

# RACE COUNTS

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Advancement Project California, USC PERE, PICO California and California CALLS launch RACECOUNTS.org**

*First-of-its-kind initiative measures racial disparities in California's 58 counties across key issues*

LOS ANGELES, CA -- Advancement Project California, USC PERE, PICO California and California CALLS today announced the launch of RACE COUNTS, a first-of-its kind initiative that paints a comprehensive picture of racial disparity in California, ranking all 58 counties by seven issue areas critical to California's future.

"California is at a turning point," said John Kim, executive director of Advancement Project California. "In 2018, it will be 50 years since we officially dubbed ourselves the Golden State. We now have a shot at living into that nickname, but this time for all of us. To do so, we need to address the racial disparities that still plague every corner of this state. The good news is that California has what we need to fix this problem. We have a renewed sense of our political destiny and community advocates launching critical campaigns at the local and statewide levels. Now with the RACE COUNTS analysis and website, we have the tools to help us to prioritize and track our progress. Altogether, we can and will re-design our public institutions to create a prosperous future for all."

The interactive online tool ([www.RACECOUNTS.org](http://www.RACECOUNTS.org)) measures counties in the context of performance, disparity and impact to tell the real story of racial disparity in the state. Using rigorous research and analysis, RACE COUNTS ranks each county in seven key issue areas: democracy, economic opportunity, safety and justice, access to health care, healthy built environments, education and housing.

"RACE COUNTS paints a more complete picture of racial equity in California than has ever been available, in part because of the three-dimensional analysis of performance, disparity and

impact,” said Dr. Manuel Pastor, director of USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE). “The data shows that the past still very much drives who has access to that California dream, and for some Californians, accumulated burdens still persist across the majority of issue areas.”

RACE COUNTS makes clear: Significant racial disparities can be found in all corners of the state, in every county, and across all key issue areas. Among the key findings:

- No county is without racial disparity.
- The Bay Area has the highest performing counties in the region, but the Bay Area is the most racially disparate region, with its counties listed among the most racially disparate statewide, including high-population counties Alameda and San Francisco; Marin is ranked as the most disparate.
- Racial disparity drives down performance; Central Valley counties all rank among the lowest performing in the state and often have high disparities.
- Los Angeles is low performing and has the highest number of residents impacted by racial disparities.

“Low-income communities of color have long been excluded from the state’s promise of equality and opportunity as a result of a history of racialized policies and practices,” said Joseph Tomás Mckellar, co-director of PICO California. “RACE COUNTS will help reinvent our public institutions and policies to advance opportunities for all Californians.”

Additional key findings include:

- The Black community suffers from high racial disparity throughout California, across key issues and indicators.
- The Latino community suffers from the largest impact due to population size.
- Criminal justice is the highest racial disparity of any key issue, with incarceration the most racially disparate indicator; LA County is where the largest population is affected.
- Education is society’s greatest equalizer; therefore, it is concerning that the RACE COUNTS data shows the second greatest racial disparities found is in education.

“Given how pervasive and consistent these disparities are, it is clear that many of our systems in California are in desperate need of a significant update,” said Christina Livingston, executive director of Alliance of Californians for Community Engagement (ACCE). “Now is the time to work together to push local governments to measure and address racial equity outcomes in our policies and practices. That is the only way to deliver needed transformation and create the California we all deserve.”

The RACE COUNTS initiative seeks to equip community organizers and governmental leaders in their work toward improving public safety, economy, health and governance in California. Organizations across the state have reviewed the cutting-edge research and are beginning to apply them to energize programs and campaigns to change the conversation and assert that race counts. Examples include: key efforts to root out bias in systems, campaigns to demand a more inclusive economy, and collective energy to increase the political power and voice of all communities.

“Thanks to decades of successful organizing and mobilizing, particularly in the Bay Area and Los Angeles, we are seeing lower levels of racial disparity in certain indicators related to democracy, including census participation, registering to vote and voting in midterm and presidential elections,” said Veronica Carrizales, policy and campaign development director at California CALLS. “We must work to expand these wins to other high need parts of the state, including the Central Valley, Inland Empire and Orange County.”

The RACE COUNTS steering committee, in addition to Advancement Project California, includes PICO California, USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE), and California CALLS.

The RACE COUNTS initiative includes an online tool (RACECOUNTS.org) and a launch report that summarizes key findings and the case for racial equity in a growing number of campaigns in the state. Moving forward, Advancement Project California, with the steering committee, will disseminate quarterly issue reports, such as health care access and criminal justice, which will provide in depth analysis and lift up insights on the most impacted populations.

For more information on the initiative and to use the tool, visit [www.RACECOUNTS.org](http://www.RACECOUNTS.org).

### **About Advancement Project California**

Advancement Project is a next generation, multiracial civil rights organization. In California, the organization champions the struggle for greater equity and opportunity for all, fostering upward mobility in communities most impacted by economic and racial injustice. Advancement Project California builds alliances and trust, uses data-driven policy solutions, creates innovative tools, and works alongside communities to ignite social transformation. For more information, visit [www.advancementprojectca.org](http://www.advancementprojectca.org). On Twitter [@AP\\_California](https://twitter.com/AP_California).