
Race Equity Action Framework (REAF)

Understanding Different Approaches for Advancing Racial Equity

Section 8

State/National Legislation & Policy

A tool developed by:
The Community Advancement Network (CAN) - Austin, TX
Updated August 2024

Race Equity Action Framework

Criminal &
Civil Justice

*State/National
Legislation &
Policy*

Addressing
Concentrated
Wealth & Power

Housing,
Health &
Human
Services

Social Capital
& Community
Leadership

Educational
& Economic
Opportunity

Workforce
Development

Expand
Opportunity
for Youth &
Adults

Section 8

Introduction

This section focuses on the need to OPPOSE policy and legislative actions that limit the ability of individuals to expand the wealth and power they possess (e.g. voter suppression, defunding public education, defunding programs that provide basic needs support to families, impeding access to higher ed), and SUPPORT policy and legislative actions that support individuals in expanding the wealth and power they possess (for examples see expanding opportunity section).

VOTING

This study by the Brennan Center for Justice examines how new laws disproportionately harm voters of color. Promoting full participation, therefore, will require intentional public policy efforts to protect the right to vote for all Americans.

Strict Voter ID Laws Disproportionately Impact Voters of Color
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21565503.2020.1773280>

Restrictions on Sunday Voting Would Fall Disproportionately on Voters of Color
<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/georgias-proposed-voting-restrictions-will-harm-black-voters-most>

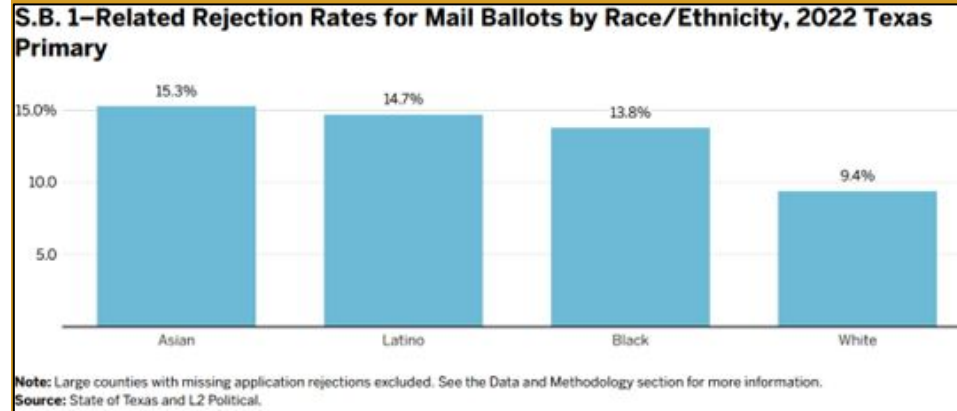
Voters of Color Face More Difficulties Voting By Mail
<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/digging-georgia-primary>

Polling Place Consolidation is Harmful to the Turnout of Racial/Ethnic Minorities
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10780874211005016>

Source: The Impact of Voter Suppression on Communities of Color (2022), Brennan Center for Justice

