

Testimony: Government Accountability Committee

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Diana brings the following experience to her testimony:

- Windham SE School District Social Competency Development Curriculum Coordinator
- Co-Founder Community Equity Collaborative of the Brattleboro Area (CEC)
- Co-Chair, CEC Diverse Workforce Development Sub-Committee
- Chair, CEC BIPOC Health Justice Sub-Committee

WICHIE ARTU

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Wichie brings the following experience to his testimony:

- Data & Analytics Specialist, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital (BMH)
- Co-Founder, BMH's Council on Racial Equity
- Community Representative, Vermont Racial Equity Task Force
- Data Manager, CEC BIPOC Health Justice Sub-Committee
- Racial Justice Organizing Leadership and BIPOC Caucus Member, Root Social Justice Ctr
- Member, NAACP of Windham County
- Rep. from Vermont Partnership for Fairness & Diversity, COVID Vaccine Advisory Comm.

The GAC Committee asks us to focus on the following questions:

- What specific indicator addition(s) or change(s) would you recommend be made to the list of indicators in Act 186 to better understand the wellbeing of BIPOC Vermonters?
- What changes would you recommend in the process of reporting indicators and outcomes to improve our understanding of the condition of wellbeing for BIPOC Vermonters?

What specific indicator addition(s) or change(s) would you recommend be made to the list of indicators in Act 186 to better understand the wellbeing of BIPOC Vermonters?

Vermont's Quality of Life Outcomes approved by Vermont Legislature S. 293 2014

1) Vermont has a prosperous economy. (2) Vermonters are healthy. (3) Vermont's environment is clean and sustainable. (4) Vermont's communities are safe and supportive. (5) Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported. (6) Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential, including: (A) Pregnant women and young people thrive. (B) Children are ready for school. (C) Children succeed in school. (D) Youth choose healthy behaviors. (E) Youth successfully transition to adulthood. (7) Vermont's elders and people with disabilities and people with mental conditions live with dignity and independence in settings they prefer. (8) Vermont has open, effective, and inclusive government at the State and local levels.

Act 186 Scoreboard: It is our understanding that this scorecard demonstrates the outcomes of well-being for Vermonters as established in Act 186 and their related population-level indicators:

<https://embed.resultsscorecard.com/Scorecard/Embed/8131> Going forward, I recommend that this scorecard use the exact wording of Vermont's Quality of Life Outcomes (S,293) and cover each of the eight outcomes in its listing.

Each of the eight Quality of Life Outcomes pertain to the well-being of Vermonters of color. Using the racial disparities lens, we recommend adding the following additional indicators measuring Population-level Well-being:

Outcome: Vermont has a prosperous economy.

Indicator: Number/percent of business owners who are people of color

Indicator: Number/percent of homeowners who are people of color

Indicator: Number/percent of homeless (adults and children) who are people of color

Indicator: Comparison of BIPOC to non-BIPOC wages/salaries across occupations

Indicator: Comparison of BIPOC land/house ownership to non-BIPOC ownership

Outcome: Vermonters are healthy.

Indicator: Percent of Vermonters of color with health insurance.

Indicator: Percent of Vermonters of color with a medical home.

Indicators: Percent of Vermonters of color with pre-existing conditions: diabetes, lung disease, cardiovascular disease.

Indicators: % of Vermonters of color with any mental health conditions receiving treatment

Indicator: Percent of Vermonters of color receiving recommended vaccines.

Outcome: Vermont's communities are safe and supportive.

Indicator: Percent of offenders who live in affordable housing immediately upon their release.

Indicator: Percent or rate of residents of color entering the corrections system.

In addition, take into account all data recommendations made in the December 1, 2020 Report of the Racial Disparities in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Systems Advisory Panel

Outcome: Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential, including:

(A) Pregnant women and young people thrive.

Indicator: Percent of women of color who receive first trimester prenatal care

Indicator: Percent of children of color with health insurance

(B) Children are ready for school.

Indicator: Percent of children of color ready for school in all five domains of healthy development

Indicator: Percent of children of color in early childhood education

(C) Children succeed in school.

Indicator: Percent of children of color below the basic level of 4th grade reading achievement under State standards

Indicator: Percent of children of color who drop out of school

Indicator: Percent of children of color who graduate from high school

(D) Youth choose healthy behaviors.

