



THE LATINO POLICY INSTITUTE
ESTAMOS AQUÍ

Founding LPI, 2013

Current LPI Staff, 2026



2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ESTAMOS AQUI

Key Highlights

2025 marked a remarkable year of celebration for the Latino Policy Institute, even amid the challenges that our communities faced. While it often felt daunting to pause and recognize our impactful programs, groundbreaking legislation, and two decades of relentless effort, our team continually reminded ourselves of a powerful truth: through history, the path to overcoming adversity has always been paved with unity.

This year, the phrase “Estamos Aqui” became our rallying cry, a powerful reminder that, no matter how hard others may try to erase us, diminish us, or break us, we stand resilient. We are present, we are strong, and we will continue to rise together.

In 2025, LPI celebrated significant legislative victories rooted in equity, dignity, and opportunity, igniting pride and confidence among our supporters. These tangible accomplishments not only highlight our collective impact today but also lay a solid foundation for transformative change in the future. Together, we are paving the way for a brighter tomorrow!



20%
Bill Priorities Passed

While this percentage may seem small, in Government this impact is huge.

150+
Community Members Activated

Community members joined us and our partners throughout the year to learn about education, health, and civic engagement.

ADVOCACY + POLICY IMPACT

PAID FAMILY LEAVE WIN

Across education, economic equity, healthcare, and immigration, we achieved meaningful progress, directly benefiting Latino families and motivating continued support.

For the first time in over a decade, Rhode Island increased the Paid Family Leave wage replacement rate from 60% to 75% for people using it. This means that more parents can care for their children without sacrificing income; more family members can care for their sick or aging parents. These wins ensure that families, especially those with limited economic means, can remain in the workforce without sacrificing their well-being.



60% → 75%

Paid Family Leave Increases Between 2027-2028

After nearly a decade, the Paid Family Leave Wage has been increased in the state of Rhode Island from 60% to 70% starting in January 2027, and will increase to 75% in January 2028.

ADVOCACY + POLICY IMPACT

HEALTHCARE + IMMIGRATION

Healthcare saw critical wins to expand access, affordability, and equity for Rhode Islanders. The expansion of the Medicare Savings Program will help more low-income seniors cover out-of-pocket costs. At the same time, medical debt reform caps interest at 4% and protects families from burdens such as housing liens. **Increased Medicaid reimbursement rates**—now at 100% of Medicare for primary care—mark a major step toward stabilizing access for providers, particularly in underserved communities. Additional reforms reduce barriers to care, including new limits on prior authorization and protections that prevent providers from asking about immigration status. Finally, a \$750,000 investment in **MomsPRN** strengthens maternal and mental health support, ensuring more mothers can access timely, culturally responsive care.

While not every bill crossed the finish line this year, the momentum is undeniable. Efforts like the **Student Success Act**, which would reduce in-state tuition residency requirements from 3 years to 1 year alongside continued advocacy for bilingual education and expanded healthcare access for all, reflect a growing recognition that equity *must be built into our systems, not added on later.*

These policies are critical to ensuring that Latino students, workers, and families can fully participate and thrive in Rhode Island's future. Together, these wins move us closer to a Rhode Island where Latino communities are not just included, but prioritized, where policy reflects the realities of our lives, and where opportunity is not determined by language, income, or immigration status.

Healthcare

- Savings Program
- Medical Debt Reform
- Increased Medicaid Reimbursement

Immigration

- Housing Protections for All
- 364-Day Misdemeanor Bill

Immigration and Housing efforts this year reflect both meaningful progress and continued urgency for Latino and immigrant families facing heightened uncertainty during this Federal administration. A major win, **Housing Protections for All**, passed both chambers, affirming that everyone deserves a safe place to call home, regardless of immigration status, and helping prevent displacement while keeping families rooted in their communities. At the same time, critical work remains. The **364-Day Misdemeanor Bill**, which would reduce the risk of deportation for minor offenses, passed the Senate but stalled in the House. *We will continue pushing for its passage.*

ESTAMOS AQUÍ

20 YEARS OF IMPACT



For two decades, LPI has worked to transform how Rhode Island *understands, supports, and invests in Latino communities.*

We have *shifted narratives, influenced policy, trained leaders,* and *produced research* grounded in the lived experiences of real people and families.