VOTING

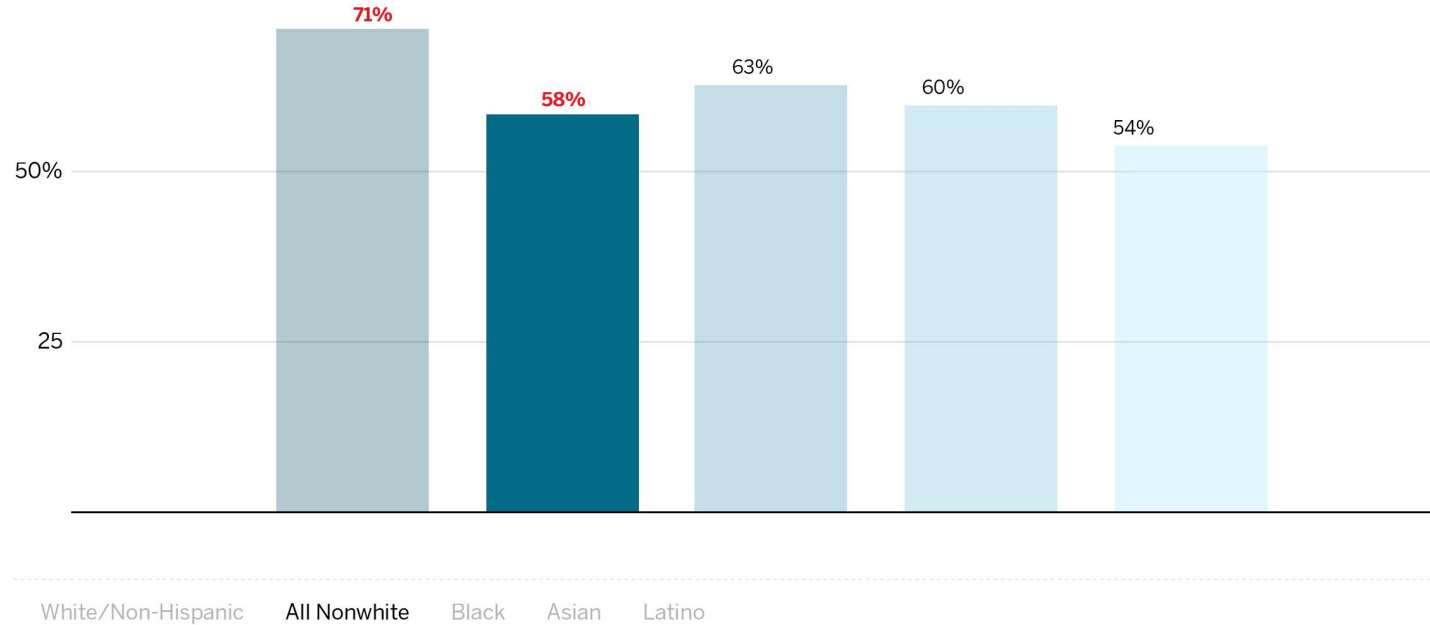
This study by the Brennan Center for Justice finds that after laws enacted in 2021 aimed at making it harder to vote by mail, resulted in the rejection of thousands of mail ballot applications and mailed ballots, with a particularly harsh impact on voters of color.



Records Show Massive Disenfranchisement of and Racial Disparities in 2022 Texas Primary, Brennan Center for Justice

VOTING

Voter Turnout by Race in 2020



Source: [U.S. Census Bureau](#)

Large Racial Turnout Gap Persisted in 2020 Election, Brennan Center for Justice

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL EQUITY IN:

VOTING

League of Women Voters Austin Area
<https://lwvaustin.org/>

ACLU of Texas
<https://aclutx.org/>

Young Invincibles
<https://younginvincibles.org/>

NAACP*
<http://www.naacpaustin.com/>

*Denotes people of color-led organizations.
For a definition of “people of color-led organization,”
please see slide 3 of Navigation and Credits.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PROTECTING VOTING RIGHTS

STATE

ACLU Texas
<https://www.aclutx.org/en/issues/voting-rights>

MOVE Texas
<https://movetexas.org/>

Disability Rights Texas
<https://www.disabilityrightstx.org/en/category/voting/>

Texas Voter Protection
<https://texasvoterprotection.org/about-texas-voter-protection/>

Texas Civil Rights Project
<https://txcivilrights.org/>

Jolt Action
<https://joltx.org/>

Texas Organizing Project
<https://organizetexas.org/campaigns/right2vote/>

Texas Rising
<https://txrising.org/>

NATIONAL

NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund
<https://www.naacpldf.org/>

Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund
<https://www.maldef.org/>

Southern Poverty Law Center
<https://www.splcenter.org/our-issues/voting-rights>

League of United Latin American Citizens
<https://lulac.org/>

Fair County
<https://www.faircount.org/>

Princeton Gerrymandering Project
<https://gerrymander.princeton.edu/>

Protect the Vote
<https://protectthevote.net/>

HIGHER EDUCATION

Reductions in public funding to institutions of higher education increase pressure for colleges/universities to raise tuition. Tuition increases, in turn, have a tendency to reduce diversity at these institutions as shown in this chart.

Barriers to Higher Education

Estimated effects on diversity by amount of tuition hike

As tuition increases, diversity declines.

