



THE BLUEPRINT FOR LATINO INVESTMENT:
A Latino Legislative Agenda

Commissioned by the Public Policy Institute of
the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation
Prepared by the Latino Policy Forum

2009



The Public Policy Institute

ILLINOIS LEGISLATIVE
LATINO CAUCUS FOUNDATION





**The Blueprint for Latino Investment:
A Latino Legislative Agenda**
November 2009

Commissioned by the Public Policy
Institute of the Illinois Legislative Latino
Caucus Foundation
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The analysis and recommendations issued in this report reflect the work and opinions of the Latino Policy Forum and not necessarily those of the Public Policy Institute, the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation, or those who have reviewed this publication. The report is offered in the spirit of developing a comprehensive Latino legislative agenda.

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Preface

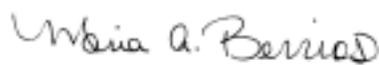
Amidst difficult economic conditions, one-time federal recovery funds, and the first capital budget in a decade, Illinoisans find themselves at a critical juncture to reconsider how the state generates and appropriates funds. This historic moment has serious implications for the Latino community and represents an opportunity to ensure that their children, families, and workers are more strategically and equitably included in the distribution of state resources.

In preparation for budget discussions, the Public Policy Institute of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation commissioned the Latino Policy Forum to conduct a budget analysis that would encompass the Governor's proposed Fiscal Year 2010 operating and capital budgets in order to provide public policy and budgetary recommendations from a Latino perspective. Following an initial analysis, the Latino Caucus Foundation asked the Latino Policy Forum to produce a larger report for public consumption that could serve as a guide for parents, advocates, and elected officials; foster policy discussions surrounding the state's budget appropriations; and ensure that common sense investments are made by the state. As a result, the Forum developed, wrote, and published *The Blueprint for Latino Investment: A Latino Legislative Agenda*.

This report articulates the needs of Illinois Latinos by providing a data-driven framework that supports a comprehensive legislative agenda. It uses the current social and economic status of Latinos to develop standards for investment across government programs. The standards are intended to serve as goals for investments in their respective areas. As the social, economic, and political contexts change over time, these standards are not likely to vary. However, meeting the standards is in itself not the only goal. The objective is to ensure that Latino children flourish in Illinois schools, families succeed in areas of civic life, and workers prosper in the state's economy. As the state moves closer to meeting these objectives, all Illinoisans will benefit.

As the Latino Caucus Foundation, we are eager to work with our colleagues to continue improving the lives of Latinos throughout the state by using the recommendations and standards for investment outlined in this report.

Sincerely,



Representative Maria A. "Toni" Berrios
Co-Chair, Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation



Senator Martin A. Sandoval
Co-Chair, Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation



Michael Gonzalez
Acting Vice-Chair, Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus Foundation

Executive Summary

The challenges associated with rebuilding the Illinois economy, correcting the marketplace for housing, and responding to the state's soaring structural deficit have presented a unique opportunity for law-makers, civic leaders, and the general public to recalibrate the state's investment in public resources. As state leaders confront the matters of today and plan for the issues of tomorrow, they must construct a strategic long-term vision for economic growth and prosperity. To achieve that goal, it is increasingly incumbent upon them to utilize the assets found within the Latino community including: bilingualism, an entrepreneurial spirit, and a desire to improve the quality of life for everyone through partnership, sacrifice, and hard work. Latinos are now the second largest racial/ethnic group in Illinois and the fastest growing segment of its population. Moving forward, the economic success of the state and the Latino community are intertwined in this century.

This report, and the Appendix that accompanies it, present a new framework for examining the state's investment in the Latino community. By connecting policy priorities to line-items in the state's operating and capital budgets, the Appendix draws the necessary connection between where investments are critical and areas of the state's budget where they can be leveraged. Although the report and the Appendix are produced separately, together they represent a pathway for the state to address the needs of Latino children, families, and workers.

More specifically, the report and the Appendix provide a statewide *Blueprint for Latino Investment* in the following critical areas:

- CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES
- EDUCATION
- HOUSING
- HEALTH
- HUMAN SERVICES
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- CAPITAL

This report also examines the economic contributions that Latinos provide to the state. As the population has grown, so has its share of the state's tax base, purchasing power, and business development. These contributions underscore the importance of ensuring that the state's vision for success includes Latinos.

STANDARDS FOR INVESTMENT

The standards for investment are useful criteria by which to monitor the degree that Illinois is investing in programs and services that support the success of Latinos given their population growth, social condition, and economic status.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

In addition to investigating specific issue areas, it is necessary to address several themes that consistently emerged throughout the analysis. Many of these areas are not tied to specific line-items or programs, but serve as issues that

broadly encompass the scope of work undertaken by agencies and state-funded programs.

Immigrant Integration

From 1990 to 2006, the foreign-born population in Illinois increased by 86%, nearly half of whom were immigrants from Latin American countries. Although immigration is typically associated with urban centers, the Latino migration pattern in Illinois has shifted to suburban areas. Unfortunately, many areas outside of Chicago have not developed the infrastructure necessary to integrate and fully support recent immigrants.

Inclusion

In Illinois there are over 115 Latino-led nonprofit organizations. However, only fifty-three, or 46%, received contracts to support their work in Latino communities from the state in Fiscal Year 2008. Many of these organizations are currently funded through private foundations, businesses and donors. Revenue from these sources is vital; however, additional state and federal support is also necessary.

Monitoring and Compliance

Illinois does not have an adequate system for monitoring compliance with state initiatives. For example, in the provision of state contracts, Illinois has set statutory goals for the inclusion of minority and women-owned businesses. In fact, Central Management Services publishes an annual report outlining the distribution of state contracts and its alignment to those goals. Unfortunately, many agencies fall short. While the publication of this data is important for the purpose of transparency, a greater effort is necessary to further encourage the accomplishment of diversity-related goals.

Under-Representation in State Employment

Among the 51,000 government employees, fewer than 2,200 are Latino. To reach parity based upon the proportion of Latinos in the

workforce, more than five-thousand additional employees would have to be hired. Its inability to hire employees who reflect the composition of its general workforce is not due to an inadequate supply of well-qualified applicants. While the highly-qualified applicant-base in 2008 alone would have been inadequate to close the gap, it provides evidence that highly-qualified Latino candidates were available to fill vacant positions.

Data Collection and Reporting

Data is critical to understanding the scope of various issues and necessary to ensure adequate resources are being directed to Latinos. The state must sponsor the collection and reporting of additional data on a variety of issues including: physical and mental health, developmental disabilities, foster care, and domestic violence. Moreover, this data must be disaggregated by age, race/ethnicity, and gender.

EDUCATION

During a ten year period ending in 2008, Latino enrollment in statewide public schools increased by nearly sixty percent. This trend is also evident among children under age five, where Latinos now account for 1-in-4 statewide. In order to adequately respond to the needs of the state's children, it must ensure that districts, schools, and educators are equipped with the resources, materials, and training to meet the diverse needs of students.

Early Childhood Education

Throughout Illinois, most Latino children are unable to take advantage of the benefits associated with participation in early care and education. In many communities, the number of Latino children eligible far exceeds the availability of services, especially outside of Chicago. In addition, the state has not maintained adequate capital investments to support the expansion or construction of new early childhood facilities where necessary.

Rationale

Standards for Investment¹

Latinos accounted for **15.3%** of Illinois' population in 2008.

At least **15% of grant line-items** and contracts should be directed to Latino-specific or Latino-serving initiatives.

Latinos accounted for **25.2% of children under age five** throughout the state in 2008. In fact, between 2000 and 2008, the number of Latino children under age five increased by 27%.

At least **25% of grants and subsidies** for early care and education should be directed to **Latino children**.

Latinos accounted for **1-in-5 students in Illinois' k-12 public schools** during the 2007-2008 school-year.

At least **20% of funding** for education and youth-related initiatives should be directed to Latino school-age children, where possible through Latino-serving entities.

Latinos accounted for **21.9%** of those in Illinois who lived **below the poverty threshold** in 2008.

At least **22% of resources** directed to programs and services that serve the state's **most vulnerable families** should be directed to Latino families and Latino-serving entities.

Latino children accounted for **30% of all children** in Illinois **living below the poverty threshold** in 2008.

At least **30% of resources** used for **children-specific, poverty-related programs** and services should be directed to Latino children and families or those serving them.

Latinos accounted for **14.3% of the Illinois workforce** in 2008.

At least **14% of workforce related programs and services** should be directed to Latino workers and Latino-serving entities. Moreover, all capital contracts should contain a provision to hire a workforce that reflects the diversity of the state.

Latinos owned **39,539 businesses** in Illinois in 2002, representing **4.1% of all firms**. Between 1997 and 2002, the number of Latino-owned firms in Illinois grew by **27.5%**.

As the **state issues new contracts**, their distribution to Latino-owned firms **should increase** in proportion to the growth in Latino entrepreneurship.

Over **55.7%** of Latinos lived in owner-occupied housing units in Illinois in 2008. Between 2000 and 2008, Latinos accounted for **46.6%** of the growth in owner occupied housing units.

As the state allocates new resources, the **distribution of funding to support homeowner related programs** and services should reflect Latinos' share of new homes brought in the state.

¹ Data from the standards for investment come from the following sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate*. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census 2000 Summary Profile 2*. Illinois State Board of Education, 2008 Annual Report. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Survey of Business Owners: Hispanic-Owned Firms: 2002*. Washington, D.C., 2006.



With regard to quality, there is a gap between the need for bilingual and bicultural teachers and their presence in the early childhood workforce. These issues present challenges for Latino children and families seeking opportunities to take advantage of the state's system of early childhood education.

During a ten-year period ending in 2008, Latino enrollment in statewide public schools increased by nearly 60%.

School Funding

Each year, Illinois government appropriates aid to local education agencies to supplement the cost of educating the state's children. Unfortunately, there is still a considerable gap in per-pupil funding between low-income schools and their counterparts. The gap in school funding reduces low-income districts' ability to compete for high-quality teachers, provide academic support, and facilitate enrichment programs for their students.

Teacher Quality

High-poverty schools have a larger proportion of teachers with less experience and lower academic credentials. Recent research suggests that student performance is directly related to teachers' experience and credentials, even controlling for in-school variation and student demographics. These issues are noteworthy given that over 66% of Latino Students are enrolled in high-poverty schools.

Bilingual Education

Since 2004, the number of English language learners (ELLs) in Illinois has grown by over

twenty percent. Importantly, nearly ninety percent of that growth has occurred outside of Chicago. Given that ELLs represent 1-in-13 school children across the state, it is essential that bilingual education be funded in a manner that is commensurate with the demand for services.

Parent Involvement

A number of barriers prevent Latino parents from fully engaging in the education of their children: language, cultural differences, adequate outreach from schools, and employment schedules. Although over 90% of Latino children are U.S. citizens, over eighty-one percent live in households that speak Spanish at home. Regrettably, many school districts have an insufficient number of bilingual and bicultural staff limiting their ability to work effectively with these parents. In order to overcome these and other cultural differences, school and district based-personnel must adopt a more personalized approach to interacting with Latino parents.

High School Graduation, College Enrollment and Completion

Nearly a third of Latino students fail to obtain their high school diploma within four years. Youth who fail to graduate are 12 times more likely to be unemployed than those who obtain their B.A. Among full-time Latino freshmen attending four-year institutions, only 17% received a B.A. in four years and just 44% received their degree within six years.

HOUSING

Homeownership represents hard-work, success, and the achievement of one aspect of the American Dream. In Illinois, nearly fifty-six

percent of Latinos live in owner-occupied housing units. Unfortunately, the foreclosure and economic crises have made it difficult for many Latinos to maintain their homes. For Latinos living in renter-occupied housing units, market forces have fostered the development of housing stock that fails to meet the needs of many families.

Homeownership

Latinos are 2.5 times more likely to save for a house than non-Latinos. Unfortunately, the foreclosure crisis has adversely affected Latino homebuyers. Many families who experienced foreclosure did not utilize, or have access to, guidance and counseling, which could have prevented many of them from agreeing to mortgages that placed them at risk of losing their homes.

Foreclosure

Since the onset of the crisis, many Latinos have lost their homes, the equity invested in their properties, and their sense of financial security. As a result of the epidemic, a majority of Latino neighborhoods have continued to experience growth in the number of foreclosure filings. In order to reduce the affects of the crisis and prevent additional turmoil, additional resources are necessary to support foreclosure mitigation efforts and those intended to curb predatory lending practices.

Affordable Housing

In Illinois, nearly fifty percent of Latinos living in renter-occupied units spend thirty percent or more of their income on housing. The insufficient supply of affordable housing stock challenges families to meet their basic needs and

in some cases contributes to overcrowded living conditions.

HEALTH

All Latinos, regardless of country of origin, legal status, or time in the U.S., face limited access to affordable health insurance, over representation among those suffering from diseases and chronic illnesses, and a lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate health care from medical professionals.

Access to Health Insurance

Among the Latino population, 454,906, or nearly one-in-four lack health care coverage. As a result, they accounted for 27% of those who were uninsured throughout the state. Moreover, more than twenty percent of Latino children lack health care coverage.

Screening and Treatment of Acute and Chronic Conditions

Latinos tend to fare worse in conditions where early detection is critical, such as diabetes. Across the nation, more than 1-in-10 aged eighteen and older had diabetes in 2007. As a consequence, Latinos are more likely than Whites to initiate treatment for end-stage renal disease, experience visual impairment, and suffer a diabetes-related death.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Health Care

For many Latinos, language, cultural norms, and legal status create barriers to adequate health care. Regrettably, Latinos represent only 5% of practicing physicians and 2% of registered nurses nationwide. In Illinois, it is also likely that the proportion of Latino physicians and registered nurses is much lower than the proportion of Latinos in the general workforce.

HUMAN SERVICES

In Chicago, a number of nonprofit, Latino-serving organizations have provided human services for years. These programs offer services in a linguistically diverse and culturally relevant manner. Unfortunately, Latinos living outside of Chicago do not have access to the same services in many instances because many suburban communities have yet to invest in the human service infrastructure necessary to meet the diverse needs of new residents.

