

California Pan-Ethnic HEALTH NETWORK Imperial Valley Equity & Justice Coalition

Equity in Local Budgets:

How are California's Local Governments Implementing

the American Rescue Plan Act Fiscal Recovery Funds?

Webinar & Discussion Wednesday June 29, 2022 10:30am-12pm PT

Hello and welcome! Before we start...

- Get comfy: grab some water or snacks
- Be mindful in the shared virtual space: e.g. mute your audio when not speaking
- Let tech work for you: use the chat box to introduce yourself, & post questions, comments and resources; feel free to stay on or off camera
- No notepads no worries: Slides and a recording of the session will be made available after

Your presenters:



California Pan-Ethnic HEALTH NETWORK Imperial Valley Equity & Justice Coalition



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Today's Goals

- Gain a baseline understanding of the American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Program and its impact on California's disadvantaged communities
- Learn about the successes, gaps and challenges with local governments' performances in using the funds
- Learn how you can get involved with your county or city's ARPA process
- Get excited about taking some action steps!!

Today's Agenda (10:30am-12:00pm)

- **5min Welcome and introduction**
- **20min Background:** what is ARPA, why do we care, and what's at stake?
- 20min Research: how did CPEHN audit and grade 11 California counties? what did we find?
- **20min Story** of a successful local ARPA campaign in Calexico City
- **10min Tools and resources:** how can I get involved?
- **15min Q&A**

What is ARPA? Why do we care? And what's at stake?

Background

Quick Facts on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021

- The 6th COVID-19 recovery measure U.S. Congress has passed since March 2020
- Signed into law on March 11, 2021 by President Joe Biden
- \$1.9 trillion COVID relief package (<u>HR 1319; PL 117-2</u>)
- The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF): sends 350 billion unprecedented, flexible, direct aid to state, local and Tribal governments



How much money (and time)?

	ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (Signed March 11, 2021)	CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (Signed March 27, 2020)	
Funds to California state government	\$27 billion	\$9.5 billion	
Total funds to California counties and cities	\$16 billion	\$5.8 billion	
Covered period	March 3, 2021- December 31, 2026	March 1, 2020- December 31, 2021	

16 California counties* have each received over \$100 million from the SLFRF program

Los Angeles County	\$1,949,978,847
San Diego County	\$648,431,468
San Francisco City and County*	\$624,817,342
Orange County	\$616,840,943
Riverside County	\$479,874,599
San Bernardino County	\$423,455,955
Santa Clara County	\$374,462,651
Alameda County	\$324,636,065
Sacramento County	\$301,469,072
Contra Costa County	\$224,058,903
Fresno County	\$194,063,657
Kern County	\$174,853,685
Ventura County	\$164,326,748
San Mateo County	\$148,897,819
San Joaquin County	\$148,038,314
Stanislaus County	\$106,959,250



"American Rescue Plan is a down payment on an equitable America"

Richard Besser, President/CEO, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation "...Comprehensive legislation that provides a more robust federal response to the continuing challenges of **an under resourced public health system, long-standing health disparities and systemic racism** that have only exacerbated within the past year"

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, E.D, American Public Health Association

Why do we care about ARPA? Our vision: ARPA is a public health and racial equity bill

What is the money for?

- Guidance from the U.S. Department of the Treasury on the <u>Coronavirus State</u> and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)
 - Final Rule, effective Apr 1, 2022
 - Interim Final Rule, effective until Apr 1, 2022
 - <u>Compliance and Reporting Guidance</u>
- Both Final and Interim Final Rules: Providing "assistance to individuals and communities in greatest need, particularly communities that have been historically disadvantaged or underserved and have experienced disproportionate impacts of the COVID–19 crisis."
- Interim Final Rule: Urging governments to "*engage* their constituents and communities in developing plans"...and "reflect the importance of **public** *input, transparency, and accountability*"...

What is the money for?

Eligible (or, encouraged) uses according to the Final Rule

- (1)Responding to the public health and negative economic impacts of the pandemic;
- (2)Providing premium pay to essential workers;
- (3)Providing government services to the extent of revenue loss due to the pandemic; and
- (4)Making necessary investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure

ONLY non-eligible/illegal use: Deposit into any pension fund

What are the opportunities?

- Bolstering ongoing pandemic response and meeting the urgent health, social, economic needs of underserved communities
- Strengthening governmental and non-governmental public health and social services systems (e.g. workforce, data collection, funding CBOs)
- Investing in long-term, structural reforms towards equity including piloting innovations (e.g. addressing systemic racism, funding public safety alternative solutions)
- Rethinking local budget making, improving public accountability & cocreating budget and strategic priorities with directly impacted communities

What's at stake?

"Local health disparities stem from legacies of white supremacy and racial capitalism entrenched in governmental policies and resource allocation." – CPEHN's People Power for Public Health project

Evidence shows that significant federal COVID-19 relief dollars have been funneled to the criminal-legal system on local levels (through "hero pay", overtime, new equipment/vehicles, specialized COVID police units, etc)

<u>The prison industrial complex (PIC)</u> is a term to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems.



