

**UNITED STATES  
COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS**



**REQUEST FOR CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATION  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027**

## Table of Contents

USCCR BUDGET REQUEST FOR SALARIES AND EXPENSES .....	3
APPROPRIATION LANGUAGE.....	3
FY 2027 U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS BUDGET REQUEST.....	3
FY 2027 U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES .....	3
FY 2027 COMMISSION OF THE SOCIAL STATUS OF BLACK MEN AND BOYS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES .....	4
BUDGET SUMMARY.....	5
REVIEW OF THE AGENCY’S FY 2027 FUNDING REQUEST.....	5
A. Budget Request by Object Class.....	5
B. Description of Budget Increases and Decreases .....	5
C. Budget Request by Organization .....	6
FY 2025 PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS.....	7
A. Public Briefings .....	7
B. Commission Reports.....	8
C. State Advisory Committees Reports, Memoranda, and Statements .....	10
FY 2026-2030 STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	17
Strategic Goal A.....	17
Strategic Goal B.....	20
Strategic Goal C.....	21
DRAFT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN.....	22

**USCCR BUDGET REQUEST FOR SALARIES AND EXPENSES**

Congressional Appropriation Request for FY 2027.....	\$11,700,000
Enacted Appropriation Act for FY 2026.....	\$14,350,000
Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act for FY 2025.....	\$14,350,000

**APPROPRIATION LANGUAGE**

FEDERAL FUNDS

Salaries and Expenses

*For necessary expenses of the Commission on Civil Rights, including hire of passenger motor vehicles, \$11,700,000 [\$14,350,000]: Provided, That none of the funds appropriated in this paragraph may be used to employ any individuals under Schedule C of subpart C of part 213 of title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations exclusive of one special assistant for each Commissioner: Provided further, That none of the funds appropriated in this paragraph shall be used to reimburse Commissioners for more than 75 billable days, with the exception of the chairperson, who is permitted 125 billable days: Provided further, That the Chair may accept and use any gift or donation to carry out the work of the Commission: Provided further, That none of the funds appropriated in this paragraph shall be used for any activity or expense that is not explicitly authorized by section 3 of the Civil Rights Commission Act of 1983 (42 U.S.C. 1975a): Provided further, That notwithstanding the preceding proviso, \$1,700,000 [\$2,000,000] shall be used to separately fund the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys.*

**FY 2027 U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS BUDGET REQUEST**

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights budget request of \$11,700,000 will support both the Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) and the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB). The Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Act (Public Law 116-156) established CSSBMB within the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Office of the Staff Director (Public Law 116-156).

**FY 2027 U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES**

This request includes \$10 million appropriation to support our civil rights agenda of promoting equal opportunity without regard to color, race, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin. The mission of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) is to inform the development of national civil rights policy and enhance enforcement of Federal civil rights laws. The Commission pursues this mission by investigating alleged deprivations of voting rights or allegations of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin, or in the

administration of justice. The Commission also serves as a monitor of effective enforcement of civil rights laws by the Federal government. The Commission is committed to quality research that leads to findings and policy recommendations to inform the President, Congress, and the public on important civil rights issues.

Our strategic vision consists of three goals:

- The Commission will function as a monitor of effective federal enforcement of civil rights laws and inform national civil rights laws and policy. The Commission is aided in this endeavor by the work of its Advisory Committees.
- The Commission will serve as a national clearinghouse to inform and raise awareness on civil rights issues amongst the public.
- The Commission will continue to strengthen the Commission's financial and operational controls and advance the Commission's mission through management excellence, efficiency, and accountability.

A more detailed discussion of the Commission's Strategic Plan is in the FY 2026 - 2030 Strategic Goals and Objectives section in this document.

### **FY 2027 COMMISSION OF THE SOCIAL STATUS OF BLACK MEN AND BOYS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES**

This request includes \$1.7 million to staff and support the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB). The Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys studies and makes recommendations to address social problems affecting Black men and boys.

CSSBMB performs the following duties:

- Study, document, and report on the conditions affecting Black men and boys, including homicide rates, arrests homicide rates, arrest and incarceration rates, poverty, violence, fatherhood, mentorship, drug abuse, death rates, disparate income and wealth levels, school performance in all grade levels including postsecondary education and college, and health issues.
- Propose measures to alleviate and remedy the underlying causes of the conditions affecting Black men and boys which may include recommendations of changes to the law, recommendations for how to implement related policies, and recommendations for how to create, develop, or improve upon government programs.
- Accept suggestions or comments from members of Congress, governmental agencies, public and private organizations, and private citizens.

## **BUDGET SUMMARY**

Our FY 2027 Appropriation Request is \$11.7 million, which will support 44 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. This request will provide \$10 million for the USCCR and \$1.7 million for the CSSBMB. It will support 37 FTE for the USCCR and 7 FTE for the CSSBMB.