Child Welfare

In order to appropriately serve Latino children, the state's child welfare system must account for their diverse linguistic and cultural needs. As such, it is important that Illinois ensure that state sponsored providers are equipped with personnel capable of navigating diverse cultural norms and issues related to immigrant integration.

Youth Development

Many Latino youth experience indicators associated with high risk: dropping out of school,

pregnancy, parenthood, drug use, suicide, violence, and incarceration. The negative outcomes associated with these issues can be mitigated by constructive after school activities and youth development programs.

Developmental Disabilities

In Illinois, over 54,000 Latino children and youth aged 3-21 have disabilities. Throughout the state's public schools, over 22,000 Latino children with disabilities are Spanish-speaking students. Although their rate of developmental disabilities is lower than that of the general population, barriers to detection may understate the prevalence of developmental disabilities among Latino children.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The composition of the Illinois workforce has undergone significant changes. Since 1990, the greatest change in the state's employment base has been the growth of the Latino labor force. In fact, Latinos now account for 14.3% of all workers. Unfortunately, many are limited in their ability to compete for high-wage jobs because they have not acquired a post-secondary education or appropriate on-the-job training.

Adult Education

Adequate access to English as a second language, GED, and other community college programs is essential for Latinos who did not graduate from high school and for recent immigrants who were not educated in this country. In Illinois, nearly 69% of working-age Latinos aged 25 and older have a high school diploma or less. Without greater access to education and other skill-building programs, many will be relegated to low-wage jobs that make it difficult to experience upward economic mobility.

Entrepreneurship

In 2002, there were 39,539 Latino-owned businesses in Illinois. Although Latino entrepreneurs are generally under-represented, they constitute a particularly small segment of the following business sectors: information, finance and insurance, and manufacturing. In order to increase the capacity, productivity, and infrastructure of Latino enterprises, access to additional resources and technical assistance is necessary.

CAPITAL

In 2009, a \$26 billion capital budget was proposed by the governor of Illinois. Although over seventy-two percent of the proposed budget was dedicated to rebuilding roadways, repairing bridges, and restoring or constructing new forms of mass transit, over \$7 billion was directed towards other strategic investments. Capital investments, particularly those that support state-funded initiatives, are important because they represent opportunities to restore the balance between the supply and demand of

services in Latino communities. Funding to support additional infrastructure is necessary in the following areas: early care and education facilities, affordable housing, health care and social service facilities, and green/open space. Moreover, as firms secure contracts from the state, it is necessary that Latino-owned enterprises have adequate access to contract opportunities.

CALL TO ACTION

Illinois has a long-standing history as a trail-blazing state. Latinos in Illinois have been at the forefront of public policy innovation. The Latino Policy Forum is one of a handful of research and advocacy organizations across the nation that focuses on state level public policy as it pertains to the Latino community. The issues presented in the Blueprint for Latino Investment offer an opportunity for the state to again forge new territory. It constructs a framework for elected and appointed officials to follow during consideration of the annual budget. It provides public policy recommendations to increase quality and access to state-funded programs and services in Illinois. Moreover, the Appendix of this report aligns the recommendations with line-items in the state's operating and capital budgets where further investments can be made.

As state leaders focus on improving the social and economic conditions that affect the lives of Illinoisans, they must ensure that the policies they promote and the budgets they support are adequately meeting the needs of the state's increasingly diverse population. Regardless of the economic and financial constraints, it is incumbent upon the state to refuse to accept the path of least resistance. In recent years, many areas of the budget have been reduced or level-funded. While this has adversely affected all residents, it has had a particularly devastating impact on Latinos. Given their population growth, budget cuts have resulted in significant per capita reductions in programs and services. Failure to further invest in Latino children, families, and workers will perpetuate conditions that limit their economic mobility and stifle the development of the state's future workforce. Despite the fiscal condition, state leaders must transform today's challenges into opportunities to redouble their efforts to appropriately serve all residents.

As progress is made in the areas outlined in this report, there is no doubt that Latinos' educational, social, and economic outcomes will improve. More importantly, all Illinoisans will benefit as a result of advances made among Latino children, families, and workers. The state's targeted investments in the Latino community will ensure economic progress and prominence well into the 21st century. However, to ensure progress, the state must act today.



I. Introduction

Latinos are now the second largest racial/ethnic group in Illinois and a significant fraction of the state's workforce, tax-base, and homeowners. In 2008, Latinos constituted 15.3% of the population, and since 2000, over ninety percent of the state's growth.² During that period, it grew by nearly twenty-nine percent, a majority of which came from births rather than immigration. Over time, Latinos have increasingly moved beyond Chicago's city limits into the metropolitan region and beyond. Latinos have helped to sustain the tax base of many municipalities, supported the viability of commercial strips, and propelled small-business growth. In addition to their core values of hard-work, faith, and family, their bilingual and bicultural perspective has enhanced the fabric of communities across the state.

Despite the tremendous growth in the Latino community, the state's investment in programs and services directed to them has not kept pace. Consequently, the state continues to under-invest in the development and capacity of its current and future workforce. The status quo is exacerbating conditions that result in low-educational achievement and limited economic mobility for many Latinos. These challenges limit their capacity to realize the full economic potential that their demographic growth will increasingly require.

Despite the tremendous growth in the Latino community, the state's investment in programs and services directed to Latino children, families and workers has not kept pace.

It is necessary for the state to reevaluate its investment in Latino children, families, and workers. It is time for all Latinos to become fully integrated into the vision, planning, and execution of Illinois' state-funded programs

and services. It is time for the state to fully equip the next generation with the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to achieve its potential and become fully invested in all aspects of leadership.

REPORT FRAMEWORK

Following the introduction in Section I, Section II examines Latino economic contributions to the state. It illustrates their financial importance and emphasizes their potential to reinvigorate the Illinois economy.

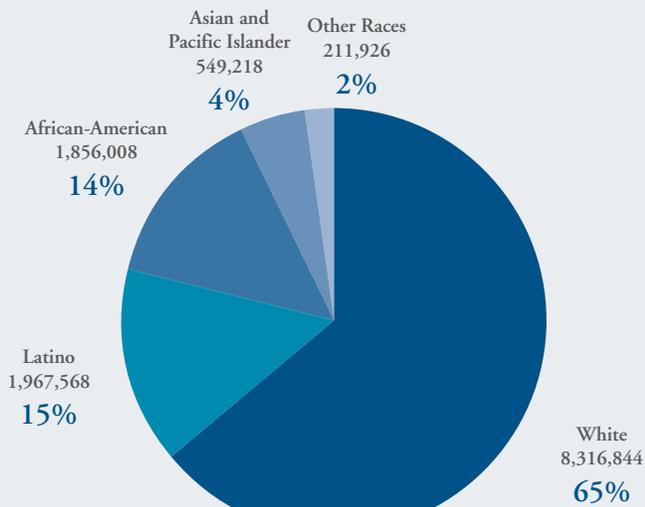
Section III examines several cross-cutting themes that emerged throughout analysis of the proposed FY2010 operating and capital budgets. This segment outlines issues related to immigrant integration, inclusion in state planning and resources, state-employment, monitoring and compliance, and data collection and reporting. To adequately invest in the Latino population, these issues must be concurrently addressed along side the policy and budgetary recommendations set forth in other sections of this report.

Sections IV-IX examine the following issues: education, housing, health, human services, workforce development, and access to state-funded capital. These represent a sample of the many critical areas that affect the lives of Latinos throughout the state.

Throughout this report, issues are broadly examined in order to frame the context in which policies are assessed and investments are considered. Following a review of each topic, a more detailed analysis is presented on several key sub-issues. Afterwards, a series of policy recommendations are proposed in each section. These recommendations, alongside the standards for investment, can be used to consider the appropriate investment of resources for the state's growing Latino population.

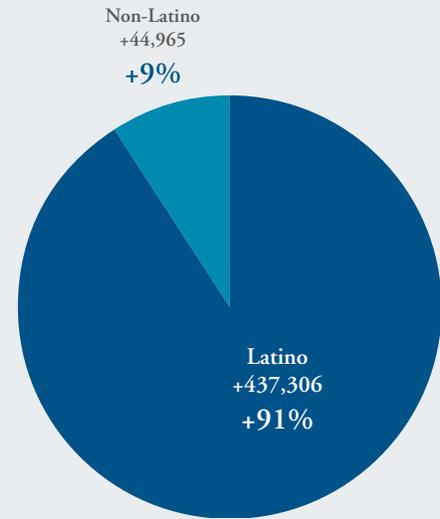
The standards for investment are useful criteria by which to monitor the degree that Illinois is investing in programs and services that support the success and productivity of Latinos. These standards, along with issue-specific indicators, should be used to consider what

FIGURE 1. POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY IN ILLINOIS, 2008 (Total 12,901,564)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. (Latino of any race; White, not Hispanic or Latino; Black, not Hispanic or Latino)

FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGE OF STATE POPULATION GROWTH ACCOUNTED FOR BY LATINOS IN ILLINOIS, 2000-2008 (Total Growth: +482,271)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 Summary Profile 2. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

the appropriate provision of state resources should be, rather than what they are or what would be politically feasible. They offer an alternative framework for measuring inclusion and progress, one that allows parents, advocates, and policy-makers to be proactive rather than reactive during consideration of the annual budget.

In addition, an Appendix is available online that complements this analysis by connecting the policy recommendations and standards for investment in this report to line-items in the proposed FY2010 operating and capital budgets. Although they are separate documents, the report and the Appendix are intended to construct a clear path from the analysis of issues affecting Latinos to specific areas of the state budget that can confront them. Although this analysis does not assess the distribution of funding within specific line-items, it serves as a starting point for this discussion. In short, this report and the Appendix that accompanies it provide a *Blueprint for Latino Investment*.

This report is unique in several ways. This is the first time the Latino Policy Forum has undertaken a comprehensive analysis of the state's budgets. Based on the comments and suggestions received during the production of this report, a significant effort was made to strike a sensible balance and approach to exploring the issues. Second, this report serves as an analysis of several priority areas where the state has the responsibility to promote the success and productivity of Latinos. However, it does not encompass every issue that is salient to the Latino community. Third, many of the recommendations will be familiar to readers. They have been previously published by the Latino Policy Forum, the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame, the Chicago Council on Global

Affairs, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and others. Lastly, the Appendix of this report connects policy recommendations and the standards for investment to line-items in the proposed operating and capital budgets rather than those approved by the Illinois Government in FY2010. The proposed budgets were used because the line-item analysis was largely undertaken prior to passage of the actual budgets.

HISTORIC NATURE OF THIS PROJECT

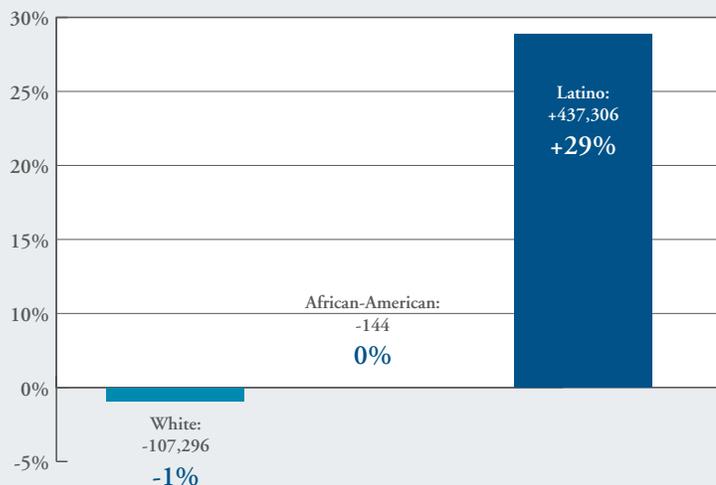
This report is the first analysis in Illinois history undertaken by Latino advocates to comprehensively explore segments of the state's budgets—line-item by line-item to review areas where the state can further invest in the Latino population. By connecting policy recommendations and

standards for investment to areas of the state budget, the Latino Policy Forum has created a broad new path for advocates to advance issues that have a significant impact on the lives of Latinos.

TIMELINESS

The relevance of this report is magnified by the timing of its release. Federal resources will be directed to Illinois for several years through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Moreover, the state has passed a capital plan for the first time in a decade. Together, these efforts will contribute nearly \$40 billion to the state over the next six years. These investments present a unique opportunity to improve the quality of life for Latinos in Illinois.

FIGURE 3. POPULATION CHANGES BY RACE/ETHNICITY IN ILLINOIS, 2000-2008



Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 Summary Profile 2. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. (Latino of any race; White, not Hispanic or Latino; Black, not Hispanic or Latino)



II. Latino Contributions to the Illinois Economy

As the Latino population has grown, so has its contribution to the state's social, cultural, and economic environments. Although Latinos have historically been associated with various neighborhoods in Chicago, population growth in suburban communities throughout the collar counties has expanded their geographic reach throughout the state. These trends have enabled Latinos to increase their share of the state tax base, purchasing power, and business development.

By contributing to the income tax, the sales tax, the property tax, and all applicable fees, Latinos help sustain the state's fiscal infrastructure.³ Moreover, as the Latino population continues to grow, so does its share of each segment of the state tax base. The fiscal responsibility that they share with other Illinoisans is further

Between 1997 and 2002, Latino-owned businesses grew at a rate three times faster than the state's overall business growth.

heightened by the changing composition of the Illinois workforce. A majority of the Latino labor force is young, aged 16-35, and the smallest fraction are those aged 56-65.⁴ As such, fewer Latinos are near retirement age than their White or African-American counterparts. As Latinos become a larger fraction of Illinois' workforce, their capacity to stimulate economic growth

must be enhanced in order to support the state's fiscal infrastructure and expand the strength of its economy.

