

RACIAL EQUITY COMMISSION



To: California Racial Equity Commissioners

From: Eric S. De La Cruz, Racial Equity Commission Executive Director

Re: Executive Director Report to the Commission – October 14, 2026

Program Updates

Commissioner Transitions

The Racial Equity Commission recently welcomed two new appointments: Commissioner Tania Israel, appointed by the Senate Rules Committee in August 2026, and Commissioner Diane Ortiz, appointed by the Office of the Speaker of the Assembly in September 2026. Conversely, following the recent resignation of Commissioner Richardson, the Commission currently maintains four vacancies. These comprise three vacant gubernatorial appointments and one vacant appointment remaining under the jurisdiction of the Senate Rules Committee.

Fundraising and Development

Executive Director Eric De La Cruz recently held an initial introductory meeting with the Blue Shield of California Foundation, during which the Foundation confirmed that the Commission's current grant funding is set to expire on June 30, 2027. To ensure continuity, the Foundation proposed initiating discussions early next year regarding program evaluation and subsequent 18- to 24-month grant opportunities, while noting an industry-wide annual decline in charitable donations. Additionally, the Foundation generously offered to coordinate a Funders Briefing in December to convene prospective donor partners. These strategic philanthropic efforts will directly support the Commission's dedicated special fund, which is statutorily authorized to accept gifts, donations, grants, and bequests to sustain essential operations, including staffing, community engagement, program implementation, and rigorous evaluation.

Committee Meetings and Community Events

During its September 28–30 community outreach visit to Bishop, California, the Racial Equity Commission (REC) focused on regional rent burdens and affordable housing shortages alongside partners Cerro Coso Community College and Dr. Roberson. Staff researched Bishop Paiute Tribal ordinances regarding land, water, and housing authority, and coordinated with the Department of Housing and Community

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Development for an eventual Day 3 alignment, though the Day 3 Table launch was ultimately postponed due to low participant confirmation. While the three-day trip successfully established a foundation with the college and engaged local groups like Wild Iris Family Services, key lessons learned highlighted the need for a minimum two-month outreach window, explicit partner agreements regarding fiscal support and speaking expectations, and mandatory dry runs for event programming.

The Racial Equity Commission (REC) is postponing its proposed October 19 outreach visit to San Diego, California, due to critical staffing shortages. Originally planned to focus on the LGBTQIA community with insights gained from a briefing with San Diego County epidemiologists on their new Adult LGBTQ Population report—the trip’s focus is shifting toward immigrant and refugee populations. While Commissioners Maldonado and Israel are potential attendees, key event structures remain unfinalized: the Day 1 Meet-and-Greet has been canceled, Day 2 partners are still being identified, and Day 3 content is still in development.

Annual Report Update

Executive Director Eric S. De La Cruz has started a draft of the 2026 Annual Report, which is due December 31, 2026. Director De La Cruz is looking at other similar Annual Reports. Suggestion is for the Commission to consider creating a report that’s illustrative and in the fashion of “Story telling” similar to that of The California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs (CAPIAA) Annual report.

Arthur Animation

The REC is incorporating an animation overview of the Racial Equity Commission and [Executive Order N-16-22](#). This project is intended for our external audience and will be used to connect the project to broader REC priorities and communications strategy.

Google Cloud Platform vs. MS SharePoint

LCI ITU plans to introduce business data resilience to all parties to the benefit of using LCI’s MS SharePoint and highlight the risks of using Google Cloud platforms. ITU will conduct a risk assessment to verify if REC stays on the Google Cloud platform.