## **REVIEW OF THE AGENCY'S FY 2027 FUNDING REQUEST**

### **A. Budget Request by Object Class**

The following table provides a summary of the Commission's Budget Request:

<b>Object Class and Title</b>	<b>FY 2027 Appropriation Request</b>	<b>FY 2026 Appropriation Request</b>	<b>Difference</b>
10 Personnel Compensation & Benefits	\$7,900,000	\$9,213,000	(\$1,313,000)
21 Travel & Transportation of Persons	\$85,000	\$125,000	(\$40,000)
23 Rent, Communications, and Utilities	\$1,548,000	\$1,741,000	(\$193,000)
24 Printing and Reproduction	\$81,000	\$104,000	(\$23,000)
25 Other Contractual Services	\$2,072,000	\$3,133,000	(\$1,061,000)
26 Supplies and Materials	\$14,000	\$34,000	(\$20,000)
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<b>\$11,700,000</b>	<b>\$14,350,000</b>	<b>(\$2,650,000)</b>

### **B. Description of Budget Increases and Decreases**

The following is a description of the budget increases and decreases from the Commission's Enacted Appropriation for FY 2026.

#### **Increases to Maintain Current Services:**

##### Personnel Compensation and Benefits - \$24,000/ 0 FTE

This increase will cover the annualization of the FY 2026 pay raise.

#### **Program Decreases**

##### Personnel Compensation and Benefits – (\$1,337,000)/ 6 FTE)

Reduction of six staff to enable the Commission to fulfill its statutory responsibilities in the most cost-effective manner possible.

##### Travel – (\$40,000)

Reduction in non-essential travel.

Rent, Communications, and Utilities – (\$193,000)

Reduction in rent and communication costs. In support of the Administration’s goal to streamline the Federal government and make agency operations more efficient, USCCR will close its Regional Office in Chicago in FY 2027.

Printing – (\$23,000)

Reduction in printing services due to fewer Federal Register Notices for Advisory Committee meetings.

Other Contractual Services – (\$1,061,000)

Reduction in other contractual services from commercial and federal service providers to enable the Commission to fulfill its statutory responsibilities in the most cost-effective manner possible.

Supplies – (\$20,000)

Reduction in supply costs.

**C. Budget Request by Organization**

The Commission’s FY 2027 budget request supports several major organizational components. The following table provides a summary of the Commission’s budget request by these components:

	<b>FY 2027 Appropriation Request</b>	<b>Percent Of Request</b>	<b>FY 2026 Appropriation Request</b>	<b>Percent Of Request</b>	<b>Difference</b>
National Program Offices	\$1,423,000	12.2%	\$1,869,000	13.0%	(\$446,000)
Regional Program Offices	\$1,712,000	14.6%	\$2,295,000	16.0%	(\$583,000)
Commissioners and Commissioner Assistants	\$2,139,000	18.3%	\$2,049,000	14.3%	\$90,000
Office of Staff Director	\$324,000	2.8%	\$308,000	2.1%	\$16,000
Robert S. Rankin Civil Rights Library	\$60,000	0.5%	\$100,000	0.7%	(\$40,000)
Operations & Administrative	\$4,342,000	37.1%	\$5,729,000	39.9%	(\$1,387,000)
CSSBMB	<u>\$1,700,000</u>	14.5%	<u>\$2,000,000</u>	13.9%	<u>(\$300,000)</u>
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<b>\$11,700,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$14,350,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>(\$2,650,000)</b>

The National Program Offices consist of the Office of General Counsel (OGC) and the Office of Civil Rights Evaluation (OCRE). The Office of the General Counsel provides legal expertise and advice to support the Commission’s mission and ensures the legal integrity of our written products. The Office of Civil Rights Evaluation provides subject matter and analytical expertise required to monitor, evaluate, and report on the civil rights enforcement effort of the Federal Government. Their combined budget is \$1,423,000 and supports 7 FTE. The National Program Offices’ budget is 12.2 percent of the Commission’s total budget request.

The Regional Program Offices provide critical support to the 51 State Advisory Committees (SACs) required by our statute. In addition, the Commission supports Advisory Committees in the

U.S. Territories - Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Marianas Islands. The Regional Program Offices' combined budget in FY 2027 is \$1,712,000 and supports 9 FTE. The Regional Program Office's budget is 14.6 percent of the Commission's total budget request.

The Commissioners and Commissioner Assistants' request covers the salary, benefits, and travel for Commissioners and their Assistants. The FY 2027 Commissioners and Commissioner Assistants' budget is \$2,139,000 and supports 10 FTE. The Commission and Assistants' budget is 18.3 percent of the Commission's total budget request.

The Office of the Staff Director's request covers the salary, benefits, and travel for the Staff Director and their staff. The FY 2027 Office of Staff Director budget is \$324,000 and supports 2 FTE. The Office of Staff Director's budget is 2.8 percent of the Commission's total budget request.

The Library is an information source for Commission staff, government agencies, private organizations, and individuals. The Library request includes Westlaw access for Commission staff. The FY 2027 budget request for the Library is \$60,000. The Library's budget is .5 percent of the Commission's total budget request.

The Operations and Administrative budget request includes rent, communications, information technology, human resources, financial management, and other functions necessary to maintain a federal agency's operations. The FY 2027 budget request for the Operations and Administrative budget is \$4,342,000 and supports 9 FTE. The Operations and Administrative budget is 37.1 percent of the Commission's total budget request.

The Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB) budget request covers salary, benefits, and other costs to support their mission. The funding will allow CSSBMB to hold meetings, conduct field visits to relevant sites and issues recommendations on social problems affecting Black men and boys. The FY 2027 budget request for CSSBMB is \$1.7 million and supports 7 FTE. The CSSBMB budget is 14.5 percent of the total budget request.

## **FY 2025 PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS**

This section highlights the Commission's FY 2025 program accomplishments and activities.