The economic impact of population growth in Illinois is being realized in many sectors as Latino purchasing power continues to increase. Between 1990 and 2008, Latino purchasing power in Illinois increased by 364%, from \$8.8 billion to \$40.9 billion, and now reflects 8.7% of the state's total buying power.⁵ In fact, Latino purchasing power in Illinois is greater than the total buying power of eight U.S. states and the District of Columbia. More importantly, Latino purchasing power has been instrumental in sustaining and revitalizing local economies in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout the state.

Latino entrepreneurship is a hallmark of the community. Latino businesses provide goods and services that enrich the diversity of the marketplace, offer job opportunities to members of the community, and foster the accumulation of wealth within Latino neighborhoods. Between 1997 and 2002, Latino-owned businesses grew

at a rate three times faster than the state's overall business growth.⁶ By 2002, there were 39,539 Latino owned-firms in Illinois, comprising over four percent of all businesses in the state. Numerically, Cook County experienced the largest growth with 6,605 new Latino businesses launched between 1997 and 2002.⁷ However, each of the collar counties experienced between 19% and 38% growth in Latino-owned enterprises. As entrepreneurship continues to grow, so does the importance of ensuring that Latino-owned firms have the capacity to compete and prosper within their respective markets.

³ Calculating this data is beyond the scope of this analysis.
⁴ Center for Governmental Studies Northern Illinois University, Office of Social Policy Research Northern Illinois University, Center for Tax and Budget Accountability. *The State of Working Illinois 2008*.

⁵ Humphreys, J. *The Multicultural Economy 2008*. Terry College of Business, Selig Center for Economic Growth, The University of Georgia, 2008.
⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises: 1997*. Washington, D.C., 2001. U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Survey of Business Owners: Hispanic-Owned Firms: 2002*. Washington, D.C., 2006. This is the latest year for which the data are available.

⁷ See note 6 above.



III. Cross-Cutting Issues

Illinois government has the responsibility to ensure that public resources are distributed in an equitable manner. To achieve this, the state should reconsider the degree to which it invests in Latino children, families, and workers. In addition to evaluating investments in specific issue-areas, there are several cross-cutting themes that must be concurrently addressed: immigrant integration, inclusion, state employment, monitoring and compliance, and data collection and reporting.

IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

For many immigrants, the process of adapting to a new country takes at least a generation. Throughout this nation's history, social, economic, and political conditions have facilitated the integration and acculturation of Irish, Polish, German, and many other immigrant groups into U.S. society. Like these groups, Latinos carry a rich and diverse set of histories, an ethic of hard-work, and a desire to succeed. Unlike many of them, Latinos have a long and rich history in North America pre-dating European settlement. Given the territorial and political history that the U.S. shares with Mexico and its proximity to the rest of Central and South America, immigration has not taken place over the course of a short and distinct period. Latino levels of acculturation and English proficiency, educational attainment, and economic success vary largely upon their family history. Today's information-based economy places unique burdens on recent immigrants. They must be prepared to adapt quickly in order to live in healthy conditions and compete in the U.S. economy.

In Illinois, more than half of all immigrants arrived after 1990.⁸ From 1990 to 2006, the foreign-born population in Illinois increased by 86%, nearly half of whom were immigrants from Latin American countries. Although immigration is typically associated with urban centers, in the Chicago area the migration pattern has shifted to the collar counties. In fact, nearly a third of the counties in Illinois experienced one-hundred percent growth in their immigrant populations during the 1990s. However, some areas outside of Chicago have not developed the infrastructure necessary to integrate and fully support recent immigrants.

From 1990 to 2006, the foreign-born population in Illinois increased by 86%.

The Office of New Americans Policy and Advocacy was created by executive order in 2005. It coordinates programs and policies to more effectively integrate Illinois immigrant

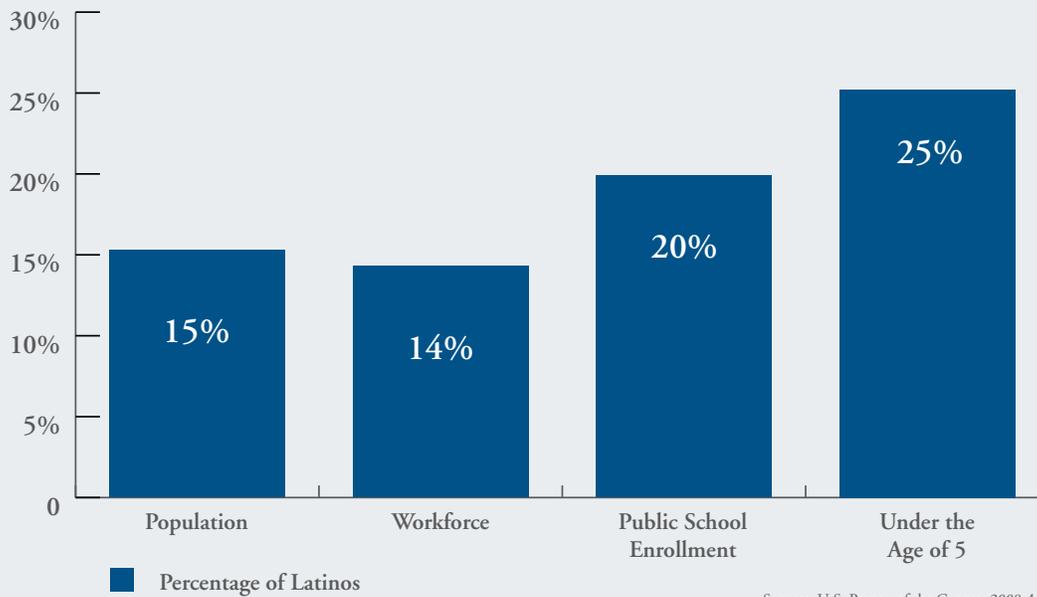
populations. For example, in partnership with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, this office oversees the *New Americans Initiative*. This partnership helps integrate new immigrants by promoting English language acquisition, vocational training, and citizenship. The state also promotes the integration of immigrants through a welcoming center coordinated by the Illinois Department of Human Services. This center provides information about how local institutions function, conducts workshops ranging from financial literacy to nutrition, and provides referrals to legal and other assistance. These efforts have made Illinois a national leader in immigrant integration.

INCLUSION

Broadly, inclusion refers to adequate access to state resources. Latino access to government services has not kept pace with the growth of its population. Since 2000, it has increased by nearly 29%, but the allocation of resources and delivery of crucial services has not. As such, the gap between the supply and demand for services has widened. In areas of the operating budget

⁸ Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. "Immigrants by the Numbers." <http://icirr.org/en/issue/demographics/immigrants-numbers>

FIGURE 4. STANDARDS FOR LATINO INVESTMENT IN ILLINOIS, 2008



Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Illinois State Board of Education. 2008 Annual Report.

that have experienced level-funding, the result in practice has been a reduction in the availability of resources per capita within the Latino community. As such, many programs are unable to meet the needs of children, families, and workers. As a consequence, many nonprofit and other organizations, who are funded in part by state resources, are required to do more with less.

Many services as currently constituted and funded are unable to meet Latino needs.

There are at least 119 Latino-led nonprofit organizations in the Chicago metropolitan region. These agencies have board representation and a client base that is mainly Latino. Yet only 46% were reported to have a contract from the state in FY 2008.⁹ These contracts totaled approximately 5% (\$35 million) of contracts distributed by the State in FY2010. An equitable share would have approximated 15% or \$105 million. The reason why a majority of Latino-led organizations did not receive government resources is unclear. In part, their efforts remain viable thanks to the support of foundations, businesses, or private donors. Revenue from these sources is vital; however, additional state and federal support is necessary.

Inclusion also refers to being incorporated into the state's strategic vision for success and prosperity. This requires state funded programs to reevaluate whether their services are tailored

to meet the unique needs of Latino children, families, and workers. Among Latinos, inclusion encompasses a broad array of considerations. For children, it refers to appropriately responding to the needs of those who are bilingual and bicultural, recognizing shifts in the supply and demand of services, and allocating resources based on the greatest areas of need. For families, inclusion beseeches state-funded programs to adequately and respectfully deliver services to recent immigrants and Spanish-speaking residents. For workers, it means reasonable access to workforce development programs that provide opportunities for upward mobility. For professionals and civic leaders, it refers to equitable representation in state government and on all government appointed bodies.

A strategic vision for Latino inclusion also compels government officials to ensure that programs and services are not dependent upon specific legislative appropriations and member initiatives. The latter is in reference to a practice in the Illinois General Assembly whereby legislators are provided with discretionary funds to help meet the needs of their constituents. Many Latinos benefit from these programs. However, this practice makes the distribution of funding undependable and places many in jeopardy of losing access to important programs and services. Moreover, these resources fail to become annualized within the state budget. As such, various initiatives continue to be excluded from the core functions of state government.

MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

The absence of an appropriate system for monitoring and compliance has diminished the state's ability to hold its agencies accountable for reaching diversity-related goals. For example, in the provision of state contracts, Illinois has set statutory goals for the inclusion of minority and women-owned businesses.¹⁰ In fact, Central Management Services publishes an annual report outlining the distribution of state contracts and its alignment to those goals. Unfortunately, many agencies fall short. While the publication of this data is important for the purpose of transparency, a greater effort is necessary to further encourage the accomplishment of diversity-related goals.

UNDER-REPRESENTATION IN STATE EMPLOYMENT

In 2008, Latino workers accounted for 14.3% of the Illinois workforce.¹¹ However, they represented only four percent of the government's workforce.¹² Among the 51,257 government employees, only 2,114 are Latinos. If measured against Latinos in the general workforce, the proportion of state employees is seventy-one percent less than parity. In management positions designated as Senior Public Service Administrators (SPSAs) and Public Service Administrators (PSAs), Latino representation is also scarce. Throughout state agencies, there are only sixty-four Latino SPSAs (4.6%) and one-hundred forty-four PSAs (3.8%). Increasing the proportion of Latino state employees could foster more culturally sensitive public policies, planning, access, and service

⁹ Latino Policy Forum analysis using information and data from the following sources: Alejo, B., (2008). *The Latino Landscape: A Metro Chicago Guide and Nonprofit Directory*. Institute for Latino Studies, Center for Metropolitan Chicago Initiatives,

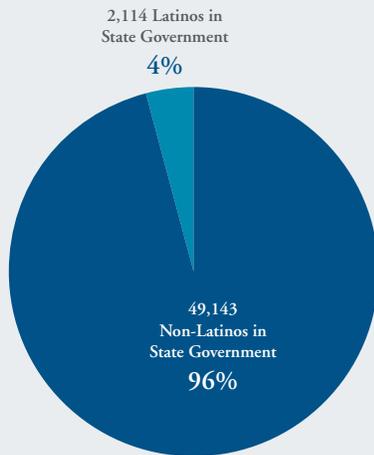
University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.; Illinois Office of the Comptroller. "Open Book: A searchable database of state contracts and campaign contributions." <http://www.openbook.illinoiscomptroller.com/> (accessed May 2009).

¹⁰ Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act, 30 ILCS 575/0.01.

¹¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

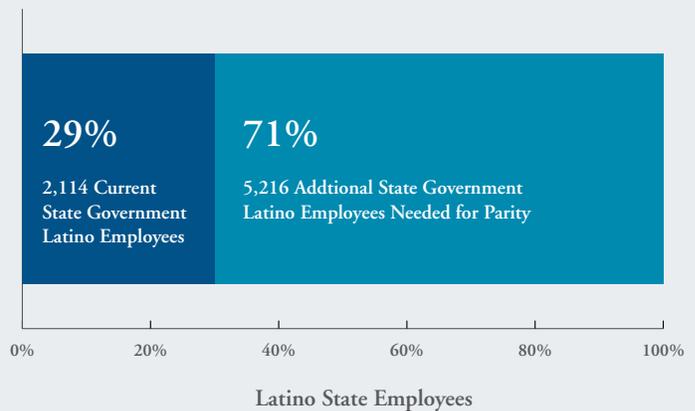
¹² Illinois Department of Central Management Services. 2009 Hispanic Employment Plan.

FIGURE 5. EMPLOYMENT IN ILLINOIS GOVERNMENT, LATINO AND NON-LATINO, 2008



Source: Illinois Department of Central Management Services. 2009 Hispanic Employment Plan.

FIGURE 6. LATINO EMPLOYMENT IN ILLINOIS GOVERNMENT IS 29% OF PARITY, 2008



Source: Illinois Department of Central Management Services. 2009 Hispanic Employment Plan.

*Parity is defined as the percentage of Latinos in the Illinois workforce, 14.3%.

delivery. To reach parity based upon the proportion of Latinos in the workforce, over 5,200 additional employees, including 135 SPSAs and 398 PSAs, would have to be hired.

Bilingual workers play a vital role in fulfilling the state's responsibility to provide meaningful access to programs and services.

The importance of increasing the proportion of Latino state employees is highlighted by the vital role that bilingual workers assume in fulfilling the state's responsibility to provide meaningful access to programs and services. However, the percentage of Latino state employees suggests an insufficient capacity to provide bilingual services. In addition to fulfilling their primary responsibilities, bilingual workers often take on disproportionate workloads because their colleagues cannot serve non-English speaking clients. As a result, many Spanish-speaking children and families experience longer wait times and must sometimes travel long distances to receive services. Moreover, these working conditions may negatively affect employee retention.

The state's inability to hire employees who reflect the composition of the state's general workforce is not due to an inadequate supply of well-qualified applicants. In 2008, 14,801 Latinos applied for employment. This reflected 12.3%

of the total applicant pool.¹³ Of those, 2,598, or 17.6%, received an A grade in the application review process. The Latino applicant-base in 2008 provides evidence that highly-qualified candidates were available to fill vacant positions.

Despite the Hispanic Employment Plan, the state has insufficiently tailored its workforce to meet the needs of the public it serves. Addressing this matter will be challenging for the state given that resources to hire new employees are limited. Further, such efforts must be done in accordance with equal employment laws. Nonetheless, Illinois should re-examine its employment policies, particularly during consideration of large reductions in the state's labor force. During difficult economic times, the state must ensure that it maintains a workforce that meets the needs of Illinois' residents, especially as it pertains to Spanish-option staff.

