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# **RACIAL DIVERSITY AMONG SENATE COMMITTEE TOP STAFF**

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July 2021

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# Executive Summary

This report provides evidence regarding the lack of racial diversity among U.S. Senate committee office top staff positions. This report defines committee office top staff as all staff director, deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy director positions in Senate committee offices. The data reflect Senate employment as of June 7, 2021. Key findings show:

- **People of color make up 40 percent of the U.S. population, but only 7.9 percent of Senate staff directors identify as people of color.** Latina/os are 18.4 percent of the U.S. population but only 2.6 percent of Senate committee staff directors. African Americans account for 12.4 percent of the U.S. population but only 2.6 percent of Senate staff directors. Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders are 5.6 percent of the U.S. population, but there are currently no Asian American/Pacific Islander Senate committee staff directors. Biracial Americans are 2.5 percent of the U.S. population, but there are currently no Biracial Senate committee staff directors. Native Americans are 0.7 percent of the U.S. population and 2.6 percent of Senate committee staff directors. Middle Eastern/North Africans are 0.6 percent of the U.S. population, but there are currently no Middle Eastern/North African committee staff directors. Since our 2015 report, the overall percentage of Senate staff directors of color increased from 7.7 to 7.9 percent.
- **Among Senate committee top staff positions outside of staff director (e.g., deputy staff director, general counsel, chief counsel, and policy director), only 15.7 percent identify as people of color.** Of these other Senate committee top staff, only 3.6 percent are Latina/o, 2.4 percent are African American, 4.8 percent are Asian American/Pacific Islander, 1.2 percent are Biracial, 1.2 percent are Native American, and 2.4 percent are Middle Eastern/North African.
- **People of color are underrepresented among both Democratic and Republican Senate committee top staff.** Although people of color make up 37.9 percent of Democratic voters nationally, they account for only 11.1 percent of Democratic Senate staff directors and 20 percent of other Democratic full committee top staff. And while people of color account for 29.6 percent of Republican voters nationally, they account for only 5.3 percent of Republican Senate staff directors and 11.6 percent of other Republican full committee top staff.

# Introduction

This report examines racial diversity among staff director, deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy director positions (“top staff”) in U.S. Senate full committee offices as of June 7, 2021.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Senate has 20 permanent committees, and the staffers of these committees play essential roles in policymaking. Most of the substantive legislation passed into law originates in committees, and committee staff are responsible for thinking through the intricacies of legislation and how policies will affect various communities.<sup>2</sup> Congressional committees are also responsible for providing oversight of government agencies, managing the confirmation process of presidential nominees, and suggesting courses of action to the full Senate, such as recommending hearings or offering edits to legislation.<sup>3</sup>

Each committee generally has a majority staff director, who is selected by the Senator who chairs the committee,<sup>4</sup> and a minority staff director, who is selected by the Senator who is the Ranking Member (the senior minority party member) of the committee.<sup>5</sup> (The exception to this is the bipartisan Select Committee on Ethics, which has one bipartisan staff director. Also, at the time of the collection of this data there was one vacancy for the Democratic staff director on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Hence, the 20 committees have a total of 38 staff directors.) The committee chair and majority staff director generally hire other majority committee staff, and the committee Ranking Member and minority staff director generally hire minority committee staff. Aside from the staff director, both majority and minority committee offices often hire top staffers with titles such as deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy director.

While Senators make the final decisions, top committee staff work in specific policy areas and wield significant influence and subject matter expertise. Corporations, advocacy organizations, news media, Senate personal office staff, and other actors look to top committee staff as experts.

The U.S. Senate already lacks racial diversity among its elected Members, and developing more racially diverse committee office top staff could help offset this lack of diversity. While people of color account for 40 percent of the U.S. population,<sup>6</sup> they account for only 11 percent of U.S. Senators, 7.9 percent of Senate full committee staff directors and 15.5 percent of other top staff (i.e., deputy staff directors, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy directors).

As explained below, the significant influence and lack of racial diversity of top staff facilitate systemic biases that reproduce privilege and inequality and affect all Americans. Increasing diversity among key staffers would enhance congressional deliberation, innovation, legitimacy, and legislative outcomes, which would allow the Senate to function more effectively and in a manner that more accurately reflects America’s diversity.

# Methodology

The U.S. Senate does not systematically and reliably study the race or ethnicity of all of its Members' top staff.<sup>7</sup> While federal law requires many federal agencies, government contractors, and private and nonprofit organizations to collect and disclose employees' race, gender, and other demographic information to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, this law does not apply to the U.S. Senate.

Senate leadership could decide to collect and disclose demographic information about their committee staff. Senate Republicans have yet to publicly release any data on the diversity of their staffs. Since 2017, Senate Democrats have collected and disclosed data on the racial diversity of the Democratic staff on each committee but have failed to disaggregate the data by position or provide other data to show whether staffers of color are represented in top positions.

We have completed a census of the top positions in each U.S. Senate full committee. The data reflect employment in Senate committee offices as of June 7, 2021.

In the initial stage of data collection, the author performed an online search for Senate staff photographs with links to current and past employment. The author obtained data from various sources, including *LegiStorm*, *Twitter*, *LinkedIn*, *YouTube*, *Roll Call*, *The Hill*, *National Journal*, constituent photographs, wedding announcements, and press interviews. During this initial stage, the author conditionally identified the race or ethnicity of approximately 96 percent of top staff.

The author then reviewed all of the collected information identifying people of color with leadership from Senate staff associations to confirm these data and identify the remaining 4 percent of staffers whose race could not be determined during the initial data collection stage. To assist with the confirmation process, researchers, on occasion, utilized a tool that uses Census data to predict the probability of an individual's race/ethnicity based upon their surname.<sup>8</sup>

Further, the author emailed the staff directors, deputy staff directors, general counsel, chief counsel, and policy directors in each Senate committee office, provided each person with the data collected about their race/ethnicity and position, and asked the staffers to correct any errors. Those staffers who did not respond were contacted via email a second time with another opportunity to correct our data.<sup>9</sup>

The U.S. Census Bureau defines race as a person's self-identification with one or more social groups. This report contains seven racial categories: White, African American, Latina/o, Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI), Biracial or Multiracial, Middle Eastern/North African (MENA), and Native American.<sup>10</sup>

To maintain consistency, this report limits the definition of "top" committee staff to five positions deemed essential to most Senate committee offices: staff director, deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy director. We selected the positions based on interviews with

current and former Senate staff directors, the positions that were common on many committees, and staff salary data. Some congressional staff have multiple titles and roles in Senate committee offices. For our analysis, we counted only the most senior position to identify top staffers as unique individuals.

