



Delaware Hispanic Public Policy Agenda

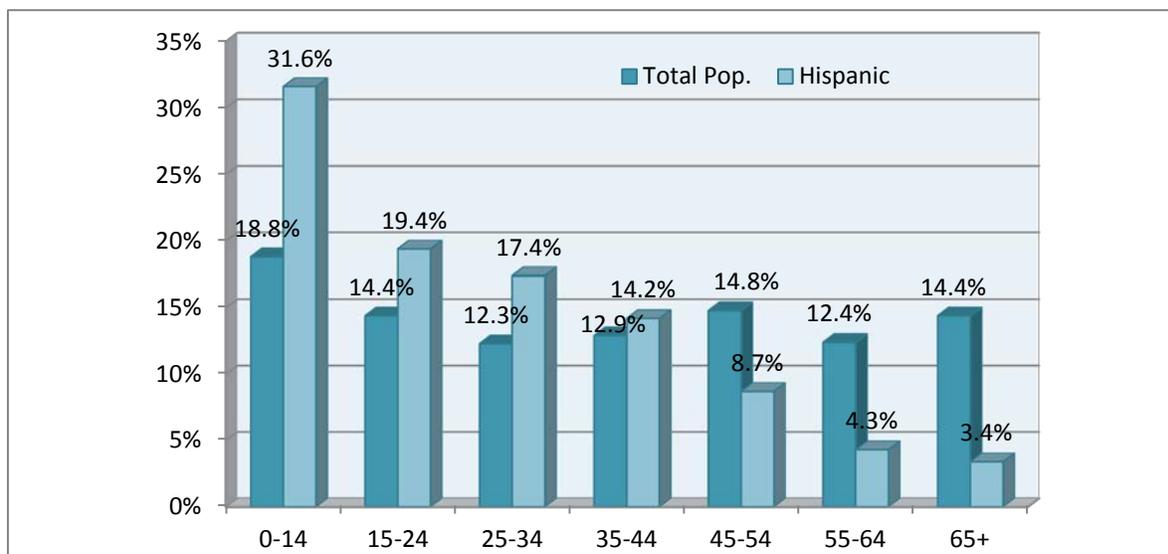
The Delaware Hispanic Commission (DHC) is pleased to present the 2014 Delaware Hispanic Public Policy Agenda. The Public Policy Agenda is a direct result of efforts from the Commission members, volunteers, State Agencies, legislators, non-profit organizations, community organizations, and individuals who participated in a collaborative effort to discuss important issues impacting the Hispanic community at the first Latino Summit on Nov. 13, 2014 in Dover Delaware.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The DHC was mandated by the Governor on September 2, 2011 by Executive Order No. 28 to expand and improve representation and advocacy for Delaware's Hispanic community. The Hispanic community has grown significantly since the last U.S. Census. Notably supported by the Census Bureau American Fact Finder data the Delaware Hispanic population grew from 37,277 in 2000 to 73,842 in 2010, a net increase of 98.1%, compared to the general population growth of 14.8% in the same time period. Sixty four percent (64%) reside in New Castle County, twenty three percent (23%) in Sussex County, and thirteen percent (13%) in Kent County.

The majority of Hispanics living in Delaware are of Mexican descent (41.4%), followed by Puerto Rican descent (30.8%), and those of Guatemalan comprises 7.1 % of the Hispanic population. The remaining are from Central and South American countries. It is an extremely young population with an average age of 24. 4 years of age. The age distribution is highlighted in figure 1.

Figure 1



Source: Census, 2000; American Factfinder, 2010

Twenty-one percent (21.7%) of the Delaware Hispanic population lives under the poverty level. Despite these economic barriers the number of startup businesses continues to grow and projected to grow significantly as evidenced in figure 2. Hispanics are contributing to new business start-ups and helping to promote economic development and job growth, the very foundation of economic strength in America.

Figure 2

	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012 Projected	2017 Projected
Number of Hispanic Businesses	497	898	879	1535	1553	1832

Source: 1992 to 2007- Census Bureau, Survey of Business Owners; Projections estimated by Industry, Research and Analysis, DEDO

The population growth has spurred the need for growth in services to the Hispanic community that need to be addressed in order to promote a healthy and vibrant communities. The first Latino Summit discusses these issues by gathering information through community conversations leading up to the Summit as well as gathering information at the Summit to form the Delaware Hispanic Public Policy Agenda that outlines important areas in each sector needing attention.

