

ECONOMIC SECURITY AND EMPOWERMENT

Despite progress, Latinos continue to face a wealth gap and other financial obstacles that inhibit the realization of their full economic potential. NHLA proposes a range of policies to empower the economic well-being of Latino communities across the country.

PRINCIPAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

EXPAND WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES

Policy solutions must aggressively work to narrow the educational gap between Latino and other adults. Greater investment is also needed in workforce training programs – especially for youth and women – as well as English instruction, and the inclusion of community-based organizations in the implementation of these programs.

IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS

Policy solutions must increase federal enforcement of worker protections, including in fissured workplaces where convoluted subcontracting arrangements make it difficult to protect workers' rights. NHLA also recommends enactment of the Paycheck Fairness Act, guaranteed paid sick and family leave, defending workers' ability to join unions, and extending worker protections currently denied to farmworkers, care-givers, domestic workers, and day-laborers. Policies must require employers to provide paid family and parental leave, equal pay by race and gender, and healthcare benefits. Policymakers must support legislation and enforcement of strong worker protection standards that protect farmworkers from pesticides, heat-related illnesses, and other environmental hazards.

PROMOTE POLICIES THAT REWARD WORK

Policies must be implemented to improve living standards for Hispanic workers in low-paid occupations, including increasing the minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2024 and expanding tax policies, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit, to more people without children. Policies should implement permanent small-area, cost-of-living adjustments to personal income tax brackets, cash or near-cash benefits, including COVID-19 relief payments, and the official poverty measure should fairly account for disproportionate burdens on the urban poor and other city and high-cost area dwellers. Policies should also ensure that essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic or any other public health emergency are provided additional health protections, benefits, and premium hazard pay, as well as full access to paid sick leave, regardless of immigration status.



ENHANCE FINANCIAL ACCESS AND PROTECT CONSUMERS

To better protect Latinos from predatory financial services while extending access to credit, measures must be taken to increase access to small-dollar loans, individualized financial counseling, improved accuracy of credit reports, and maintain the role of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).

INCREASE RETIREMENT SECURITY

Policies must be created to improve retirement security and combat elder poverty, including expanded access to 401(k)s and individual retirement accounts (IRAs), the creation of federal savings plans, protecting Social Security from cuts, and increased funding for the Older Americans Act's programs.

SUPPORT AFFORDABLE RENTAL AND HOMEOWNERSHIP

Multiple measures must be taken to reverse the downward trend in the Hispanic homeownership rate, including strong implementation and enforcement of the CFPB servicing rules and increased housing counseling, while also addressing the need for farmworker housing.

SUPPORT LATINAS IN THE WORKFORCE

Latinas face the largest wage gap among women, earning just 53 cents for every dollar paid to White non-Hispanic men. This wage gap is evident even when accounting for educational and professional achievement. NHLA supports policy efforts that advance gender equity in the workplace, study the effects of the wage gap among Latina subgroups, and ensure that all Latina women are compensated fairly and on par with their counterparts.

