



Biden's First Year:
Latinos See Progress,
But Permanent Investments
Are Needed



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HISTORIC EMERGENCY RELIEF AND BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE PASSED IN BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

In his first year in office, President Biden took significant steps to address many of the pressing Latino* priorities UnidosUS called on him to address in [*The First 100 Days: Latino Inclusion in the Biden Administration's First Steps*](#) and at the 100-day mark in [*Latinos on Biden's First 100 Days: A Down Payment on Real Progress*](#).

Enactment of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was the most significant legislative achievement of the Biden administration and helped to address the health and economic threats faced by Latinos and all Americans. The \$1.9 trillion relief package helped millions of Latinos return to work and school safely, pay their bills, keep a roof over their heads, and feed their families. The expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) reduced poverty for millions during a period of significant economic peril. Importantly, many mixed-status families received emergency pandemic aid for the first time: a lifeline for immigrants, who have for too long been denied access to our nation's safety net.

The furthest reaching impacts of ARPA for Latinos were the funds that helped to expand access to life-saving vaccines and affordable health coverage, as these are critical public health supports for our community who suffer deep and disproportionate health disparities exacerbated by the pandemic. Early in the vaccination rollout, Hispanics were less likely than their white counterparts to receive a vaccine, but these disparities have narrowed over time—Latinos now represent [19%](#) of those vaccinated (where race and ethnicity are known), which is equal to their share of the population. Millions more Latinos were [eligible](#) to enroll in health coverage as well, due to the reduction in Affordable Care Act (ACA) health care premiums for low- and moderate-income families, the expansion of opportunities



Joe Biden
46th President of the United States

* The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish, and other Hispanic descent; they may be of any race. This document may also refer to this population as "Latinx" to represent the diversity of gender identities and expressions that are present in the community.

to enroll in ACA Marketplace coverage, significant [investments](#) in “Navigators,” and the development of more culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach. This expansion of accessible and affordable health care came at a critical time for many in our community at the height of the global pandemic.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was a rare bipartisan achievement of a Biden administration priority in a year otherwise plagued by partisan gridlock in Congress. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal invests \$1.2 trillion to build our nation’s roads and bridges, upgrade airports and waterways, create jobs, and address climate change. Critically, the IIJA includes \$65 billion to improve broadband access for underserved communities, which will help Latinos—only [65%](#) of whom have broadband at home—and other people of color to access the internet so they can complete their homework, take online technical training, or apply for a job or college. The nearly \$90 billion committed to maintain and modernize the public transit system, including bus, rail, and related infrastructure, is also essential to the well-being of Hispanics, who are twice as likely as whites to depend on public transportation to get to work. These critical provisions will help Latinos prepare for and secure better jobs critical to the rebuilding and recovery of the nation.

WITHOUT FURTHER ACTION, PROGRESS IN 2022 WILL STALL, DASHING HOPES FOR A LASTING, EQUITABLE RECOVERY

Together, the ARPA and IIJA invest more than \$3 trillion in critical pandemic relief and historic physical infrastructure and represent remarkable progress given the challenges President Biden and the nation faced throughout 2021.

Despite these notable federal investments in 2021, they fall short of achieving the full promise of Biden’s recovery “Build Back Better” agenda for workers and families. This is a direct result of the Congress’s failure thus far to pass the “Build Back Better Act” (BBB Act) and the need to resolve conflicts in the Senate around key provisions in the House-passed bill that are critical to reducing entrenched health and economic disparities. The following BBB Act provisions are critical to advancing Latinos’ full inclusion in our nation’s recovery and society—they must not only be included in the bill but also enacted as soon as possible.



Craftsman repairing a road.

- **Access to affordable health coverage.** The BBB Act protects and expands health coverage on multiple fronts, including by extending subsidies for ACA health care premiums for low- and moderate-income families; ensuring children in Medicaid and CHIP have continuous coverage; closing the Medicaid coverage gap in states that refuse to expand Medicaid; and permanently increasing federal funding for Puerto Rico's (and other territories') Medicaid programs. Expanding health coverage is crucial to the well-being of Latinos given that they make up nearly 30% of the overall remaining uninsured.
- **Poverty reduction for all children.** The House-passed bill extends the ARPA CTC expansions to the amount of the credit for one tax year, including the maximum credit amount and monthly payments through 2022. It also makes the credit fully refundable on a permanent basis, ensuring that the lowest-income households benefit from the full credit. Importantly, CTC eligibility is restored to immigrant children with Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITINs), who were unfairly denied access by the Trump tax cuts in 2017. On the whole, the CTC policy is estimated to benefit more than 17.5 million Latino children.
- **Decrease hunger.** The BBB Act meets the nutritional needs of Latino children by expanding access to free school meals during the school year through the Community Eligibility Provision, and during the summer when school is out by expanding Summer EBT nationwide through 2024. While Latino household food insecurity [decreased](#) (from nearly 33% in April 2020 to 25.7% in April 2021) due to critical nutrition interventions, this trend will stall and backslide without further lasting and durable child nutrition investments.
- **Keep families in their homes.** The bill would invest \$100 billion combined in rental assistance, down payment assistance for first-generation homeowners, and to bolster public housing. Together, these housing investments will help Latinos who are experiencing significant housing insecurity during the pandemic: according to a recent Census Bureau [survey](#), only 38% of Latinos had high confidence that they could make next month's mortgage payment, and just 37% had high confidence they could make next month's rent.



