

State Racial Impact Note Act

Language contained in HB 158 (Public Act 102-0004)

Chief sponsors: Rep. Camille Lilly/Sen. Mattie Hunter

Signed into Law 4/27/21

HB 158 contains a provision that:

- Creates the Racial Impact Note Act. The Act requires, upon the request of a member, a state agency or board to prepare a statement or note on introduced legislation that provides a reliable estimate of the anticipated impact on racial and ethnic minorities likely to be affected by the bill.

Racial Impact Notes

Creating a Racial Impact Note Act provides within the legislative process a means of examining the consequences of a proposed bill along racial and ethnic lines.

It means looking at statistics on current circumstances faced by each group whether it is with regards to household income, housing costs, ability to afford college, academic proficiency at various grade levels or any other data point and what disparities exist by race or ethnicity for each data point.

It means asking how proposed legislation might impact each group and whether it will close the range of disparities that exist for those data points or increase inequalities.

Racial Impact Notes are designed to help in the decision-making process prior to enacting new legislation.

Some other states using racial impact assessments:

Connecticut: P.A. 18-78 requires preparation of a racial and ethnic impact statement at the request of a General Assembly member on bills and amendments. Any such request is to be made within ten days after the deadline for the committee that introduced the bill to vote to report favorably.

Maine: Signed into law 3/17/21, Maine's new statute requires, upon the request of a legislative committee, a commissioner or state agency director (or designee) to provide information necessary for the legislature to prepare a racial impact statement on legislation before the committee.

Maryland: In February, the state's legislative leaders announced a pilot program to produce racial impact statements on major criminal justice reform legislation.

Earlier this year, Governor J.B. Pritzker signed HB 2170 into law that expands an existing law requiring data collection by the Department of Human Services. The new law now requires the Illinois State Board of Education, state human service agencies, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Central Management Services to report on the racial and ethnic demographics of program participants for each major program administered by ISBE or one of the designated departments.

For more information, contact Tasha Green Cruzat, Voices for Illinois Children, 312-516-5565.

