

THE PERMANENT COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF RACIAL, INDIGENOUS, AND TRIBAL POPULATIONS

Draft Proposal for Racial Impact Statement Development Project for the Maine Legislature

Synopsis

In the interest of eliminating disparities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous, and tribal populations in the State of Maine, the Permanent Commission in collaboration with its research partners will pilot a program to provide Maine's legislators with a means of reviewing active legislation for its impact on racial disparities.

Parties

- Legislative Council
- The Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations ("Permanent Commission")
- University of Maine Systems ("UMS")
 - Cutler Institute, Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine
 - Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, University of Maine

Process

- The Subcommittee nominates a pool of bills for consideration no later than December 1st
- Research team reviews these proposed bills from a feasibility perspective and reports back to the subcommittee on which are most impactful and feasible
- Racial Impact Statements will be provided to the legislative committees before the end of February 2022
 - format – in person? Written?

Roles

The Permanent Commission and the Maine University System together form the "Research Team" and are co-equal collaborators in the effort to produce racial impact statements to inform legislative decision-making processes. The Permanent Commission will head up qualitative research and analysis efforts among impacted communities while UMS will be responsible for carrying out quantitative research and analysis.

Selection of Bills for Pilot

The pilot will focus on carry-over bills (number as yet undetermined) from some or all of the following committees:

- Education
- Labor and Housing
- Health and Human Services
- Judiciary

Once bills are selected for review, the research teams will develop an approach that will be presented to the Subcommittee in December.

Racial Impact Statement (RIS) Framework:

The RIS shall respond to the following questions, adapted from a framework articulated by the Urban Institute:

- What problem is this policy/legislation addressing?
- Is the problem worse or exacerbated for people of color?
- What factors contribute to or compound racial inequities around this problem?
- More specifically, what policies, institutions, or actors have shaped these inequalities, disparities, and/or disparate impacts?
- What actors, at what levels of influence, could reduce these inequities?

The RIS will obtain both qualitative and quantitative information from which to draw conclusions.

Questions for the Subcommittee to consider:

- Preference with respect to quality vs. quantity for bills to analyze in the pilot?
- What types of bills should be piloted?
- Which bills does Subcommittee recommend?

Questions for the research teams to consider:

- Availability of data/information
- Data collection processes needed to answer the questions posed
- Feasibility of answering the questions posed within the timeframe

The Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations was established by the Legislature and signed into law in 2019. It is an independent entity with a mission to address systemic racism by examining racial disparities across all systems and working to improve the status and outcomes for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous, and tribal populations. The Commission is empowered to advise all three branches of state government and to submit legislation.

The Cutler Institute, the research arm of the Muskie School of Public Service, collaborates with partners throughout the nation and across the world to find sustainable practical solutions to critical societal issues. The experienced staff of the Cutler Institute work collaboratively to help organizations and communities thrive in a changing world by translating knowledge and best practices into sustainable solutions that are responsive to societal needs and focused on both short-term and long-term outcomes. Cutler Institute staff bring decades of experience and advanced degrees in areas of policy, social work, law, education, business administration, and public health. Our multidisciplinary approach

allows us to provide innovative outcomes to complex local, national, and international issues.

The Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center is a nonpartisan, independent research and public service unit of the University of Maine (UMaine). Created in 1989, the Center was named to continue the legacy of [Senator Margaret Chase Smith](#) who served as a model of civil discourse and integrity. The Policy Center informs public policy processes and societal decision-making through timely research and applied public policy activities focused on critical issues facing Maine and the nation.