The DHC collated public surveys polled across the state, expressing various issues impacting the daily lives and development of the Latino community. By using the data, DHC identified six sectors that were addressed in individual workshops at the first Latino Summit.

The sectors are:

- * Education
- * Healthcare and Social Services
- * Economic and Workforce Development
- * Community and Social Justice
- * Transportation
- * Housing

Methodology:

Through **“Train by Cell,”** (a mobile device technology to relay questions and comments by the audience to a predesigned summit web link) the workshop leaders in all six sessions interacted with their participants. They could directly respond to concerns, questions, and facilitate discussions within sub groups during the sessions. Every participant who wanted to be heard, viewed and or scribed could do so openly or anonymously.

To ensure uniformity in all sessions, each leader represented his or her sector by incorporating the **“Appreciative inquiry” AI** methodology. AI is positive investigative approach designed to lay the foundation of best practices, initiatives, and strategies, to tackle ineffective policies and eliminate obsolete processes.

Within the AI module, the summit sessions were divided into two segments. The first part, **“discovery,”** encouraged participants in each session to prioritize three to five areas they believed were working for them in Delaware and the factors contributing to these successes.

The public opinions were relayed by a lead volunteer from each session at the general forum. All comments were displayed on the screen for the assembly to follow. These common themes and synergies from each sector workshop became the firm consensus for participants to return to their sessions to list the **“dreams” they envisioned”** some existing policies or infrastructures could produce, or where possible, be executed differently.

During this session, audiences were divided into sub groups to brainstorm ideas, and to collectively **“design”** policies or initiatives they believe will offer constructive and progressive changes to their sector and communities. They were also guided to take into considerations existing policies and infrastructures they were unaware of in order to come up with viable action plans.

Finally, all participants returned to the final general session with actionable solutions to **“deliver”** their plans from individual design sessions. Each session leader presented plans for moving forward as a community with committed volunteers working together to achieve short-term one-year goals and long-term three-year goals.

Following the opening ceremony and speeches of the summit, subsequent pages of this policy agenda details each sector’s discoveries, visions, solutions, and goals. The priorities for each sector are outlined in the following pages.

Top 3 Priorities for Education

1. Eliminate achievement gaps for Latino Students from Pre-School to 12th grade.
2. Support the academic achievement of K-12 Latino students to ensure college and career readiness.
3. Support English Language Acquisition of Latino Adults

Top 6 Priorities for Health Care & Social Services Committee

1. Education: Promote and create educational programs aimed to improve Hispanics' ability to understand and utilize health services and resources to improve access to health care programs and promote health

Patients:

- Implement a state level literacy and health literacy education program for Hispanics to improve our ability to understand Spanish and English as a Second Language.
- Design a communications and education campaign to build awareness on population health delivery models and ways to navigate effectively insurance and health services.
- Use local Hispanic publications, TV and social media in order to build awareness about preventive care and resources available.

Health Providers:

Propose cultural competency expectations from healthcare providers and implement a state-wide education program towards certification to promote respect, inclusion and safety.

2. Supply more language services and resources for Spanish speaking residents, enhancing their ability to communicate with family doctors and health services providers.
 - Conduct a state-wide language services assessment.
 - Advocate for policy changes to allow reimbursement for language services.
 - Develop programs to educate bilingual individuals to become interpreters.
 - Explore the possibility of creating a centralized language services function for the state.
3. Develop a multi-cultural community engagement Health Strategy: Build partnerships to design an outreach plan to meet Hispanics needs and improve awareness and access of health services.
 - Create a state office for Diversity and Equity affairs
 - Partner with key healthcare providers and DHSS to publish a state of the union report of Hispanic Healthcare equity opportunities and challenges
 - Leverage existence resources (LACC, Westside, United Way 211, etc.) to create a "one stop" place for bilingual information and services for education, prevention, and health programs for the Hispanic community.
4. Workforce: Increase the number of bilingual and multi-cultural healthcare providers.
 - Promote health careers in middle schools and high schools and career counseling for adults looking for new careers in healthcare and behavioral health.
 - Partner with state agencies and key organizations to set priorities to implement a workforce development plan to increase the number of Hispanic students pursuing a career in healthcare.
 - Provide educational grants toward degree programs and internships to improve access and equity of educational opportunities.
5. Improve understanding and access to behavioural health services addressing addiction and depression while working to lessen the stigma of seeking help.

