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**National Institute
for Latino Policy
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25 West 18th Street
New York, NY 10011
800-590-2516

info@latinopolicy.org
www.latinopolicy.org

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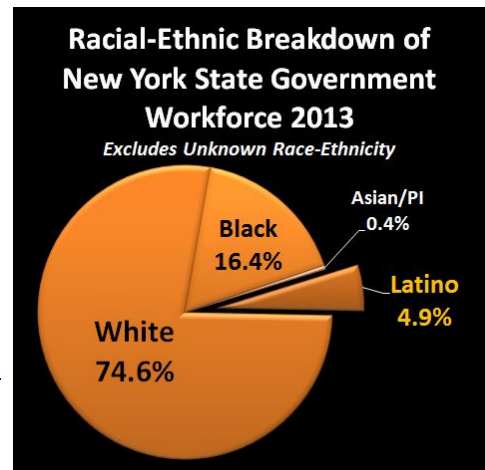
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Latino Underrepresentation in New York State Government Employment

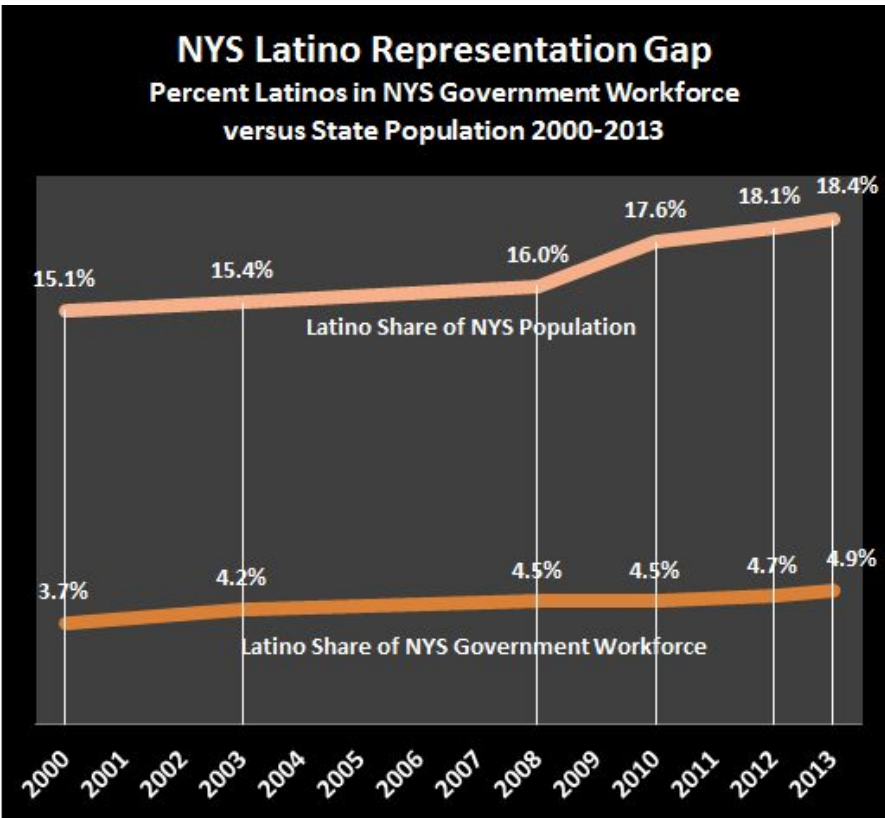
The NiLP Network on Latino Issues (October 27, 2014)

The extreme underrepresentation of Latinos in the New York State government workforce is a long-term problem unaddressed in this year's gubernatorial election. According to the latest Census population estimates for New York State, in 2013 there were 3.6 million Latino residents in the state, making up 18.4 percent of the total population. However, in terms of the state government workforce, [Latinos in 2013 made up only 4.9 percent of the total](#). This figure excludes those who did not disclose their race or ethnicity (if these are included the denominator increases and Latinos become 4.7 percent of the total).



To make the implications of this extreme Latino state employment gap more concrete, taking [the Latino share of the state's labor force \(15 percent\)](#) as a goal, Latinos should have had 22,799 jobs with the state instead of the only 7,213 state government jobs they held in 2013. . In other words, Latinos were excluded from a potential 15,586 additional jobs with New York State under the Andrew Cuomo Administration. With a median annual base salary of \$55,076 for all state workers, this means "lost" wages of at least \$858.4 million for Latino workers in 2013 alone, not counting benefits.

