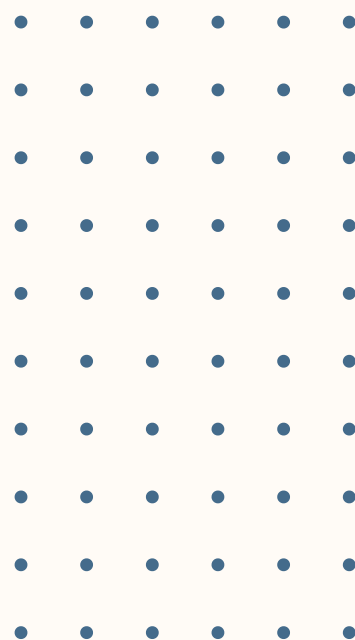


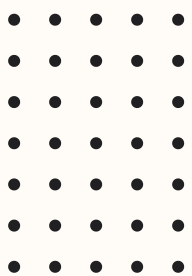


LATINO
POLICY INSTITUTE
Research | Advocacy | Education



ANNUAL REPORT 2024





A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2024 was a year of growth, transformation, and determination for the Latino Policy Institute (LPI). Over the past year, we prioritized recentralizing our work, focusing on community needs, and deepening our partnerships. By engaging new and existing allies, we amplified critical issues and uplifted solutions led by our community. Through our work, we learned incredible lessons, such as the power of parent advocates, the resiliency and determination of Latino students in higher education, and the importance of investing in the economic growth and power of the community.

It was humbling to witness the love, power, and determination of coalitions, advocates, and policymakers throughout the year. It is a constant reminder that change and progress are possible when the community comes together.

As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited to celebrate LPI's 20th anniversary—a milestone inviting us to reflect on how far we and Rhode Island have come while recognizing the work still ahead. As we approach this milestone, we invite you to join us in shaping the next chapter—through advocacy, collaboration, and investment in our community's future.



Marcela Betancur
Executive Director
Latino Policy Institute

ADVOCACY & POLICY IMPACTS



This year, LPI championed policies to advance equity in education, health, and economic opportunity for Latinos and all Rhode Islanders. Through persistent advocacy and collaboration with key stakeholders, we secured significant legislative wins that will directly benefit families, workers, and students across the state.

01

Education

LPI played a pivotal role in **increasing the total education funding by \$70.9 million in the FY 2025 budget**, ensuring greater investment in Rhode Island's schools. Additionally, **Multilingual Learner (MLL) funding was incorporated into the core funding formula**, with the multiplier increasing from **15% to 20% for students in the lowest three English proficiency categories**. This change guarantees more resources for students who need additional language support, helping them thrive academically.

02

Healthcare

LPI successfully **secured funding for the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program** and the **Ladders to Licensure Program**, which help address workforce shortages and create pathways for diverse healthcare professionals. These initiatives ensure that Rhode Island continues to build a strong, culturally competent healthcare workforce that reflects the communities it serves.



03

Economic Equity

LPI worked to strengthen **economic security and worker protections** by successfully advocating for an **expansion of Paid Family Leave**. Beginning in **2025**, **Rhode Islanders will have access to seven weeks of leave, increasing to eight weeks in 2026**, allowing workers to care for their loved ones.

One of the most impactful pieces of legislation we were proud to help champion this year was the **Rhode Island Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program**. This law will provide private sector employees with access to retirement accounts if they are not offered through their employer. LPI was proud to be part of the Secure Choice Coalition, led by AARP of RI, with the goal of ensuring that more Rhode Islanders can build long-term financial stability



“

Around 40% of the workforce in Rhode Island doesn't have access to a retirement savings plan through their employer. One of the reasons I reached out to LPI was because the stats we had showed that out of any other group in Rhode Island, Latinos had the least access [to retirement accounts.] Secure choice was a way to empower citizens to be self-sustaining and save their own money. We hope to look back 10-15 years from now and see that people have saved tens of millions of dollars, and there's a lot more people with a secure retirement and a bright future, you know, in retirement.

- Matthew Neto, AARP Associate State Director Outreach and Advocacy

”



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2024, LPI remained committed to amplifying voices and empowering Rhode Islanders to actively shape their futures. Through strategic partnerships, we worked to increase civic engagement, promote voter education, and provide communities with the tools needed to navigate democratic systems.



Democracy and School Governance with Parents Leading for Educational Equity (PLEE)

LPI co-hosted four community events designed to empower Providence parents with the knowledge, tools, and resources necessary to participate actively in the school governance system. These events aimed to demystify school decision-making processes, ensuring that parents—particularly those from historically underrepresented communities—understand their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities to advocate for their children’s education. As part of these efforts, our Senior Policy & Research Manager led a presentation on the history of school boards and provided a deep dive into Rhode Island’s school governance models. The session highlighted how governance structures impact local education policies and decision-making, equipping families with the critical information to engage effectively with school leadership, advisory boards, and other key stakeholders. Through these engagements, LPI reaffirmed its commitment to fostering inclusive educational advocacy by ensuring Latino and BIPOC parents have a seat at the table where policies affecting their children are shaped.