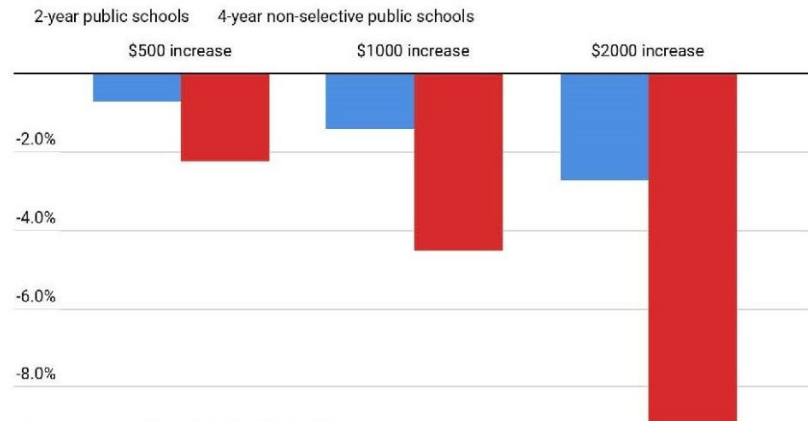
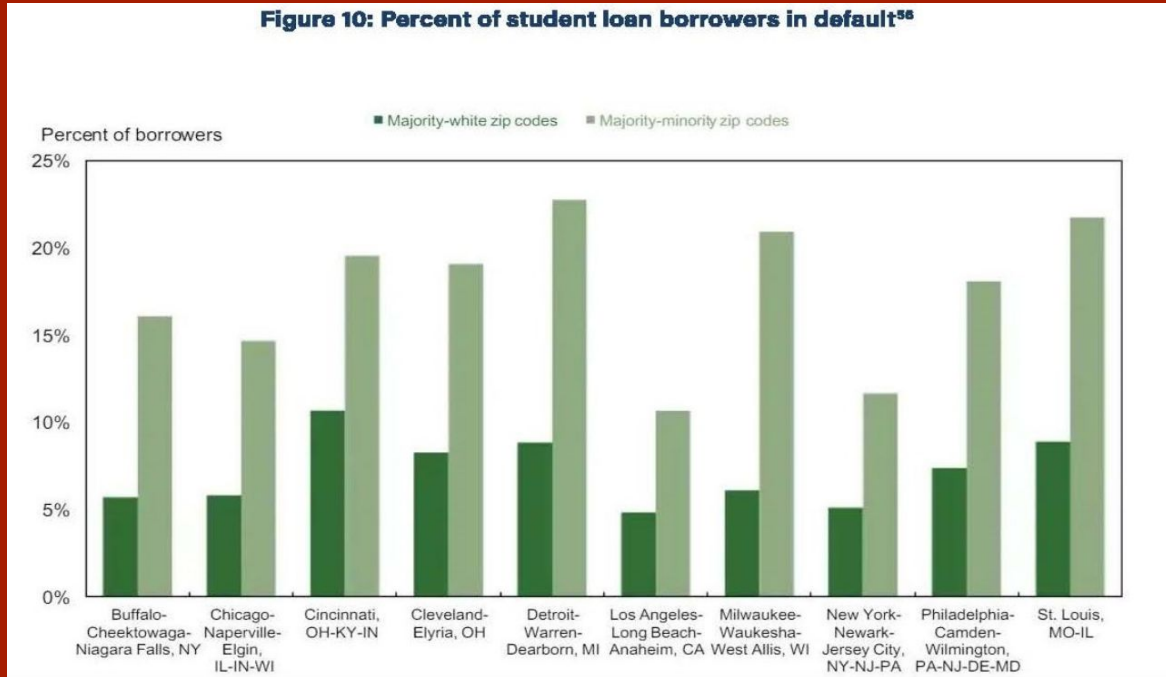


Chart: The Conversation, CC-by-ND • [Get the data](#)

The Conversation (2018), *When Campus Tuition Goes Up, Diversity Goes Down.*

STUDENT LOAN DEBT

Figure 10: Percent of student loan borrowers in default⁵⁶



Student Borrower Protection Center, *Disparate Debts: How Students Debts Drive Racial Inequality Across America's Cities* (2020) pg. 23

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL EQUITY IN:

HIGHER EDUCATION

My Brother's Keeper Greater Austin Area*
<https://gaambk.org>

Project MALES*
<https://diversity.utexas.edu/projectmales/>

E3 Alliance
<https://e3alliance.org>

Breakthrough Central Texas
<https://breakthroughctx.org>

College Forward
<https://collegeforward.org>

*Denotes people of color-led organizations.
For a definition of “people of color-led organization,”
please see slide 3 of Navigation and Credits.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

STATE

Texas Star Alliance
<https://www.texasstaralliance.com/public-highereducationadvocacy>

Raise Your Hand Texas
<https://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/>

Young Invincibles - Texas
<https://younginvincibles.org/location/texas/>

NATIONAL

Committee for Education Funding
<https://cef.org/>

U.S. PIRG
<https://uspirg.org/issues/usp/make-higher-education-affordable>

The Education Trust
<https://edtrust.org/issue/affordability-financial-aid/>

National Education Association
<https://www.nea.org/your-rights-workplace/fair-pay-benefits/student-debt-support>