Child getting a dental screening.



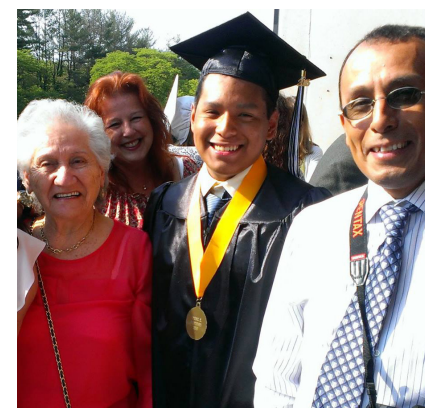
Family in front of their home.

- **Safeguard our immigrant and frontline workforce and their families.** The recovery package included a work permit for the undocumented, including the estimated five million essential workers who have helped our country through the pandemic. This provision would protect the undocumented—who have lived an average of 15 years in the United States and have more than 16.7 million family members and roughly six million [American children](#)—from deportation, keep families together, and ease pandemic workforce disruptions and worker shortages.
- **Expand access to college and earning a degree.** The BBB Act increases the maximum Pell Grant, helping to support enrollment of Latinx students, nearly half of whom depend on Pell Grants to pay for college. Funding for college completion grants is included and is critically needed to ensure that low-income students successfully complete college and earn a degree, as [roughly 31%](#) of Latinx adults have a college degree compared to 58% of white adults, although Latinx students make up one in five students. In addition, students with status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Temporary Protective Status (TPS), or Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) programs would have access to these and other Title IV financial aid programs, ending discrimination against immigrant students.

The promises of President Biden’s “Build Back Better” agenda must be realized with these vital provisions included. Without them, Latino workers, families, children, and students will continue to face harmful barriers to reaching their full potential, and our nation’s leaders will fail to deliver on their repeated pledge to reduce racial disparities and rebuild the nation for the benefit of everyone.



Rally against deportation.



High school graduate with family.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION MUST UPHOLD AND ADVANCE PROGRESS MADE IN 2021

In addition to delivering his recovery agenda for the American people, President Biden must ensure that progress made last year continues to advance and reach all Americans. It is well-documented that, even when eligible, Latinos are too often unable to take, or are discouraged from taking, full advantage of the benefits available to them. The reasons for this vary and include mistrust in government institutions related to historical stigma and trauma, misinformation and disinformation, and insufficient funding and infrastructure for culturally competent outreach and communications strategies. A failure to fully support efforts to reach Latinos with the historic investments in ARPA, the bipartisan infrastructure package, and the steps outlined in the below tracker would unnecessarily threaten many Hispanic families and their children with health and economic challenges that undermine their and our nation's future. This is particularly true for the most vulnerable Hispanics who face the most pernicious discrimination and exclusion, including Latinas, immigrants, and mixed-status families and their children.

The administration's ongoing ability to implement policies to advance racial equity continues to depend on equal representation in government. The government should reflect the diversity of our country's population, including the 62 million Latinos in the United States. Nevertheless, history has proven that this doesn't happen on its own. [Proyecto 20%](#), a partnership between UnidosUS and eight national Latino organizations, has, since the beginning of the Biden presidency, called for 20%, or roughly 800, of President Biden's 4,000 political appointees to identify as Latino, thus representing the American population. While the president has already named the largest number of first-term Hispanic cabinet members in U.S. history, more progress is needed to ensure the needs and desires of the growing Hispanic community are addressed. As of November 2021, Proyecto 20% estimates that there is only 14% Latino representation within the Biden-Harris administration (similarly, the White House reported 15% Latino representation as part of its 100-day progress report). Yet without qualified Hispanics at all levels of government service, the needs of our community will continue to be left out and not fully incorporated in the administration's priorities.



Mother and child



The analysis that follows identifies the progress made in the first year of the Biden administration and highlights the policy priorities still urgently needed to advance the lives and futures of more than 62 million Latinos for the benefit of all Americans and the nation.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

