

HOW WOULD PROP 54 IMPACT LA COUNTY?

Proposition 54, the Classification of Race, Ethnicity, Color, or National Origin (CRECNO) Initiative, would prohibit state and local governments from collecting, using, or analyzing data on race, ethnicity, or national origin, with certain limited exemptions. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors instructed departments to work closely with the County's Human Relations Commission to inform the public of Prop 54's impacts on LA County government.

The following is a summary of what county departments have reported on any impacts of Proposition 54 on the department.

Not all LA County Departments would be affected in the same ways.

Some county departments would not be impacted at all by Prop 54, and some departments might find that Prop 54 makes their job easier by reducing the data they need to collect. However, many departments would have a more difficult time providing effective service to county residents.

There are questions about how the Proposition would be implemented.

Several aspects of Proposition 54 are not clear at this point, and county officials are left with many questions about how departments would be affected. Several departments have indicated confusion as to the implementation of Prop 54. For example, the Department of Health is concerned that some physicians, in an effort to comply with Proposition 54, may exclude data that are in fact exempt when completing reports sent to the Department of Health Services. This would result in under-reporting of certain diseases, and could therefore reduce funding dedicated to their prevention and treatment.

Prop 54 would directly cost LA County an estimated \$6 to \$8.3 million dollars.

Direct costs due to the modifications of computer systems and forms and the requisite training are estimated by County departments to be approximately \$5,981,449 to \$8,267,353, with 28 out of 38 departments reporting. Indirect costs, addressed below, are more difficult to estimate. Also, departments estimated that 35,608 county employees would need to receive some form of retraining.

LA County would have more difficulty building a diverse workforce.

The Office of Affirmative Action Compliance would have a more difficult time ensuring a diverse workforce without data on race, ethnicity, or national origin. Employment discrimination investigations depend on data that would no longer be available to prove or disprove allegations.

Several LA County Departments would not have the information to appropriately allocate resources, making them less effective and less efficient.

Several departments are concerned that without data regarding the needs of particular racial or ethnic groups, programs and services lack the specificity required to impact those groups needing the resources the most.

For example:

The Department of Children and Family Services indicates that if it were unable to use data on race/ethnicity/national origin for resource allocation within the Department, there would likely be an inequitable allocation of resources, resulting in lower quality services for vulnerable families and children within the county.

The Department of Mental Health notes that, without information about certain groups' needs, prevention, education, and outreach services would have to be offered to the entire community, resulting in 1) higher cost, 2) a wasted effort on communities that might not need outreach, prevention, and education services, and 3) the potential need to curtail other services, given limited financial and human resources.

The Department of Health Services cites that without racial and ethnic data, health disparities would be difficult to identify through its LA Health Survey, which has found significant differences in breastfeeding, diabetes, sudden infant death syndrome, childhood asthma, alcohol consumption and abuse, tobacco smoking, HIV testing, and health insurance coverage for children.

A complete copy of the Report can be obtained by calling 213-974-7611, or by going to our website:

The LA County Human Relations Commission

www.lahumanrelations.org