This level of Latino underutilization is the largest disparity of any racial-ethnic group in the state. If current employment trends continue, the gap between the growing Latino state population and its representation in the state government workforce will continue to widen.

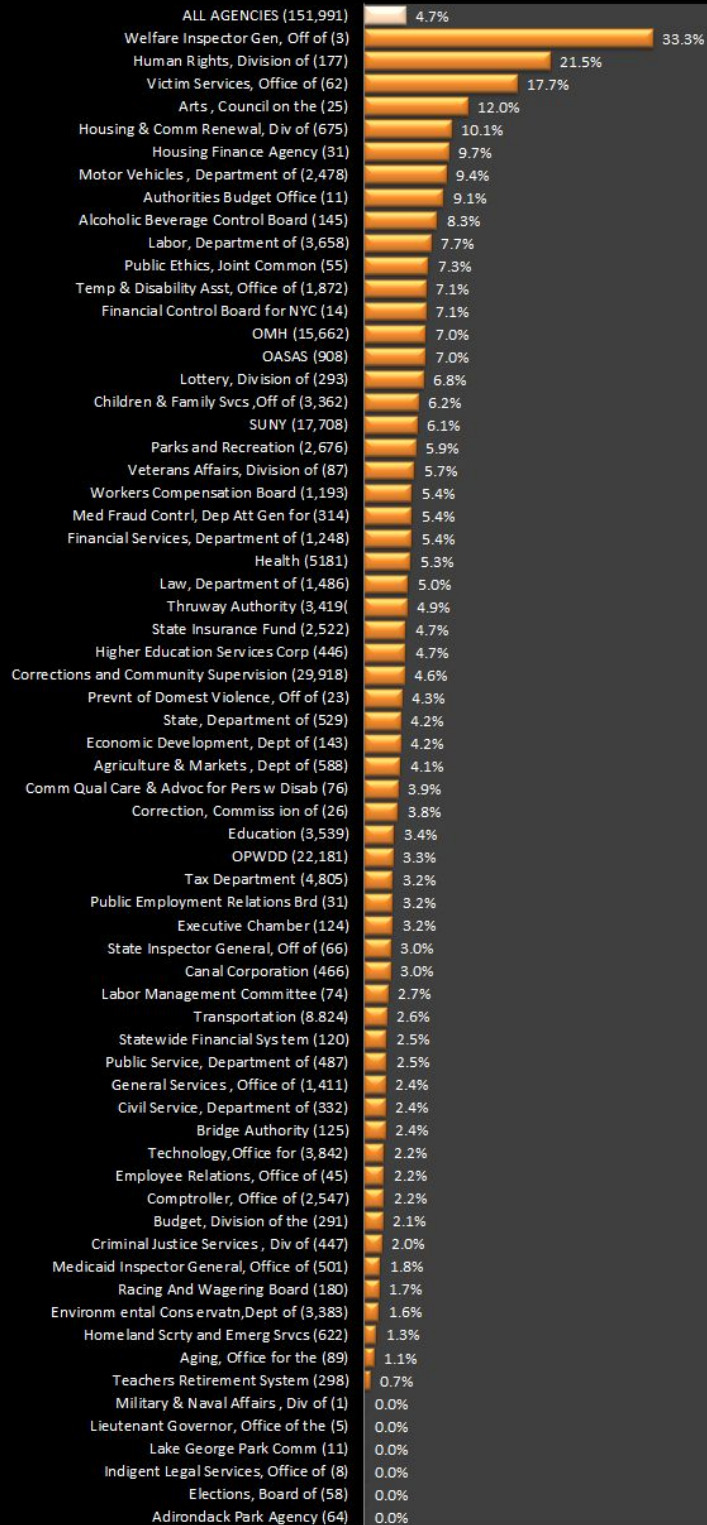


Of the 66 state agencies listed in the New York State Department of Civil Service 2013 workforce report, Latinos were 10 percent or more of the employees in only five agencies (and one of these only had 3 total employees). There were six agencies with no Latino employees. For a more detailed agency-by-agency breakdown, [click here](#). In contrast, Whites made up at least 40 percent of the employees of all 66 agencies, and Blacks at least 10 percent of those in 35 agencies.

