

EWD RLC Report: A Comprehensive Game Plan for a More Resilient Louisiana

Principles for Equity in Resilience

Resilience is bigger than recovery. Recovery gets us back to where we were. Resilience is about building the capacity of individuals, businesses and communities to withstand, recover from and thrive after crises. When we focus efforts on equity, true resilience abounds.

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Employing a wider lens on equity, our task forces and the agencies that influence or drive their work ideally serve the same goal: promoting resilience. In doing so, the following guiding questions can be used by task forces in the development of recommendations that build equity across Louisiana.

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Make People Our Priority

Louisiana's people have suffered disproportionately in ways that include, but reach far wider than, what the COVID-19 infection and death data shows. Approximately, 1 in 5 people in the state live in poverty. According to the 2018 United Way Alice Project report, 66 percent of jobs in Louisiana pay less than \$20 per hour, with more than two-thirds of those jobs paying less than \$15 per hour.

Louisiana is also the most unequal state in the country in relation to the gender pay gap, whereby in 2019 women earn 69 cents for every dollar men make. Black women are paid less than half—47 cents on the dollar—of what white men make. As a result, Louisiana has the 2nd highest poverty rate; the 3rd highest child poverty rate, the 4th lowest median household income and the 2nd highest income inequality rate in the United States.

The pandemic has further exacerbated the inability of Louisianans to earn the money they need to keep themselves and their families healthy and safe. ***How will your recommendations prioritize vulnerable people and their jobs so we recover better than we entered this pandemic?***

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We Must Be Honest About Racial and Ethnic Discrimination and Disparities

The racial disparities in COVID-19 deaths are not a coincidence, but a result of systemic inequities, inequalities and policy choices. True resilience will be a result of the development of recovery strategies and practices that are conscious of racial realities. ***How will your recommendations seek to eliminate the continuing impact of past and current discrimination?***

Increase Opportunity in Rural and Urban Areas Facing Extreme Poverty

The alarming COVID-19 infection and death rates in Louisiana can be traced back to the combination of ethnicity, poverty and place. Recovery strategies can bring opportunities to the places of concentrated poverty that need them most in both rural and urban areas. ***How will your recommendations ensure that ZIP codes don't predict health and economic outcomes?***

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Create Prosperity Pathways through Opportunities for Job Seekers and Small Businesses

Small businesses are the backbone of Louisiana's economy. Pathways to prosperity for all Louisianans will be further enhanced by connecting disadvantaged job seekers and small, diverse businesses to new opportunities. ***How will your recommendations create more ladders of opportunity so that Louisiana becomes a stronger, more prosperous and resilient state?***

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Overarching DRAFT Recommendation:

Transformative redesign of education and workforce systems with every approach centered on the person and the family

- Crisis-informed snapshot of the state of the economy and opportunity in LA
- Proactive and braided resourcing
- Collaborative regional processes