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## Latino Immigrants Have Higher Rates of Health Insurance in States with Inclusive Policies

Maria-Elena Young and Steven P. Wallace

State policymakers have the discretion to extend a range of rights, protections, and opportunities for eligibility to Latino immigrants who lack citizenship. Inclusive policies range from eligibility to public benefits to access to higher education and workplace protections, to limitations on involvement in immigration enforcement. As a result, states across the U.S. have different levels of inclusion of their Latino immigrant residents.<sup>1</sup>

Inclusive policies not only make critical resources available to immigrants, but together these policies create a social environment that is more welcoming to them. In such environments, immigrants are likely to feel more comfortable accessing health care, engaging with providers, and obtaining resources to promote their well-being.

Exhibit 1

Number of Inclusive State Immigrant Policies

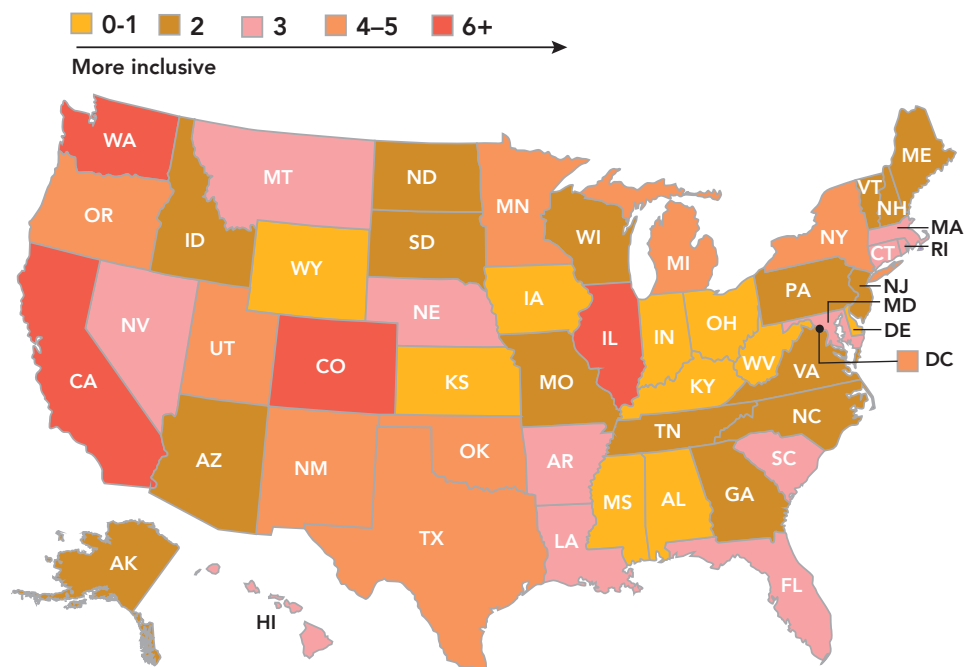


Exhibit 2

Types of Inclusive Policies by Two States: California and Alabama

| California | Alabama | Inclusive Policies   |
|------------|---------|--|
| ✓          | ✗       | Provides health insurance to low-income children and pregnant women, regardless of legal status. |
| ✓          | ✗       | Gives in-state tuition to undocumented university students.                                      |
| ✓          | ✗       | Limits the use of E-Verify work authorization.   |
| ✓          | ✗       | Grants driver's licenses regardless of legal status.   |
| ✓          | ✗       | Limits police collaboration with immigrant enforcement.  |

Recent research shows that in states that have a greater number of inclusive policies, Latino immigrants who lack citizenship have higher rates of health insurance coverage. Controlling for sociodemographic factors such as age, education, and income, noncitizen Latinos in states with more than nine inclusive policies have a 10 percent higher probability of having health insurance than do noncitizen Latinos in states with no inclusive policies.<sup>2</sup>

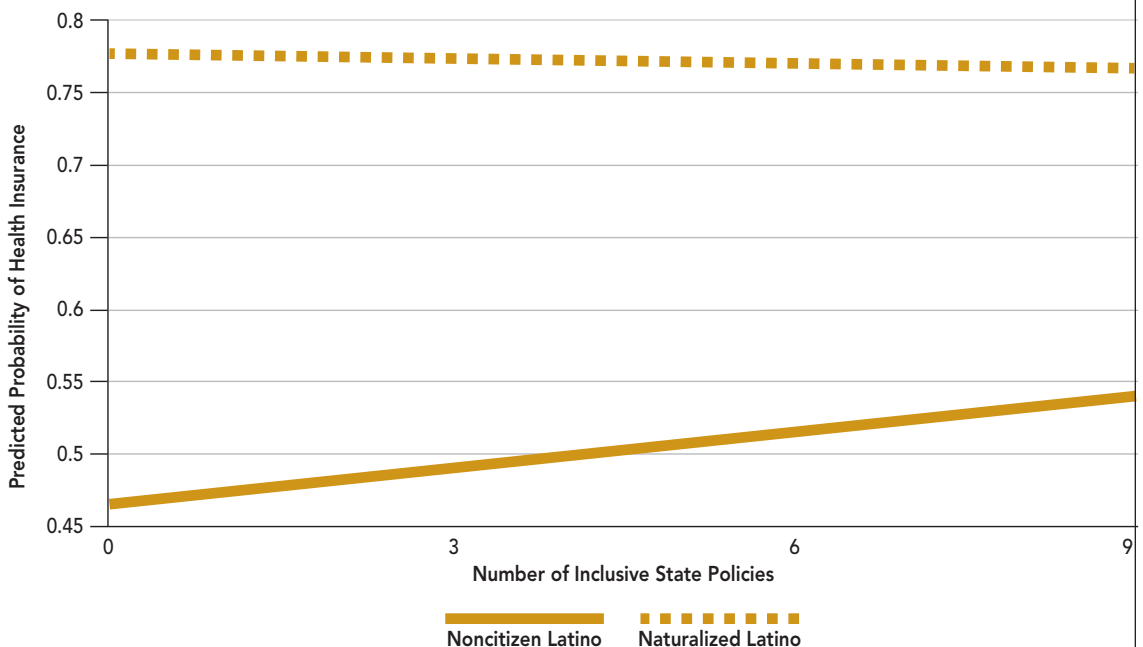
**Noncitizens Have Lower Rates than Naturalized Citizens**

Research also shows that noncitizens, even in the most inclusive states, have much lower rates of health insurance coverage than immigrants who are naturalized.

While many states, such as California and Illinois, are leading the way in expanding the rights, protections, and eligibility of their immigrant residents, noncitizens still have lower levels of health insurance than their counterparts who are naturalized.

Exhibit 3

Predicted Probabilities of Health Insurance by Citizenship and Race/Ethnicity



### Author Information

Maria-Elena Young is a graduate student researcher at the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and a doctoral student in the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. Steven P. Wallace is professor and chair of the Department of Community Health Sciences and associate director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.

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### Endnotes

- 1 Rodríguez MA, Young ME, Wallace SP. 2015. *Creating Conditions to Support Healthy People: State Policies That Affect the Health of Undocumented Immigrants and Their Families*. Los Angeles, CA. University of California Global Health Institute.
- 2 Young MT, Leon-Perez G, Wells CR, Wallace SP. Inclusive State Immigrant Policies and Health Insurance Among Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, and White Noncitizens in the United States. *Ethnicity & Health*. Published online Oct 20, 2017. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13557858.2017.1390074>.



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