Latinos in the New York State Government Workforce 2013

By Agency

(Total Employees, All Groups, in Parenthesis)



Of the 66 state agencies, the majority of Latino employees were concentrated in only four: Corrections and Community Supervision (19.3 percent of total Latino state employees), Office of Mental Health (OMH) (15.1 percent), State University of New York (SUNY) (15.0 percent), and Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) (10.1 percent). The majority of all non-Latino state workers was also concentrated in these agencies, but to a less extent (56.4 percent).

In terms of policy-making positions, of the 59 commissionerships and other titles we could identify, only 3 (or 5.1 percent) were held by Latinos. These are **Cesar A. Perales**, Secretary of State; **Peter M. Rivera**, Commissioner of Department of Labor; and **Arlene González Sánchez**, Commissioner of the Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. Even in these three agencies headed by Latinos, where one might expect greater sensitivity to the need for much greater Latino inclusiveness, Latinos make up only 7.2 percent of their combined employees. For a report prepared for The Ford Foundation of top New York State government officials who are Latino from 2004-2013, [click here](#).

Discussion

The extreme underemployment of Latinos in the New York State government workforce is a long-term problem that has never been addressed seriously. It is ironic that our organization, known then as the Institute for Puerto Rican Policy (IPR), issued its [first report back in 1982 on this same issue](#), focusing on the subsequent policies of the current governor's father, Mario Cuomo. Upon taking office in 1983, the then Governor Cuomo issued executive order 7 establishing a Governor's Advisory Committee on Hispanic Affairs in response to this and related concerns. However, almost no progress was made during his administration and those of Republican George Pataki and Democrat David Paterson to address this problem.



The Cuomos:
Like Father Like Son for Latinos?

Efforts were made by us to reach out on numerous occasions to Governor Andrew Cuomo's [Chief Diversity Officer, Mecca Santana](#), to get information on the state's initiatives to address this Latino underrepresentation problem. The most information we received from this office was a link to the Civil Service Commission's workforce report and the explanation that "Additionally, we do not currently have a list of Latino appointments to policy-level positions in the Cuomo Administration. Please let me know if you need additional information." (April 11, 2014 email from Ms. Santana's assistant, **Ashley Harrington**) It was, therefore, difficult to assess the Cuomo Administration's diversity employment efforts in relation to the Latino community given this lack of transparency.

At the same time, this is not an issue that the 13 Latino members of the State Assembly and 6 in the State Senate are addressing at all. The expectation, at minimum, would be that the Latino legislators would make a special effort at some point to assure that the Governor appointed a significant number of Latinos to policy-level positions, the so-called top political appointments of

which Latinos occupy only 3 (or 5.1 percent of the total). But this has not been the case in terms of one of the areas in which the Latino state legislators could have a major impact.

For a stark example of this neglect by the Latino legislators, during the [upcoming November 5-9 Somos El Futuro Conference in Puerto Rico](#), of the 19 issue workshops as well as other sessions being held, none address this problem. These include workshops focusing on diversity in the private sector, ignoring the problem in the state government they are part of. These include such topics as "The Value of Diversity on Corporate Boards," "Economic Development MWBE: Regulations and Private sector, International Procurement" and "The 4 Ingredients of Latino Business Success: Great Entrepreneurs, Capital, Access, Champions and Lifters," as well as a breakfast reception of the New York City Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), but nothing that deals with the problem of the exclusion of Latinos from state government policy-level positions and state jobs in general.

The inclusion of Latinos in the state government's workforce is important for a number of reasons. First, there is a need to have culturally sensitive individuals in policymaking positions that help determine the direction in which state government is going in the wide range of issues affecting the Latino community. Second, for a community that has major challenges in terms of un- and under-employment, racial and ethnic discrimination and general economic distress, there is an urgent need to see the fair inclusion of Latinos in the state government workforce as an important economic development issue promoting the growth of a middle class. Third, it is important to the future civic and political development of the Latino community to have more people in leadership positions in state government at all levels and policy areas. Public sector employment has historically played these roles for other racial-ethnic groups in this society and it is clearly long overdue to do so for the Latino community of New York State.

The NiLP Network on Latino Issues is an online information service provided by the National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP). For further information, visit www.latinopolicy.org.