### **A. Public Briefings**

#### **Federal Response to Teacher Shortage Impacts on Students with Disabilities**

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights held a briefing on, Friday, November 15, 2024, on how national teacher shortages, exacerbated by the 2020 pandemic, have impacted students with disabilities. The investigation focused on challenges schools face in staffing special education professionals, and how the federal government has worked to address these challenges in recent years. The Commission heard from subject matter experts such as government officials, current and past educators, researchers, and impacted persons.

Video of the briefing, including the expert panels and open comment period, along with written statements submitted to the Commission from invited experts and members of the public, can be viewed on our website here: <https://www.usccr.gov/meetings/2024/11-15-federal-response-teacher-shortage-impacts-students-disabilities>

## **Language Access for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency**

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights held a briefing on Friday, March 21, 2025, to examine the extent to which language barriers impact access to government services and healthcare for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). The investigation explored how government agencies and recipients of federal funding provide language access, the challenges of language access, and best practices for improving language access.

“The Commission is dedicated to ensuring that all individuals can access the resources they need to thrive. Millions of Americans rely on government services and federally funded programs, yet too many face barriers simply because English is not their first language.” - Chair Rochelle M. Garza.

"Today, 25.7 million or 8% of people ages five or older living in the U.S. are LEP. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects LEP Americans and longstanding federal guidance has helped to ensure equitable access to government services and federally funded programs for all Americans, including LEP persons." - Commissioner Glenn D. Magpantay.

At this public briefing, the Commission heard from subject matter experts such as language access researchers and attorneys, federal and state government officials, community advocates, and impacted persons.

Video of the briefing, including the expert panels and open comment period, along with written statements submitted to the Commission from invited experts and members of the public, can be viewed on our website here: <https://www.usccr.gov/meetings/2025/03-21-language-access-individuals-limited-english-proficiency>

## **B. Commission Reports**

The Commission issued the following report to inform Commission stakeholders of policy recommendations:

### ***Enforcing Religious Freedoms in Prison: 2017-2023***

Religious liberty is a cornerstone of American democracy and must not be forfeited at the prison gate. While correctional institutions must ensure safety and order, they must also protect the dignity and rights of every person in their care, including the right to worship freely. This report updates the Commission’s 2008 publication on the enforcement of religious freedom in prisons and jails. It investigates the current landscape of religious accommodations within carceral institutions and examines the extent to which incarcerated individuals—particularly those of minority faiths—are able to freely practice their religion.

The Commission’s investigation reveals persistent and systemic barriers to religious freedom in prison. Incarcerated individuals from minority faiths—such as Muslims, Sikhs, Jews, and Indigenous religions—continue to encounter disproportionate obstacles compared to Christian prisoners. These barriers include limited access to worship spaces, clergy, and religious services; inadequate provision of religious diets; restrictions on religious clothing and grooming; and difficulty obtaining sacred texts. The report highlights how institutional rules, lack of religious diversity among staff and volunteers, and misapplication of security concerns often serve as unjustified impediments to free religious expression.

Among the most serious concerns identified are challenges in obtaining religious accommodations. These include recurring issues such as mislabeled halal meals, denial of vegetarian diets for Sikh prisoners, bans on religious head coverings, and punitive hair-cutting policies that conflict with Native American spiritual practices. Some prisoners report that requests for accommodation are delayed, denied, or met with misunderstanding or outright bias.

Furthermore, when prisoners attempt to seek redress through the grievance process, they often face procedural roadblocks and retaliation. Many report that grievances are discarded or ignored, and that filing complaints can result in punitive measures such as cell searches or solitary confinement. These practices undermine not only the right to religious freedom but also the broader right to due process and fair treatment under the law.

Despite these challenges, the report also identifies paths forward. It emphasizes the importance of expanding religious diversity among prison chaplains and volunteers, improving transparency and accountability in the grievance process, and ensuring fair access to religious diets, services, and texts. This report reflects the Commission’s ongoing commitment to protecting the civil rights of all people, including those behind bars.

The report is available at the following website: <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-04/enforcing-religious-freedoms-in-prison.pdf>

### ***Teacher Shortages: Impacts on the Civil Rights of Students***

The Commission examined the growing nationwide shortage of qualified teachers and its particularly harsh effects on students with disabilities and other underserved groups. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic magnified the crisis. School closures, shifts to virtual and hybrid learning, and disruptions to routines disproportionately harmed students with disabilities. Many schools lacked the resources to provide necessary accommodations, administer Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), or supply technology and internet access for equitable participation. These disparities were most acute in low-income, high-poverty, and high-minority districts.

The pandemic also accelerated teacher attrition and exposed the chronic shortage of qualified educators, particularly in special education. Nearly half of public schools reported special education vacancies in 2022–24, with many positions filled by long-term substitutes or underqualified teachers. Estimates suggest as many as 400,000 underqualified teachers now make up more than 10 percent of the U.S. workforce, undermining the quality of education. Excessive

workloads, administrative burdens, and stagnant pay were cited as primary reasons for burnout, especially among special education teachers.

The lack of comprehensive national data compounds the problem. There is no unified federal database to track teacher vacancies, certification, or staffing needs, making it difficult to assess the true scope of shortages. This gap in data prevents policymakers from fully understanding and addressing how shortages undermine students' civil rights.