Other staff may have significant roles in committee offices, but those positions, such as chief economist, are not included in this report because they are not consistent across committees.

We also did not include communications directors as top committee staff. Many committee offices do not have the position and rely instead on the communications director in the personal office of the Chair or Ranking Member. As of June 7, 2021, 56.4 percent of committee offices had a communications director or similar position. These communications directors earned on average \$119,070, while the five positions we render “top” staff earned on average between \$148,617 (policy director) to \$169,231 (staff director). Of the committee offices that did have a communications director, five of 22 (22.7 percent) were people of color (one African American, two Latina/os, one Asian American/Pacific Islander, and one Biracial staffer). If we were to include the communications director position along with the other Senate committee top staff in our analysis, we would increase the percentage of top staff of color among other Senate committee top staff from 15.5 percent to 17 percent. The committee Chairs and Ranking Members who have hired a communications director who identifies as a person of color are Senators Cardin (D-MD), Menendez (D-NJ), Portman (R-OH), Toomey (R-PA), and Wyden (D-OR).

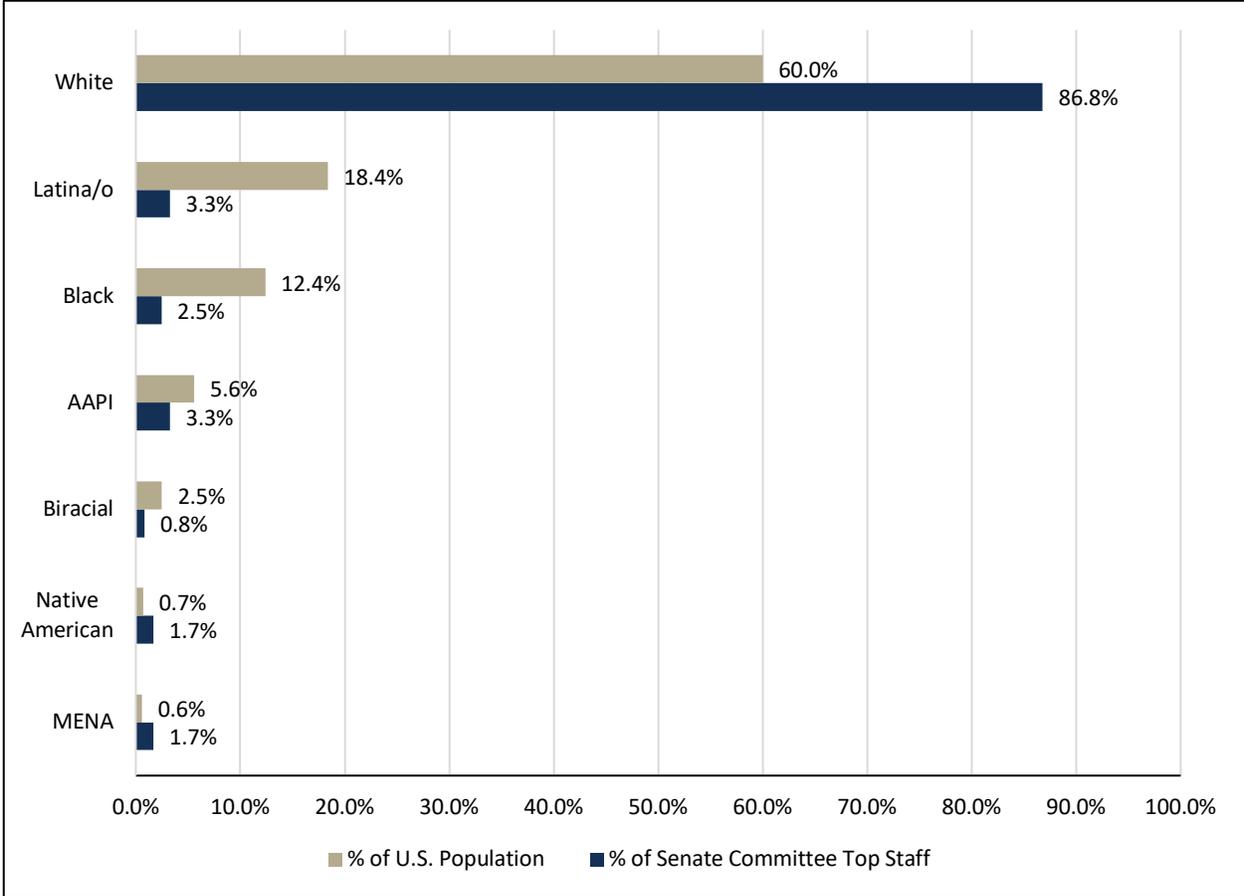
We believe this report’s analysis provides the most consistent snapshot of diversity across top staff in U.S. Senators’ committee offices. Although there may be isolated instances of significantly influential staff of color in positions not reflected by this report, these individuals’ presence does not explain why the U.S. Senate, as an institution, has relatively few people of color in the positions included in this study.

Committee staff are an extension of the Chairs and Ranking Members and have incredible influence over the political process, including deciding which hearings to hold and what bills move further through the legislative process. The top staff of committee members that work out of a Member’s personal office were not included in this study. Thus, we excluded from our official count of “top staff” four chief counsel who are employed by Senate Judiciary Committee Members rather than the Chair or Ranking Member of the Committee. Two of the four chief counsel who were not included in this study are people of color, and both are employed by Senator Booker (D-NJ).

# Diversity of Top Committee Staff

People of color make up 40 percent of the U.S. population, but only 13.2 percent of Senate top committee staff (i.e., staff director, deputy directors, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy directors) identify as people of color.

**Racial Demographics of U.S. Population vs. Senate Committee Top Staff**



Note: Due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100 percent.

**Racial Demographics Among Senate Committee Office Top Staff  
(by raw numbers)**

	Staff Director	Deputy Staff Director	Chief Counsel	General Counsel	Policy Director
<b>White</b>	35	22	21	10	17
<b>Black</b>	1	0	2	0	0
<b>Latina/o</b>	1	1	1	0	1
<b>AAPI</b>	0	0	2	2	0
<b>Native American</b>	1	1	0	0	0
<b>MENA</b>	0	1	1	0	0
<b>Biracial</b>	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>

Note: Although there are 39 committee offices, there are not 39 staff directors, deputy staff directors, chief counsel, general counsel, or policy directors. This is due to vacancies at the time of data collection and because 13 committee staff have multiple titles and roles in the Senate committee offices. For our analysis, we counted only the most senior role to identify top staffers as unique individuals. See the Methodology section for more detail.