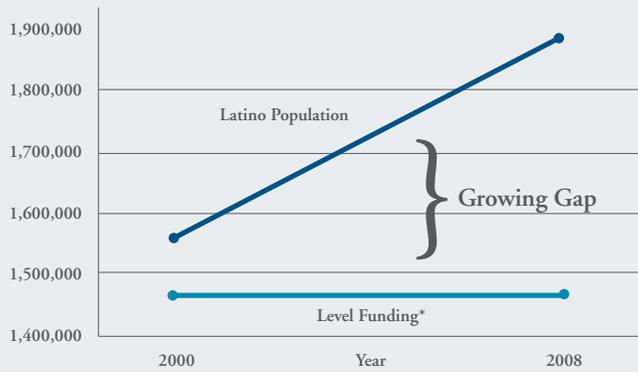
Beyond the goal of promoting a diverse workforce, addressing the language characteristics of Latinos is required by Federal law. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, any agency using federal funds cannot deny, delay, or differentiate the services it provides based on limited English language proficiency. Latinos who cannot speak English fluently have the same rights as those whose primary language is English. The Federal Government has stated that meaningful communication is the foundation for determining access. It requires state agencies to ensure that language is not a barrier to services.

DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

In order to adequately serve residents of all ages, elected officials must ensure that state-funded programs consistently collect and report disaggregated data by age, race/ethnicity, and gender. Data is critical to understanding the scope of various issues and necessary to ensure adequate resources are being directed to those in need. Although the U.S. Census provides access to Illinois-specific information, there are many gaps. In some cases, the state has proactively collected and reported data, but often fails to disaggregate it. Moreover, there is inconsistency with regard to the collection and reporting of data among and within state agencies. Without greater access to detailed information, it is difficult to appropriately direct resources. The state should also sponsor the collection and reporting of data for various health, social, and economic indicators. Although there are many issues where additional data would be useful, there are several areas of particular importance including: physical and mental health, developmental disabilities, foster care, and domestic violence.

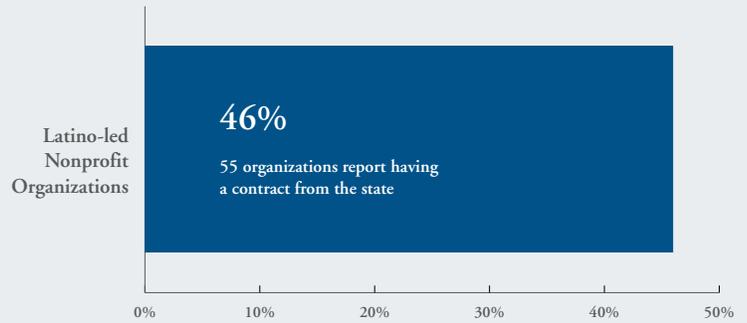
¹³ See note 12 above.

FIGURE 7. LEVEL ALLOCATION OF GRANTS/CONTRACTS RESULTING IN GROWING SERVICE NEED



* This line represents the use of level funding for state programs and services.
 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Census 2000 Summary Profile 2*.
 U.S. Bureau of the Census. *2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate*.

FIGURE 8. PERCENTAGE OF LATINO-LED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVING A CONTRACT FROM THE STATE, FISCAL YEAR 2009



Source: Latino Policy Forum analysis using information and data from the following sources: Alejo, B., (2008). *The Latino Landscape: A Metro Chicago Guide and Nonprofit Directory*. Institute for Latino Studies, Center for Metropolitan Chicago Initiatives, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.; Illinois Office of the Comptroller. "Open Book: A searchable database of state contracts and campaign contributions." <http://www.openbook.illinoiscomptroller.com/> (accessed May 2009).

CROSS- CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS

IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

- Ensure that eligible immigrants receive the appropriate classes and support to become naturalized citizens.
- Increase access to information about state-funded programs and services in communities with a significant immigrant population.
- Support partnerships among institutions serving immigrants.
- Strengthen access to immigrant integration services outside of Chicago.
- Boost resources to new or existing social service organizations working with immigrant populations.

INCLUSION

- Increase the proportion of state contracts to Latino-led organizations from five to fifteen percent.
- Ensure consistent RFP language in the state grant-making process to ensure cultural competency and include priority for underserved areas and populations.
- Review all state programs to ensure Latinos are equitably served and bilingual services are available.
- Expand Latino representation on state-appointed boards and commissions.

MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

- Develop monitoring and compliance standards for state agencies that align to the standards for Latino investment.

UNDER-REPRESENTATION IN STATE EMPLOYMENT

- Increase the proportion of Latino state employees in all state agencies in compliance with all applicable laws.
- Build an accountability-based compliance system to meet the goals associated with the Illinois Hispanic Employment Plan.
- Establish a process to ensure that positions designated for Spanish-option staff are maintained during any plan for a reduction in the state's labor force.
- Ensure an equitable distribution of caseloads between bilingual and non-bilingual staff.

DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

- Collect and report additional information regarding state sponsored programs and services.
- Consult with the Latino Family Commission to determine additional areas for investigation.
- Ensure that all data is disaggregated by age, race/ethnicity, and gender.



IV. Education

National polling has consistently shown that education is among the most important issues to Latinos. In May 2008, a poll of voter attitudes among adults found that they ranked the importance of education above jobs, health care, and immigration.¹⁴ Research by the Latino Policy Forum suggests that attitudes in Illinois reflect the same sentiment.

Since the adoption of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), local and state education agencies have been intensely focused on standards-based accountability in grades 3-8 in reading and math. Although controversial, NCLB's system of accountability has renewed schools' focus on improving student outcomes for children, particularly those who are low-income and/or English Language Learners (ELLs). The challenges associated with meeting NCLB's requirements are exacerbated in some schools by inadequate funding, difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers, and state standards that leave too many high school graduates unprepared for the rigors of higher education or the workplace.

As school-based personnel, district administrators, and government officials work to overcome these and other obstacles to student success, they must also respond accordingly to the demographic changes that have increased the proportion of Latino students throughout the state. During the ten year period between 1998-2008, Latino enrollment in k-12 public schools increased by 58.5%.¹⁵ Latino children now make up 1-in-5 students in public schools. Conversely, the number of African-American and White students has decreased by four percent and eight percent

respectively during the same timeframe. These trends are also evident for children under age five, which show that 1-in-4 children is Latino.¹⁶ Leaders in school systems across the state must work to ensure that all students are successful. At the same time, the state must ensure that districts, schools, and educators are equipped with the resources and training to meet the diverse needs of students.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

According to national figures, Latino four-year olds trail peers in language, literacy, and mathematics in preschool.²⁶ For Latino children, participation in birth-to-five early childhood education is critical to reducing the achievement gap before they enter kindergarten.

Preliminary evidence suggests that Latino children have limited access to early childhood programs.²⁷ Throughout Illinois, there aren't enough state or federally-funded slots available for all children to enroll in early childhood education programs. In many communities, especially outside of Chicago. Moreover, the state has not maintained an adequate capital investment to support the expansion or

development of early childhood facilities where necessary. In many areas, school districts do not have enough space to support additional programming and the private market has yet to fill the void. As such, public resources are necessary to support the development of new early childhood facilities in underserved areas.

In addition to access, quality is a critical issue for Latino children. Although Illinois has a very sophisticated system of early childhood education, it must continue to increase the quality of its services for Latino children. This requires programs to appropriately respond to their cultural and linguistic needs. In part, this will require teacher preparation programs to ensure that the early childhood education workforce is trained to work with students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Moreover, additional bilingual capacity will be critical to the field as the state strengthens its effort to meet the needs of ELLs in early childhood education.²⁸

SCHOOL FUNDING

Illinois public schools are funded by local, state, and federal revenue with the largest share coming from local resources. During the 2007-08 school-year, 56.5% of funding was generated

¹⁴ Lopez, M.H., Minushkin, S. 2008 *National Survey of Latinos: Hispanic Voter Attitudes*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, July 2008.

¹⁵ Illinois State Board of Education. 2008 *Annual Report*.

¹⁶ See note 11 above.

¹⁷ Jacobson Chernoff, J., Flanagan, K. D., McPhee, C., and Park, J. (2007). *Preschool: First Findings From the Preschool Follow-up of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)* (NCES 2008-025). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Illinois State Report Card, Mathematics: Grade 4, 2009, Reading: Grade 4, 2007.

¹⁹ U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for

Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Illinois State Report Card, Mathematics: Grade 8, 2009, Reading: Grade 8, 2007.

²⁰ Stillwell, R. and Hoffman, L. (2008). *Public School Graduates and Dropouts From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2005-06* (NCES 2008-353rev). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC. Retrieved September 15, 2009 from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008353rev>.

²¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. (Data for Hispanic or Latino; White, not Hispanic or Latino; and Black or African-American, not Hispanic or Latino)

²² Illinois Board of Higher Education Academic Degree Program Inventory Database. <http://www.ihbe.state.il.us/BHEProgramInventory/Search.aspx> (accessed October 10, 2009).

²³ The Education Trust. *Education Watch State Report: Illinois*. April 2009.

²⁴ See note 21 above.

²⁵ Zhou, L. (2009). *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2006-07 (Fiscal Year 2007)* (NCES 2009-337). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC. Retrieved September 9, 2009 from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2009337>.

²⁶ See note 17 above.

²⁷ Illinois Action for Children. *Getting to Preschool for All: Reaching Chicago's Latino Communities*. 2007 Institute for Latino Studies, Center for Metropolitan Chicago Initiatives, University of Notre Dame. *Cicero Education Forum Summary*, March 2004.

locally, 34.6% from the state, and 8.8% was appropriated from the federal government.²⁹ The state's contribution to public education is meant to ensure that all children are provided with a minimum amount of education funding. Each fiscal year, the Illinois General Assembly appropriates aid to local education agencies to meet this purpose. The amount of state funding directed to school districts is based on their ability to meet a pre-determined foundation level. Districts also generate additional revenue through property taxes.

This approach to financing public schools has led to significant inequities between property-rich and property-poor districts. During the 2005-06 school-year, the average difference in per-pupil funding between high-poverty districts and low-poverty districts was \$1,735, or nineteen percent.³⁰ The gap in school funding reduces high-poverty, high-minority districts' ability to compete for high-quality teachers, provide academic support, and facilitate enrichment programs for their students.

TEACHER QUALITY

Although numerous variables influence student success, teacher quality has a significant impact on achievement. In order to have highly-qualified educators in every classroom, NCLB requires 100% of teachers at every school to hold a bachelor's degree, a valid state teacher's certificate, and demonstrated knowledge in the content area taught. Unfortunately, low-income, high-minority districts face significant challenges in the recruitment of their workforce.

There is a considerable disparity between teacher quality in high-poverty, high-minority schools and their more affluent, less diverse counterparts.³¹ For example, high-poverty schools have a larger proportion of teachers with lower academic credentials. In addition, low-performing schools tend to have a greater number of inexperienced teachers. Moreover, there is evidence that performance is directly related to teachers' experience and credentials, even controlling for in-school variation and student demographics. Given that 66.5% of Latino students are enrolled in high-poverty districts, it is critical that this issue is addressed.³²

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Since Fiscal Year 2004, the number of English language learners (ELLs)

has grown by over twenty percent and now accounts for 1-in-13 public school children.³³ During the 2007-08 school-year, 189,239 students were ELLs in public school districts, 81.5% of which are native Spanish-speakers. Importantly, nearly ninety percent of that growth has occurred outside of Chicago.

In order to support the acquisition of English as a second language while providing core content instruction, schools are required by state and federal law to provide bilingual education services.³⁴ Moreover, the state is required to provide supplementary resources to offset the local costs associated with providing bilingual education services.³⁵ Unfortunately, Illinois is not required by law to appropriate a foundation level of funding for bilingual education. Given the growth in Illinois' ELL population, it is essential that bilingual education be funded in a manner that is commensurate with the demand for services.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Promoting and facilitating parent participation is critical for Latino students. However, a number of barriers prevent Latino parents from fully engaging in the education of their children: language, cultural differences, adequate outreach from schools, and employment schedules. Although over 90% of Latino children in Illinois are U.S. citizens, over 81% speak Spanish at home.³⁶ Unfortunately, many school districts lack an adequate number of bilingual and bicultural staff to work effectively with parents whose primary language is not English. This makes it difficult to communicate with parents and diminishes their ability to understand how best to advocate for their children.

District and school personnel should also recognize that some parents have non-traditional work schedules, making it difficult to attend parent-teacher conferences and other related activities. The inability of some parents to participate in these functions should not be taken as a sign of neglect or indifference. School personnel should determine how to coordinate important meetings in a manner that makes them accessible for all parents.

In addition to language and employment barriers, there are some cultural differences that affect how Latino parents interact with school staff. For example, the educational experiences of immigrant



VITAL STATISTICS

→ Nationally, Latino four-year olds have lower average scores on tests used to measure their language, literacy, and mathematics development in pre-primary education in every category including: receptive and expressive vocabulary, letter recognition, phonological awareness, and mathematics than their White or African-American counterparts.¹⁷

→ According to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), 28% of Latino children in Illinois scored below basic in 4th grade mathematics and 50% scored below basic in reading.¹⁸

→ NAEP data also show that 41% of Latino eighth graders scored below basic in mathematics and 36% scored below basic in reading.¹⁹

→ According to a report published by the U.S. Department of Education, the on-time graduation rate of Latino students in Illinois' public schools in 2006 was 66%.²⁰

→ In Illinois, over forty-one percent of Latinos aged 25 and older have less than a high school diploma compared to 8.7% of Whites and 18.5% of African-Americans.²¹

→ According to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Latinos accounted for 7% of those who enrolled in undergraduate programs in Illinois public universities in the fall of 2008. Moreover, Latinos only accounted for 6.3% of those who received an undergraduate degree from a public institution in 2008.²²

→ Among first-time, full-time college freshmen attending public colleges in Illinois in 2000, only 17% of Latinos graduated in four years. Within six years, 44% had graduated.²³

→ In Illinois, only 11.8% of Latinos aged 25 and older have a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to 33.1% of Whites and 19.3% of African-Americans.²⁴

→ In Fiscal Year 2007, Illinois ranked 49th in the nation in proportion of revenue used for public education provided by the state.²⁵

²⁹ For more information, please refer to the following source: Hernandez, R. *Transforming Early Learning: Educational Equity for Young Latinos*. Latino Policy Forum. March 2009.