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

At a time when many in our community are experiencing fear and uncertainty, elevating and centering Latino voices is more important than ever. In 2025, we intentionally created spaces, partnerships, and opportunities that reflect our deep commitment to community voice—fostering belonging, strengthening connections, and honoring the collective power that drives our work forward.

Bilingual Medicare Town Hall

In partnership with the Protect Our Healthcare Coalition and Progreso Latino, the Latino Policy Institute convened a bilingual Medicare town hall in Central Falls, attended by more than 20 residents and stakeholders. The session focused on the implications of H.R. 1, the Tax Reconciliation Act, for Medicare and Medicaid. Senior Policy and Research Manager Awilda Reinoso Lopez presented critical policy information in Spanish, equipping community members with a clearer understanding of how these programs are funded and what proposed cuts could mean for their care. Participants shared personal experiences navigating Medicaid and Medicare, highlighting both persistent barriers to access and the essential role these programs play in their lives. The discussion created space for community voice, connection, and informed advocacy.



Hosted in Partnership with



“ El derecho a la salud está completamente ligado al derecho a la vida. ”

-CF Resident, Town Hall

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP POLICY CIRCLES, TERTULIAS + EMDR PROGRAM

Across tertulias, forums, and policy circles, LPI continues to ensure that its research is not only informed by community voice but also shared back in ways that build **understanding, connection,** and **collective action.**



Mental Health Policy Circle, 2025

Policy Circles + Tertulias

In 2025, LPI deepened its commitment to centering Latino voices through community-driven dialogue and policy engagement. The year began with LPI's first tertulia, creating a space for community members to reflect on Latino civic engagement following the 2024 election and to collectively define what participation and political power look like in their communities.

Throughout the year, LPI hosted Policy Circles that brought together community members and decision-makers to engage directly with research and its real-world implications. A Policy Circle on Hispanic-Serving Institutions used the 2025 Latino Pathways to Success report to spark discussion among educators, students, and advocates on advancing Latino student success. Participants examined both opportunities and systemic barriers—from resource allocation to navigating institutional systems—while identifying actionable pathways for change.

LPI also convened a Mental Health Policy Circle, bringing together Latino clinicians and community members to explore culturally grounded approaches to care. The conversation reframed what it means to seek help and elevated community-informed solutions to make mental health services more accessible and responsive.

FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

EXPANDING ACCESS TO TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Following the 2022 Latino Mental Health Pipeline Report, LPI partnered with the Latino Mental Health Network and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island to implement one of its key recommendations: expanding access to culturally and linguistically responsive mental health care.

Together, we launched a first-of-its-kind **EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) Training Program** for **bilingual, Spanish-speaking Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers**. Eight clinicians completed the EMDR Basic Training, significantly increasing the availability of specialized trauma-informed care for Spanish-speaking communities in Rhode Island, where such access had previously been extremely limited.

Participating clinicians have collectively served more than 200 clients, including youth, adults, and veterans. They report increased confidence and capacity to deliver EMDR, a critical tool in treating trauma. This initiative demonstrates the power of moving from research to implementation—strengthening the behavioral health workforce while expanding equitable access to care. LPI remains committed to advancing solutions that translate community-informed research into meaningful, lasting impact.

“ At LPI, research is **not the endpoint**—**it is a catalyst for action.** ”



EMDR Training Program, 2025

ESTAMOS AQUÍ 20 YEARS OF IMPACT

Our work has consistently helped drive critical conversations and policy change across the state. In **2013**, our education report highlighted growing funding inequities impacting urban school districts serving multilingual learners, helping catalyze statewide discussions and action around educational equity.

In **2017**, our report examining the economic and public safety impacts of providing driver's licenses to undocumented Rhode Islanders became a key resource in the advocacy efforts that ultimately led to the successful passage of statewide legislation in **2022**.

Beyond research, LPI has played a leading role in building coalitions and advancing policies that improve the lives of all Rhode Islanders. Our advocacy and partnerships have contributed to the passage of landmark initiatives such as Cover All Kids, expanded investments in childcare and higher education, strengthened Paid Family Leave benefits, and many other policies that promote economic opportunity, equity, and community well-being across the state.