The report is available at the following website: <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-09/teacher-shortage-report-final.pdf>

### **C. State Advisory Committees Reports, Memoranda, and Statements**

#### ***Examining Access to Adequate Healthcare within the Northern Mariana Islands' Justice System***

On July 19, 2023, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Advisory Committee (Committee) to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission) adopted a proposal to study the access to adequate health care for incarcerated individuals within the Northern Mariana Islands' justice system. The focus of the Committee's inquiry was to examine whether there is a denial of equal protection of the laws under the Constitution in the administration of justice, as it specifically relates to the right to adequate health care for incarcerated individuals within Northern Mariana Islands' criminal justice system. The Committee sought to consider whether the conditions of the Northern Mariana Islands' prison facility affected incarcerated individuals' access to adequate health care, whether individuals involved in the broader criminal justice system (i.e., pretrial detainees, specialty court participants, etc.) are able to access adequate health care, including mental health care, and whether pretrial detainees are protected from unnecessary involuntary medication

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website: <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-06/cnmi-report.pdf>

#### ***Examining the Implementation of Rylan's Law and Disparate Impact in North Carolina***

The North Carolina Advisory Committee (Committee) to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission) adopted a proposal to undertake a study examining the impact of Rylan's Law, a 2017 law that requires more oversight in child custody cases. The focus of the Committee's inquiry was to examine instances of state intervention in the child welfare system since the passage of Rylan's Law, including any disparities that were created and/or reinforced based on race, color, age, disability, or other federally protected category and any denial of equal protection of the law in the administration of justice with the intention of identifying areas for improvement and developing recommendations accordingly.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website: <https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-05/nc-rylans-law-report.pdf>

### ***Civil Rights and Education Funding in Mississippi***

In September 2023, the Mississippi Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights submitted a proposal to study education funding concerns in the state. In February 2024, the Committee held a briefing to specifically address any civil rights implications of the education funding scheme in the state of Mississippi. The Committee heard testimony regarding the need for the Mississippi legislature to fully fund its education finance scheme. Panelists also stated that state resources need to be adequate, sufficient, and equitable. The current level of student progress was discussed.

Informed by the testimony, summarized in the memo, the Committee offers preliminary thoughts on concerns and recommendations. In particular, the Committee is concerned with the historical practice of the Mississippi legislature of underfunding the education finance plan.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-05/ms-memo.pdf>

### ***Access To Mental and Behavioral Health Care for Students in K-12 Schools***

The Iowa Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights adopted a proposal to undertake a study of access to mental and behavioral health care for K-12 students. The focus of the Committee's inquiry was to examine civil rights concerns regarding access to mental and behavioral health care for students in Iowa's K-12 schools on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, and/or national origin. Specifically, the Committee sought to examine the extent to which specific state or local policies and practices may contribute to indicated disparities, as well as alternative practices or recommendations with the demonstrated potential to address such concerns.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

[https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-04/ia-sac-report\\_access-to-mental-and-behavioral-health-in-k-12-schools.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-04/ia-sac-report_access-to-mental-and-behavioral-health-in-k-12-schools.pdf)

### ***The Disproportionate Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Communities of Color in Delaware***

The Delaware Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights submits this report regarding the disparate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities of color in Delaware. The contents of this report are primarily based on testimony the Committee heard during public meetings held via videoconference between September 2021 and April 2022. This investigation focused on testing, vaccinations, treatment, and the social determinants that impact health care, especially to communities of color in Delaware during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

[https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-04/2024\\_disp\\_impact\\_covid-19\\_delaware.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-04/2024_disp_impact_covid-19_delaware.pdf)

## ***Examining the Racial Impact of Public School Attendance Zones in Colorado***

The Colorado Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Committee) has investigated the effect of school attendance boundaries—also known as “catchment areas”—on school segregation. The Committee has focused in particular on 20 U.S.C. §1703(c), a long-overlooked provision in the federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 that provides both: 1. A qualified individual right to public school choice, as a federal civil right; and 2. A reliable legal basis for taking segregative/integrative effects—as defined by the law—into account when drawing attendance boundaries and setting school-assignment policies. The jurisdiction of the U.S. Commission, and thus of the Committee, encompasses deliberate discrimination or disparate impact that affects civil rights. This report addresses deliberate discrimination or disparate impact in violation of 20 U.S.C. §1703(c).

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-03/co-sac-public-school-attendance-zones-report.pdf>

## ***The Insular Cases and the Doctrine of Unincorporated Territory and Their Effects on the Civil Rights of Puerto Rico Residents - Part II***

On September 14, 2023, the Puerto Rico Advisory Committee held a virtual briefing to receive testimony on economic perspectives concerning the Insular Cases and the Doctrine of Unincorporated Territory and their effects on the civil rights of Puerto Rico residents. This was a continuation of the in-person briefing held on May 10, 2023, which resulted in the Committee’s first memorandum. This memorandum is the second and final part of the “General Overview” phase of this study.

For this memorandum, the Committee analyzed perspectives on Puerto Rico’s economic situation, considering the Uniformity Clause. The Uniformity Clause requires certain taxes imposed by Congress to be uniform across the United States. In *Downes v. Bidwell*, the Supreme Court ruled that the Uniformity Clause did not apply to Puerto Rico because the Island was not considered part of the “United States.” This designation has affected the fiscal and tax relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States to this day.

