



MEMORANDUM

Prepared for: House Special Committee on
Modernizing the People's Legislature
Date: March 3, 2021
By: Melissa Leoni and Leslie Porter, Analysts
Re: State and Legislator Demographics

LPRO: LEGISLATIVE POLICY AND RESEARCH OFFICE

The House Special Committee on Modernizing the People's Legislature has scheduled an informational meeting and public hearing on the topic of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) Inclusion in the Legislative Assembly. The Committee's co-chairs have asked for information on the demographics of Oregon and the Legislative Assembly.

SUMMARY

The Population Research Center at Portland State University compiled data from the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census Bureau reports and 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) population estimates.¹ While comparing the data from the 2000 U.S. Census and the 2019 ACS survey, the following population changes are estimated for the past 20 years:

- "Hispanic or Latino (of any race)" will grow from 8 percent to 13.4 percent;
- "Not Hispanic or Latino" will fall from 92 percent to 86.6 percent;
- "White alone" will fall from 83.5 percent to 74.9 percent;
- "Black or African American alone" will grow from 1.6 percent to 1.8 percent;
- "American Indian and Alaska Native alone" will fall from 1.2 percent to one percent;
- "Asian alone" will grow from 2.9 percent to 4.5 percent;
- "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone" will grow from 0.2 percent to 0.3 percent;
- "Some other race alone" will remain constant at 0.1 percent; and
- "Two or more races" will grow from 2.4 percent to 3.9 percent.

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) conducted research on state legislator demographics in 2015 and 2020 prior to the November election. Concerning gender, the 2015 NCSL data show that 69 percent of Oregon's legislators were men and 31 percent were women, whereas in 2020, 60 percent of Oregon's legislators were men and 40 percent were women. For race and ethnicity, the NCSL data show that percentage of "White/Caucasian" members of the Oregon Legislative Assembly decreased from 94 percent in 2015 to 84 percent in 2020. In 2015, five percent were identified as either "Black/African American" or "Hispanic/Latino," while the 2020 data

¹ Charles Rynerson, State Data Center Coordinator, Population Research Center, College of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State University. [Redistricting Senate 2021 Regular Session - Oregon Legislative Information System \(oregonlegislature.gov\)](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/redistricting-senate-2021-regular-session).

show zero percent. However, the identification data for 2020 are incomplete, having “no data” for eight percent of the Assembly while another seven percent is missing.²

OREGON POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1 shows the change in population shares by race and ethnicity for 2000, 2010, and 2019 from data from the U.S. Census and 2019 American Community Survey.³ Below are summaries of that data.

Between 2000 and 2010:

- “Hispanic or Latino (of any race)” grew by 3.7 percentage points;
- “Not Hispanic or Latino” fell by 3.7 percentage points;
- “White alone” fell seven percentage points;
- “Black or African American alone” grew by 0.1 percentage points;
- “American Indian and Alaska Native alone” fell by 0.1 percentage points;
- “Asian alone” grew by 0.7 percentage points;
- “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone” grew 0.1 percentage points;
- “Some other race alone” remained constant at 0.1 percent; and,
- “Two or more races” grew by 0.5 percentage points.

Between 2010 and 2019:

- “Hispanic or Latino (of any race)” is estimated to grow by 1.6 percentage points;
- “Not Hispanic or Latino” is estimated to fall by 1.7 percentage points;
- “White alone” is estimated to fall by 3.6 percentage points
- “Black or African American alone” is estimated to grow by 0.1 percentage points;
- “American Indian and Alaska Native alone” is estimated to fall by 0.1 percentage points;
- “Asian alone” is estimated to grow by 0.9 percentage points;
- “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone” is estimated to remain constant at 0.3 percent;
- “Some other race alone” is estimated to remain constant at 0.1 percent; and
- “Two or more races” is estimated to grow by one percentage point.

² National Conference of State Legislatures, *State Legislator Demographics*, <https://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/state-legislator-demographics.aspx> (last visited March 2, 2021.)

³ Charles Rynerson, State Data Center Coordinator, Population Research Center, College of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State University. [Redistricting Senate 2021 Regular Session - Oregon Legislative Information System \(oregonlegislature.gov\)](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/legislation/redistricting-senate-2021-regular-session).

Table 1: Population Shares by Race/Ethnicity 2000 – 2019⁴

HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE	2000 Census	2010 Census	2019 ACS Estimate	2019 ACS MOE*
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	8.0%	11.7%	13.4%	
Not Hispanic or Latino	92.0%	88.3%	86.6%	
White alone	83.5%	78.5%	74.9%	+/-0.1%
Black or African American alone	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	+/-0.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	+/-0.1%
Asian alone	2.9%	3.6%	4.5%	+/-0.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	+/-0.1%
Some other race alone	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	+/-0.1%
Two or more races	2.4%	2.9%	3.9%	+/-0.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Censuses, 2019 American Community Survey one-year estimates, Table DP05.

**MOE = Margin of Error at the 90% confidence level. Includes sampling error but does not incorporate errors to independent estimates used to weight survey responses.*

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEMOGRAPHICS

Tables 2 and 3 show NCSL's data for Oregon on gender and race/ethnicity for 2015 and 2020. NCSL also collected data on generation, party, religion, and highest level of education. NCSL notes that that data for many states and categories are not complete and any conclusions drawn from this data must contend with those limitations.⁵

Table 2: Gender in the Oregon Legislative Assembly

Gender	2015	2020
Female	31%	40%
Male	69%	60%

Source: NCSL⁶

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ National Conference of State Legislatures, *State Legislator Demographics*, <https://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/state-legislator-demographics.aspx> (last visited March 2, 2021.)

⁶ *Id.*

Table 3: Race and Ethnicity in the Oregon Legislative Assembly

Race/Ethnicity	2015	2020
White/Caucasian	94%	84%
Black/African American	2%	0%
Hispanic/Latino	3%	0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0%	0%
American Indian/Native American	0%	1%
Multiracial/Other	0%	0%
No Data	0%	8%

Source: NCSL⁷

⁷ *Id.*