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# **mn** MINNESOTA COUNCIL ON LATINO AFFAIRS

## HISTORY AND MISSION OF MCLA

The Council was first established in 1978 as the Spanish Speaking Affairs Council, later it was renamed the Chicano Latino Affairs Council (CLAC). With a restructure of mandate, the Council became the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA) on July 1, 2015.

Our mission is to advise and inform the governor's office and state legislators on matters of importance to Latinos in Minnesota by consulting on the impact of proposed policy, procedures, laws, and regulations on Minnesotan Latinos.

MCLA assesses the impact of legislation through a combination of research and analysis, collaboration with council partners, and engagement with Minnesota's Latino community.

## HOW MCLA WORKS FOR YOU

At the Capitol, MCLA drafts legislation and consults on the content of proposed bills. MCLA meets with state legislators or the governor's office to advise on current issues affecting Latinos state-wide. Staff monitors legislation throughout the legislative session to evaluate its impact on the Latino community and then testifies at the Senate or House committee hearings or provides written testimony. MCLA also advises the different state agencies on the implementation of existing and newly adopted policies and programs.

The MCLA team works hard acting as the Latino community's liaison and bridge to state government. One of MCLA's objectives is to empower Latinos by injecting their voice into the legislative policy making process.

## MCLA'S LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY AREAS

MCLA focuses on interconnected policy and legislative areas of particular importance for Latinos living in the state.

ADVISE AND INFORM  
ON LEGISLATION  
AND POLICY WITH  
**LATINO**  
MINNESOTANS

# LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY PRIORITIES 2021

## Education

- 1 As part of the Increase Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers legislation, address the need for districts and charter schools to be required to provide for a welcoming environment and have a curriculum that is anti-racist, respectful, and inclusive for all in their strategic plans.
- 2 Advocate for improved classroom experiences (virtual and in person) and more funding in English Language Learners (ELL) programming. Indexing the ELL funding to increases in general revenue aid would allow for moderate increases to better support districts and charter schools.
- 3 Advocate for programming that emphasizes Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) will be critical to student academic achievement. Providing districts with flexibility on relief funding to continue or enhance mental health services is vitally important to meeting the needs of our students.
- 4 Work with state entities to intentionally require visual aids and verbal translations when communicating with families that would benefit from school services. Communication is essential in providing support to students and parents in order to maintain engagement for districts and charter schools.

## New Minnesotans

Support allocation of funding to expand information and resources for migrant workers and New Minnesotanos, including funding for emerging non-profits that can become hubs of information and integration for new immigrants.

Support driver's licenses for all.

## Economic Development/Taxes

- 1 Include Individual Taxpayer Individual Number (ITIN) users into Minnesota's Working Family Tax Credit and Homestead programs. These steps will help families achieve financial stability and will align with the state's agenda on economic equity.
- 2 Consumer Protection: continue working on bills that discourage predatory practices and ensure fair and reliable transactions for Latino consumers.
- 3 Continue to support and expand relief measures for renters experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19.
- 4 Ensure that Latino Veterans have access to all applicable tax benefits in Minnesota.

## Equitable Access to Health Care

The top priority for Latino Minnesotans is the health and safety related to and beyond COVID-19. With heightened exposure to the virus, and disproportionate infection rates, the Council supports a more consistent, concise, coordinated, and intentional outreach to ensure "essential" workers have the vital information and resources they need to protect themselves and their families.

