

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA) is a state agency with statutory duties to advise and inform the Governor's Office, the Legislature and stakeholders on policy and legislation.

2018 Legislative Priorities

Education

As the fastest growing, and one of the youngest, demographic groups in the state, Minnesota's economic competitiveness and socioeconomic outcomes depend in part on Latinos' educational attainment. Progress has been made in closing the achievement and opportunity gaps that disproportionately impact Latinos, but much work remains to further narrow them.

- **Increase Teachers of Color Act of 2018 (ITCA of 2018):** Building on passage of the ITCA of 2017, this comprehensive act includes provisions to address severe shortage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers. Provisions ensure learning, work environments, curriculum are inclusive and respectful for students, families, staff of all racial and ethnic groups; support expanded pathways to teaching; provide induction and retention support for diverse teachers; acknowledge proven teacher skills, reduce unnecessary teacher testing.
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Health

A social determinant of wellbeing and a healthy life is to have equitable access to affordable insurance and health services. The high percentage of uninsured Latinos in the state require protecting sources of payment for primary care services by safety-net providers and information about potential eligibility to access health insurance. Prevention is also key for the community's wellbeing.

- **Universal Health Coverage:** Support initiatives aiming at allowing more individuals to opt for health insurance.
- **Health in All Policies:** Support a health *in all* policies approach with health equity as a goal, and promote preventive healthy living initiatives such as access to physical and recreational activities, and healthy food.
- **Spoken Language Health Care Interpreters - Registry System Bill:** The bill creates a statewide standard for training and testing, with two categories for increased professional recognition. Its purpose is to reduce disparities in health care outcomes for patients with limited English proficiency (LEP).
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Economic Development

Minnesotan Latinos have the highest labor force participation rate in the state. However, this success in the workforce has not yet translated to higher incomes or economic stability. The Council supports economic policies that narrow economic achievement gaps while also fostering a climate that encourages entrepreneurialism and small business development.

- **Housing Development:** Support a bonding bill with significant allocations for affordable housing development across the state.
- **Wage Theft:** Strengthen policies to prevent wage theft and support fair working conditions that satisfy both employees and employers.
- **Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN):** Encourage innovative policy changes for the use of ITINs to increase the equitable participation and benefits of tax payers.
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Immigration

Immigration policy is one of the top priorities for Latino Minnesotans. The Council understands that much of immigration policy constitutionally comes from the federal government. Nevertheless, the Council will strongly support state-level immigration policies that are humane, nondiscriminatory, and consistent with America's longstanding values of inclusion.

- **Citizenship Opportunity Act:** Increase the number of naturalized citizens by providing a tax credit to citizenship applicants who are below the 200% poverty line.
- **Driver's Licenses:** Access to driver's licenses to all who meet the requirements regardless of immigration status.
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