**Racial Demographics Among Senate Committee Office Top Staff  
(by percentages)**

	U.S. Population	Staff Director	Deputy Staff Director	Chief Counsel	General Counsel	Policy Director
<b>White</b>	60.0%	92.1%	84.6%	77.8%	83.3%	94.4%
<b>Black</b>	12.4%	2.6%	0%	7.4%	0%	0%
<b>Latina/o</b>	18.4%	2.6%	3.8%	3.7%	0%	5.6%
<b>AAPI</b>	5.6%	0%	0%	7.4%	16.7%	0%
<b>Native American</b>	0.7%	2.6%	3.8%	0%	0%	0%
<b>MENA</b>	0.6%	0%	3.8%	3.7%	0%	0%
<b>Biracial</b>	2.5%	0%	3.8%	0%	0%	0%

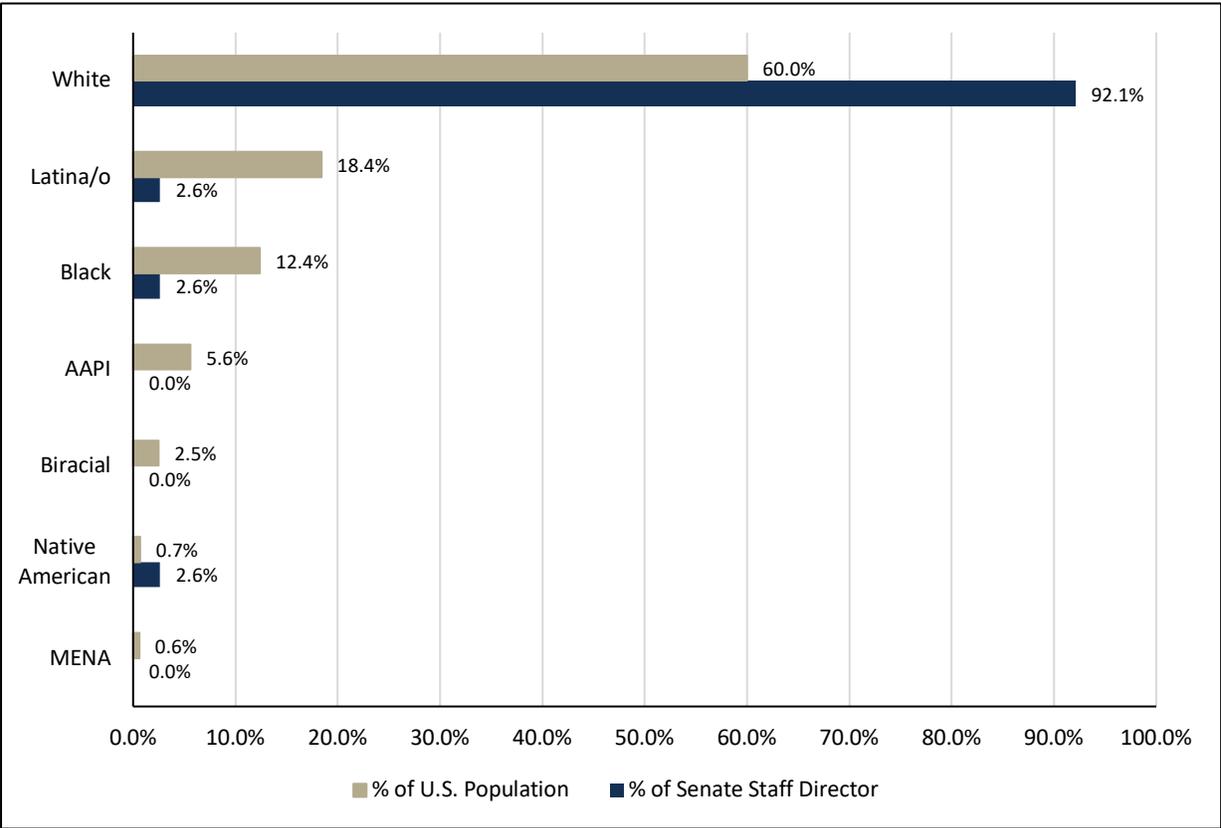
Note: Due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100 percent.

# Diversity of Staff Directors

Staff director is the highest-ranking staff position in each Senate committee office, so we analyze this position separately. Usually, staff directors manage the committee’s work agenda, schedule markups and hearings, and find witnesses to appear at hearings and to provide subject matter expertise to committee members.

Of the 38 Senate staff directors in committee offices, only three (or 7.9 percent) are people of color, including one African American, one Latina/o, and one Native American. (At the time this data was collected and analyzed, there was one vacancy for the Democratic staff director on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee). People of color account for 40 percent of the U.S. population but 7.9 percent of committee staff directors in the Senate. White Americans account for 60 percent of the U.S. population but 92.1 percent of committee staff directors in the Senate.