I. Health: Defeat COVID-19, Expand Health Coverage, and Reduce Food Insecurity

POLICY PRIORITY



TESTING AND VACCINES

Ensure that all Americans have equitable access to COVID-19 testing and vaccines.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA includes tens of billions of dollars for COVID-19 testing and contact tracing, vaccine production and distribution, and to purchase, manufacture, and distribute critically needed medical supplies and equipment.
- ✓ [\\$10 billion](#) committed to expand access to vaccines and better serve communities of color, rural areas, low-income populations, and other underserved communities.
- ✓ [Launched](#) the Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program, which will provide more vaccines for community health centers to better reach underserved communities.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- By making the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States regardless of immigration or health insurance status, key access barriers faced by Latinos were eliminated.
- ARPA funds helped remove other access barriers, including language, cultural, and transportation barriers: (1) by making vaccines available in local communities from trusted providers, such as local pharmacies, community health centers, and mobile clinics; and (2) through the [COVID-19 Community Corps](#), which mobilizes a nationwide network of trusted messengers in local communities to increase confidence in and uptake of vaccines.
- By including diverse health leaders, the administration will ensure the Health Equity Task Force's recommendations and actions are culturally responsive.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Invest \$150 million to support the CDC's Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) to strengthen the collection and dissemination of race and ethnicity data so we can measure progress and address equity gaps in testing and vaccines. This must include state-level demographic data.
2. While investments across multiple sectors closed vaccination gaps among adult populations ages 19+, further work is needed to: 1) expand prevention efforts to all populations including children and adolescents ages 0-18 years old; 2) build capacity for community-based organizations to address misinformation at the local level; 3) uplift local trusted messengers; and 4) develop culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate communications materials on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY

ACTION TAKEN

ACTION STILL NEEDED



TESTING AND VACCINES

Ensure that all Americans have equitable access to COVID-19 testing and vaccines.

- ✓ [Established](#) a COVID-19 Pandemic Testing Board to coordinate promotion of COVID-19 diagnostic, screening, and surveillance testing.
- ✓ [Established](#) the COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force to help ensure an equitable response to the pandemic.
- ✓ Through the Community-Based Workforce for COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach, the administration [distributed](#) \$125 million of ARPA funding to organizations working to bolster COVID-19 vaccinations in underserved communities. Funding to organizations working to bolster COVID-19 vaccinations in underserved communities.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- By making the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the United States regardless of immigration or health insurance status, key access barriers faced by Latinos were eliminated.
- ARPA funds helped remove other access barriers, including language, cultural, and transportation barriers: (1) by making vaccines available in local communities from trusted providers, such as local pharmacies, community health centers, and mobile clinics; and (2) through the [COVID-19 Community Corps](#), which mobilizes a nationwide network of trusted messengers in local communities to increase confidence in and uptake of vaccines.
- By including diverse health leaders, the administration will ensure the Health Equity Task Force's recommendations and actions are culturally responsive.

1. Invest \$150 million to support the CDC's Data Modernization Initiative (DMI) to strengthen the collection and dissemination of race and ethnicity data so we can measure progress and address equity gaps in testing and vaccines. This must include state-level demographic data.
2. While investments across multiple sectors closed vaccination gaps among adult populations ages 19+, further work is needed to: 1) expand prevention efforts to all populations including children and adolescents ages 0-18 years old; 2) build capacity for community-based organizations to address misinformation at the local level; 3) uplift local trusted messengers; and 4) develop culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate communications materials on the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



EXPANDED HEALTH COVERAGE DURING PANDEMIC AND BEYOND

Ensure access to COVID-19 treatment and health coverage for all, regardless of insurance, ability to pay, and immigration status.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA reduced ACA health care premiums for low- and moderate-income families by increasing premium tax credits through 2022.
- ✓ To provide more opportunities for uninsured people to purchase affordable coverage through HealthCare.gov, CMS: 1) established a special enrollment period until August 15, 2021; 2) permanently extended the annual open enrollment period to run through January 15 of each year; and 3) created a new monthly special enrollment period for very low-income families to enroll mid-year. For the 2022 Open Enrollment Period, HHS [provided](#) \$80 million in funding for Navigators to help promote enrollment, including via UnidosUS Affiliates and other community-based organizations working with underserved populations.
- ✓ The HHS Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation released new research on immigrant health coverage access, with policy recommendations like allowing DACA recipients to qualify for Medicaid/CHIP and the ACA, as well as eliminating the five-year bar.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- As many as three million Latinos [qualify](#) for these low-premium ACA plans, including 2.6 million who qualify for zero-dollar plans as a result of changes in ARPA.
- At least 400,000 Latinos [enrolled](#) in health coverage throughout the 2021 Special Enrollment Period.
- Additional funding for ACA Navigators helps more Latinos access health coverage, given that Latinos are [more likely](#) to rely on assistance to enroll in or renew coverage and experience [enrollment decreases](#) in the absence of the outreach provided by Navigators.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Permanently increase premium tax credits and reduce ACA Marketplace premiums to ensure lasting and uninterrupted access to affordable care for millions.
2. Close the Medicaid coverage gap in the states that refuse to expand Medicaid.
3. Given that Latinos make up nearly 30% of the overall remaining uninsured (as well as those in the coverage gap), allocate 30% of new funding to Latino outreach and enrollment in ACA coverage.
4. Provide financial stability for Puerto Rico's Medicaid program by creating parity between funding for territories' and states' Medicaid programs.
5. Prevent harmful gaps in health coverage by requiring states to continuously cover children enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP for 12 months.
6. Remove discriminatory eligibility restrictions on programs like Medicaid and CHIP, such as the five-year waiting period currently in place for lawful immigrants, to ensure that otherwise eligible individuals can enroll in health coverage. HHS should also clarify that people with DACA status are "lawfully present/residing" for the purposes of eligibility for ACA Marketplaces, Medicaid, CHIP, and BHP.
7. In anticipation of the restart of Medicaid disenrollments in 2022, CMS [should](#) work with states to ensure that people who are eligible for Medicaid remain enrolled in the program and that the individuals who are no longer eligible are successfully enrolled in other programs such as CHIP or subsidized coverage on the ACA Marketplace.
8. Support federal research and education around long COVID, given the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on racial and ethnic minority populations.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