This memorandum is organized to share the main findings identified in the testimony directly described by the panelists and includes external sources where necessary. It begins with historical context, and the final sections focus on recommendations shared in the testimony along with the Committee’s preliminary recommendations regarding the “General Overview” phase. The Committee’s final recommendations will be included in the final report of this study.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

[https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-11/english\\_pr-ac-memo-2.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-11/english_pr-ac-memo-2.pdf)

## ***Housing Discrimination: Fair Housing Practices in Wyoming***

On December 1, 2022, the Wyoming Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights adopted a proposal to study the extent of housing discrimination and/or unfair housing practices in Wyoming. The Wyoming Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released a report, *Housing Discrimination: Fair Housing Practices in Wyoming*, following a series of web

hearings. The Committee heard testimony and received written statements from various stakeholders with insight into housing practices in Wyoming including researchers, advocates, impacted individuals, and government officials.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-01/wyoming-housing-report.pdf>

### ***Civil Rights and Disparities in Pediatric Healthcare Access for Racial and Ethnic Minority Families in Arizona***

The Arizona Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights adopted a proposal to study the extent to which disparities exist in the access to and quality of pediatric healthcare for families who identify as members of a racial and/or ethnic minority in Arizona. This report is intended to focus on civil rights concerns related to access to and quality of pediatric healthcare for Arizona families who identify as members of a racial and/or ethnic minority. As part of this inquiry, the Committee heard testimony via videoconference on June 14, 2023; September 29, 2023; February 2, 2024; and March 26, 2024. This report also includes written testimony submitted within the Committee's project timeline.

The following report results from a review of testimony at these meetings along with written testimony submitted to the Committee. It begins with a brief background of the issues considered by the Committee, followed by themes and findings as they emerged from this testimony. Finally, it makes recommendations for addressing related civil rights concerns. While other important topics may have surfaced during the Committee's inquiry, matters that are outside the scope of this specific civil rights mandate may be mentioned but are left for another discussion. This report and the recommendations included within it were adopted by a majority of Committee members present at a meeting on November 18, 2024.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-12/az-sac-access-to-pediatric-health-care-report.pdf>

### ***Accessing Services for Students with Disabilities in DC Public Schools***

The District of Columbia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights took up a study on May 18, 2023 regarding access to special education and transportation services in D.C. for students with disabilities. Through its study, the Committee has examined if policies, practices, and procedures limit access to these services on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin, or in the administration of justice.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

[https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-12/dc-report\\_special-education.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-12/dc-report_special-education.pdf)

### ***The Rising Use of Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Education***

On December 13, 2023, the Pennsylvania Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights adopted a proposal to study the rising use of artificial intelligence (AI) in K-12 education. The focus of the Committee's inquiry was to examine how AI algorithms are developed, and the impact they can have on either reducing or exacerbating existing disparities (or creating new

disparities) in K-12 classrooms based on federally protected classes. The Committee also examined potential solutions and recommendations to remediate identified concerns.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-12/2024-ai-in-education.pdf>

### ***The Insular Cases and the Doctrine of Unincorporated Territory and Their Effects on the Civil Rights of Puerto Rico Residents - Part II***

On September 14, 2023, the Puerto Rico Advisory Committee held a virtual briefing to receive testimony on economic perspectives concerning the Insular Cases and the Doctrine of Unincorporated Territory and their effects on the civil rights of Puerto Rico residents. This was a continuation of the in-person briefing held on May 10, 2023, which resulted in the Committee's first memorandum. This memorandum is the second and final part of the "General Overview" phase of this study.

The Committee plans to continue organizing briefings to receive input on the following subtopics approved in July 2022: (1) voting rights/lack of political representation, (2) racial/national discrimination, and (3) access to public programs. The Committee will publish memoranda on these subtopics throughout its term, culminating in a final report with the recommendations developed by the Committee.

This memorandum is organized to share the main findings identified in the testimony directly described by the panelists and includes external sources where necessary. It begins with historical context, and the final sections focus on recommendations shared in the testimony along with the Committee's preliminary recommendations regarding the "General Overview" phase. The Committee's final recommendations will be included in the final report of this study.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

[https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-11/english\\_pr-ac-memo-2.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-11/english_pr-ac-memo-2.pdf)

### ***The Right to Counsel in Arkansas***

On January 19, 2024, the Arkansas Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights adopted a proposal to study the right to counsel for indigent defendants in Arkansas. The focus of the Committee's inquiry was to examine the role public defenders play in ensuring equal protection of the laws in the administration of justice. The Committee considered public investment and funding available to support the right to counsel for those who cannot afford it and the impact such counsel (or the lack thereof) may have on persistent disparities throughout the criminal justice system based on race, color, sex, disability, and national origin.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-11/2024-right-to-counsel-ar.pdf>

### ***Source-of-Income Housing Discrimination in Ohio***

On December 12, 2022, the Ohio Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights adopted a proposal to study source-of-income housing discrimination in Ohio. The focus of the

Committee’s inquiry was to examine ways landlords may decline or discourage housing applicants based on their lawful source-of-income, and to understand the impact of source-of-income discrimination on housing stability as well as other broader indicators of social and economic wellbeing. From a civil rights perspective, the Committee sought to consider the impact of source-of-income discrimination on the advancement of fair housing goals and related civil-rights protections.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2024-10/2024-source-of-income-housing-discrimination-in-oh.pdf>