³⁰ See note 15 above.

³¹ See note 23 above.

³² White, B. R., Presley, J. B., & DeAngelis, K. J. (2008). *Leveling up: Narrowing the teacher academic capital gap in Illinois* (IERC 2008-1).

Illinois Education Research Council, Edwardsville, IL.

³³ The Center for Tax and Budget Accountability. *Money Matters: How the Illinois School Funding System Creates Significant Educational Inequities that Impact Most Students in the State*. September 2008.

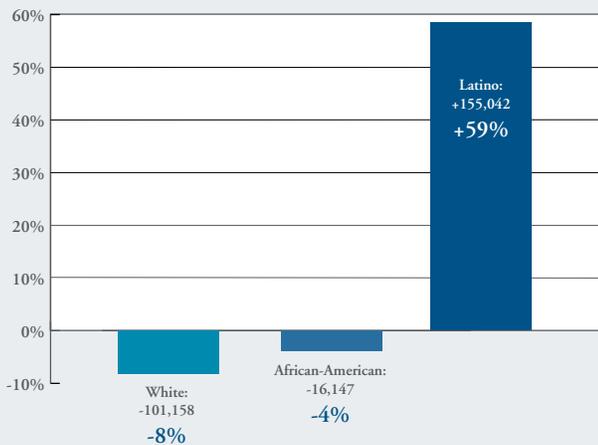
³⁴ See note 15 above.

³⁵ *Equal Education Opportunity Act of 1974*, U.S. Code 20, § 1703(f).

³⁶ Illinois Compiled Statutes Chapter 105, Schools Common Schools Act 5, Article 14(c) Transitional Bilingual Education.

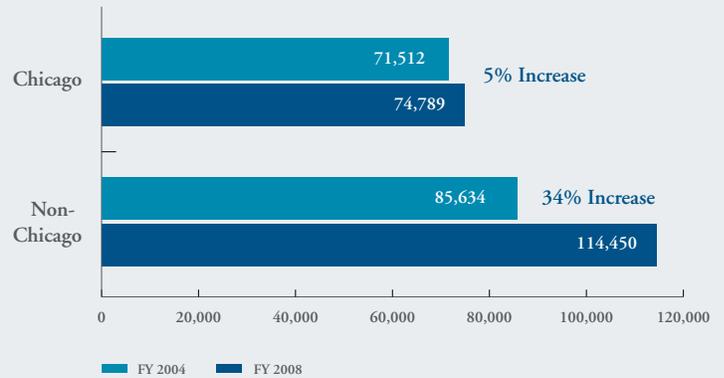
³⁷ See note 11 above.

FIGURE 9. CHANGES IN THE ILLINOIS PUBLIC SCHOOL POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SCHOOL YEARS 1997-2007



Source: Illinois State Board of Education. 2008 Annual Report.

FIGURE 10. INCREASE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN ILLINOIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS, FISCAL YEARS 2004 AND 2008



Source: Illinois State Board of Education. 2008 Annual Report.

parents are likely to be significantly different from that of their children, which could hamper their ability to support their children's academic progress. In order to overcome these and other cultural differences, school and district based-personnel must adopt a more personalized approach to interacting with parents.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION

Graduating from high school and obtaining at least some college education is increasingly necessary to compete for high-wage jobs in the state's economy. In 2006, 81.7% of jobs in Illinois were considered middle or high-skilled – those requiring a high school degree and at least some college.³⁷ Unfortunately, about a third

of Latino students fail to earn their high school diploma each spring.³⁸ According to the *State of Working Illinois (2008)*, youth who fail to graduate from high school are twelve times more likely to be unemployed than those who obtain their B.A. By not gaining the hard and soft skills associated with education and employment, youth place themselves at risk of being tracked into low-skill, low-paying jobs and prolonged periods of unemployment.

Since 1998, the proportion of Latino students enrolling in post-secondary institutions has increased. However the percentage of those that have earned a degree continues to lag behind other racial and ethnic groups. Among full-time Latino college freshmen attending four year

public institutions, only 17% received a B.A. in four years and just 44% received their degree within six years.³⁹ Too many freshmen entering two and four-year colleges lack the academic preparation, institutional support, and financial resources to succeed in higher education.

The proportion of Latinos with a bachelor's degree in Illinois severely limits the pool of students entering graduate programs. This also contributes to the difficulty post-secondary institutions encounter as they seek to diversify their faculty. This reduces their capacity to provide bicultural instruction in schools of education, nursing, and other service-oriented fields.

EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Expand the capacity to enroll additional children in all programs.
- Ensure equitable access and participation for all birth-to-five services.
- Increase the availability of full-day early care and education.
- Allocate funds to expand the pool of bilingual teachers and administrators.

SCHOOL FUNDING

- Increase general state aid to meet the updated allocation based on the previous recommendation of the Education Funding Advisory Board.

TEACHER QUALITY

- Increase the pool of bilingual and bicultural teachers and administrators in public school districts across the state.
- Provide additional resources to low-income, high-minority school districts to ensure that all teachers are highly-qualified.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

- Direct resources to support best practices in the education of students with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Determine a minimum level of state funding for bilingual education based on educational need.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- Allocate funding to public school districts to support parental involvement.
- Require public school districts to conduct outreach in languages that reflect the diversity of their student enrollment.
- Develop a statewide vision and code for parent involvement in schools.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION

- Support academic and extracurricular activities focused on reducing Latino student dropout rates.

- Direct resources to public colleges and universities to increase the recruitment, enrollment, and retention of Latinos.
- Create a Latino scholarship fund.
- Increase state support for youth mentoring programs and services.
- Expand funding for additional college guidance counselors in school districts.
- Require public colleges and universities to direct additional support to Latino studies departments, cultural centers, and efforts to create a more diverse faculty.
- Establish a Latino higher education task force.
- Require all public post-secondary institutions to institute a plan to increase Latino graduation rates by fifty percent in ten years and submit it to the General Assembly and a Latino higher education task force.



V. Housing

Homeownership represents hard-work, success, and the achievement of one aspect of the American Dream. It provides a deep connection to one's neighborhood, region, and state. In addition to these symbolic associations, homeownership is one of Americans' principal vehicles for accumulating wealth, particularly in minority communities. In fact, non-White and Latino families are more than five times likelier to hold their primary residence as an asset than they are to hold corporate stock.⁴⁰ However, in Illinois only 55.7% of Latinos live in owner-occupied housing units compared to 69.3% of the total population.⁴¹

Despite the benefits associated with homeownership, there are significant challenges associated with it. Real wages have stagnated and the cost of housing has increased. Further, many have been adversely affected by the foreclosure crisis. Unfortunately, the epidemic has been largely fueled by an under-regulated market, a proliferation of eager developers, and opportunistic lenders. Regrettably, some homebuyers were either under-informed or not ready to assume the responsibilities associated with accepting a mortgage.

In April 2009, Illinois had the eighth highest foreclosure rate in the nation with 1-in-384 households receiving a foreclosure notice.⁴² Latinos and other minority groups have been disproportionately affected by the crisis.⁴³ According to a national study, Latino borrowers will lose between \$75 and \$98 billion as a result of loans taken between 2000 and 2008.⁴⁴ Although it is primarily an issue for individual homeowners, foreclosure has

broad social implications. In many areas the epidemic has caused property values to decline, led to unstable living conditions for renters, and has created refuge for criminals in abandoned homes in many communities.

According to a national study, Latino borrowers will lose between \$75 and \$98 billion as a result of foreclosures.⁴⁴

Latino families are also confronting a number of challenges in the rental market. For example, there is a lack of affordable housing stock that is compatible with the size of their families. As a result of these market trends, and in some instances cultural factors, some Latinos live in overcrowded housing units. In addition, many immigrant and Spanish-speaking tenants have been subjected to discrimination and exploitation by landlords because they lack adequate

information regarding their rights and all applicable housing codes.⁴⁵ As suburban areas continue to diversify, municipalities must ensure that Latinos are respectfully absorbed into communities and engaged in local plans to foster strong and prosperous areas.

HOMEOWNERSHIP

According to *Nuestro Hogar: Addressing the Foreclosure Crisis in the Latino Community (2008)*, Latinos are 2.5 times more likely to save for a house than non-Latinos. Unfortunately, the foreclosure crisis has had a negative impact on Latino homebuyers. Many families who experienced foreclosure did not utilize or have access to guidance and counseling, which could have prevented many of them from agreeing to mortgages that placed them at risk of foreclosure. In Illinois, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sponsors over 100 certified housing counseling agencies. However, survey data show that over 80% of counseling agencies are operating at capacity and have

⁴⁰ Bucks, B.K., Kennickell, A.B., Mach, T.L., Moore, K.B. *Changes in U.S. Family Finances from 2004 to 2007: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances*. Federal Reserve Bulletin, vol. 95 (February 2009), pp. A1-A55.

⁴¹ See note 11 above.

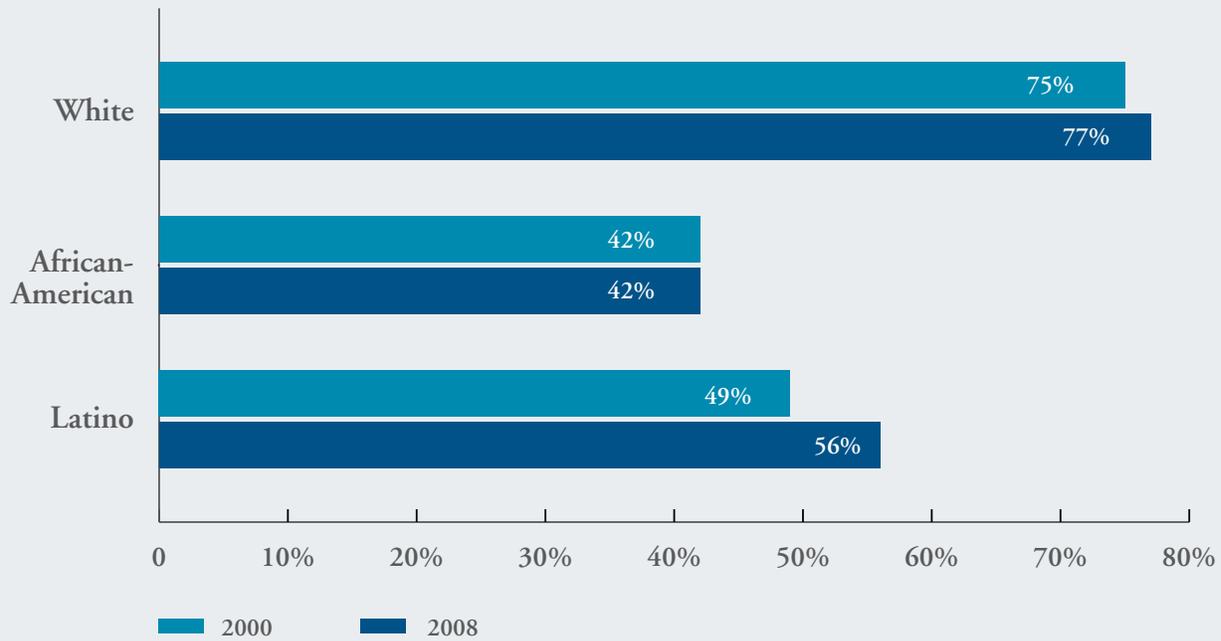
⁴² Reuters. *Foreclosure Activity Remains at Record Levels in April According to RealtyTrac*. May 13, 2009. <http://www.reuters.com/article/pressRelease/idUS40632+13-May-2009+PRN20090513>

⁴³ Bromley, C., Campen, J., Nafici, S., Rust, A., Smith, G., Stein, K., van Kerkhove, B. *Paying More for the American Dream: The SubPrime Shakeout and Its Impact on Lower Income and Minority Communities*. California Reinvestment Coalition, Community Reinvestment Association of North Carolina, Empire Justice Center, Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance, Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project, Ohio Fair Lending Coalition, Woodstock Institute. March 2008.

⁴⁴ Rivera, A., Cotto-Escalera, B., Desai, A., Huezio, J., Muhammad, D. *Foreclosed: State of the Dream 2008*. United for a Fair Economy. January 2008.

⁴⁵ Roth, B.J. *Bajo el Mismo Techo: The Latino Community in Suburban Chicago: An Analysis of Overcrowded Housing*. Latinos United. February 2008

FIGURE 11. HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES IN ILLINOIS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2000 AND 2008



Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Census 2000 Summary Profile 2*. U.S. Bureau of the Census. *2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate*. (Latino of any race; White, not Hispanic or Latino; Black, not Hispanic or Latino)

waitlists for their services.⁵⁵ Given that 45% of those who finish counseling are able to remain in their homes, access to these services is important for families at risk of losing their home. In order to ensure equal access to these services, bilingual and bicultural counselors must be available across the state. According to a survey conducted by the Chicago Reporter, out of 103 housing counselors from 19 different HUD agencies, only 57 spoke Spanish.⁵⁶ Moreover, only 6 out of 11 majority Latino wards in Chicago had Spanish-speaking counseling agents. Although the survey contained a small sample of Illinois' HUD counseling agencies, it calls attention to the need for additional bilingual capacity.

FORECLOSURE

Since the onset of the foreclosure crisis, many Latinos have lost their homes, the equity invested in their properties, and their sense of financial security. During this difficult period, a majority of Latino neighborhoods have continued to experience growth in the number of foreclosure filings. Moreover, the city recorded higher rates of filings in the first half of 2009 than in the first half of 2008.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, the epidemic is likely to continue given the prevalence of adjustable rate mortgages and the state of the economy.