PAID LEAVE

Ensure all workers get paid time off if they get sick or need to care for a loved one.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA provided payroll tax credits for employers who voluntarily provided paid leave through the end of September 2021.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

The administration should work with Congress to establish a permanent, 12-week, national paid leave program.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- More than half of Latino workers—an estimated 15 million people—[have no access](#) to paid leave, which is a critical [workplace equity issue](#), since around a third of a working person's compensation comes from workplace benefits and Latinos are more likely to have adult caregiving responsibilities than other racial and ethnic groups.

POLICY PRIORITY



NUTRITION

Reduce food insecurity.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA provided a 15% SNAP increase through September 2021 along with additional funding for Pandemic EBT, which was extended through the remainder of the Public Health Emergency.
- ✓ ARPA also provided \$390 million to support WIC outreach, innovation, and program modernization efforts.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Millions of eligible Latinos do not participate in SNAP, and the former public charge rule [continues](#) to depress participation in nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC. The USDA should: 1) designate a portion of the \$390 million provided by ARPA for WIC outreach innovation and program modernization funding to support outreach through community-based organizations; and 2) allocate at least \$10 million for SNAP competitive outreach grants to support outreach to low-income Latinos and other under-participating groups.
2. USDA should provide leadership, best practices, and sample outreach materials to states to ensure that state pandemic EBT plans provide benefits to all eligible immigrant families, prioritize technical assistance to states that have yet to submit a SNAP outreach plan, and share lessons learned among states with already approved outreach plans.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- While Latino households experience food insecurity at a [higher rate](#) than the national average, this issue was made more urgent by the pandemic. Nevertheless, in part due to the SNAP benefit increases and the availability of Pandemic EBT, Latino household food insecurity [decreased](#) from nearly 33% in April 2020 to 25.7% in April 2021.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



NUTRITION

Reduce food insecurity.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ The USDA took multiple actions to reduce hunger. The agency: (1) [withdrew](#) a proposed rule restricting categorical eligibility in SNAP which would have jeopardized benefits for households also receiving TANF benefits; (2) [increased](#) emergency SNAP benefits for 25 million participants who were at the SNAP maximum benefit level and received no benefit increases authorized by Congress last year; (3) [revised](#) the Thrifty Food Plan, used to calculate SNAP benefits in August-increasing the average by more than \$36 per person for FY2022; and (4) [established](#) an Equity Commission charged with identifying and making recommendations for how USDA can reduce barriers and increase access to USDA programs.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- While Latino households experience food insecurity at a [higher rate](#) than the national average, this issue was made more urgent by the pandemic. Nevertheless, in part due to the SNAP benefit increases and the availability of Pandemic EBT, Latino household food insecurity [decreased](#) from nearly 33% in April 2020 to 25.7% in April 2021.
- The Thrifty Food Plan change will further benefit as many as [6.5 million](#) Latinos. Pandemic EBT is a lifeline to these families as it provides low-income families (including those in Puerto Rico) access to food regardless of immigration status, and Latinos who were aware of the program [participated](#) at higher rates than non-Hispanic whites.
- WIC is also vital to address nutrition needs for low-income children and families. About 40% of the more than six million WIC participants are Latino women and children.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Millions of eligible Latinos do not participate in SNAP, and the former public charge rule [continues](#) to depress participation in nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC. The USDA should: 1) designate a portion of the \$390 million provided by ARPA for WIC outreach innovation and program modernization funding to support outreach through community-based organizations; and 2) allocate at least \$10 million for SNAP competitive outreach grants to support outreach to low-income Latinos and other under-participating groups.
2. USDA should provide leadership, best practices, and sample outreach materials to states to ensure that state pandemic EBT plans provide benefits to all eligible immigrant families, prioritize technical assistance to states that have yet to submit a SNAP outreach plan, and share lessons learned among states with already approved outreach plans.
3. The Biden administration should work with Congress to remove discriminatory SNAP eligibility restrictions, such as the five-year waiting period currently in place for lawfully present adults, to ensure that all who need food assistance can receive it.
4. USDA should work with state officials to improve adherence to and awareness of the 2000 tri-agency guidance (and other related guidance) regarding inquiries into citizenship, immigration status, and Social Security numbers (SSNs) for non-applicants.
5. USDA should utilize its demonstration authority to expand direct certification to Medicaid, WIC, and SNAP, so that many more eligible food-insecure children can access food.
6. Increase child nutrition investments so that more schools can offer free breakfast and lunch to all their students through the Community Eligibility Provision.
7. Create a nationwide Summer EBT program to help close the summer hunger gap.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