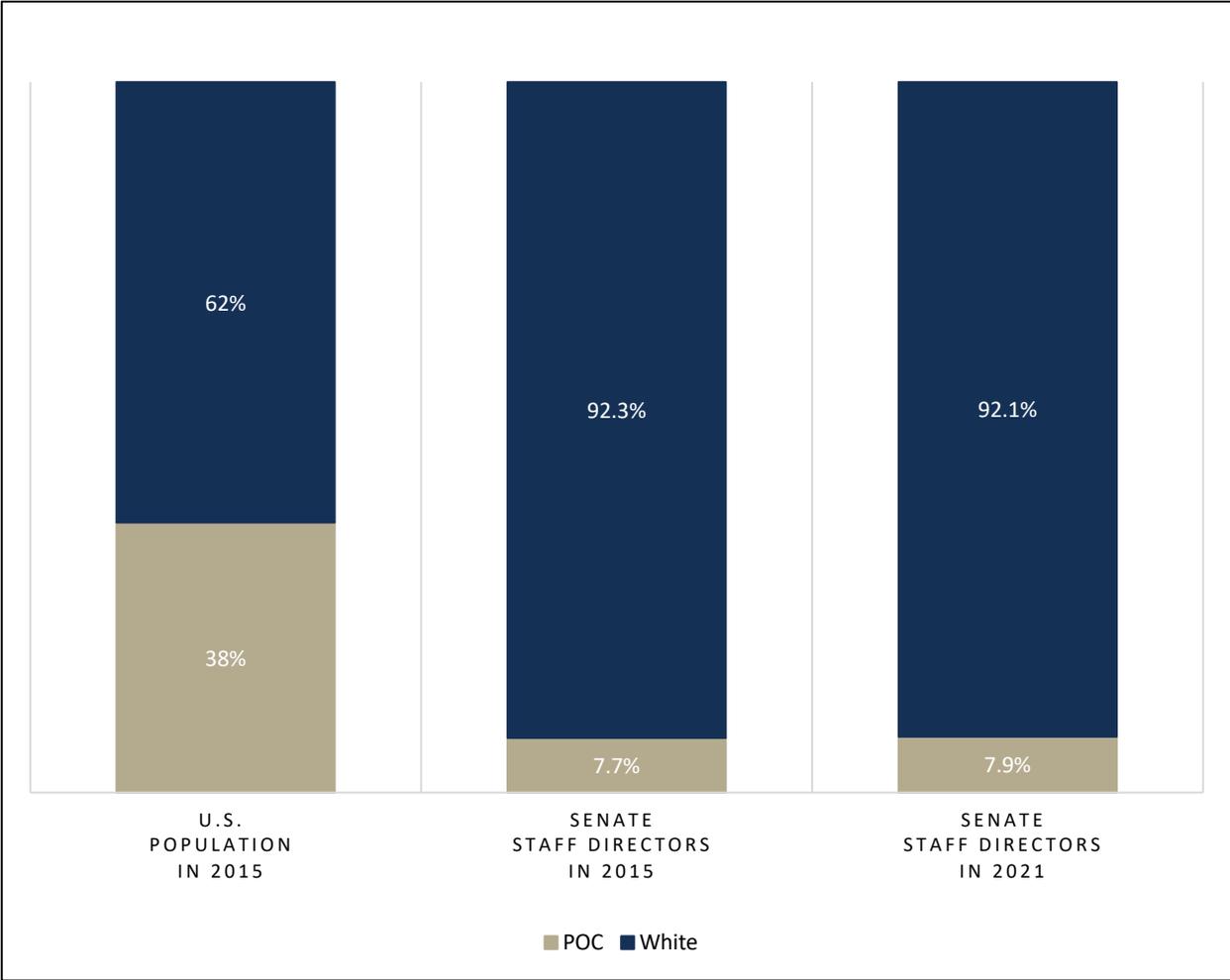
**Racial Demographics of U.S. Population vs. Senate Staff Director<sup>11</sup>**



Note: Due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100 percent.

Between 2015 and 2021, the percentage of people of color in Senate staff director positions increased marginally from 7.7 to 7.9 percent.

### Racial Diversity Among Senate Staff Directors, 2015 – 2021



Note: Between 2015 and 2019, the percentage of people of color in the U.S. increased from 38 percent of the population to 40 percent. There were 39 available staff director positions in 2015 and 38 available staff director positions in 2021 (one vacancy for the Democratic staff director on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee).

# Diversity of Deputy Staff Directors, Chief Counsel, General Counsel, and Policy Directors

This report separates the analysis of the staff director position from other top positions—deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy director—since staff director is generally the top committee staff position, and it exists in every Senate office. Deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, and policy director staff positions also perform essential functions in Senate committee offices, but these positions are not universally used in Senate committee offices.

There are 83 committee top staff who serve as deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, and/or policy director. Of these positions, 13 (or 15.7 percent) are held by people of color.

A deputy staff director often helps the staff director manage an office’s legislative activities and staff. Of the 26 deputy staff directors, 4 (or 15.4 percent) are people of color, including one Latina/o, one Biracial, one Middle Eastern/North African, and one Native American.

A chief counsel plays a central role in overseeing a committee’s legislative, oversight, and investigative activities. Of the 27 chief counsel positions, 6 (or 22.2 percent) are held by people of color, including two African Americans, two Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, one Middle Eastern/North African, and one Latina/o. There are 9 additional chief counsel who also hold the title of a higher position (i.e., staff director or deputy staff director), and they are already included in our staff calculations of those higher positions in their respective committee offices.

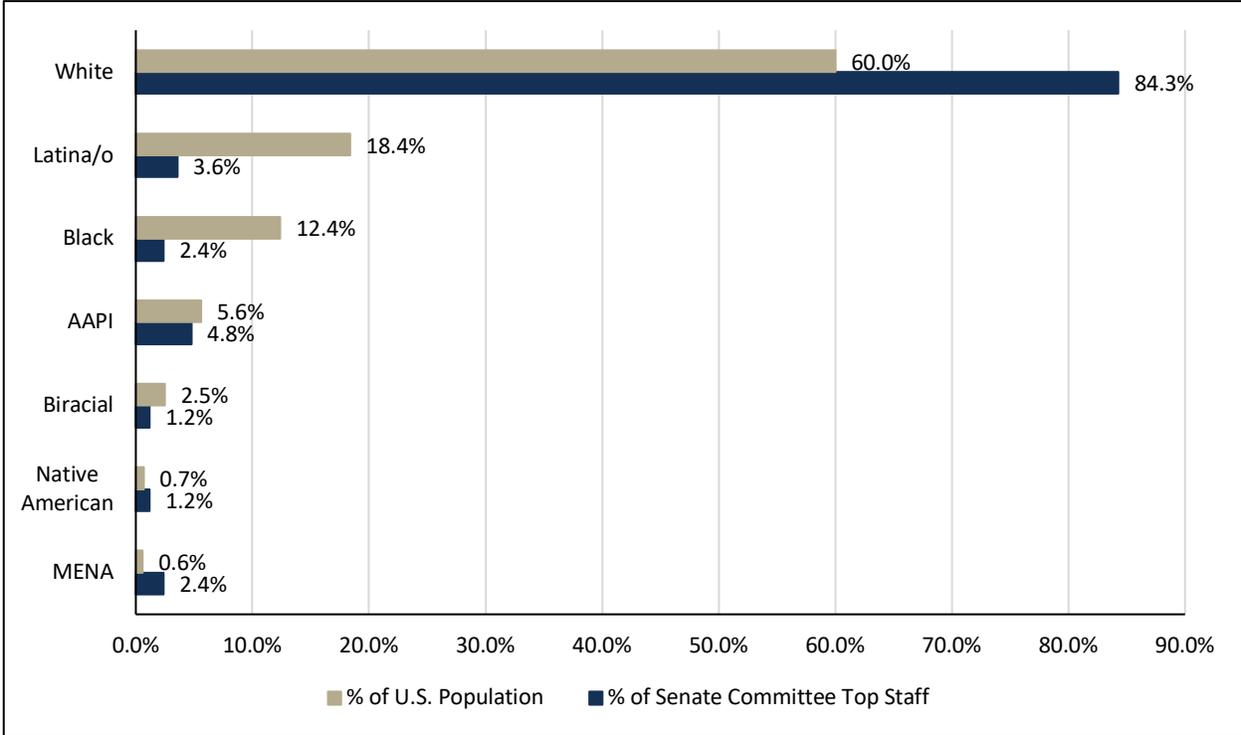
A general counsel also plays a central role in overseeing a committee’s legislative, oversight, and investigative activities. Of the 12 general counsel positions, 2 (or 16.7 percent) are held by people of color—both Asian American/Pacific Islanders. There are two additional general counsel who also hold the title of a higher position (i.e., deputy staff director or chief counsel), and they are already included in our staff calculations of those higher positions in their respective committee offices.