### ***Racial Outcomes in Maternal Mortality in Texas***

In June 2024, the Texas Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights adopted a proposal to study the civil rights implications of racial disparities in maternal mortality in Texas. The Committee found that robust data collection is essential to addressing racial disparities and evaluating the impact of policy changes on maternal health. And there are some achievable policy solutions that would decrease maternal mortality, including promising developments in technology, paid family leave, and investing in more birth workers. Based on the Committee’s findings, we provide several recommendations that Congress and the state of Texas should take, which the Committee believes would address many of the current shortcomings and greatly decrease Texas’s maternal mortality rate.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-09/tx-sac-report-on-maternal-mortality.pdf>

### ***Civil Rights in Immigrant Detention Centers in New Mexico***

The New Mexico Advisory Committee voted in October 2024 to initiate an inquiry into civil rights in the state’s three immigrant detention centers which are located in Otero, Cibola and Torrance Counties. The selection was based upon ongoing reports of due process violations, unsafe conditions, systemic contracting concerns in these facilities, a federal complaint regarding the Torrance facility and a wrongful death lawsuit. Around 1,500 individuals, primarily asylum seekers, are detained in New Mexico in privately managed detention centers, under contracts between ICE and respective counties.

As part of this inquiry, the Committee heard testimony via videoconferences held from December 2024 to January 2025. The following report results from a review of testimony provided at these meetings, combined with written testimony submitted during the related timeframe. It begins with a brief background of the issues the Committee considered and then identifies primary findings as they emerged from this testimony. Finally, it makes recommendations for addressing related civil rights concerns. This report and the recommendations included within it were adopted by majority by the Committee on Monday, July 28, 2025.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-09/nm-report-on-immigrant-detention.pdf>

## ***The Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on K-12 Education in Nebraska***

On March 23, 2023, the Nebraska Advisory Committee (Committee) to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission) adopted a proposal to undertake a study on the civil rights effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on education in the state. The focus of the Committee's inquiry was to examine the challenges faced by diverse communities regarding youth mental health and the digital divide.

As part of this inquiry the Committee heard testimony via videoconference held on July 10, 2023, July 13, 2023, November 8, 2023, March 6, 2024, and May 15, 2024. The following report results from a review of testimony provided at these meetings. It begins with a brief background of the issues to be considered by the Committee. It then identifies primary findings as they emerged from this testimony. Finally, it makes recommendations for addressing related civil rights concerns.

This report focuses on an examination of the lingering effects the Covid-19 pandemic has had on public and non-public K-12 education in Nebraska stemming from Spring 2020 (lockdown) and the 2020-2021 academic year, with a specific focus on disparities that were created and/or reinforced based on race, color, age, disability, or other federally protected category as they relate to: (a) the challenges of e-learning and (b) increased mental health issues facing youth with the intent of identifying opportunities to address ongoing challenges through laws and procedures.

While other important topics may have surfaced throughout the Committee's inquiry, matters that are outside the scope of this specific civil rights mandate are left for another discussion. This report and the recommendations included within it were adopted unanimously by the Committee on August 21, 2025.

The report, memorandum or statement is available at the following website:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-09/ne-report-2025.pdf>

**FY 2026-2030 STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Throughout our history, the Commission has worked towards fulfilling our Congressional mandate to serve as an independent, bipartisan, fact-finding federal agency charged with making recommendations on civil rights issues that affect our nation.

**Strategic Goal A: The Commission will function as a monitor of effective federal enforcement of civil rights laws and inform national civil rights laws and policy. Advisory Committees aid the Commission in this endeavor.**

Objective	Strategies	Performance Measures	Examples of Performance Targets
The Commission will assess the national state of important civil rights issues.	The Commission will determine civil rights issues of national significance on which to conduct informative briefings and/or hearings.	The Commission will develop proposals and investigative plans to conduct investigations into civil rights issues of national significance.	Two new projects.
		The Commission will hold at least two briefings and/or hearings each year.	Two briefings and/or hearings.
	The Commission will keep the Advisory Committees engaged with the Commission’s investigative projects.	The Commission will keep Advisory Committees apprised of investigative priorities so that they can determine whether there is any beneficial overlap or alignment in their agenda setting.	Headquarters issued report will include Advisory Committee’s reports when their topics align.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Examples of Performance Targets</b>
		<p>The Staff Director, Chair, or Commissioners will attend (telephonically or in-person) Advisory Committee briefings or meetings to maintain the connection between the Commission and Advisory Committees. Each Commissioner is encouraged to attend at least two Advisory Committee meetings per fiscal year, including one meeting in their home state and one meeting outside their state.</p>	<p>Each Commissioner attends at least two briefings or meetings per fiscal year.</p>
<p>The Commission will publish reports, letters, and statements on important civil rights issues, following investigation and as informed by research, and distribute them to the President, Congress, and the American people.</p>	<p>The Commission will continuously monitor the state of civil rights and issues of national significance and use its expertise to report on its policy recommendations.</p>	<p>The Commission will issue reports, including its annual statutory enforcement report, to inform its stakeholders of policy recommendations.</p> <p>Language access efforts should be encouraged and taken under advisement by Commission leadership to the extent practicable.</p>	<p>Two reports.</p>

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Examples of Performance Targets</b>
The Commission's Advisory Committees as a group will hold briefings and meetings on civil rights concerns in their jurisdiction and issue publications on their concerns, providing recommendations for action on those issues.	The Commission will maintain all 56 Advisory Committees.	The Commission will promptly appoint members to each Advisory Committee after expiration.	90% currently appointed Advisory Committees.
	The Commission's Advisory Committees will assess the state of civil rights, or a particular civil rights issue, in their jurisdiction.	Advisory Committees will develop proposals and investigative plans to conduct investigations into civil rights issues of significance in their jurisdiction.	Ten meetings
		Advisory Committees will hold briefings, public forums, or another mechanism.	Five fact-finding events.
		Advisory Committees will publish reports, statements, memoranda, or other publications to provide policy recommendations to the Commission.	Five publications.