II. EDUCATION: SUPPORT VULNERABLE STUDENTS

POLICY PRIORITY



K-12 EDUCATION

Keep schools safely open and address the impact of the pandemic on student learning.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA provided \$123 billion in new, flexible funds for school to reopen safely and meet students' educational needs.
- ✓ ARPA provided more than \$7 billion to cover the purchase of broadband service and devices by schools and libraries for use by students, staff, and patrons.
- ✓ U.S. Department of Education required states to submit a plan on how ARPA funds will be used to support students and to provide data on impact of COVID-19 on student learning, including English learners (ELs), in order to release remaining 1/3 of education (ESSER) funds.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- The federal education funds will help [boost schools](#) that serve large numbers of poor children in states that have faced disproportionate state funding cuts.
- The E-Rate program, which provides discounts for telecommunications, internet access, and internal connections to eligible schools and libraries, will grow broadband access to the [one in three Latino households](#) that lack high speed internet.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. The administration should require more detailed data collection on how states and school districts will use these funds, to ensure accountability to students whose needs are not being met.
2. Include \$2 billion for Title III in the president's FY2023 budget request to Congress, which he failed to include in his FY2022 request. The nation's five million ELs continue to fall further behind their peers without more targeted investment in Title III, the federal funding stream dedicated to advancing the education of ELs.
3. The administration should continue to provide clear guidance to ensure state allocation of ARPA education funds reach the students with the greatest needs.
4. The administration must provide oversight to ensure states are meeting federal requirements to conduct statewide assessments, which will provide critical data to help us understand the extent to which COVID-19 has impacted learning for Latino students and ELs and inform how ARPA funds can be better targeted.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



SUPPORT FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Reduce pandemic hardships on students, and expand access to college and earning a degree.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA included at least \$20 billion to be distributed to students in higher education in the form of emergency grants to prevent hunger, homelessness, and other hardships.
Interest and monthly payments on federally held loans were suspended through May 1, 2022.
- ✓ U.S. Department of Education issued a new rule that allows undocumented college and university students to access emergency grant aid.
- ✓ U.S. Department of Education rescinded previous administration rule which limited debt relief for borrowers who were defrauded or misled by predominantly for-profit colleges and is instituting a streamlined approach which will provide full relief to borrowers.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. President Biden should use his executive authority to eliminate no less than \$10k in federal student debt per student, which would also serve as economic stimulus.
2. Nearly half of Latinx students depend on Pell Grants, which have not kept up with the rising costs of a college education. Pell Grants should be doubled to better meet the actual need.
3. Robust funding is needed for college completion grants to ensure that Latinos stay in college and earn a degree.
4. Title IV funding should be extended to all undocumented students so that they have access to the support they need to finish college and fully contribute to our economy.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- The pandemic has led to the [first decline](#) in Latino postsecondary enrollment in a decade, with 2020 seeing a 6% drop. The emergency grants and student loan relief are helping students meet their basic needs, a critical step in reversing this troubling trend.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

III. ECONOMY: PROVIDE RELIEF THAT PLACES OUR COUNTRY ON A PATH TO AN EQUITABLE RECOVERY

POLICY PRIORITY



FUNDING FOR STATE, LOCAL, TRIBAL, AND TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENTS

Funding to prevent layoffs and help pay for unbudgeted expenses tied to the pandemic.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARP provides \$350 billion to help state, local, tribal, and territorial governments pay for unbudgeted expenses tied to the COVID-19 emergency, which will also help to prevent layoffs.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

Strong federal guidance, tracking, robust oversight, and enforcement is needed to ensure that state and local aid reaches the communities that need it most.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- State and local officials have a historic opportunity to use this substantial federal aid to help communities hit hardest by the pandemic and address the long-term inequities that have kept too many Latinos, people of color, and women from reaching their potential.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC RELIEF

Include Latino workers and small-business owners and their families in emergency economic relief.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA granted \$1,400 in direct stimulus payments to adults and dependents.
- ✓ ARPA included \$300 in enhanced unemployment benefits per week through September 6, 2021.
- ✓ ARPA temporarily increased the CTC from \$2,000 to \$3,000, with an additional \$600 for children under six. It also made the CTC fully refundable and provided advanced monthly payments from July-December 2021.
- ✓ ARPA temporarily expanded the EITC to childless workers who were being taxed further into poverty.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- 5.1 million spouses and children with Social Security numbers in mixed-status families became fully eligible for cash relief under the ARPA.
- The unemployment benefits helped millions of Latinos who lost their jobs keep their heads above water. The November unemployment rate for Latinos was [5.2%](#), lower than the [18.5%](#) peak in April 2020, but still higher than the pre-pandemic average of 4%.
- The EITC expansion [supported](#) more than 17 million working adults without children, of whom 3.7 million are Latino (or 22%). The CTC expansion kept [3.8 million](#) children from poverty.
- The small-business emergency grants, lending, investment, and navigator program will strengthen main street small businesses in low-income areas, including minority-owned businesses.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Include in future legislation the extension of stimulus cash payments to more than nine million ITIN holders, including more than 900k undocumented children (as was the case in the HEROES Act).
2. Make the EITC and CTC expansions permanent.
3. Restore the CTC for immigrant children with ITINs. This would help nearly one million children, about 85% of whom are Latino.
4. Latinos face [barriers](#) in accessing tax credits, which lower their take-up rates. Recent [data](#) show only 64% of Latino tax filers claim the CTC, compared to 76% of white and Black filers. The Biden administration should expand outreach to increase EITC and CTC awareness, especially to low-income families who have no tax filing requirements and communities that face language barriers.
5. The Department of Treasury should provide race and ethnicity data on who is accessing the CTC and EITC to help inform outreach and future advocacy around effective poverty reduction policy.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY

INCLUSIVE
ECONOMIC
RELIEF

Include Latino workers and small-business owners and their families in emergency economic relief.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ The IRS launched an [online tool](#) to help Spanish-speaking families see if they qualify for advance CTC payments.
- ✓ ARPA provided \$50 billion in small-business aid, including funding for the Payroll Protection Program, the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Advance program, food and drinking establishments, and the Community Navigator Pilot Program.
- ✓ USDA established the Farm and Food Workers Relief grant program to help farmworkers, meatpacking workers, and grocery store workers with pandemic-related health and safety costs.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- 5.1 million spouses and children with Social Security numbers in mixed-status families became fully eligible for cash relief under the ARPA.
- The unemployment benefits helped millions of Latinos who lost their jobs keep their heads above water. The November unemployment rate for Latinos was [5.2%](#), lower than the [18.5%](#) peak in April 2020, but still higher than the pre-pandemic average of 4%.
- The EITC expansion [supported](#) more than 17 million working adults without children, of whom 3.7 million are Latino (or 22%). The CTC expansion helped lift [1.4 million Latino children out of poverty](#), reduced poverty among an additional 3.8 million, and provided access to the full CTC to 9.9 million children for the first time.
- The small-business emergency grants, lending, investment, and navigator program will strengthen main street small businesses in low-income areas, including minority-owned businesses.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Include in future legislation the extension of stimulus cash payments to more than nine million ITIN holders, including more than 900k undocumented children (as was the case in the HEROES Act).
2. Make the EITC and CTC expansions permanent.
3. Restore the CTC for immigrant children with ITINs. This would help nearly one million children, about 85% of whom are Latino.
4. Latinos face [barriers](#) in accessing tax credits, which lower their take-up rates. Recent [data](#) show only 64% of Latino tax filers claim the CTC, compared to 76% of white and Black filers. The Biden administration should expand outreach to increase EITC and CTC awareness, especially to low-income families who have no tax filing requirements and communities that face language barriers.
5. The Department of Treasury should provide race and ethnicity data on who is accessing the CTC and EITC to help inform outreach and future advocacy around effective poverty reduction policy.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



HOUSING RELIEF

Keep more Latinos in their homes.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ ARPA includes \$26 billion in emergency rental assistance, \$10 billion in mortgage assistance, \$5 billion for people facing homelessness, and \$100 million for the housing counseling program.
- ✓ The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) [proposed](#) a set of rule changes intended to prevent avoidable foreclosures as the CARES Act emergency federal foreclosure protections expire in the fall.
- ✓ The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) [issued a final rule](#) to rescind former President Trump's effort to gut key protections in the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA)—a landmark law that helps ensure low- and moderate-income Latinos access to bank services, capital, and credit.
- ✓ The Biden administration extended the foreclosure and eviction moratorium until the end of June.
- ✓ The Biden administration withdrew the proposed 2019 Housing and Community Development Act of 1980: Verification of Eligible Status, a rule that would have threatened the housing access, security, and unity of tens of thousands of families in federally assisted housing, especially households with families that have mixed immigration status.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- Together, these housing provisions will help Latinos who have experienced significant housing insecurity during the pandemic. According to an October Census Bureau [survey](#), only 38% of Latinos had high confidence that they could make next month's mortgage payment and only 37% had high confidence they could make next month's rent.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Additional housing counseling funding is needed and should be set at a minimum of \$100 million a year.
2. The Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Treasury, and the CFPB should orchestrate a collaboration between mortgage servicers and housing counseling organizations that operationalizes the ways homeowners receive support from the mortgage and housing counseling intermediaries.
3. The Biden administration should update the CRA to better serve the Latino community. As UnidosUS has [recommended](#), these updates should better reflect bank presence and deposit products offered in low- and moderate-income communities, review demographic data as part of CRA exams, and advance other priorities.
4. While the homeowners with federally backed mortgages were protected against foreclosure through July 2021 and can apply for forbearance if they experience financial hardship due to the pandemic, protection and relief is needed for more than 15 million homeowners with mortgages not federally backed, which remain unprotected by current federal protections.
5. Congress must invest in the housing needs of Latino communities. This should include at least what the House proposed in the BBB Act, which included \$25 billion in rental assistance, \$10 billion in down payment assistance to first-generation homeowners, and \$65 billion in public housing.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