A policy director plays a central role in providing expertise in specific policy areas to a policy director’s committee. Of the 18 policy directors, 1 (or 5.6 percent) is a person of color (a Latina/o staffer). There are two additional policy directors who also hold the title of a higher position (i.e., deputy staff director), and they are already included in our staff calculations of those higher positions in their respective committee offices.

People of color account for 40 percent of the U.S. population but only 15.7 percent of Senate committee office top staff who are not staff directors—deputy staff directors, chief counsel,

general counsel, and policy directors. White Americans account for 60 percent of the U.S. population but 84.3 percent of non-staff-director committee office top staff.

**Racial Demographics of U.S. Population  
vs. Senate Committee Non-Staff-Director Top Staff  
(Deputy Staff Directors, Chief Counsel, General Counsel, and Policy Directors)<sup>12</sup>**



Note: Due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100 percent.

# Top Staff Diversity by Political Party

People of color are underrepresented among both Democratic and Republican Senate committee top staffers.

Although people of color make up 37.9 percent of Democratic voters nationally, they account for only 11.1 percent of Democratic Senate staff directors and 20 percent of other Democratic full committee top staff. And while people of color account for 29.6 percent of Republican voters nationally, they account for only 5.3 percent of Republican Senate staff directors and 11.6 percent of other Republican full committee top staff.

**Staff Director in Senate Committee Offices  
by Political Party (by raw numbers)**

	Democratic Staff Director	Republican Staff Director	Bipartisan Staff Director	Total
<b>White</b>	16	18	1	35
<b>Black</b>	1	0	0	1
<b>Latina/o</b>	0	1	0	1
<b>AAPI</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Native American</b>	1	0	0	1
<b>MENA</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Biracial</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>

While Senate Republican committee offices have a larger number of top committee positions available (43 vs. 40), Democratic offices have more top committee staff of color. Democratic top committee staff of color make up 8 (or 20 percent) of the 40 positions available. By comparison, Republican committee staff of color make up 5 (or 11.6 percent) of the 43 positions available.

**Non-Staff-Director Top Staff in Senate Committee Offices by Political Party  
(Deputy Staff Directors, Chief Counsel, General Counsel,  
and Policy Directors, by raw numbers)**

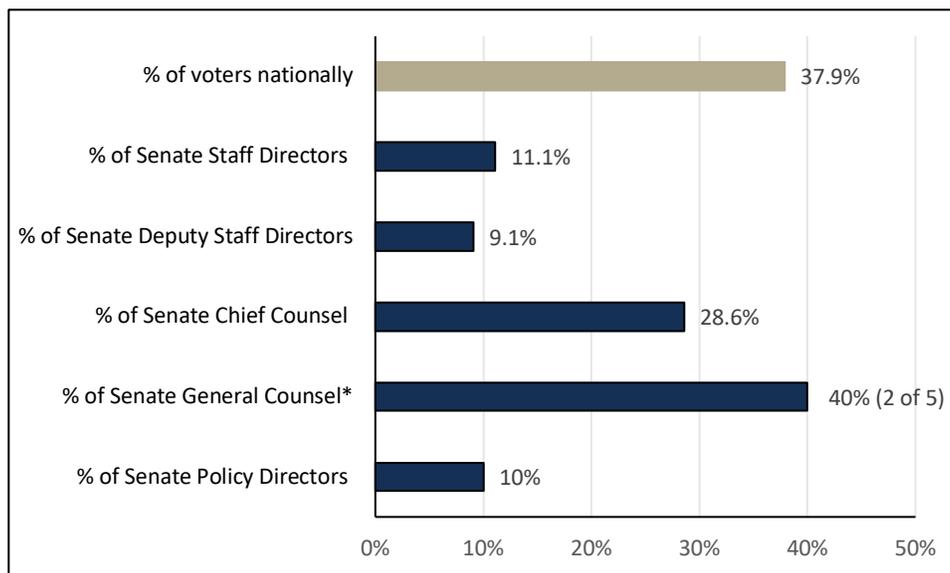
	Democratic Top Staff	Republican Top Staff	Total
<b>White</b>	32	38	70
<b>Black</b>	2	0	2
<b>Latina/o</b>	2	1	3
<b>AAPI</b>	3	1	4
<b>Native American</b>	0	1	1
<b>MENA</b>	1	1	2
<b>Biracial</b>	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>83</b>

Disaggregating these data by position and political party reveal some notable differences.

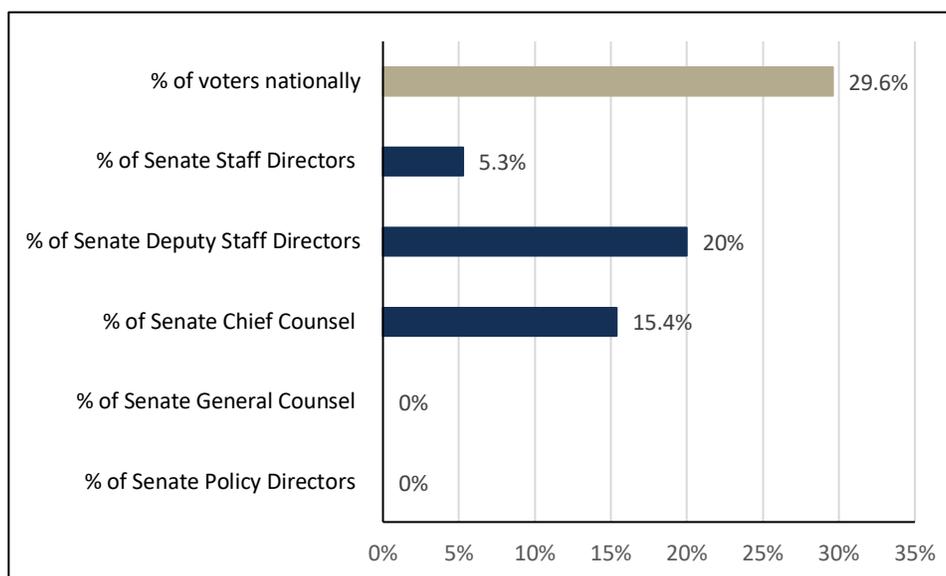
Among Democrats, people of color are underrepresented among Senate staff directors (11.1 percent), deputy staff directors (9.1 percent), policy directors (10 percent), and to a lesser extent chief counsel (28.6 percent) relative to their makeup among voters nationally. However, people of color represent 40 percent (2 of 5) of Democratic general counsel, which is slightly higher than the share of Democratic voters who are people of color.