Events like these with LPI helped our families interactively have access to information. With the expertise of the LPI Team, we not only taught families about school boards and existing governance structures but they also facilitated fruitful discussions with our families. Because of this collaboration with LPI, we explored what parents, caregivers, youth and community members see their roles in the school system to be and allowed them to reimagine what the governance structures can be in the future.

-Joselyn R., PLEE Deputy Director





Advancing Latino Success in Higher Education - Rhode Island College

As the Latino population continues to grow and shape the demographic landscape of the United States, addressing educational disparities remains critical to ensuring equitable opportunities for success. For nearly two decades, the Latino Policy Institute (LPI) has been dedicated to analyzing, advocating, and amplifying the evolving experiences of Latinos in Rhode Island—particularly in education.



Since 2023, LPI has partnered with Rhode Island College (RIC), members of the General Assembly, and leading policy and education advocacy organizations to develop a comprehensive report examining the state of Latino students in higher education. This collaboration has allowed us to identify key barriers, highlight opportunities, and shape policy recommendations that will drive institutional and systemic change.

Through these partnerships, LPI remains committed to advancing best practices, fostering data-driven advocacy, and ensuring Latino students receive the support needed to thrive. At LPI, we are working to create inclusive, equitable pathways to higher education that empower Latino students in Rhode Island and beyond.



Demystifying Democracy with Common Cause

For the second consecutive year, we co-hosted "I'm Just a Bill Held for Further Study," an initiative designed to break down the legislative process and connect community members with key insights into policy-making at the state level.



United We Vote with United Way of Rhode Island

UNITED WE VOTE

Our voter engagement social media campaign reached thousands of Rhode Islanders, providing accessible and critical voter information—especially for underrepresented communities—helping ensure their participation in the electoral process.

These partnerships reflect LPI's ongoing commitment to strengthening democracy, expanding civic engagement, and ensuring that every Rhode Islander has the tools to advocate for their rights and their communities.

AT A GLANCE: THE POWER OF POLICY



10

Coalitions



15

Community events & engagements



200+

Number of people reached



20

Bills testified



10+

Bills passed



9,391

Number of people who used TCI in 2024



172,000

RI workers will have access to the Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program



PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS



Coalitions

- **Voting Rights**
 - RI Voting Access Coalition *Let RI Vote Campaign*
- **Economic Equity**
 - Rhode Island Paid Family Leave Coalition
 - Secure Choice
 - Raising RI Coalition
 - Equity Impact Coalition
 - Revenue for Rhode Islanders
- **Education & Early Childhood Development**
 - Right from the Start
 - Coalition for a Multilingual Rhode Island
- **Immigration**
 - Immigrant Coalition of RI
- **Healthcare**
 - Protect Our Healthcare Coalition of RI
 - RI Life Index Coalition



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ARISE

Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI

Centreville Bank

City of Central Falls

City of Pawtucket

City of Providence

Children and Youth Cabinet

Coastal One

CYCLE

Distinctive Success Solutions

Don Jose Tequilas

Economic Progress Institute

HousingWorks RI

Law Office of William J. Conley

Nuñez Co.

Neighborhood Health Plan of RI

PLEE

Planned Parenthood of New England

RIPIN

Rhode Island College

Rhode Island Energy

Rhode Island Foundation

Roger Williams University

Sec. Gregg Amore

SEIU

Stop the Wait

Trailblaze Marketing

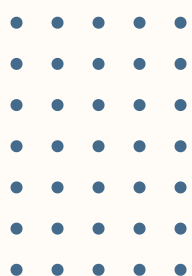
Treasurer James Diosa

United Way of Rhode Island

Verizon

Washington Trust

Young Voices



VISION FOR 2025



As we enter 2025, the LPI team is more determined than ever to work toward influencing decisions and policymaking to achieve greater social, political, and economic equity for Latinos and historically marginalized communities. We believe deeply in the power of community, the importance of data and research, and the value of advocacy. We enter our twentieth year with a deeper understanding, love, and commitment to our partners and community and look forward to celebrating it together.



Acknowledgments

Board of Directors

Antonieta Falconi
Juanita Montes de Oca
Gonzalo Cuervo
Maggie Chung
Rachel Flum
Lehidy Frias
Omar Reyes

Staff

Awilda Reinoso Lopez
Yarisa Diaz
Marcela Betancur



A COMMITMENT TO SYSTEMIC CHANGE

These achievements reflect LPI's commitment to policy solutions that drive systemic change. Whether by securing stronger worker protections, increasing access to quality education, or ensuring economic stability for families, we continue to advocate for policies that create a more just and equitable Rhode Island for Latinos and all.



CELEBRATE 20 YEARS OF LPI!

Join us for a night of music, food, and culture as we honor the people and progress that brought us here—and look ahead to what's next.

Sponsor or Get Your Tickets Today!

Thursday, September 18

thelatinopolicy.org/latinosunidos