ESSENTIAL WORKER PROTECTIONS

Stabilize and protect our immigrant and frontline workforce and their families.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ Delivered an immigration bill, the "U.S. Citizenship Act (USCA)" to Congress that provides a pathway to citizenship for 11 million undocumented immigrants.
- ✓ Supported the passage in the House of the American Dream and Promise Act and Farmworker Modernization Act. Many of the nearly four million people who would be protected by the passage of these bills work in essential industries.
- ✓ Took executive action to "preserve and fortify" [DACA](#), including publishing new regulations for public comment.
- ✓ Signed IIJA into law, which provides \$430 million to CBP for the construction and modernization of our land ports of entry and equipment and fixtures for operations.
- ✓ TPS extended for beneficiaries from Venezuela, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Burma, and Sudan. DED was also extended for nationals from Liberia and instituted for those from Hong Kong.
- ✓ As a part of its regional migration management strategy, reopened the Central American Minors program to allow in-country processing of qualified migrants from Northern Triangle.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- Immigration relief for more than five million essential workers is urgently needed to provide security and stability to Latino families and our frontline workforce. An estimated [5.2 million undocumented immigrants](#) have worked as essential workers—including 400,000 agricultural workers; 400,000 cleaning staff; 300,000 packers, stockers, and shippers of essential goods; and 100,000 home health and personal care aides.
- The U.S. immigration system has not seen meaningful reform for 30 years. For undocumented immigrants—who on average have lived in the country for 15 years—and their 10.2 million family members, the future is tenuous.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Immigration relief for the undocumented—including millions of frontline pandemic workers—must be passed as part of Biden's "Build Back Better" recovery plan. It must not fall off as BBB negotiations spill into 2022.
2. Beyond just delivering a bill to Congress, the administration must steadfastly advocate for a divided Congress to pass a pathway to citizenship regardless of what happens in the BBB Act, such as the USCA, the "DREAM and Promise Act," the "Farm Workforce Modernization Act," and the "Citizenship for Essential Workers Act."
3. The administration must make significant progress to fortify DACA consistent with its policy direction, including by expanding the policy as recommended by UnidosUS, Senators Menendez, Cortez Masto, Padilla, and Lujan, and others.
4. The administration must take steps to increase participation of in-country processing of Central American migrants to stem the flow of irregular migration, including making the program more widely accessible by extending or updating TPS protections for Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.
5. The administration must more fully exercise its administrative authorities to protect long-term undocumented residents—including those providing significant public benefit to the nation as essential workers during the ongoing pandemic.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



ESSENTIAL WORKER PROTECTIONS

Stabilize and protect our immigrant and frontline workforce, and their families.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ 100-day moratorium on deportations. While the moratorium was indefinitely enjoined in Texas, nothing in the ruling requires deportations and DHS continues its review and [updates](#) of its enforcement priorities.
- ✓ Promulgated new DHS-wide priorities memos to focus limited enforcement resources on significant public safety and national security threats, replacing the dragnet approach of the prior administration that threatened longtime residents.
- ✓ Promulgated ancillary DHS enforcement guidance such as on "Protected Areas," engagement at court houses, worksite enforcement, and the Detention Case Management Pilot Program.
- ✓ The Biden administration stopped defending lawsuits challenging the Trump-era public charge regulations. Federal courts then dismissed the government's appeals. Issued Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule Making for a new public charge regulation.
- ✓ Withdrew the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-proposed "mixed-status" rule, which, if finalized, would have put 55,000 American kids in mixed-status homes at risk of eviction.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- Legalization of the undocumented would be a good return on the investment: their households pay \$79.7 billion in federal tax contributions and \$41 billion in state and local tax contributions, which help fund public schools, infrastructure repairs for roads and bridges, and the military.
- Roughly six million American kids live with an undocumented loved one, most of whom are Latino. Stabilizing families (by reducing indiscriminate enforcement) is a significant investment in America's future workforce, leaders, and dynamism.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. Immigration relief for the undocumented—including millions of frontline pandemic workers—must be passed as part of Biden's "Build Back Better" recovery plan. It must not fall off as BBB negotiations spill into 2022.
2. Beyond just delivering a bill to Congress, the administration must steadfastly advocate for a divided Congress to pass a pathway to citizenship regardless of what happens in the BBB Act, such as the USCA, the "DREAM and Promise Act," the "Farm Workforce Modernization Act," and the "Citizenship for Essential Workers Act."
3. The administration must make significant progress to fortify DACA consistent with its policy direction, including by expanding the policy as recommended by UnidosUS, Senators Menendez, Cortez Masto, Padilla, and Lujan, and others.
4. The administration must take steps to increase participation of in-country processing of Central American migrants to stem the flow of irregular migration, including making the program more widely accessible by extending or updating TPS protections for Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.
5. The administration must more fully exercise its administrative authorities to protect long-term undocumented residents—including those providing significant public benefit to the nation as essential workers during the ongoing pandemic.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

IV. RACIAL EQUITY: WORK TOWARD UNITY AND HEALING

POLICY PRIORITY



PROYECTO 20%

20% of all federal appointments and positions to be filled by Latinos.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ At the cabinet level, Biden has nominated Xavier Becerra (HHS), Alejandro Mayorkas (DHS), Miguel Cardona (DOE), and Isabel Guzman (SBA), totaling four out of 26 Cabinet level positions, or 15%.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- This is the largest number of first-term Hispanic cabinet members in U.S. history, and Becerra is the first Latino to serve as HHS secretary.
- Latinos must be appointed to the highest levels of government, driving policy that benefits our community and the United States.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. President Biden must ensure 20% of all hiring and appointments are Latinos, to reflect the population of the United States.
2. This means 800 of the approximately 4,000 placements in the executive branch made by the new president should be filled by Latinos.
3. Far more progress is needed in agencies where there is a wide gap of Latino appointees, including at the Department of Justice, Department of Treasury, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.
4. Because appointment and hiring data is not clear or available on broader nominations, the administration needs to ensure transparency and share data publicly about Latino appointments and hires.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



DATA REPORTING

Collect complete data on racial inequities.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ Issued an [executive order](#) establishing an equitable data working group to address the fact that many federal datasets are not disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability, income, veteran status, or other key demographic variables.