- Partner with the Department of Health and Social Services and healthcare systems to strengthen behavioural health services building cultural competent processes of care and addressing social determinants of care.

-Recommend solutions for undocumented and uninsured

6. Understand social determinants that prevent Hispanics to be healthy:
 - Build partnerships with healthy 2020 and review 2008 research study to better understand and prioritize key social determinants to address necessary to successfully promote the utilization and access of health services among Hispanics.
7. Foster collaboration between health care systems and community-based organizations to develop a coordinated model to implement healthcare programs in communities across the state.
 - Partner with Delaware's Center for Healthcare Innovation to support the design and implementation of new healthcare delivery models, for example: "Healthy Neighbourhoods", engaging Hispanics consumers to ensure their needs are taken into consideration to promote acceptance and healthy families.

Top 5 Short and Long Term Priorities for Economic and Workforce Development

- Short Term: within 1 year
 1. Expand cultural training made available for Business
 2. Establish a referral process for businesses & employers to find each other
 3. Reduction of wait time in Financial Product licensing
 4. Allocate funding for marketing programs and business opportunities utilizing the Hispanic media channels.
 5. Establish a monthly Hispanic Business networking group
- Long term: – within 3 years
 1. Create a stand-alone business resource center funded by private partners.
 2. Develop a process to make professional degrees from other countries acceptable in the USA.
 3. Increase access to higher education through the development of bilingual on line training
 4. Website translation for the Department of Labor and bilingual counsellors at the One Stops
 5. Establish a Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Top 5 Priorities for Community & Social Justice Committee:

1. Create a state funded "Office of Hispanic Affairs - OHA" with a devoted paid staff to manage the community affairs.
2. Make OHA the main network hub for the work done on the DHC Subcommittees:

3. Communication / Media: Educate and inform the Latino population about resources available by communicating with the media to develop positive relationships with Latinos and share positive feedback.
4. Social Justice: Provide accessibility of resources to the people that need it mostly such as affordable legal services.
5. Community Organizing: Develop networks with schools, churches, business, non-profits, agencies and other entities to make them aware of Hispanic community's issues, to learn more about it, dispel myths and assumptions, potentially bolster business from the Hispanic community, and motivate call to actions when is needed.

Top 5 Priorities for Transportation Committee:

1. Driving Privilege Card
2. Education Expand Public Transportation -“Ride With Us”
3. Transportation Vendor Opportunities
4. Transportation Related Employment
5. Communications Model

Top 5 Priorities for Housing were not developed at the Summit.

Summary

The 2014 Latino Summit report outlines the Delaware Hispanic Public Policy Agenda listing the top priorities in each sector; Education, Health and Social Services, Economic and Workforce Development, Community and Social Justice, and Transportation. Each of these sectors identifies and details each sector's discoveries, visions, solutions, and goals from the voices of the people through surveys, train by cell, and the Appreciative Methodology employed at the Summit. It's extremely important that their voices be heard in order as a means to “Connecting to a brighter future.”

Several common themes continued to reverberate through the First Latino Summit across all of the six sectors. It became very evident that due to the language and culture barrier common problems continued to surface throughout all of the breakout and general sessions. These common themes are outlined below:

Areas of commonality are as follows:

1. Outreach efforts to the Hispanic Community:

The Delaware Hispanic community often is not aware of many State and non-profit services because most of them don't know that they exist. Programs such as \$tandbyMe Hispano is making in-roads in the community through aggressive campaign efforts and a dedicated bilingual and culturally competent staff that interacts within the community. They go to the community rather than the community comes to them. This grass roots outreach efforts has

been very successful model and should be considered by other organizations wishing to reach the Hispanic communities.

2. Increase Communications

The use of Hispanic media is extremely important tool in communicating with the Hispanic community. The DHC has found that the radio stations in Sussex and Kent County are a great way to effectively reach the community. It captures large audiences that keeping them abreast of important issues as well as services and job opportunities that are available. In addition, the newspapers and magazines are also very popular and should be used to announce job opportunities, health screenings, and other important services that the Hispanic community can benefit. Both these Media outlets should be used to effectively communicate with the Hispanic community throughout the State.