In an effort to reduce the affects of the crisis, Illinois has been using Federal resources through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. This program, which was authorized by the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, seeks to redevelop communities by rehabbing homes and stabilizing neighborhoods. As resources for this program are distributed across the state, it is necessary to ensure that Latino neighborhoods receive a share of the resources commensurate with the scope of the problem.

In Illinois, 1-in-384 households received a foreclosure notice as of April 2009. At the time, Illinois ranked 8th in the nation in foreclosures.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In Illinois, over 49% of Latinos living in renter-occupied units spend thirty percent or more of their income on housing, a condition referred to as being cost-burdened.⁵⁸ Lower than average median incomes and the youthfulness of the population create a significant demand for affordable housing. Unfortunately, the housing stock currently available in the rental market

does not align with the needs of many Latino households. The disconnect is driven in part by the fact that they tend to raise more children and live with multiple-generations.

The lack of affordable housing causes many families to struggle with their financial obligations. For example, balancing housing costs and general expenses may reduce their ability to purchase food, seek medical attention, and fill prescriptions. This may also cause some to rely too heavily on credit. Moreover, inadequate housing stock has also caused many to live in overcrowded households. In fact, between 1990 and 2000, the number of overcrowded housing units leapt by 133%, seventy-five percent of which were occupied by Latinos.⁵⁹ Overcrowding may place many at risk of homelessness. This occurs because many Latinos live in overcrowded conditions before resorting to the shelter system.⁶⁰

FAIR HOUSING

Despite the existence of fair housing organizations in the Chicago metropolitan area, work has not traditionally focused on the needs of Spanish-speaking families. According to the National Fair Housing Alliance and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD),

⁵⁵ See note 21 above.
⁵⁶ See note 11 above.
⁵⁷ See note 11 above.
⁵⁸ See note 11 above.
⁵⁹ See note 11 above.
⁶⁰ See note 11 above.

⁵³ See note 42 above.
⁵⁴ Woodstock Institute. Chicago City and Regional Foreclosure Activity: First Half 2009 Foreclosure Figures. August 2009
⁵⁵ Gottschall-Donohue, K., Smith, G. *On the Foreclosure Front Lines: Surveying the Capacity of HUD Certified Counseling Agents in Illinois*. Housing Action Illinois, Woodstock Institute, June 2009
⁵⁶ Madden, K. *Market Demands Bilingual Counselors*. Chicago Reporter, January 5, 2009.

⁵⁷ See note 54 above.
⁵⁸ See note 11 above.
⁵⁹ See note 45 above.
⁶⁰ Alejo, B., (2008). *The Latino Landscape: A Metro Chicago Guide and Nonprofit Directory*. Institute for Latino Studies, Center for Metropolitan Chicago Initiatives, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.

Latinos are more likely to encounter discrimination in the rental and for-sale market than African-Americans. Latinos are also unlikely to file a complaint due to language barriers and unfamiliarity with housing laws and available services. According to HUD, one-in-four Latinos is discriminated against compared to 1-in-5 African-Americans.

In Illinois, the Department of Human Rights (IDHR) was created to enact and administer the Human Rights Act. One

of IDHR's responsibilities is to conduct community outreach and training on issues pertaining to fair housing and housing discrimination. In order to continue protecting the rights of all residents, it is necessary to ensure that bilingual and bicultural outreach is being conducted throughout the state, particularly in areas with a growing Latino population.



VITAL STATISTICS

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

HOMEOWNERSHIP

- Direct additional resources to provide financial literacy services in Latino communities.
- Fund, develop, and expand homeownership assistance and model education programs for tenants and homebuyers.

FORECLOSURE

- Enact legislation that curbs predatory lending and prevents foreclosures.
- Provide additional resources for foreclosure mitigation.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Provide incentives to increase the availability of affordable housing across the state.
- Promote the development of affordable housing that is responsive to diverse family structures.
- Foster the development and management of affordable rental housing units by nonprofit organizations.
- Direct additional resources to affordable housing initiatives.

FAIR HOUSING

- Ensure that bilingual materials, services, and outreach are available to communities across the state.

→ In Illinois, the average household size among Latinos was 3.65 compared to 2.45 for Whites and 2.7 for African-Americans in 2008.⁴⁶

→ In Illinois, 55.7% of Latinos live in owner-occupied housing units, compared to 69.3% of the total population.⁴⁷

→ Latinos account for 8.5% of all owner-occupied housing units in the state.⁴⁸

→ Among Latinos living in owner-occupied housing units, 61.6% pay thirty percent or more of their household income on housing costs, compared to 38.8% of the total population.⁴⁹

→ In Illinois, 44.3% of Latinos live in renter-occupied housing units, compared to 30.7% of the total population.⁵⁰

→ Latinos account for 15.2% of all renter-occupied housing units in the state.⁵¹

→ Among Latinos living in renter-occupied housing units, 49.2% pay more than thirty percent of their household income on rent.⁵²

→ In Illinois, 1-in-384 households received a foreclosure notice as of April 2009. At the time, Illinois ranked 8th in the nation in foreclosures.⁵³

→ A majority of neighborhoods in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs with large concentrations of Latinos experienced a greater number of foreclosure filings in the first half of 2009 than the first half of 2008.⁵⁴



VI. Health

Access to affordable health insurance and over-representation among those suffering from a variety of medical conditions and diseases represent significant areas of concern. The reduction of jobs providing employer-based health insurance has placed many Latino families at risk of experiencing adverse health related outcomes. Moreover, as Latinos seek medical care, many confront a number of barriers ranging from language and cultural sensitivity to those related to legal status.

Although Latinos disproportionately suffer from certain chronic conditions, their specific health-related issues vary according to ethnicity, level of educational attainment, generational, legal, and socio-economic status. For example, non-U.S. born Latinos tend to be healthier than their U.S. born counterparts; they have healthier eating habits and engage in more physical activities. Generally, as Latinos spend more time in the U.S. their eating habits change. They adopt a more American diet – higher in fat and lower in fiber.⁶¹ However, U.S. born Latinos tend to have higher educational levels, greater access to employer-based health care, and more familiarity with general wellness. With regard to ethnicity, the Center for Disease Control reports that Puerto Ricans tend to suffer disproportionately from asthma, HIV/AIDS, and infant mortality, while Mexican-Americans tend to suffer more from diabetes.

Despite these differences, all Latinos, regardless of country of origin, legal status, or time in the U.S., face limited access to affordable health insurance, overrepresentation among those suffering from diseases and chronic illnesses, and

a lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate health care from medical professionals.

ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE

In 2007, fifteen percent of Illinois residents did not have health insurance.⁷² Among the Latino population, nearly 454,906, or nearly one-in-four lack health care coverage. Moreover, more than twenty percent of children lack health care coverage.⁷³ As a result, Latinos accounted for 27% of those who were uninsured throughout the state. Access to health insurance is particularly limited among undocumented adults, who are excluded from Medicaid, Medicare, and other public programs. Many working-age Latinos are uninsured because their employers do not offer health insurance. Further, those who have failed to graduate from high school are over four times more likely to be uninsured than those who have a bachelor's degree or higher.⁷⁴

In addition to being uninsured, the high costs of health care severely limits access to preventative care and the management of chronic disorders. These factors are made worse by environmental conditions and employment in high-risk jobs. As a result, some Latinos endure health problems

for prolonged periods of time before seeking medical assistance. As a consequence, some require costly emergency care for treatments that could have been prevented or pro-actively managed. Moreover, delays in treatment often have dire financial, employment, and personal costs for Latino families.

Latinos accounted for 27% of those who were uninsured throughout the state.

SCREENING AND TREATMENT OF ACUTE AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

It is estimated that 68.7% of Latino adults are obese.⁷⁵ Confronting obesity is imperative because it is associated with coronary heart disease, hypertension, type-2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer. At the community level, there are several factors that contribute to obesity including limited access to affordable, healthy food and safe environments for physical activity.⁷⁶

Latinos generally fare worse in conditions where early detection is critical, such as diabetes. Nationally, more than 1-in-10 aged eighteen and

⁶¹ News Bureau. *Cancer set to 'explode' in Latinola populations*, expert says. July 28, 2009. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://news.illinois.edu/news/09/0728cancer.html>

⁶² Latino Policy Forum analysis using data from the following sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2007 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate. Gilead Outreach & Referral Center. *Taking a Closer Look at Illinois' Uninsured*. April 2009.

⁶³ The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data, 2008, unpublished data. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=91&cat=2&rgn=15>

⁶⁴ National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality, Child Policy Research Center., Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. *Childhood Obesity Action Network: How much do you know about the childhood obesity epidemic in Illinois*. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://nschdata.org/Viewdocument.aspx?item=212>

⁶⁵ The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention-Surveillance and Epidemiology, Special Data Request, February 2009. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=512&cat=11&rgn=15> and <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=515&cat=11&rgn=15>

⁶⁶ See note 21 above.

⁶⁷ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, The Office of Minority Health. *Diabetes and Hispanic Americans*. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.omhrc.gov/templates/content.aspx?lvl=2&lvlID=54&ID=3324>

⁶⁸ The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. Data Source: U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. *United States Cancer Statistics: 1999-2004 Incidence and Mortality Web-based Report Version*. Atlanta (GA): Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and National Cancer Institute; Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=66&cat=2&rgn=15>

⁶⁹ The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. Data Source: U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. *United States Cancer Statistics: 2004 Incidence and Mortality*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Cancer Institute; 2008. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=474&cat=10&rgn=15>

⁷⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration. *The Physician Workforce: Projections and Research into Current Issues Affecting Supply and Demand*. 2008/71 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration. *The Registered Nurse Population: Findings from the March 2004 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses*. 2006

⁷¹ The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. Data Source: Association of American Medical Colleges, Applicant-Matriculant File, 2008. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=454&cat=9&rgn=15>

older had diabetes in 2007. As a result, they are more likely than Whites to initiate treatment for end-stage renal disease, experience visual impairment, and suffer a diabetes-related death.⁷⁷

Early screening is also critical for timely cancer detection and treatment. Nationally, Latino men are more likely to suffer from stomach, liver, and gallbladder cancer than White men. Among women, Latinas have a high incidence rate of cervical, liver, and gallbladder cancer than White women.⁷⁸ In Illinois, more than thirteen Latinas per 100,000 had cervical cancer compared to 8 for White women.⁷⁹ It is critical that state supported efforts targeted at cancer prevention and treatment are available in Spanish in all areas of the state.

HIV/AIDS is also a serious issue in the Latino community. In Illinois, Latinos represent 15.8% of those estimated to be living with AIDS.⁸⁰ In fact, the rate of new cases among Latinas was five times that of White females. In addition, the most common forms of transmission were high risk heterosexual contact and injection drug use.⁸¹ Confronting the epidemic is very challenging in the Latino community. Cultural stigmas associated with the virus and homosexuality prevent many from seeking medical assistance to confront the disease. For example, 42% of Latinos were tested for HIV late in their illness compared to thirty-eight percent of African-Americans and 35% of Whites. Although preventing the spread of AIDS and increasing access to treatment is critical, it is especially important among men whose death rate is three times greater than that of Latinas.⁸²

HEALTH CARE RECOMMENDATIONS

ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE

- Promote health care coverage and insurance for all.

SCREENING AND TREATMENT OF ACUTE AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS

- Fund and expand prevention, education, and health screening opportunities in Latino communities.
- Provide additional resources for programs to promote preventive care in Latino communities.

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN HEALTH CARE

For many, language, cultural norms, and legal status create barriers to adequate health care. Linguistically and culturally competent practices can improve the accuracy and efficiency of diagnosis and treatment. Moreover, some patients and families believe they are encountering better service when they are treated in a linguistically and culturally responsive manner. This may encourage more regular visits and treatment compliance. Latinos who are unfamiliar with U.S. health care may feel that the treatment is brief and impersonal. For non-English speakers and recent arrivals, these issues are exacerbated by the lack of Spanish-speaking medical personnel. This can leave many unclear about their condition and plan of treatment.

Given these challenges, many Latinos, particularly recent arrivals, prefer to seek medical attention from community-based health care providers. They often have greater links with the culture of the neighborhood and are viewed as less threatening institutions. In addition, community clinics often employ bilingual staff. As families move into suburban and rural areas throughout the state, there is an increased demand to expand the network of community health centers.

Unfortunately, Latinos represent only five percent of practicing physicians and two percent of registered nurses nationwide.⁸³ In Illinois, it is also likely that the proportion of Latino physicians and registered nurses is far lower than the proportion of Latinos in the general labor force. Supporting pathways to health-related careers is critical to achieving a more diverse workforce in the medical field.

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN HEALTH CARE

- Increase the availability of preventative and primary health care services in suburban communities with large Latino populations.
- Allocate additional funding to community-based health care providers.
- Fund the development of programs to recruit and train bicultural and bilingual health care professionals.



VITAL STATISTICS

→ In Illinois, Latinos accounted for 27% of the state's uninsured population in 2007. With 454,906 uninsured Latinos in Illinois, nearly 1-in-4, are uninsured. Moreover, 21% of Latino children aged 18 and under lack access to health insurance.⁶²

→ In 2008, 68.7% of Latino adults in Illinois were overweight or obese, compared to 58.7% of Whites and 72.6% of African-Americans.⁶³

→ In Illinois, over 40% of Latino children aged 10-17 were overweight or obese in 2003, compared to 39% of African-American children and 28% of White children.⁶⁴

→ In 2007, Latinos represented 14.5% of all new AIDS cases in Illinois. The adult and adolescent annual AIDS case per 100,000 in Illinois was 13.9 for Latinos, compared to 5.3 for Whites and 49.0 for African-Americans.⁶⁵

→ In 2008, 30% of all children living in poverty in Illinois were Latino, while African-American and White children accounted for 37.6% and 27.7% respectively.⁶⁶

→ In Illinois, 6.2% of Latinos had diabetes in 2002. Nationally, 11.1% of Latinos aged 18 and over had diabetes in 2007 compared to 6.4% of Whites, a rate that is 73% higher. In 2005, Latinos were 1.6 times as likely as Whites to die from diabetes and related illnesses.⁶⁷

→ In 2004, the incidence of cancer among Latinos in Illinois was lower than that of Whites and African-Americans, at rates of 338.3, 465.6, and 484.2 per 100,000 people respectively.⁶⁸ However, Latinas in Illinois had the highest incidence of cervical cancer, 13.4 per 100,000 compared to 7.5 for Whites and 12.6 for African-Americans.⁶⁹

→ Nationally, Latinos only represent 5% of practicing physicians and 2% of registered nurses nationwide.⁷⁰ Out of over 1,000 medical school graduates in 2008, only 76 were Latinos in Illinois.⁷¹

⁷² Gilead Outreach & Referral Center. Taking a Closer Look at Illinois' Uninsured. April 2009

⁷³ Ready, T., Brown-Gört, A. (2005). The State of Latino Chicago: This is Home Now. Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame. Notre Dame, IN:75 The State of Latino Chicago: This is Home Now. Institute for Latino Studies Notre Dame University. 2005.