Among Republicans, people of color are underrepresented among Senate staff directors (5.3 percent), deputy staff directors (20 percent), chief counsel (15.4 percent), general counsel (0 percent), and policy directors (0 percent) relative to their makeup among Republican voters nationally (29.6 percent).

### Among Democrats, People of Color Are<sup>13</sup>



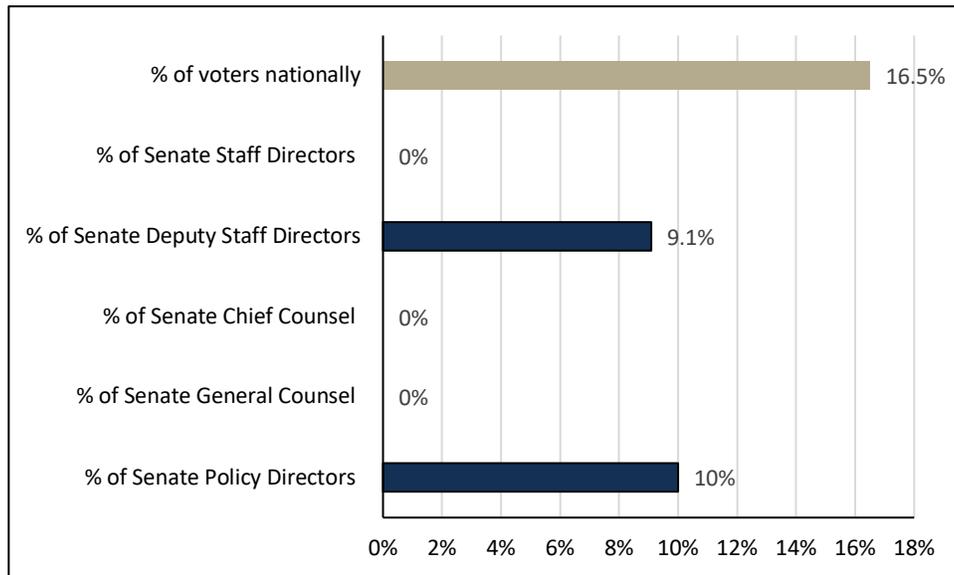
### Among Republicans, People of Color Are



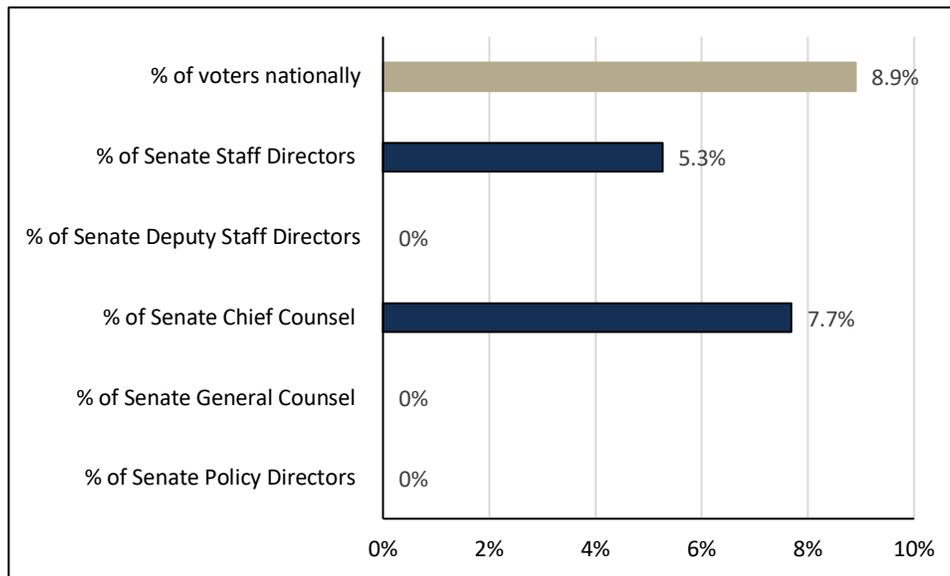
Among Democrats, Latina/os are underrepresented among Senate staff directors (0 percent), deputy staff directors (9.1 percent), chief counsel (0 percent), general counsel (0 percent), and policy directors (10 percent) relative to their makeup among Democratic voters nationally (16.5 percent).

Among Republicans, Latina/os are underrepresented among Senate staff directors (5.3 percent), deputy staff directors (0 percent), chief counsel (7.7 percent), general counsel (0 percent), and policy directors (0 percent) relative to their makeup among Republican voters nationally (8.9 percent).