3. More Bilingual and culturally competent professionals in Schools, Delaware Court System, and Hospitals

There is a big need for bilingual professionals that are certified interpreters and culturally competent in the Schools, Courts, and Hospitals. Too many times the proper services are not rendered simply because there is a gap in communication. The individual walks away frustrated, confused, and more importantly unsatisfied with the service provided due to a lack of qualified bilingual and culturally competent professionals. Understanding not just the language but the cultural will help understand and deliver the proper information. An effort needs to be made to encourage students to enter into professional bilingual/culturally competent interpreting careers. The Delaware Hispanic population continues to grow and schools, courts, and hospitals are seeing a big need for these types of services.

4. Business bilingual Counselors/Advisors

The DHC initiated a series of business pilot business workshops throughout the three Counties (New Castle, Kent, and Sussex). It was a collaborative effort with the various business partners and it was quickly realized that they were well received by the Hispanic community who attended, participated, and thoroughly enjoyed the classes. Through the use of a bilingual business counselor/advisor the DHC was able to effectively reach and communicate a pilot business six week workshop to the Hispanic Community throughout 2014 in all three Counties. Several classes were held and met with great enthusiasm from the participants. They were eager to learn how to become entrepreneur's and learn how to do business in Delaware. More business bilingual counselors/advisors are needed as the population continues to grow and new start-up businesses seek help.

5. Increase availability of more Spanish websites, written publications, brochures, and general information about Services

Offering website pages in Spanish will help the community access important information and services offered by the State agency. State agencies like the Division of Motor Vehicle have made great strides in reaching the Hispanic community by making tremendous effort to translate many of its material to the Spanish language. Further strides can be made by translating the State agency website to Spanish. Offering this basic service will be a step in the right direction to communicate the community.

In addition, Spanish publications, brochures, and general information about services, employment, or other information will help reach the community. These can easily be distributed to the churches, Hispanic community organizations, and etc. and keep the community updated on important information.

6. Improve literacy levels in both English and Spanish for Hispanics in DE.

Literacy—the ability to read and write—is essential to fully developing a sense of well-being and citizenship. Children who are solid readers perform better in school, have a healthy self-image, and become lifelong learners, adding to their viability in a competitive world. Experts estimate that nearly 40 percent of U.S. 4th graders do not achieve basic levels of reading proficiency. The number is higher among low-income families, certain minority groups, and English language learners. The tragedy is that these children may never fully participate in American society. Their employment prospects grow dim and the chance for anti-social behavior increases. A recent Pew Hispanic Center survey revealed that while 89 percent of Latinos ages 16 to 25 say that college education is important for success in life, only 48 percent plan to get a college degree. Hispanic families generally have high aspirations for their children to pursue higher education, but they often lack the resources and support needed to achieve this goal. There is a direct and effective way to help more of our families tap into the promise of higher education. According to the 2013 census the following are key education statistics for Hispanics in DE: Less than a high school diploma: 32.9%, High school graduate: 26%, Some college or associate's degree: 25.4%, Bachelor's degree or higher: 15.2%.

The challenge of literacy is a big barrier also for Hispanics to find and receive proper health care services. While a significant number of Hispanics lack health insurance and this is a critical

issue related to access, an even greater concern is how many Hispanics access care and what happens in that encounter. Once care is accessed the health care is often not provided in a linguist and culturally appropriate manner, thus the individual may leave the encounter with incomplete understanding of the treatment plan prescribed by the provider. One of the Delaware Healthcare State Innovation is to be the # 5 Healthy State in the USA. To accomplish this goal and due to increase rate of Hispanics in DE we need to increase the literacy levels so that we they leverage resources and increase education rates for our children/adults to enable them to become healthier.

7. Create a state office of Diversity and Equity Affairs

The DE Hispanic Commission is an entity with very passionate and committed and individuals with a clear agenda, but we only have part time resources. It is recognized that not only Hispanics, but other minorities growth in the state will continue to a rate that by 2040 it will be a shift of minorities becoming majority. The mission of this office can be to provide forums for discussion of minority issues and assist in the development of diversity and inclusion strategies to develop multi-cultural services to promote equality in programs and services across the state.

The Delaware Hispanic Public Policy Agenda outlines some key short term and long term priorities that need to take place in the areas of Education, Health and Social Service, Economic and Workforce development, Housing, Transportation, and Community and Social Justice. What needs to happen in each of these areas is clearly defined and must be supported through legislative, programmatic, and policy changes. The theme of the 2014 First Delaware Latino Summit was “connecting for a brighter future”. If want to have a healthy, diverse, and engaging community we need to make sure that these long term and short term goals are reached.