**Strategic Goal B: The Commission will serve as a national clearinghouse to inform and raise awareness on civil rights issues amongst the public.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Examples of Performance Targets</b>
The Commission will keep the public apprised of historic and current civil rights issues.	The Commission will routinely post to social media to keep the public informed on civil rights historical events	Increased engagement with the Commission’s social media accounts as seen through analytic tracking	Increase in social media activity.
The Commission will keep the public and individual Advisory Committees apprised of both the Commission and Advisory Committees’ investigations, fact-finding activities, reports, and other publications.	Use press outreach, social media, and newsletters to reach more individuals, improve participation at events, and increase awareness of Commission and Advisory Committees activities.	The Commission will regularly publicize Commission and Advisory Committee investigations, fact-finding activities, reports, and other publications.	Monthly newsletter, press releases, social media posts.
	Increase access to Commission briefings, hearings, and business meetings.	The Commission will use technology, including live streaming, phone lines, and social media, to provide immediate public access to its meetings, briefings, publications, and other activities.	Two live streamed events.
Elevate the public profile of the Commission as a national authority on civil rights issues.	Expand the opportunities for the Chair or other designated spokesperson to speak directly to the public on civil rights issues.	Ensure that the Chair or other designated spokesperson speaks directly to the public about civil rights.	Two speaking engagements with national reach.

**Strategic Goal C: The Commission will continue to strengthen the Commission’s financial and operational controls and advance the Commission’s mission through management excellence, efficiency, and accountability.**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Examples of Performance Targets</b>
The Commission will strengthen its human resources, financial, budget, and performance policy, procedures, and reports.	Align the Commission’s budget submissions with the Agency’s strategic plan and annual performance plan.	Compliance with OMB Circular A-11.	Budget is compliant with OMB Circular A-11.
	Monitor and report on the Commission’s progress in achieving its annual performance plan goals and objectives.	Submit a Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) that adheres to all relevant guidance.	PAR adheres to relevant guidance.
	Ensure the agency has a highly skilled and flexible workforce to carry out its mission.	Implementation of the Commission’s Office of Personnel Management’s program, strategies, and initiatives.	Implement the Commission’s and OPM’s personnel initiatives.
The Commission will strengthen its information technology infrastructure and security.	Comply with federal information security requirements.	Conduct an annual FISMA Audit.	FISMA Audit.

**DRAFT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN**

**Strategic Goal A** - The Commission will function as a monitor of effective federal enforcement of civil rights laws and inform national civil rights laws and policy. Advisory Committees aid the Commission in this endeavor.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
The Commission will assess the national state of important civil rights issues.	The Commission will determine civil rights issues of national significance on which to conduct informative briefings and/or hearings.	The Commission will develop proposals and investigative plans to conduct investigations into civil rights issues of national significance.	Two new projects.	Two new projects.
The Commission will assess the national state of important civil rights issues.	The Commission will determine civil rights issues of national significance on which to conduct informative briefings and/or hearings.	The Commission will hold at least two briefings and/or hearings each year.	Two briefings and/or hearings.	Two briefings and/or hearings.
The Commission will assess the national state of important civil rights issues.	The Commission will keep the Advisory Committees engaged with the Commission’s investigative projects.	The Commission will keep Advisory Committees apprised of investigative priorities so that they can determine whether there is any beneficial overlap or alignment in their agenda setting.	Headquarters issued report will include Advisory Committee’s reports when their topics align.	Headquarters issued report will include Advisory Committee’s reports when their topics align.

**Strategic Goal A** - The Commission will function as a monitor of effective federal enforcement of civil rights laws and inform national civil rights laws and policy. Advisory Committees aid the Commission in this endeavor.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
<p>The Commission will assess the national state of important civil rights issues.</p>	<p>The Commission will keep the Advisory Committees engaged with the Commission’s investigative projects.</p>	<p>The Staff Director, Chair, or Commissioners will attend (telephonically or in-person) Advisory Committee briefings or meetings to maintain the connection between the Commission and Advisory Committees. Each Commissioner is encouraged to attend at least two Advisory Committee meetings per fiscal year, including one meeting in their home state and one meeting outside their state.</p>	<p>Each Commissioner attends at least two briefings or meetings per fiscal year.</p>	<p>Each Commissioner attends at least two briefings or meetings per fiscal year.</p>

**Strategic Goal A** - The Commission will function as a monitor of effective federal enforcement of civil rights laws and inform national civil rights laws and policy. Advisory Committees aid the Commission in this endeavor.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
<p>The Commission will publish reports, letters, and statements on important civil rights issues, following investigation and as informed by research, and distribute them to the President, Congress, and the American people.</p>	<p>The Commission will continuously monitor the state of civil rights and issues of national significance and use its expertise to report its policy recommendations.</p>	<p>The Commission will issue reports, including its annual statutory enforcement report, to inform its stakeholders of policy recommendations.</p> <p>Language access efforts should be encouraged and taken under advisement by Commission leadership to the extent practicable.</p>	<p>Two reports.</p>	<p>Two reports.</p>
<p>The Commission’s Advisory Committees as a group will hold briefings and meetings on civil rights concerns in their jurisdiction and issue publications on their concerns, providing recommendations for action on those issues.</p>	<p>The Commission will maintain all 56 Advisory Committees.</p>	<p>The Commission will promptly appoint members to each Advisory Committee after expiration.</p>	<p>90% currently appointed Advisory Committees.</p>	<p>90% currently appointed Advisory Committees.</p>

