

RECOMMENDATION TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY TO ADDRESS RACIAL INEQUITIES ACROSS CALIFORNIA AND ADVANCE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITIES

TO: Members of Governor Newsom's Task Force on Business and Jobs Recovery

FROM: 90+ Organizations that Signed on to [Just Recovery Recommendations](#) for Governor Newsom's Task Force

THE CHALLENGE

People of color, particularly Black people, have experienced centuries of inequality and systemic and institutionalized racism. Decades of underinvestment and unjust systems have left Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities with high levels of poverty and pollution, a lack of quality jobs and education opportunities, outdated and weak critical infrastructure, disproportionately high costs for energy, transportation and basic necessities, and limited access to public services. Moreover, Black and brown communities have long been excluded from policy and funding decision-making processes that can be used to address the injustices they experience and support a transition to healthy communities.

THE SOLUTION

California must establish a statewide Office of Racial Equity. Now more than ever we have to embrace racial equity, which means transforming the behaviors, institutions, and systems that disproportionately harm marginalized communities by increasing access to power, redistributing and providing additional resources, and eliminating barriers to opportunity, in order to empower low-income communities of color to thrive and reach their full potential. Establishing an Office of Racial Equity will help the State *practice equity*, turning our commitment into actionable equity strategies in our immediate response to the crisis, in our recovery efforts, and as the world reshapes the global economy. We have to make equity real.

The California Office of Racial Equity

The Office of Racial Equity would identify existing policies and practices in the state that contribute to, uphold, or exacerbate racial disparities and develop proposals to address these disparities. It would also enact measures to support capacity building and provide technical assistance for state agencies to invest in strategies for racial equity, including employee training and support, development of racial equity programming, and assistance to departments to change departmental policies and practices to improve racial equity outcomes.

The Office of Racial Equity can live within the Office of the Governor, from which it will lead efforts to:

- Develop a Racial Equity Framework;
- Oversee the development of agency-specific Racial Equity Action Plans that outline strategies to address racial disparities resulting from programs and policies the agency administers;
- Identify existing policies and practices in the state that contribute to, uphold, or exacerbate racial disparities and develop proposals to address these disparities, to be recommended to the Governor's Office and Legislature;
- Analyze and report on policies in the areas of but not limited to housing/land use, employment, environment, economic security, public health and public safety that may have an impact on racial equity or racial disparities;
- Create a budget equity assessment tool to determine whether budget requests and annual allocations benefit or burden communities of color;
- Facilitate state policy reform and systems change;
- Promote community outreach and engagement;
- Collaborate with the appropriate offices to develop policies, provide technical assistance, and train agencies on maintaining a diverse, inclusive, and culturally sensitive workforce; and
- Establish, in collaboration with agencies as appropriate:
 - (a) standards for the collection, analysis, and reporting of disaggregated data regarding race and ethnicity; and
 - (b) agency-specific performance measures.
- Convene work groups consisting of agency representatives and a diverse body of public stakeholders to explore strategies to achieve the purpose of this act.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Greenlining's Making Equity Real in Climate Adaptation and Resilience Guidebook](#)

- [HB 1783 - 2019-20. Creating the Washington state office of equity](#)
- [San Francisco Office of Racial Equity Ordinance](#)
- [Vermont Executive Order to Form Racial Equity Task Force](#)

The recommendations above are an expansion of concepts included in the [Just Recovery Recommendations for Governor Newsom's Task Force](#), which was supported by the 90+ organizations below. While the organizations below support the overall concepts, they have not yet had a chance to review the detailed recommendations we shared in this letter.

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