core

LD 2 : An Act To Require the Inclusion of Racial Impact Statements in the Legislative Process

What will LD2 do?

- Introduce "Racial Impact Statements" as a powerful tool to address racial disparities through law making. This will give policymakers information and data they need to consider the impacts of future laws on racial, indigenous, and tribal populations.
- LD 2 will set up a process to study and pilot racial impact statements in 2022. Based on the outcome, recommendations will be made on how racial impact statements can be fully operationalized starting in 2023.

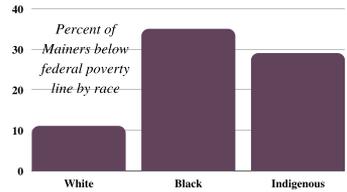## What is a *Racial Impact Statement*?

*A **Racial Impact Statement** is a systematic analysis of how historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups would be affected by a proposed policy.*

Why should the Legislature use Racial Impact Statements?

- Racial Impact Statements help inform better lawmaking.
- Policies often have unintended consequences that contribute to disparities based on race. Racial Impact Statements help assess this up front.
- Similar to fiscal and environmental impact statements, they provide a fact-based background analysis that legislators need to make fully-informed decisions before enacting laws.
- Racial Impact Statements will enable lawmakers to take on institutional and systemic racism in our state.

Are there other states that use racial impact statements? YES...

Iowa
Connecticut
Minnesota
New Jersey

Colorado
Florida
Oregon

Significant disparities based on race, ethnicity, and tribal status in Maine harm all of us:

Socioeconomic Disparities

Percent of Mainers below federal poverty line by race

White | Black | Indigenous
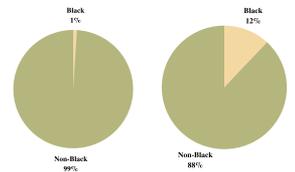
Source: 2019 5-year ACS Estimates

Criminal Justice System Disparities

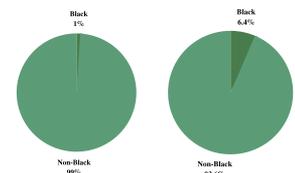*Percent of Black Mainers vs. Non-Black Mainers by population*

Percent of Black Mainers vs. Non-Black Mainers by population sent to prison

Black 1%

Non-Black 99%

Black 12%

Non-Black 88%

Source: Council of State Governments Justice Center Report

Public Health Disparities

Percent of Black Mainers vs. Non-Black Mainers by population

Percent of Black Mainers vs. Non-Black Mainers by population who got COVID-19

Black 1%

Non-Black 99%

Black 6.4%

Non-Black 93.6%

Source: Press Herald

How can LD 2 help Maine make better laws?

LD 2 creates a process to examine legislation through a racial equity lens

In 2019, the Maine State Legislature formed the **Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Maine Tribal Populations** to examine disparities across systems and improve outcomes for historically disadvantaged racial and tribal populations in Maine. The Permanent Commission recommended that Maine "*institutionalize a process to examine legislation through a racial equity lens.*" Racial Impact Statements are a way to do just that.

Racial Impact Statements can help shrink racial disparities

Racial disparities result from a complex set of factors, including socioeconomic disadvantages of previous generations, resource allocation in communities, biased decision-making among practitioners, policymakers, and more. They show up in different areas including housing, health care, public safety, the criminal justice system, employment, and economic security and opportunity. Racial Impact Statements offer one way policymakers can begin to consider different factors that contribute to and perpetuate racial disparities so they can work to address them in a constructive way.

LD 2 offers a significant step toward undoing systemic racism.

While Racial Impact Statements will not end systemic racism, they will provide legislators with a tool they can employ in lawmaking that will have a meaningful and long-lasting impact. It took centuries to create the systems and structures that lead to the disparities we see today, and it will take a long time to eliminate them. **We need to start now if we are committed to making sure our state government reflects our shared values of fairness and justice.**