

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: August 12, 2021

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections & Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso *KEL*
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No: 21-0002-S141
Assignment No: 21-08-0599

SUBJECT: Resolution (Harris-Dawson – Lee) to support SB 17 (Pan)

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution (Harris-Dawson – Lee) to include in the City's 2021-2022 State Legislative Program, SUPPORT for SB 17 (Pan) which would create a State Office of Racial Equity to be governed by a Racial Equity Advisory and Accountability Council.

SUMMARY

Resolution (Harris-Dawson – Lee), introduced June 22, 2021, advises that on April 28, 2021, the City of Los Angeles established an Office of Racial Equity (ORE) within the City's Civil, Human Rights and Equity Department to analyze public and private policies and practices; advance anti-racist policy recommendations; and actualize anti-racist training and capacity-building initiatives. Current State law established an Office of Health Equity for the purposes of aligning State resources, decision-making, and programs to accomplish health equity goals and to protect vulnerable communities. The Office of Health Equity is required to develop plans to close the gaps in health status and access to care among the State's diverse racial and ethnic communities. Current law has also established the Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans.

The Resolution further advises that on December 20, 2020, SB 17 was introduced in the California State Senate to establish a State Office of Racial Equity. The State Office of Racial Equity would be governed by a Racial Equity Advisory and Accountability Council (REAAC). REAAC members would be appointed by the Governor, Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the Assembly for two-year terms. The appointments should reflect the diversity of the State. Persons of color have experienced centuries of inequality and systemic racism beginning with colonization. Institutional and systemic racism continue to permeate our society and have been found to constitute a public health crisis, leading to significant health disparities.

The Resolution recommends that the City support SB 17 (Pan) which would create a State Office of Racial Equity to be governed by a Racial Equity Advisory and Accountability Council as it aligns with the City's equity priorities to achieve racial equity and end systemic racism.

BACKGROUND

California history includes a number of events that have caused harm to communities of color. These events include but are not limited to Spanish missionary seizures and forced conversions, fugitive slave laws, immigration laws, internment orders, and the establishment of the highway system breaking up communities of color. Historically, laws and policies enacted by the State of California have also, whether intentionally or not, had harmful effects on communities of color. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified racism as a serious public health threat which has led to health inequities resulting in harm such as higher rates of infant and maternal mortality, disease, and lower life expectancy. The COVID-19

pandemic has clearly demonstrated the gap in health care access, disproportionately affecting communities of color. Systemic racism and historic policies continue to result in marked disparities in housing, economic, environmental, and health care outcomes for communities of color. Current law establishes the Office of Health Equity (OHE) to align State resources, decision-making, and programs to accomplish health equity goals and protect vulnerable communities. The OHE is required to assist state agencies and departments in developing policies, systems, and programs that will advance health equity.

SB 17 (Pan) would establish a State Office of Racial Equity (ORE) to coordinate, develop, evaluate, and recommend strategies for advancing racial equity across State agencies and departments. The ORE would be tasked with developing a Racial Equity Framework that sets forth a vision for racial equity in the State by providing guidelines for inclusive policies and practices. The ORE would be governed by a Racial Equity Advisory and Accountability Council (REEAC), the members of which would be appointed by the Governor, Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the Assembly. The bill would further require State departments and agencies to adopt Racial Equity Action Plans which would describe how each State agency will address racial inequities. State departments and agencies would also be required to prepare an annual report on the agency's progress toward goals set by the Racial Equity Action Plans.

Several jurisdictions in the United States have formed racial equity bodies to advance racial equity policies. The State of Vermont established a Racial Equity Advisory Panel and appointed an Executive Director for racial equity. Michigan created a Racial Equity Toolkit to provide guidance to government, organizations, and communities to guide long-term racial equity capacity building efforts. In California, the City of San Francisco created the San Francisco Office of Racial Equity (SFORE) to enact a citywide Racial Equity Framework, directing city agencies to develop and implement Racial Equity Action Plans. SFORE was also directed to analyze the potential disparate impacts of pending ordinances and policies. The California State Department of Transportation (CalTrans) has also developed the CalTrans Race & Equity Action Plan.

On April 28, 2021, the City of Los Angeles established an Office of Racial Equity within the City's Civil, Human Rights and Equity Department (Council File 19-1470) to analyze public and private policies and practices, advance anti-racist policy recommendations, and actualize anti-racist training and capacity-building initiatives. The ORE would accomplish these goals through a Community Racial Equity Advisory Committee by policy analysis and research, data monitoring, civic engagement efforts, and technical assistance.

Support for SB 17 (Pan) would be consistent with City efforts to adopt policies to encourage racial equity, address systemic racism, and ensure public welfare.

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED

None

BILL STATUS

12/07/20	Introduced
01/28/21	Referred to Committee on Rules
03/25/21	Passed by Committee on Governmental Organization and re-referred to Committee on Judiciary
04/14/21	Passed by Committee on Judiciary, referred to Committee on Appropriations
05/20/21	Passed by Committee on Appropriations
06/02/21	Passed by Senate, ordered to Assembly

06/30/21

Passed by Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review and
re-referred to the Committee on Appropriations


Andy Galan
Analyst

Attachments: 1. Resolution (Harris-Dawson – Lee)

RESOLUTION

RULES, ELECTIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations, or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, on April 28, 2021, the City of Los Angeles established an Office of Racial Equity (ORE) within the City's Civil, Human Rights and Equity Department to: 1) analyze public and private policies and practices; 2) advance anti-racist policy recommendations; and 3) actualize anti-racist training and capacity-building initiatives; and

WHEREAS, current State law establishes an Office of Health Equity for purposes of aligning State resources, decision-making, and programs to accomplish certain goals related to health equity and protecting vulnerable communities; and

WHEREAS, the State Office of Health Equity is required to develop plans to close the gaps in health status and access to care among the State's diverse racial and ethnic communities, women, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ communities; and

WHEREAS, current State law also establishes the Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans, with a special consideration for African Americans who are descendants of persons enslaved in the United States; and

WHEREAS, on December 20, 2020, SB 17 was introduced in the State Senate to establish a State Office of Racial Equity to be governed by a Racial Equity Advisory and Accountability Council (REAAC) and provides that REAAC members shall be appointed by the Governor, Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the Assembly to two-year terms and that such appointments reflect the cultural, ethnic, racial, linguistic, sexual orientation, gender, immigration status, socio-economic, and geographical diversity of the State; and


WHEREAS, the author of the bill notes that in the United States, Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) have experienced centuries of inequality and systemic racism beginning when European colonizers stripped tens of millions of Indigenous and native people of their identity, culture, language, lifestyle, families, work, history, and traditions; and

WHEREAS, the author of the bill further notes that institutional and systemic racism continues to permeate our society in insidious ways and extensive research has identified racism as a public health crisis leading to significant health disparities, including infant and maternal mortality, chronic diseases, life expectancy, and, more recently, COVID-19 mortality; and

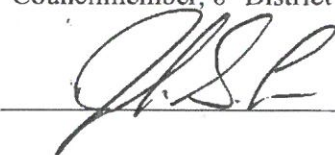
WHEREAS, the City should support SB 17 as it aligns with the City's equity priorities which aim to achieve racial equity and ending systemic racism;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2021-2022 State Legislative Program SUPPORT of SB 17 which would create the State Office of Racial Equity to be governed by a Racial Equity Advisory and Accountability Council.

PRESENTED BY


MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON
Councilmember, 8th District

SECONDED BY



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JUN 22 2021

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