2013

Educational Report

Education funding inequity report → sparked statewide discussion



2017

Driver Safety Report

Driver's license report → led to 2022 legislation



2022

Safer Rhodes Passed

Driver's license law, Safer Rhodes, passed



2025

20 Years of LPI

"Estamos Aquí" Celebrated our 20th Year



BEYOND

Key Wins

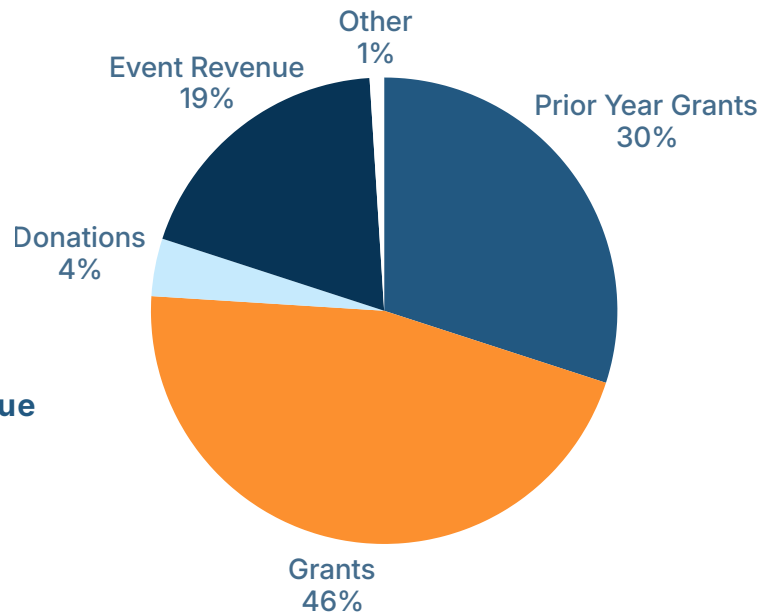
Cover All Kids, expanded childcare, Paid Family Leave

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2025 REVENUE

76% of our total revenue in 2025 came from Grants (2024 + 2025 FY)

- **Prior Year Grants** 30%
- **Grants** 46%
- **Donations** 4%
- **Event Revenue** 19%



The Latino Policy Institute plans to advance systemic change by using research, advocacy, and community voice to strengthen social, civic, and economic equity for Latino communities to ensure we all help shape Rhode Island's future.

FY 2026 - 2028

STRATEGIC PLAN

Our new Strategic Plan outlines LPI's vision to advance systemic change so that all Latinos in Rhode Island achieve social, civic, and economic equity.

Read the full thing on our website:

www.thelatinopolicy.org

FOR YOUR DEDICATION + SUPPORT THANK YOU

THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 TOP DONORS

Bari & Alan Harlam, David Caldwell, Senator Jake Bissaillon, Jill Fabian, Karl Ziegler, Kelly Nevins, Maggie & Peter Chung, Mara Cassata, Mayor Grebien, Michelle Carr, Nicole Verdi, Omar Reyes, Rachel & Josh Flum, Rebecca Pronsky, Robert DiMuccio, Stephanie Gonzalez & Jorge Elorza, Vimala Phongsavanh, Jordan Day, Elliot Rivera, Yamil Baz, Omar Reyes, Paige Parks, Jannelle Codianni, Jennifer Wood.



Meet Our Board

Maggie Chung, Board Member. Rachel Flum, Board Co-Chair. Omar Reyes, Board Member. Yahaira Reyes, Secretary. Gonzalo Cuervo, Board Member. Juanita Montes de Oca, Board Co-Chair. Antioneta Flaconi, Treasurer. *(Not in Photography)* Lehidy Frias, Board Member.

Meet Our Staff

Marcela Betancur
Executive Director

Awilda Reinoso Lopez
Senior Policy & Research Manager

Yarisa Diaz
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 TOP SPONSORS

Nellie Mae, Nuñez, Washington Trust, Zachary Lyons, Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI, United Way of RI, Rhode Island Foundation.



Estamos Aquí

Hear the power of Latino Policy Institute's impact directly from those in our community.

You can find our "Estamos Aquí" video on our new website, or by scanning this QR.



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