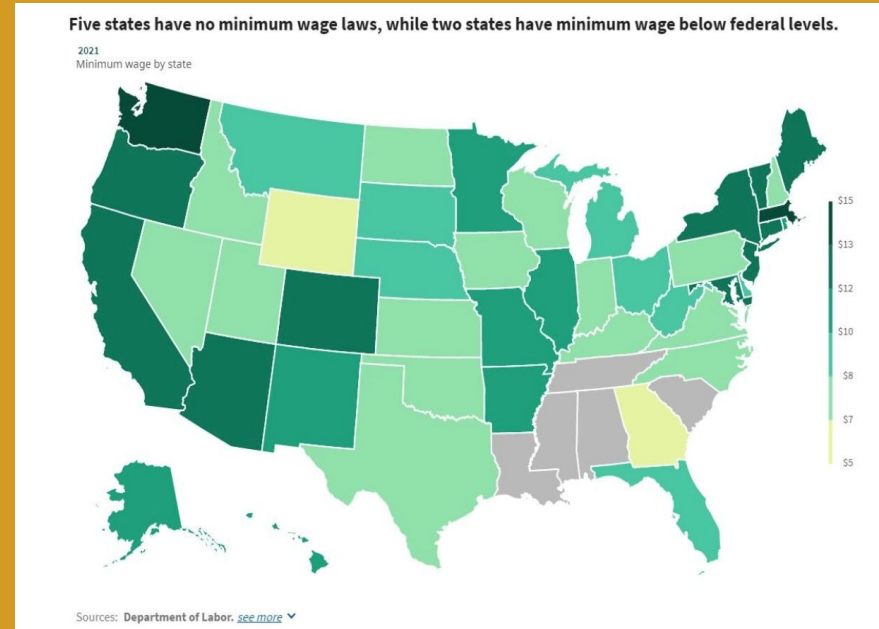
The Institute for College Access and Success
<https://ticas.org/our-work/student-debt/>

Student Borrower Protection Center
<https://protectborrowers.org/>

MINIMUM WAGE

"About 2.4% of Black hourly workers earn the federal minimum wage or less, compared to about 2% among white, Asian, and Hispanic hourly workers."

Wage Inequality



USA Facts (2021). *Minimum wage in America: How many people are earning \$7.25 an hour?*

<https://usafacts.org/articles/minimum-wage-america-how-many-people-are-earning-725-hour/>

WAGE INEQUALITY



MOVE (2020). *The Least Livable US Cities for Minimum Wage Earners*
<https://www.move.org/least-livable-us-cities-for-minimum-wage-earners/>

ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL EQUITY IN:

WAGE INEQUALITY

AFSCME Local 1624

<https://www.afscme1624.org>

Education Austin

<https://educationaustin.org>

Austin Interfaith

<https://austininterfaith.org>

Workers Defense Project*

<https://workersdefense.org/en/>

*Denotes people of color-led organizations.
For a definition of “people of color-led organization,”
please see slide 3 of Navigation and Credits.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING WAGE INEQUALITY

State / National Resources

Economic Policy Institute

<https://www.epi.org/>

One Fair Wage Emergency Fund

<https://ofwemergencyfund.org/>

National Employment Project's Raise
the Minimum Wage

<https://raisetheminimumwage.com/>

United For a Fair Economy - Living
Wage Network

<https://www.livingwagenetwork.org/#>

Fight for \$15

<https://fightfor15.org/>

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Beyond Diversity (Leadership Austin)

<https://leadershipaustin.org/2020/12/26/beyond-diversity-seminar-2021-dates/>

Undoing Racism

<https://undoingracismaustin.org/activities/register-for-future-undoing-racism-workshops-in-austin/>

Racial Healing Circles

<https://www.austinyymca.org/blog/racial-healing-circles>

COALITIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Austin Black Caucus

<https://www.facebook.com/AustinBlackCaucus/>

Central Texas Collective for Racial Equity

<https://ctcraciaequity.org/>

Austin Justice Coalition

<https://austinjustice.org/>

Communities of Color United

<https://www.atxccu.org/>

Community Resilience Trust

<https://communityresiliencetrust.org/>

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

GOVERNMENTAL RESOURCES FOR ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY

Austin ISD Chief Equity Officer
<https://www.austinisd.org/equityoffice/staff>

City of Austin Chief Equity Officer
<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/equity-office>

ACC Chief Equity & Inclusion Officer
<https://www.austincc.edu/news/tag/chief-equity-diversity-inclusion-officer>

RESOURCE TO LEARN ABOUT ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CAN "Get Engaged" Podcast & Calendar
<http://canatx.org/podcasts/>