



NJ Latinos and Redistricting Statement

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Following the 2020 Census count, New Jersey is now undergoing the decennial redistricting and apportionment of its congressional and legislative map. Latinos comprise 20.9% of NJ's total population¹ but only 10% of NJ's state legislature² and 0% of the Apportionment Commission³. New Jersey also continues to lag behind in Latino representation in top political appointments. Latinos continue to be disproportionately affected by NJ's lack of affordable housing, trapped in segregated school districts, and lack access to their basic every day civil rights such as language and translation in courts and healthcare. The most recent example of the impact of structural racism on Latino communities in NJ includes the 361 Latino men who represented 43% of coronavirus deaths in people under 50⁴. However, there is now an opportunity for NJ to put forward a fair and accurate redistricting effort that can respect the power of the Latino vote. This is especially important for a new generation of Latinx voters with Latinx youth comprising 21.8% of NJ's school-age children.

The redistricting process provides an opportunity to create a fairer New Jersey, one in which Latinos have appropriate representation at the state and federal levels. We aim to advocate for appropriate congressional and state legislative districts. These districts must respect our communities of interest and ensure that our communities are neither "packed" or "cracked," so that our influence is not diluted. There are opportunities to create greater Latino representation both in the North and South of NJ. In the last 10 years, our communities have branched out across the state and that needs to be represented in the future map.

The Latino Action Network Foundation (LAN Foundation) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization geared toward civil rights, equity, inclusion, & empowerment of Latina/o/x, immigrant, and low-income communities in NJ.

¹ 2020 Census Quick Facts - NJ. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NJ>

² (Smith, C.). 20 Jan 2021. Hispanics in State Legislatures: A State-by-State Map

<https://www.governing.com/now/hispanics-in-state-legislatures-a-state-by-state-map.html>

³ Campos Medina, P. & Matos, L. (18 Nov 2020). Latinos are 20% of the state yet they got 0% representation on N.J.'s redistricting panel. <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2020/11/latinos-are-20-of-the-state-yet-they-got-0-representation-on-njs-redistricting-panel-opinion.html>

⁴ Yi, K. (10 Mar 2021). 'Whole Generations Of Fathers' Lost As COVID-19 Kills Young Latino Men In NJ. <https://gothamist.com/news/whole-generations-of-fathers-lost-as-covid-19-kills-young-latino-men-in-nj>