



**To:** California Racial Equity Commissioners

**From:** Racial Equity Commission Staff

**Re:** Budget Equity Committee Report to the Commission – May 9, 2024

**Commissioners in attendance:**

Candis Bowles, John Kim, Gabriel Maldonado, Jolie Onodera (Remote)

**Committee Recap:**

- Commissioner Maldonado was elected as committee lead.
- Commissioner Kim proposed amending Article VII Section 2.C. Amendment will be proposed at the July 17 Committee Meeting.
- Commissioners heard from Dr. D'artangan Scorza (Los Angeles County), Kim Desmond (City of San Diego), Maria Barakat (Greenlining Institute), and Skyla Fuentes (InnerCity Struggle) about advancing budget equity strategies.

**Key Takeaways:**

- Relationships and consistent engagement with community is important, as is the intersection of government guidance, political leadership, infrastructure, an equitable formula, and technical assistance.
- The narrative of equity is often portrayed as “taking away from someone” which is a problematic narrative and needs to be addressed.
- Using data to understanding disparities and inequities encourage deliberate fiduciary action. Funding allocations in response to data needs to address the totality of the experience in community. Data also provides a baseline for action and can help define measurable goals.
- Understanding the system (departments, agencies, etc.), their roles and services provided can better connect funding to purpose and meeting specific needs. This can inform a methodology that allows for the consistent implementation of a budget equity formula.
- Be mindful of the intersection of Federal, state and local requirements and how they may conflict.
- Changing equity outcomes may require an effort to redesign systems in different ways.
- Budget equity tool(s) needs to be inclusive of a process and transparent in its development, implementation, and evaluation.

**Next steps:**

- Gain a better understanding of the existing budget system and the relationship with the Federal and state government and state to local government.
- Engage leaders from state departments and county budget officials.
- Identify racial disparities to understand where state investments can make an impact.
- Receive additional information on existing models and resources to inform their deliberations on budget equity.



**Intersection with the Framework and Commission Strategy:**

- It is critical to consider and leverage data to inform budget equity strategies.
- The Commission needs to understand the totality of the state budget system and how money moves through the system, including where decision points are to inform how and where budget equity strategies should be implemented.
- Engaging community and stakeholders are important to make sure that budget equity tools, formulas, and methodologies are responsive to needs and do not conflict with guidance from the Federal government.