancur
Margaret Chung
Maribel McLaughlin
Marlex Torres
Mary Clark

Matthew Jerzyk
Michelle DePlante
Michelle Rivera
Natalie Almeida
Nick Autiello
Nicole Verdi
Oscar Mejias
Owen Stearns
Pablo Rodriguez
Paige Clausius-Parks
Patricia Martinez
Peter Chung
Rachel Flum
Rachel Miller
Ramona E Santos
Ray Nuñez
Robert Dimuccio
Robert Hancock
Rodney Lopez

Samuel Salganik
Sandra Cano
Sandra Victorino
Seth Kolker
Shawn Selleck
Stacy Sullivan
Stephanie Gonzalez
Steven Brown
Sylvia Bernal
Travis Escobar
Valerie Goris
Victor Capellan
Victoria Rodriguez
Vimala Phongsavanh
Weayonnoh Nelson-Davies
Yarisa Diaz
Zeus Beltre

2023 board and LPI staff

Antonieta Falconi
Diony Garcia
Gonzalo Cuervo
Dr. Julie Nora
Angela Bannerman Ankoma

Joseph Molina Flynn
Ray Nuñez
Juanita Montes De Oca
Roger Duque

Marcela Betancur
Executive Director
Latino Policy Institute