### Among Democrats, Latina/os Are



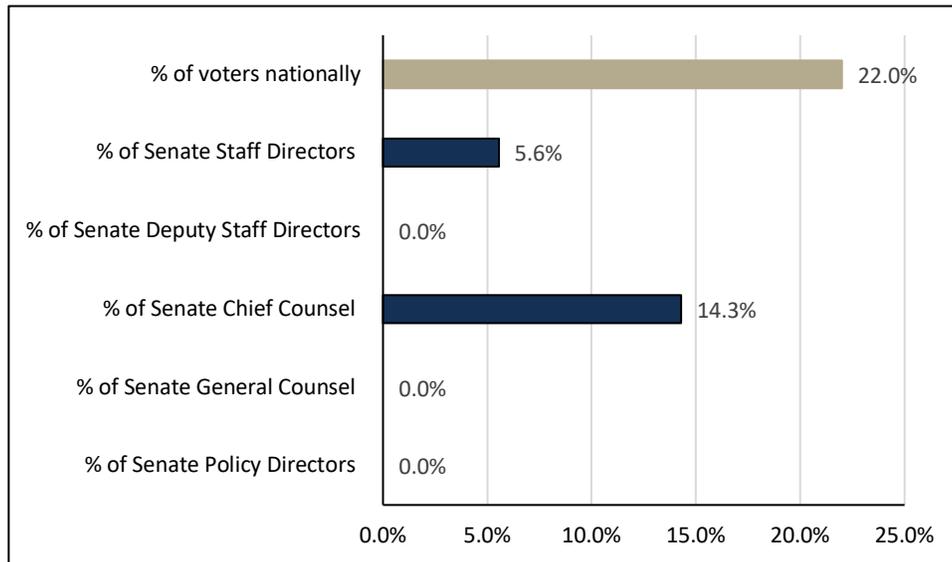
### Among Republicans, Latina/os Are



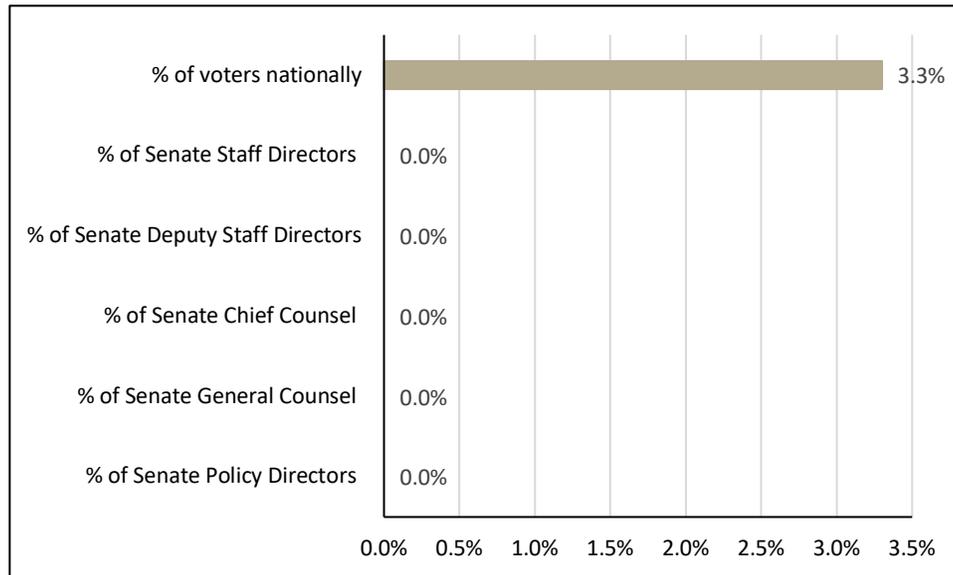
Among Democrats, African Americans are underrepresented among Senate staff directors (5.6 percent), deputy staff directors (0 percent), chief counsel (14.3 percent), general counsel (0 percent), and policy directors (0 percent) relative to their makeup among Democratic voters nationally (22 percent).

Among Republicans, there are no African American Senate staff directors, deputy staff directors, chief counsel, general counsel, or policy directors. African Americans account for 3.3 percent of Republican voters nationally.

### Among Democrats, African Americans Are



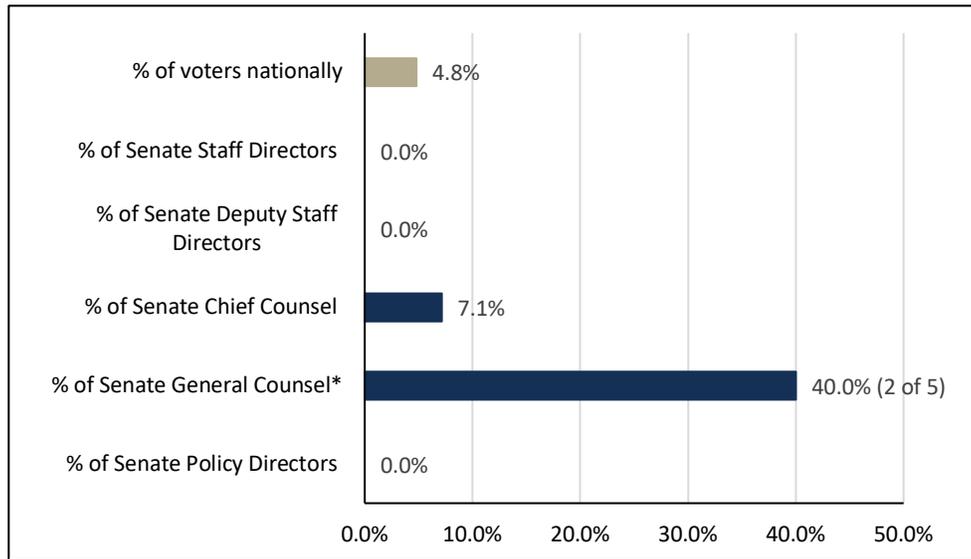
## Among Republicans, African Americans Are



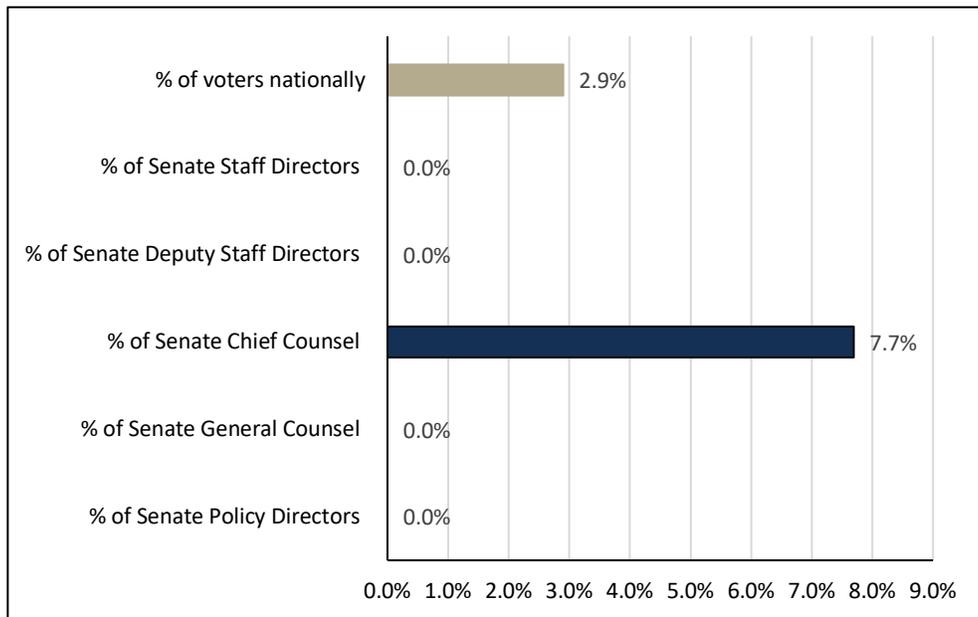
Among Democrats, there are no Asian American/Pacific Islander Senate staff directors, deputy staff directors, or policy directors. However, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders represent 40 percent (2 of 5) of Democratic Senate general counsel and 7.1 percent of Democratic Senate chief counsel, which is greater than the Asian American/Pacific Islander share of Democratic voters nationally (4.8 percent).