The president's "[skinny budget](#)" calls for \$8.7 billion for the CDC to, among other things, modernize public health data collection nationwide. It also includes \$153 million for the CDC's Social Determinants of Health program to support states and territories in improving health equity and data collection for racial and ethnic populations.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

In his full 2022 budget to Congress this year, the president should reiterate and expand on his commitment to robust funding for data collection and disaggregation across all federal departments and programs, including health, education, and criminal justice. This information should be accessible to the public.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- This will help to begin unmasking the true extent of inequities experienced by Latinos and other people of color, and to promote the development of policies needed to effect structural change.

POLICY PRIORITY



CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Ensure all Americans have access to affordable broadband.

ACTION TAKEN

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provided \$65 billion to increase access to reliable high-speed internet, close the digital divide, and fund digital literacy initiatives. These investments will democratize access to information, services, and opportunity while promoting information awareness and education.



ACTION STILL NEEDED

1. The Biden budget should shore up funding for the newly created Affordable Connectivity Program, administered by the FCC, to ensure the program's durability and maximize efficacy and reach within hard-to-reach communities.
2. President Biden must work with Congress to swiftly fill the remaining vacant seat on the FCC. The vacancy limits the FCC's ability to maintain its workstreams, including delivery of FCC-updated broadband maps necessary to disseminate state funds included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- Only 65% of Latinos have broadband at home, which undermines their access to education, employment, health and other information, opportunities and services. It also increases pandemic-related social isolation and limits civic and community engagement.

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY	ACTION TAKEN	ACTION STILL NEEDED
 <p>IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION</p> <p>Empower immigrants to contribute their full potential.</p>	<p>✓ Issued an executive order that instructs the Domestic Policy Council to convene a Task Force on New Americans, which will include members of agencies that implement policies that impact immigrant communities.</p> <p>BENEFIT TO LATINOS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This small investment commits limited resources to support the integration of Latino immigrants and refugees. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Issues impacting immigrants in the United States require more than a task force. The White House should therefore establish an Office of New Americans, housed within the Executive Office of the President, which would be responsible for coordinating immigrant integration across the federal government and at state and local levels. The Biden budget should include increased funding for the Immigrant Integration Grant program.
POLICY PRIORITY	ACTION TAKEN	ACTION STILL NEEDED
 <p>INCLUSIVE BUDGET</p> <p>Promote a federal budget that advances equity, inclusion, and protection of civil rights.</p>	<p>✓ The president called for significant budget increases for civil rights offices and activities across federal agencies to ensure that our laws are enforced fairly and equitably.</p> <p>BENEFIT TO LATINOS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A budget that invests in full inclusion and equity results in proportionate government funding in education, health care, housing, voting, job creation, and the social safety net that benefits Latinos. Such investments will begin to root out discrimination and racism at federal agencies. 	<p>In his 2023 budget to Congress this year, the president should reiterate and expand on his commitment to strong funding for civil rights protections and equity inclusion.</p>

UNIDOSUS LATINO INCLUSION TRACKER: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S FIRST YEAR

POLICY PRIORITY



STRENGTHEN OUR DEMOCRACY

Protect voting rights.

ACTION TAKEN

- ✓ Issued an [executive order](#) to promote access to voting by requiring federal agencies to increase citizens' opportunities—with an emphasis on disenfranchised voters—to register to vote and obtain information about the electoral process.

BENEFIT TO LATINOS

- For generations, Latino and other voters of color have faced discriminatory barriers to casting their ballots, including long lines at the polls, voter identification laws, limited opportunities to vote by mail, and limited access to language assistance.
- [Threats](#) to Latinos' right to vote continue to grow because of the pandemic, misinformation which undermines confidence in legitimate election outcomes, and troubling moves in key states to restrict voting rights and/or allow the overturn of legitimate election results.

ACTION STILL NEEDED

President Biden must work with Congress to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act by working to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. The president and Congress must also prioritize passage of the Freedom to Vote Act, which would strengthen voting rights protections and increase voter access to the ballot box.

ABOUT US

UnidosUS, previously known as NCLR (National Council of La Raza), is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an [Affiliate Network](#) of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers that affect Latinos at the national and local levels.

For more than 50 years, UnidosUS has united communities and different groups seeking common ground through collaboration, and that share a desire to make our community stronger. For more information on UnidosUS, visit [unidosus.org](https://www.unidosus.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

UnidosUS
Raul Yzaguirre Building
1126 16th Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20036-4845
(202) 785-1670
[unidosus.org](https://www.unidosus.org)

Copyright © 2022 by UnidosUS All rights reserved.