⁷⁴ See note 72 above.

⁷⁵ See note 63 above.

⁷⁶ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Differences in Prevalence of Obesity Among Black, White, and Hispanic Adults - United States, 2006-2008. MMWR 2009;58: pgs 740-744.

⁷⁷ See note 67 above.

⁷⁸ American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures for Hispanics/Latinos 2009-2011. 2009

⁷⁹ See note 69 above.

⁸⁰ The Kaiser Family Foundation, statehealthfacts.org. Data Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention-Surveillance and Epidemiology, Special Data Request, February 2009. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profileind.jsp?ind=520&cat=11&rgn=15>

⁸¹ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HIV/AIDS among Hispanics/Latinos. Retrieved September 24, 2009 from <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/hispanics/resources/factsheets/PDF/hispanic.pdf>

⁸² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Health, United States, 2008. Table 41. Hyattsville, MD: 2009

⁸³ See note 70 above.



VII. Human Services

The Illinois human services system is designed to promote prevention-oriented practices; to aid those dealing with domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, and physical disabilities; and to support individuals and families struggling to achieve self-sufficiency. Illinois has set aside significant funding to ensure the security of its residents by supporting a number of human services. It is important to make certain that those eligible to receive aid are directed to high-quality care and assistance. For many Latinos, human services represent critical opportunities for stability, security, and in some instances survival.

The ability to deal with the issues articulated above is limited by several dynamics in the Latino community. One of the most pressing factors in the provision of human services is the lack of linguistically diverse and culturally competent service providers and treatment programs. Without an infrastructure to meet the needs of diverse populations, some Latinos with limited English language proficiency suffer and fail to acquire adequate assistance. Moreover, the identification and treatment of mental and physical health issues go unmet, and preventative measures go underutilized.

The situation is especially dire for children and families living outside of Chicago. Within the City, a number of nonprofit, Latino-serving organizations have begun meeting the demand for services ranging from domestic violence to respite care. Moreover, these programs are often provided in a linguistically diverse and culturally relevant manner. However, Latinos living in the suburbs and other areas of the state do not have

the same access to assistance. Many suburban communities have not invested in the human service infrastructure necessary to meet the diverse needs of new residents. Given that 61% of Latinos in Illinois now live outside of Chicago, a figure which has been increasing over time, it is incumbent upon the state to ensure that they have adequate access to human services wherever they live.⁸⁴

Many suburban communities have not invested in the human service infrastructure necessary to meet the diverse needs of new residents.

CHILD WELFARE

In order to adequately serve Latino children, the Illinois child welfare system must meet their diverse linguistic and cultural needs. This may require state-sponsored providers to hire

additional bilingual and bicultural staff and to offer cultural competency training to current employees. Ensuring that these entities are equipped with adequate personnel will enable them to navigate cultural norms and issues related to immigrant integration. This is especially important as front-line staff conduct investigations into reported incidents of child abuse, perform prevention initiatives with families who need assistance, and oversee the placement of children into foster care.

In addition, the provision of bilingual services is required for federally funded programs. For example, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is under a Federal Consent Decree which mandates meaningful access for Latinos and their children. As such, the state has a responsibility to provide access to Latinos regardless of their English language proficiency.

With regard to foster care, Latinos tend to first turn to extended family members when they are

⁸⁴ See note 11 above.

⁸⁵ Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Child Abuse and Neglect Statistics Fiscal Year 2008.

⁸⁶ Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Community Health and Prevention. Youth Study on Substance Use: Comparing the 2002, 2004 and 2006 Results from the Illinois Youth Survey. Prepared by Chestnut Health Systems, Inc. Bloomington, IL, March 2007.

⁸⁷ See note 15 above.

⁸⁸ See note 11 above.

⁸⁹ Martin J.A., Hamilton B.E., Sutton P.D., Ventura S.J., et al. Births: Final data for 2006. National vital statistics reports; vol 57 no 7. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2009.

⁹⁰ Ander, R., Cook, P.J., Ludwig, J., Pollack, H. Gun Violence Among School-Age Youth in Chicago. University of Chicago Crime Lab. March 2009]

⁹¹ Martin J.A., Hamilton B.E., Sutton P.D., Ventura S.J., et al. Births: Final data for 2006. National vital statistics reports; vol 57 no 7. Hyattsville, MD: National Center

for Health Statistics. 2009. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Health, United States, 2008. Table 4. Hyattsville, MD: 2009

⁹² Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission. Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly for calendar years 2007 and 2008. February 2009.

⁹³ National Council of La Raza. Overcoming Language and Cultural Barriers Using Evidence-Based Practices. 2008.

⁹⁴ See note 15 above.

in need of temporary care for their children. However, bureaucratic hurdles and linguistic barriers often impede relatives from becoming foster care providers and inhibit them from taking advantage of compensation where appropriate. This is especially the case for immigrant families who may be wary of getting involved in government programs due to their citizenship status. Given that the child welfare system is vital to the protection of unaccompanied alien children or those left behind after raids, interventions that improve social outcomes for immigrant children and support family reunification must be in place.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Additional support for programs that address teen pregnancy and juvenile justice are necessary for Latino youth. Although the teen pregnancy rate has decreased in recent years, average trends obscure the fact that pregnancy among Latinas remains disproportionately high. In fact, the birth rate for 15-19 year old Latinas nationwide in 2006 (83 births per 1,000 women) was roughly the same as it was in 1980 (82 births per 1,000 women).⁹¹ Teen pregnancy greatly reduces education and employment opportunities. Counseling and parenting services are essential to ending the cycle of pregnancy, school desertion, poverty, and violence.

In Illinois, Latino males experience disproportionate contact with the juvenile justice system. For example, these young men are admitted to detention centers at a rate 61% higher than that of the general population.⁹² In the U.S., they are more likely to be detained unnecessarily before trial, to be waived into the adult system, and to receive out-of-home placement and longer sentences.⁹³ Intervention programs and support services offer a more viable and effective alternative to incarceration. Moreover, they are less costly to the state.

Latino youth experience many of the indicators associated with high risk: dropping out of school, pregnancy, parenthood, drug use, suicide, violence, and incarceration. Constructive after school activities present effective methods to mitigate the impact of these indicators and promote positive outcomes. For Latino youth and families, services offered by community-based organizations are

more likely to be accessible and culturally sensitive. Unfortunately, youth services have been among those most affected by budget cuts.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

In Illinois, over 54,000 Latino children and youth aged 3-21 have disabilities.⁹⁴ Throughout the state's public schools, over 22,000 Latino children with disabilities are Spanish-speaking. Despite these numbers, their rate of developmental disabilities is lower than that of the general population and barriers to detection may understate their prevalence among the population. Under-detection, coupled with inadequate outreach, may partially explain why some Latinos and their care-giving relatives do not acquire the programmatic and financial assistance for which they may be eligible. The under-provision of resources may cause significant social and financial stress, exacerbate the problem of data collection and reporting, and create challenges for strategic planning and service delivery.

In Illinois, Latino males experience disproportionate contact with the juvenile justice system.

MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Mental health problems, substance abuse, and domestic violence can tremendously affect families. The impact is magnified for those who must navigate social, cultural, economic, and institutional barriers. Given the proportion of Latinos who live in poverty, experience discrimination, and deal with issues related to immigration status, they are at increased risk for mental health problems, substance abuse, and potentially domestic violence. According to a report issued by the Illinois Children's Mental Health Task Force in 2003, disparities in access to mental health services are evident among low-income and Latino children. Moreover, the Task Force found that children experience barriers to care due to: the negative stigma associated with treatment, the cost of services, insufficient mental health coverage in private insurance packages, inadequately trained personnel, and a lack of bilingual and bicultural providers.



VITAL STATISTICS

- In 2008, Latinos accounted for 8.1% of all children in Illinois who were shown to have suffered from abuse and neglect.⁸⁵
- In 2006, 49.2% of Latino students in grades 8, 10, and 12 reported using a gateway substance (alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana).⁸⁶ More specifically, 47.2% of Latino students reported using alcohol. 14.6% reported using marijuana, 4.3% reported using crack/cocaine, and 14.6% reported using pain pills. Over 40% were involved in a physical fight during the previous year.
- During the 2007-2008 school-year, over 54,000 Latino children aged 3-21 had disabilities, accounting for 16.8% of all children with disabilities receiving special education services. Among these students, over 22,000 were Spanish-speaking students.⁸⁷
- In Illinois, Latino children account for 30% of all children living in poverty across the state.⁸⁸
- Nationally, the Latina teen birth rate was the highest in the nation among all racial and ethnic groups at 83 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years old in 2006.⁸⁹
- In 2005, Latinos accounted for 25% of Chicago's homicide victims aged 10-24 years old.⁹⁰



Community-based prevention and treatment initiatives represent cost-effective options to mental health care. Although these services

provide a lifeline for Latinos, they have been severely impacted by budget cuts. Reductions in these types of programming often have a

disproportionate impact on the well-being of Latinos.

HUMAN SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

CHILD WELFARE

- Increase funding for additional bilingual and bicultural staff to provide child and family welfare services in all areas.
- Remove barriers and increase opportunities for Latinos to become foster parents.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

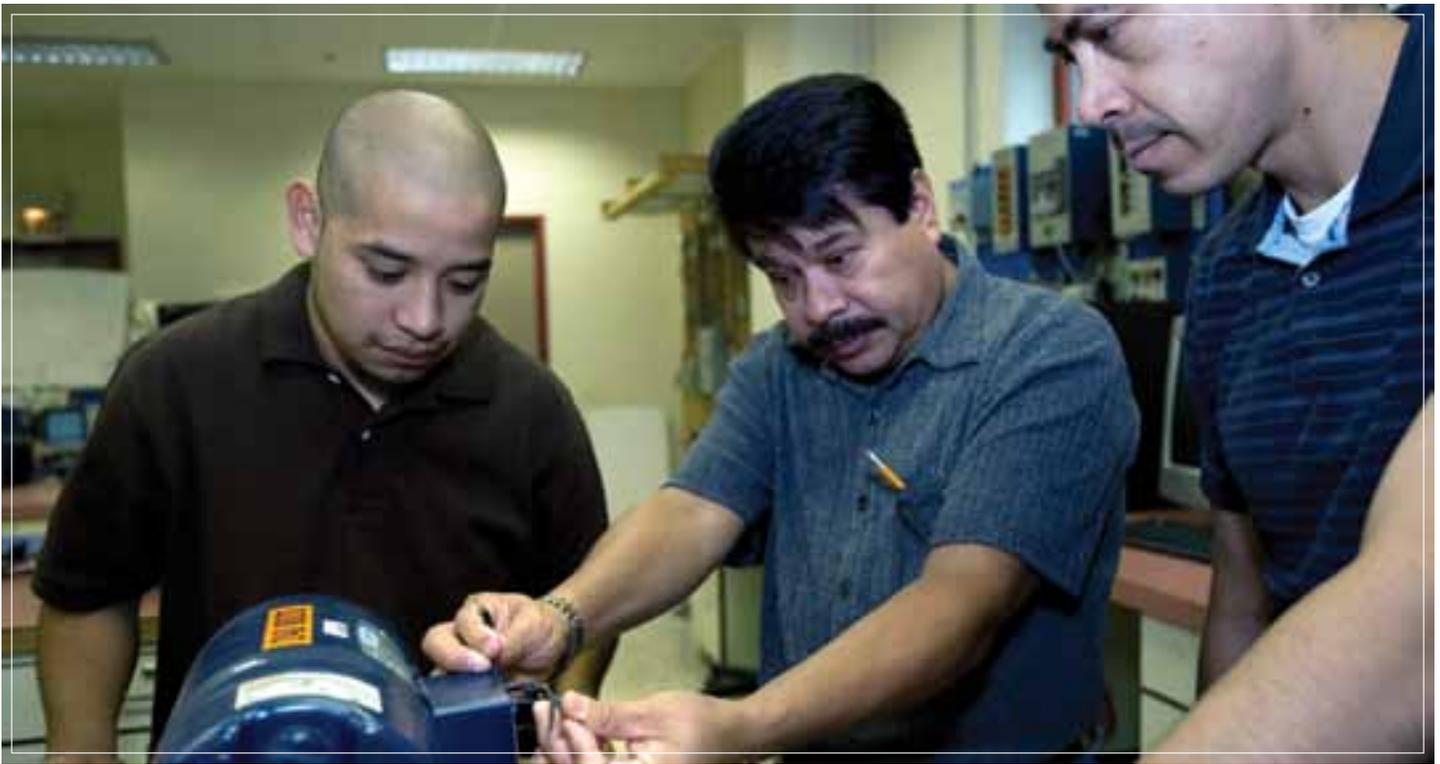
- Provide additional resources for youth development programs and services.
- Foster the use of work-study and other employment opportunities for youth.
- Increase funding for parenting and teen pregnancy prevention programs.
- Improve the linguistic and cultural competency of the juvenile justice system.
- Provide additional support for community-based programming working with at-risk youth.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

- Increase awareness of services and programs available to children with special needs.
- Direct additional resources to identify and serve children with special needs.
- Increase investments in linguistically and culturally competent community-based services for all Latinos.
- Allocate resources to support partnerships among social service providers in Latino communities.

MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Increase the availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling programs.
- Increase the availability of social services in the communities of greatest need.
- Increase the availability of substance abuse prevention and intervention programs that are linguistically and culturally appropriate for Latinos.



VIII. Workforce Development

In 2007, the Illinois gross state product (GSP) was estimated to be \$508.5 billion which ranked fifth in the U.S.⁹⁵ If Illinois were a nation, its GSP would rank 18th in the world. While the state's economy has been historically strong, particularly compared to its neighbors, the composition of its economy is changing. Between 1990 and 2008, the state lost nearly 250,000 manufacturing jobs.⁹⁶

Since 2000, it has experienced a net loss in the number of jobs in the following high-paying sectors: information services, financial activities, and professional and business services. Meanwhile, the state has experienced an increase in the following lower-wage sectors: education and health services, leisure and hospitality, and other services. After adjusting for inflation, most workers have experienced declines in their average weekly earnings since 2001. At the same time, residents have seen an increase in the cost of food, gasoline, housing, and medical care. The current economic climate presents considerable challenges for residents and government officials.

In addition to the economic shifts outlined above, the composition of the Illinois workforce has undergone significant changes. Although Whites still comprise the largest segment, growth in the Latino labor force accounts for the greatest workforce changes since 1990.⁹⁷ In fact, Latinos now account for 14.3% of the labor force.⁹⁸ Among working age Latinos (aged 16-65), 55% are between 16-35 years of age. Within the African-American labor force, 39% are within this age cohort as are 37% of Whites. Conversely, fewer Latinos are near retirement age than their counterparts.⁹⁹

Despite their growth, many Latinos are limited in their ability to compete for high-wage jobs. Far too many have failed to acquire a post-secondary education or appropriate on-the-job training. Over forty-one percent of those aged 25 and older have less than a high school diploma compared to 8.7% of Whites and 18.5% of African-Americans.¹⁰⁰ Despite these limitations, many Latinos are strengthening the Illinois economy. They are opening new businesses, revitalizing local economies, and providing a youthful base of future workers. With additional support to increase human capital in Latino communities, they will contribute even further.

ADULT EDUCATION

Engaging in opportunities for adult education is critical to the success of Latinos in Illinois, especially with regard to English language acquisition. Although fluency in Spanish is an important asset, many recognize that it is also essential to be equally skilled in English. Seventy-five percent of Latinos are either fluent in English or speak the language well.¹⁰¹ Among those who are foreign-born, only 27.8% speak English very well. As a result, some struggle with everyday activities. In order to improve language skills, additional opportunities to learn English are necessary.

Likewise, access to general educational development (GED) and other community college programs is essential for Latinos who did not graduate from high school and for recent immigrants who were not educated in this country. In addition, community colleges and other providers should promote the transition from English as a second language (ESL) and GED programs to vocational and college credit programs. Ensuring that Latinos go beyond ESL and GED coursework will further enable them to seek out higher skilled employment opportunities. Without greater access, many will be relegated to low-wage jobs that do not offer employer-based health insurance and make it difficult to experience upward economic mobility.

JOB TRAINING

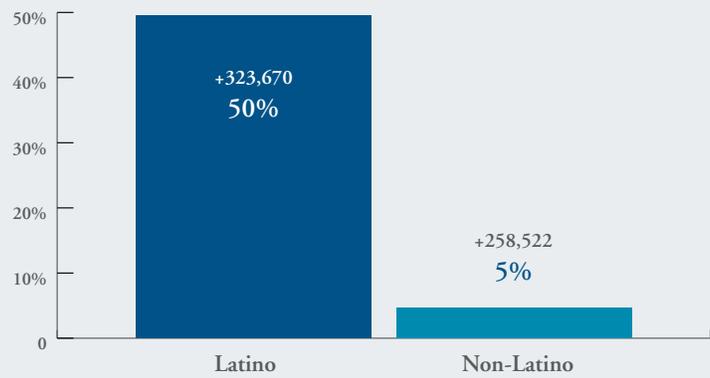
In addition to education, it is imperative that Latinos acquire additional training and job-skills in order to compete for high-wage jobs. While many community colleges and community-based organizations offer job training opportunities, the state must ensure that these resources are available in suburban communities that have experienced Latino population growth. The need to ensure access outside of Chicago is further highlighted by the fact that over sixty percent of Latinos now live outside of the City.



VITAL STATISTICS

- Latinos accounted for 14.3 percent of the Illinois workforce in 2008.¹⁰²
- In the Chicago metropolitan region, 19% of workers are Latino. This represents a 36% increase between 2000 and 2006. In addition, Latinos accounted for 74% of the total increase of employed persons in the Chicago region.¹⁰³
- In 2002, there were 39,539 Latino-owned businesses in Illinois. These accounted for 4.1% of all firms in the state. Between 1997 and 2002, the number of Latino enterprises grew by 27.5% - a rate three times greater than that of the state in general.¹⁰⁴
- Nearly one-third of Latino workers are employed in lower-paying jobs, while less than twenty percent hold high-wage positions.¹⁰⁵
- In Illinois, 19.2% of all Latinos in the workforce were employed in the manufacturing industry in 2008.¹⁰⁶
- In Illinois, 14.6% of all Latinos in the workforce were employed in the leisure and hospitality sector in 2008.¹⁰⁷
- In Illinois, Latinos accounted for 3.3% of workers in Information Services, 8.2% in Education and Health Services, and 8.3% in Financial Activities in 2008.¹⁰⁸
- In 2007, the median hourly wages of Latinos in Illinois was less than \$12, compared to over \$16 for Whites.¹⁰⁹
- In 2008, less than fifty percent of Latino workers had access to employer-provided health coverage and only 36.8 percent had access to an employer-provided pension plan.¹¹⁰

FIGURE 12. LABOR FORCE GROWTH IN ILLINOIS, 2000-2008



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Census 2000 Summary Profile 2*. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate.

It is also incumbent upon the state to ensure equitable access to new opportunities in emerging sectors, particularly green jobs. This industry is currently supported by state and federal funding and is likely to accelerate as an economic driver in years ahead. More specifically, it is expected to provide new jobs for electricians, metal workers, and those in construction. Enhancing the skills of these workers will enable them to seek employment in pollution prevention, weatherization, and energy efficiency development.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In 2002, there were 39,539 Latino-owned businesses in Illinois. Although Latino entrepreneurs are generally under-represented, they constitute a particularly small segment of the following business areas: information, finance and insurance, and manufacturing.¹¹¹ Instead, many are

clustered in the areas of construction, retail trade, and transportation/warehousing.

In order to increase the capacity, productivity, and infrastructure of Latino enterprises, additional access to resources is necessary. For example, many businesses would benefit from resources to enhance their information technology, guidance strengthening their business plans, and assistance in financial planning. Technical assistance would benefit Latino entrepreneurs as they navigate the lending system and improve the likelihood that they receive loans. Their businesses would also benefit from technical assistance as they apply to become MBE/DBE certified by local, county, state, and federal governments.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

ADULT EDUCATION

- Expand funding for strategically located, accessible GED and ESL classes in Latino neighborhoods.
- Increase resources for vocational training in high-growth industries.
- Provide additional support for partnerships between community colleges and community-based organizations.

JOB TRAINING

- Allocate additional resources to train workers in the emerging green jobs sector.

- Ensure that workforce development opportunities are available in Latino communities located in suburban regions of the state.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Increase resources to organizations that provide technical assistance and guidance to minority entrepreneurs.
- Ensure the consistent and equitable distribution of all state procurement contracts to Latino-owned businesses.

¹⁰² See note 11 above.

¹⁰³ U.S. Bureau of the Census. *2006 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate*. U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Census 2000 Summary Profile 2*.

¹⁰⁴ See note 6 above.

¹⁰⁵ See note 4 above.

¹⁰⁶ See note 4 above.

¹⁰⁷ See note 4 above.

¹⁰⁸ See note 4 above.

¹⁰⁹ See note 4 above.

¹¹⁰ See note 11 above.

¹¹¹ See note 6 above.



IX. Capital

In March 2009, a \$26 billion capital budget was proposed by the governor of Illinois.¹¹² The plan aimed to restore, expand, and construct new infrastructure throughout the state. It projected that nearly 340,000 jobs would be created. The budget, supplemented by federal resources from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, was crafted to mitigate the foreclosure epidemic and rejuvenate the Illinois economy.

Although seventy-two percent of the proposed budget was dedicated to rebuilding roadways, repairing bridges, and restoring or constructing new forms of mass transit, over \$7.3 billion was directed towards other strategic investments. These allocations were targeted for education, economic development, energy, and technology. These efforts are not specifically directed to Latino communities. However, they – along with other investments – reflect strategic capital priorities for Latinos. Unfortunately, as the population has grown, there has not been an adequate nor consistent investment in state-funded capital resources.

Capital investments, particularly those that support state-funded initiatives, are important because they represent opportunities to restore the balance between the supply and demand of services. For example, Latino population growth in suburban communities has created an increased demand for affordable housing. Restrictive zoning codes and more profitable forms of housing stock have disrupted the development of affordable housing. State-sponsored capital resources that meet

the needs of low to middle income families can serve as an incentive to construct affordable housing. Other areas reflect similar gaps in the supply and demand for infrastructure.

Capital investments, particularly those that support state-funded initiatives, are important because they represent opportunities to restore the balance between the supply and demand of services.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Latino population growth has contributed to a mismatch between the supply and demand of education services and facilities. In early childhood education, while there are other barriers to entry among Latino children, the lack of facilities has exacerbated their under-enrollment. In elementary and secondary schools, the renovation and construction of new buildings is necessary to alleviate overcrowding.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Market trends and restrictive zoning codes have fueled a disconnect between the supply and demand of available housing stock. Census data shows that Latino households are larger than those of the general population in Illinois. They tend to have more children and many live in multi-generational settings. Unfortunately, the stock of affordable housing is often incongruent with the needs of Latino families. This, in conjunction with economic necessity, is a contributing factor to overcrowding. The availability of adequate housing is a growing issue in communities throughout the state that have experienced significant Latino population growth.

HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICE FACILITIES

The lack of health care and social service facilities outside of Chicago limits the ability of many families to seek assistance. Many of these areas have not invested in the health and social service infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of Latino families. As a result, many lack access to preventative health care and may use more

¹¹² A capital plan was approved by the Illinois General Assembly and signed by the Governor in May 2009.



costly emergency room services for general visits. To improve the quality of life among Latinos, it is important that capital resources be dedicated to expanding or establishing health care and social service facilities in communities with the greatest need.

GREEN/OPEN SPACE

While its population is youthful and generally healthy, Latinos disproportionately suffer from heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. The latter particularly affects children. The health

conditions afflicting Latino families are often aggravated by their environment. Poor access to safe and accessible green space limits children's ability to engage in physical activity and maintain a healthy lifestyle, particularly in Chicago. In fact, the region has the lowest amount of green space per capita of all metropolitan areas in the state.¹¹³

STATE CONTRACTS

In addition to investing dollars in specific areas, the capital budget presents a unique

opportunity to support Latino entrepreneurs across the state. The share of state contracts awarded to Latino firms has been traditionally low. The full inclusion of their businesses in all aspects of state procurement would increase the state's ability to meet the MBE/WBE goals established by the General Assembly. Moreover, those receiving state contracts should be required to make a good faith effort to hire a workforce that reflects the diversity of the state's labor force.

CAPITAL RECOMMENDATIONS

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

- Appropriate resources to expand the availability of early care and education facilities in underserved areas of the state.
- Target resources to alleviate overcrowding in Illinois public schools, particularly in low-income school districts.

HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICE FACILITIES

- Expand funding to increase the number of facilities that provide state-sponsored health and human services in underserved areas.

GREEN/OPEN SPACE

- Support community partnerships that establish more green space in low-income neighborhoods.

STATE CONTRACTS

- Require those receiving state contracts to make a good faith effort to hire a workforce that reflects the diversity of the state's labor force.
- Increase the proportion of state contracts directed to Latino-owned businesses.
- Create accountability-based compliance with state goals for MBE/WBE contracts.

¹¹³ Illinois Department of Natural Resources. *Green Space in Illinois Metropolitan Statistical Areas*. 1996. Retrieved September 24, 2009. <http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/pfc/balancedgrowth/pdfs/green.pdf>

Call to Action

Illinois has a long-standing history as a trail-blazing state. Latinos in Illinois have been at the forefront of public policy innovation. The Latino Policy Forum is one of a handful of research and advocacy organizations across the nation that focuses on state level public policy as it pertains to the Latino community. The issues presented in the *Blueprint for Latino Investment* offer an opportunity for the state to again forge new territory. It constructs a framework for elected and appointed officials to follow during consideration of the annual budget. It provides public policy recommendations to increase quality and access to state-funded programs and services in Illinois. Moreover, the Appendix of this report aligns the recommendations with line-items in the state's operating and capital budgets where further investments can be made.

As state leaders focus on improving the social and economic conditions that affect the lives of Illinoisans, they must ensure that the policies they promote and the budgets they support are adequately meeting the needs of the state's increasingly diverse population. Regardless of the economic and financial constraints, it is incumbent upon the state to refuse to accept the path of least resistance. In recent years, many areas of the budget have been reduced or level-funded. While this has adversely affected all residents, it has had a particularly devastating impact on Latinos. Given their population growth, budget cuts have resulted in significant per capita reductions in programs and services. Failure to further invest in Latino children, families, and workers will perpetuate conditions that limit their economic mobility and stifle the development of the state's future workforce. Despite the fiscal condition, state leaders must transform today's challenges into opportunities to redouble their efforts to appropriately serve all residents.

As progress is made in the areas outlined in this report, there is no doubt that Latinos' educational, social, and economic outcomes will improve. More importantly, all Illinoisans will benefit as a result of advances made among Latino children, families, and workers. The state's targeted investments in the Latino community will ensure economic progress and prominence well into the 21st century. However, to ensure progress, the state must act today.

Sincerely,



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