Among Republicans, there are no Asian American/Pacific Islander Senate staff directors, deputy staff directors, general counsel, or policy directors. However, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders represent 7.7 percent of Republican Senate chief counsel, which is greater than the Asian American/Pacific Islander share of Republican voters nationally (2.9 percent).

### Among Democrats, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders Are



### Among Republicans, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders Are



# Top Staff Diversity by Committee Office

This report is a snapshot of the racial and ethnic diversity among full Senate committee offices on June 7, 2021. Staff, however, change over time. As a result, we also have developed a [report card that tracks and ranks the racial diversity of committee offices](#) that we update regularly. The report card and its methodology can be found [here](#).

As of June 7, 2021, the following committee offices that employed at least one person of color as a staff director, deputy staff director, chief counsel, general counsel, or policy director are listed below:

## Recognition of Committee Offices with Diverse Top Staff as of June 7, 2021

Senate Committee Office	Chair/Ranking Member Name	State	Party	Diverse Top Staff
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs	Sherrod Brown	OH	D	Chief Counsel (Black)
Commerce, Science, and Transportation	Maria Cantwell	WA	D	Staff Director (Black)
Finance	Ron Wyden	OR	D	Chief Counsel (Black)
Finance	Mike Crapo	ID	R	Chief Counsel (AAPI)
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP)	Patty Murray	WA	D	Policy Director (Latina/o)
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs	Gary Peters	MI	D	Chief Counsel (MENA)
Indian Affairs	Brian Schatz	HI	D	Staff Director (Native American) General Counsel (AAPI)
Indian Affairs	Lisa Murkowski	AK	R	Deputy Staff Director (Native American)
Judiciary	Dick Durbin	IL	D	Chief Counsel (AAPI) General Counsel (AAPI)
Judiciary	Chuck Grassley	IA	R	Deputy Staff Director (Biracial) Chief Counsel (Latina/o)
Special Committee on Aging	Tim Scott	SC	R	Staff Director (Latina/o) Deputy Staff Director (MENA)
Veterans' Affairs	Jon Tester	MT	D	Deputy Staff Director (Latina/o)

Note: For our analysis, we counted only the most senior role to identify top staffers as unique individuals.

## Next Steps

Since the Joint Center's 2015 [Racial Diversity Among Top Senate Staff](#) Report, Congress has taken essential steps to improve transparency and staff diversity. The Senate Democratic Diversity Initiative helps Democratic personal and committee offices implement practices to advance diversity. For the past four years, Senate Democrats have also led both chambers by releasing racial/ethnic data about the staff in Democratic Senators' personal and committee offices. In future reports, Senate Democrats should disclose data on diversity by position. This would reveal which Senators have diversity in critical mid-level positions that serve as pipelines to top positions.

Senators should work together and follow the lead of the U.S. House of Representatives by establishing an Office of Diversity and Inclusion that develops a diversity plan that helps Senate offices in recruiting, hiring, training, promoting, and retaining a diverse Senate staff. Absent immediate bipartisan cooperation to create such an office, Senate Republicans should at least match the practices of Democrats by creating their own Diversity Initiative to help Republican offices advance racial diversity and disclose data to monitor progress.

In forthcoming reports, the Joint Center will analyze data on the racial diversity of Senate mid-level staff and state directors and examine data on staff diversity in the U.S. House.

## About the Author



**Dr. LaShonda Brenson** is the Senior Fellow of Diversity and Inclusion at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, where she leads the organization’s congressional staff diversity efforts. Prior to her current role, she served as a Civil Rights Analyst at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. At the Commission, Dr. Brenson organized national briefings and wrote reports on municipal fines and fees and their impact on minority communities, minority voting rights, and women in prison. Previously, she was the Research Director at Project Vote, a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization founded on the belief that an organized, diverse electorate is the key to a better America.

Dr. Brenson earned her Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and Political Science from the University of Rochester, and her Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. Using qualitative interviews with congressional staffers and quantitative methods, her dissertation research provides evidence that the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), as institutions, matter. One way she demonstrates the added value of the CBC and CHC is by illustrating that when caucus members serve as caucus leaders, they introduce more bills because of their additional staff capacity.

# Acknowledgments

I am especially appreciative of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for its support of this report. I also thank the Hewlett Foundation and the Democracy Fund for their support of the Joint Center's entire program to increase diversity among congressional staff.

I am grateful to the diverse staff associations, especially the Senate Black Legislative Staff Caucus and Congressional Asian Pacific American Staff Association, which provided input and assistance in identifying staff members. I also thank all offices that responded to our emails and phone calls to help us get accurate data.

A special thanks to my colleagues at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies for their support throughout the project, for closely reviewing the report to ensure the highest level of accuracy, and for providing research assistance, including Spencer Overton, Jessica Fulton, Victoria Johnson, and Aleya Jones. Thanks also to Fane Wolfer for closely reviewing the language and numbers.

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<sup>1</sup> We also use the terms “top staff,” “key staff,” or and “senior staff” interchangeably.

<sup>2</sup> Congress.gov, “[The Legislative Process: Introduction and Referral of Bills](#),”

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Senate, “[The Role of Committees in the Legislative Process](#).”

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Senate, “[About the Senate Committee System](#).”

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Senate, “[Senate Committees](#).”

<sup>6</sup> [United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey](#).

<sup>7</sup> One notable exception is the [Senate Democratic Diversity Initiative](#), which has published an annual survey of staff diversity among U.S. Senate Democratic offices since 2017. To date, Senate Republican offices have not released demographic data on their staffs.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Cisneros, “[Surnames and Race in the U.S.](#),” Tableau Public, October 6, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> In previous studies, the researcher hand-delivered personalized letters individually addressed to staffers in offices where staffers did not respond to our two confirmation emails. These letters gave those offices a final opportunity to respond to and correct the data. However, due to the COVID-19, the researcher was unable to hand-deliver letters.

<sup>10</sup> Our previous Senate report published in 2015 did not include Middle Eastern/North African and Biracial/Multiracial as racial and ethnic categories.

<sup>11</sup> This figure is calculated by the author using U.S. Census data and original data collection. See [United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey and Maryam Asi and Daniel Beaulieu, “Arab Households in the United States: 2006-2010,” United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey Briefs, May 2013](#).

<sup>12</sup> This figure is calculated by the author using U.S. Census data and original data collection. See [United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey and Maryam Asi and Daniel Beaulieu, “Arab Households in the United States: 2006-2010,” United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey Briefs, May 2013](#).

<sup>13</sup> All voting statistics were calculated by the author using a combination of the following sources: [CNN.com](#), 2020 General Election Exit Poll Data; [Cook Political Report](#), 2020 National Popular Vote Tracker; and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.