



The Commission on
Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity

CWCSEO

Connecticut General Assembly

For Immediate Release

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Legislative Commission Awarded Grant to Enhance Awareness of, and Access to, Equity Tool.

(Hartford, CT) 9/24/21 – The *Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, & Opportunity* (CWCSEO) applauds the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG) for their recent grant aimed at enhancing community partnerships around municipal racial equity policy and providing training opportunities on how Connecticut's 2018's law on racial/ethnic impact statements can be beneficial to the State of Connecticut.

Racial & Ethnic impact statements (REIS) are a mandated tool for lawmakers to analyze the potential disparate impact of proposed legislation prior to adoption and implementation. This tool will assist legislators in understanding more fully the implications of policy decisions that create or worsen existing racial disparities. In Connecticut, Public Act 18-78 requires that a REIS be prepared at the request of any legislator, for certain bills and amendments.*

"We are grateful to the Hartford Foundation for their support in creating and implementing this critical tool," said Steven Hernández, Esq., CWCSEO Executive Director, *"We believe that these resources will help us demonstrate how this new equity tool can help policymakers and community stakeholders analyze and address disparities in a data-driven way."*

It is important to note that this project is an ongoing collaboration spearheaded by several legislative leaders at the highest levels, including those from the Connecticut General Assembly's Black and Puerto Rican Caucus (BPRC), researchers, and community stakeholders. With this commitment, Connecticut is the first state in the country to analyze disparate impact along racial and ethnic lines in this way.

Moving forward, this project will be managed by an external consultant Brenda Calderon, CWCSEO staff, and a full-time civic engagement fellow, Godfrey Azima. The project will include a point in time landscape analysis of "civics deserts" across the Hartford Region that will help inform our educational outreach, community and legislative training on racial equity and REISs, and a model racial equity tool to be used in the Connecticut state legislature, among other activities. The civics deserts analysis will also enable us to create new ways for residents to engage in our democracy and its institutions.

"The Hartford Foundation is committed to working with our public and private sector partners to refocus the lens through which we all view policy and funding decisions, and to ensure that racial and ethnic impact analysis is informed by all community stakeholders, particularly those whose voices often go unheard,"

* The act requires that the Government Administration and Elections Committee propose changes to the Joint Rules of the Connecticut General Assembly concerning the procedure for preparing the statements, their content, and the types of bills and amendments for which they should be prepared. Under prior law, similar statements were available for criminal justice matters pursuant to Joint Rule 15(c)(2). A total of one statement was prepared under the previous law.



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said Hartford Foundation Vice President of Community Impact Elysa Gordon. *“Connecticut can lead in focusing on the outcomes of policy to maximize equitable opportunity and impact.”*

The CWCSEO, is a non-partisan agency within the legislative branch of government. We work to eliminate disparities by identifying opportunities, building connections and promoting change. Most importantly, we serve the legislature and the people of the state by promoting best practices and driving sound public policy via data driven research, recommendations and a cross-cultural approach to policy innovation.

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is the community foundation for Hartford and 28 surrounding towns. Through partnerships, the Foundation seeks to strengthen communities in Greater Hartford by putting philanthropy in action to dismantle structural racism and achieve equity in social and economic mobility. Made possible by the gifts of generous individuals, families and organizations, the Foundation has awarded grants of more than \$849 million since its founding in 1925. For more information, visit www.hfpg.org or call 860-548-1888.

Note: CWCSEO is currently accepting proposals regarding the upcoming trainings, for more information, please contact Brenda Calderón via email at brenda.ashley.calderon@gmail.com

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