Indicator: Rate of pregnancy for young women of color (15-17 years of age)

Indicator: Number and rate of minors of color who are under the supervision of the Dept. of Corrections.

(E) Youth successfully transition to adulthood.

Indicator: Percent of high school seniors of color with plans for education, vocational training, or employment.

Indicator: Percent of graduating seniors of color who continue their education within 5 years after graduation

Indicator: Percent of graduating college students of color with less than \$5000 in debt

(7) Vermont's elders and people with disabilities and people with mental conditions live with dignity and independence in settings they prefer.

Indicator: Rate of confirmed reports of abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults of color

(8) Vermont has open, effective, and inclusive government at the State and local levels.

Indicator: Number/percent of Vermonters of color elected to town, county and State office.

What changes would you recommend in the process of reporting indicators and outcomes to improve our understanding of the condition of wellbeing for BIPOC Vermonters?

Results Based Accountability (RBA) is the framework that will keep us on track. Simply put, what gets measured gets done. Expanding the availability of indicators monitoring the well-being of our BIPOC community members demonstrates their value to our State's future. The goal would be to create a centralized platform for race-based data collection. Each branch of State government would monitor racial disparities and contribute to the centralized platform. Each branch would utilize RBA both on the population and performance levels. A comprehensive "bank" of indicators and program performance measures will guide departmental programs to frame their annual reports to the General Assembly. The performance level work demonstrates the various ways that department is "turning the curve" on its population indicators. See examples below of ways that each branch can be accountable.

Regional planning is equally important. It is recommended that every AHS District and County have an annual Community Profile that features the eight State outcomes of well-being along with indicators relating to that outcome. Each regional indicator needs to be broken down to report on racial disparities, encouraging the development of regional strategies for improved well-being for ALL community members. These Community Profiles are vital tools for regional coalitions and planners to accurately develop RBA strategies for improving conditions of well-being. For example, our Windham County BIPOC Health Justice Committee requires these population indicators to move forward in our health strategy development.

Racial Equity and Service System, Program Performance Measuring Performance and Well-being of Clients

Performance measures are measures of how well public and private programs and agencies are working. The State of Vermont Chief Performance Officer has designated an employee in each agency of State government to be a performance accountability liaison to the General Assembly. Racial disparities performance measures need to be added to the present reporting requirements. Take into account quantity and quality vs. effort and effect in preparing performance measures. Each of the examples listed need to be expanded keeping this intersection in mind.

Examples to consider:

Service System: Economic Development

Performance Measure: Create a government commission to promote and support the growth of BIPOC businesses

Performance Measure: Re-define job descriptions to emphasize competency over degrees

Performance Measure: Best practice in retention of people of color in work settings

Performance Measure: Best practice in supporting people of color to gain access to public transportation, acquisition and maintenance of cars.

Service System: Health Care

Performance Measure: Outreach to communities of color re: health insurance enrollment

Performance Measure: Outreach to communities of color re: securing a medical home

Performance Measure: Program that strengthens the academic proficiency and career development of students underrepresented in the health professions and prepares them for a successful application and matriculation to health professions schools.

Performance Measure: Medical school curriculum features accurate history of BIPOC treatment practice in US and Vermont, as well as best practices.

Service System: Housing

Performance Measure: Number of landlords who will rent to ex-offenders

Performance Measure: Percent of ex-offenders who have a circle of support and accountability upon release from prison

Service System: Early Childhood and Education

Performance Measure: Early education available to children of color, including transportation

Performance Measure: Percent of administrators, teachers and support staff in each school who have received ongoing diversity/equity/inclusion education.

Performance Measure: Ethnic and Social Equity Standards are adopted in all public school curriculum and administration.

Performance Measure: Percent of students of color who are chronically out of school (miss 10% or more of school) due to absence or suspension/expulsion

Performance Measure: Programs exist to help youth of color gain connections to the larger community, where they see themselves having a valuable role.

Performance Measure: Internship programs support graduating students of color to gain awareness of employment opportunities.

Service System: Aging

Performance Measure: All advocates and ombudsmen for the elderly have ongoing diversity/equity/inclusion education.

Service System: State Government

Performance Measure: Support programs to identify, train, and encourage people of color to run for office at all levels of government, get elected, and serve their communities and our state.

Performance Measure: Number/percent of Vermonters of color elected to town, county and State office who are forced to leave their office due to threats.