**Strategic Goal A** - The Commission will function as a monitor of effective federal enforcement of civil rights laws and inform national civil rights laws and policy. Advisory Committees aid the Commission in this endeavor.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
The Commission’s Advisory Committees as a group will hold briefings and meetings on civil rights concerns in their jurisdiction and issue publications on their concerns, providing recommendations for action on those issues.	The Commission’s Advisory Committees will assess the state of civil rights, or a particular civil rights issue, in their jurisdiction.	Advisory Committees will develop proposals and investigative plans to conduct investigations into civil rights issues of significance in their jurisdiction.	Ten meetings.	Ten meetings.
The Commission’s Advisory Committees as a group will hold briefings and meetings on civil rights concerns in their jurisdiction and issue publications on their concerns, providing recommendations for action on those issues.	The Commission’s Advisory Committees will assess the state of civil rights, or a particular civil rights issue, in their jurisdiction.	Advisory Committees will hold briefings, public forums, or another mechanism.	Five fact-finding events.	Five fact-finding events.

**Strategic Goal A** - The Commission will function as a monitor of effective federal enforcement of civil rights laws and inform national civil rights laws and policy. Advisory Committees aid the Commission in this endeavor.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
The Commission’s Advisory Committees as a group will hold briefings and meetings on civil rights concerns in their jurisdiction and issue publications on their concerns, providing recommendations for action on those issues.	The Commission’s Advisory Committees will assess the state of civil rights, or a particular civil rights issue, in their jurisdiction.	Advisory Committees will publish reports, statements, memoranda, or other publications to provide policy recommendations to the Commission.	Five publications.	Five publications.

**Strategic Goal B** - The Commission will serve as a national clearinghouse to inform and raise awareness on civil rights issues amongst the public.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
The Commission will keep the public apprised of historic and current civil rights issues.	The Commission will routinely post to social media to keep the public informed on civil rights historical events.	Increased engagement with the Commission’s social media accounts as seen through analytic tracking.	Increase in social media activity.	Increase in social media activity.
The Commission will keep the public and individual Advisory Committees apprised of both the Commission and Advisory Committees’ investigations, fact-finding activities, reports, and other publications.	Use press outreach, social media, and newsletters to reach more individuals, improve participation at events, and increase awareness of Commission and Advisory Committees activities.	The Commission will regularly publicize Commission and Advisory Committee investigations, fact-finding activities, reports, and other publications.	Monthly newsletter, press releases, social media posts.	Monthly newsletter, press releases, social media posts.
The Commission will keep the public and individual Advisory Committees apprised of both the Commission and Advisory Committees’ investigations, fact-finding activities, reports, and other publications.	Increase access to Commission briefings, hearings, and business meetings	The Commission will use technology, including live streaming, phone lines, and social media, to provide immediate public access to its meetings, briefings, publications, and other activities.	Two live streamed events.	Two live streamed events.

**Strategic Goal B** - The Commission will serve as a national clearinghouse to inform and raise awareness on civil rights issues amongst the public.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
Elevate the public profile of the Commission as a national authority on civil rights issues.	Expand the opportunities for the Chair or other designated spokesperson to speak directly to the public on civil rights issues.	Ensure that the Chair or other designated spokesperson speaks directly to the public about civil rights.	Two speaking engagements with national reach.	Two speaking engagements with national reach.

**Strategic Goal C** - The Commission will continue to strengthen the Commission’s financial and operational controls and advance the Commission’s mission through management excellence, efficiency, and accountability.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2027 Performance Targets</b>
The Commission will strengthen its human resources, financial, budget, and performance policy, procedures, and reports.	Align the Commission’s budget submissions with the Agency’s strategic plan and annual performance plan.	Compliance with OMB Circular A-11.	Budget is compliant with OMB Circular A-11.	Budget is compliant with OMB Circular A-11.
The Commission will strengthen its human resources, financial, budget, and performance policy, procedures, and reports.	Monitor and report on the Commission’s progress in achieving its annual performance plan goals and objectives.	Submit a Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) that adheres to all relevant guidance.	PAR adheres to relevant guidance.	PAR adheres to relevant guidance.
The Commission will strengthen its human resources, financial, budget, and performance policy, procedures, and reports.	Ensure the agency has a highly skilled and flexible workforce to carry out its mission.	Implementation of the Commission’s Office of Personnel Management’s program, strategies, and initiatives.	Implement the Commission’s and OPM’s personnel initiatives.	Implement the Commission’s and OPM’s personnel initiatives.

**Strategic Goal C** - The Commission will continue to strengthen the Commission’s financial and operational controls and advance the Commission’s mission through management excellence, efficiency, and accountability.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>FY 2025 Performance Targets</b>	<b>FY 2026 Performance Targets</b>
The Commission will strengthen its information technology infrastructure and security.	Comply with federal information security requirements	Conduct an annual FISMA Audit	FISMA Audit	FISMA Audit