

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 146

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 28, 2024

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman CARMEN THERESA MORALES

District 34 (Essex)

Assemblyman GABRIEL RODRIGUEZ

District 33 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Marengo

SYNOPSIS

Encourages institutions of higher education to address lack of representation of Hispanic and Latino leadership in higher education.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/28/2024)

- 1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** encouraging institutions of higher
2 education to address the lack of representation of Hispanic and
3 Latino leadership in higher education.
4
- 5 **WHEREAS**, In 2022, enrollment of Hispanic and Latino students in
6 United States institutions of higher education rose to nearly 3.8
7 million students, and one out of four associate degrees and 16
8 percent of bachelor’s degrees were conferred to Hispanic students;
9 and
- 10 **WHEREAS**, Approximately 20 percent of the undergraduate population
11 in the United States and 25 percent of the undergraduate population
12 in New Jersey identifies as Hispanic or Latino, and postsecondary
13 attendance among Hispanic and Latino students continues to
14 increase each year; and
- 15 **WHEREAS**, Despite the growing population of Hispanic and Latino
16 students in higher education, the number of Hispanic and Latino
17 college and university presidents remains disproportionately low;
18 and
- 19 **WHEREAS**, In 2023, only six percent of presidents of institutions of
20 higher education in the United States identified as Hispanic or
21 Latino, and there is currently only one Latino president leading an
22 institution of higher education in New Jersey; and
- 23 **WHEREAS**, The lack of representation of Hispanic and Latino
24 individuals in leadership roles in higher education is of great
25 concern as cultivating a leadership team that is reflective of the
26 student body is critical to fostering an inclusive climate,
27 understanding students’ diverse needs and interests, and ensuring
28 students feel seen and heard; and
- 29 **WHEREAS**, The challenges Hispanic and Latino students face in higher
30 education underscore the need to better ensure college campuses are
31 as inclusive as they are diverse; and
- 32 **WHEREAS**, According to the 2024 State of Higher Education report,
33 among the Hispanic students surveyed, 16 percent reported feeling
34 disrespected, 14 percent felt discriminated against, 15 percent felt
35 physically unsafe, and 16 percent felt psychologically unsafe during
36 their postsecondary education, and 42 percent had considered
37 withdrawing from their postsecondary education program; and
- 38 **WHEREAS**, Addressing the low representation of Hispanic and Latino
39 presidents at institutions of higher education can help improve the
40 cultural competency of postsecondary education institutions to
41 better support Hispanic and Latino students’ academic success and
42 well-being; and
- 43 **WHEREAS**, Hiring practices in institutions of higher education, which
44 lack diversity on governing boards and in executive search firms,
45 create barriers to advancing Hispanic and Latino individuals to
46 presidential positions; and
- 47 **WHEREAS**, Replacing outmoded hiring practices with concerted
48 efforts to attract diverse talent in higher education, expand

1 leadership development programs, and engage with organizations
2 dedicated to the advancement of Hispanic and Latino leaders in
3 higher education can help institutions overcome such barriers; and
4 **WHEREAS**, Focusing on inclusive leadership and improving the
5 representation of Hispanic and Latino presidents in higher
6 education will benefit students, institutions, and society at large by
7 fostering welcoming, diverse learning environments that promote
8 critical thinking, break down stereotypes and reduce biases, and
9 prepare graduates to navigate an increasingly globalized world; and
10 **WHEREAS**, The General Assembly celebrates the increasingly diverse
11 college student population representing the diversity of our broader
12 communities and recognizes the importance of increasing the
13 representation of Hispanic and Latino leadership in institutions of
14 higher education in New Jersey and across the United States; now,
15 therefore,

16
17 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New
18 Jersey:

19
20 1. This House encourages institutions of higher education to
21 address the lack of representation of Hispanic and Latino presidents
22 in institutions of higher education by establishing and expanding
23 leadership development programs, enhancing the diversity of
24 governing boards and search committees, and actively engaging
25 with organizations dedicated to the advancement of Hispanic and
26 Latino leaders in higher education.

27
28 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
29 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
30 New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education, the Executive Director
31 of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities,
32 the Chair of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, and the
33 United States Secretary of Education.

34

35

36

STATEMENT

37

38 This resolution encourages institutions of higher education in
39 New Jersey and across the United States to address the lack of
40 representation of Hispanic and Latino presidents of institutions of
41 higher education.

42 Colleges and universities in New Jersey and across the country
43 have seen significant increases in enrollment of Hispanic and Latino
44 undergraduate students in recent decades. Currently, approximately
45 20 percent of undergraduate students in the United States and
46 approximately 25 percent of undergraduate students in New Jersey
47 identify as Hispanic or Latino.

1 However, while college enrollments increasingly reflect the rich
2 diversity of this State and nation as a whole, the leadership in
3 institutions of higher education does not. In 2023, only six percent
4 of presidents of institutions of higher education in the United States
5 identified as Hispanic or Latino and there is currently only one
6 Latino president leading an institution of higher education in New
7 Jersey.

8 The lack of diverse leadership among institutions of higher
9 education is of great concern as creating a leadership team that is
10 reflective of the student body is critical to promoting inclusivity and
11 belongingness among students, understanding students' diverse
12 needs and interests, and ensuring students feel safe, seen, and heard.
13 Thus, this resolution encourages institutions of higher education in
14 New Jersey and across the United States to address the lack of
15 representation of Hispanic and Latino leadership in higher
16 education by establishing and expanding leadership development
17 programs, enhancing the diversity of governing boards and search
18 committees, and actively engaging with organizations dedicated to
19 the advancement of Hispanic and Latino leaders in higher
20 education.