A timeline: balancing urgency with deliberation



How did CPEHN audit and grade 11 California counties? What did we find?

CPEHN's Research Project

CPEHN's ARPA Scorecards for Counties

 Our research goals are to investigate and reveal counties' performance in equitably implementing these recovery funds and to lift up best practices/efforts as well as gaps and limitations across 11 counties

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CPFHN

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

- For community organizations: to encourage and support your local advocacy with your county
- For county officials: to strengthen accountability and to sparkle curiosity and growth

CPEHN's ARPA Scorecards for Counties: METHODS





CPEHN's ARPA Scorecards for Counties: METHODS

- Examining ARPA SLFRF implementation "in a vacuum" a *reflection* of the county's ongoing COVID-19 recovery efforts
- Turning qualitative data into quantifiable points and *comparable* grades; weighting reflects CPEHN's values
- Investigation period: March 2021 February 2022
- Our assessment is as good as how well the county has documented and shared information publicly

Equity Metric Areas	51 Questions & 100 Points
Uses of Funds	22 questions, 40 points
Promoting Racial Equity	12 questions, 36 points
Community Engagement	7 questions, 14 points
Transparency, Accessibility, Accountability	10 questions, 10 points

FRESNO COUNTY

HIGHLIGHTS: Besides conducting some community surveys in 2021, Fresno County has still not allocated any SLFRF monies towards specific projects as of early 2022. The county has failed to acknowledge or address racial inequities in its SLFRF plans. The county did set up a comprehensive, easy-to-navigate ARPA website to host relevant information for the public to view.

Total ARPA SLFRF allocated: **\$194,063,657** First tranche received in 2021: **\$97,031,828.5**

CATEGORY	BEST EFFORTS	GAPS AND LIMITATIONS	GRADE	
Use of Funds	As of February 2022, Fresno County has just begun to propose a general funding framework for the total SLFRF allocation, including 58% of funds proposed for "Public Health and Economic Impacts." The county earmarked some funds to support key local health infrastructure, including community clinics and its public health department. Fresno county set aside \$37 million SLFRF for "sub- recipients" and opened an online portal in early 2022 to receive applications from community and private entities.	Despite urgent health and social needs in the community, Fresno County has still not allocated any ARPA SLFRF monies towards specific projects as of early 2022. The county's proposed premium pay program was only available for county employees, which included sheriff, probation and jails. There was no additional support for low-income essential workers including the county's agricultural worker population.	\odot	
Promoting Racial Equity	The county's sub- recipient selection policy for community-based organizations proposing ARPA-funded projects mentioned prioritizing projects designed with "equity" in mind.	Fresno County's compliance reports as well as stated " <u>Board</u> <u>Priorities</u> " and " <u>Guiding</u> <u>Principles</u> " for the use of SLFRF all failed to mention or address racial equity. There have been no explicit considerations of racial equity in its funding allocation criteria or outcomes evaluation.	F	

GAPS AND CATEGORY BEST EFFORTS GRADE LIMITATIONS Community Fresno County conducted Fresno county's internal SLFRF Engagement a community survey in decisions through an "ad-hoc committee" failed to include English, Spanish and Hmong as well as some webinars directly impacted communities. to announce sub-recipient County outreach efforts funding for private entities and community organizations. focused on informing the community, rather than proactive education or cocreating funding priorities. The community outreach survey only asked basic questions about funding priorities. Fresno County has set up Despite having a public ARPA Transparency, Accessibility a dedicated public-facing website and a listserv, the and ARPA page to house relevant county provided limited public Accountability spending information. information on the ARPA The website has listed spending decision-making comprehensive information, processes and it was unclear including reference documents whether or not community from the Treasury, a timeline organizations who served of the county's actions around impacted communities were SLFRF, and a public listserv to adequately informed. disseminate information. **RELEVANT LINKS** County ARPA website: www.co.fresno.ca.us/departments/county-administrative-office/ american-rescue-plan 2021 Recovery Plan Performance Report: www.co.fresno.ca.us/departments/countyadministrative-office/american-rescue-plan/recovery-plan-performance-report 2021 Interim Report: apps-treas.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/t0000000TZbC/a/ t0000001emD8/6HKILMq00IxC_OqRrK5ax0gpbQtrqO9oJXGncw5QYUY 2022 January Project and Expenditure Report: N/A American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal California Pan-Ethnic Recovery Funds (SLFRF) Scorecard for Fresno County **HEALTH NETWORK** For more information, visit www.CPEHN.org/ARPAscorecards

CPEHN's ARPA Scorecards: FINDINGS

County	Overall	Uses of funds	Promoting racial equity	Community Engagement	Transparency Accessibility Accountability
Los Angeles County	А	А	A+	Α	В
San Diego County	В	А	B+	В	D
Orange County	В	В	В	В	Α
San Bernardino County	С	С	В	С	С
Sacramento County	С	В	С	В	В
Fresno County	С	С	F	В	В
Kern County	С	С	D	D	С
Ventura County	С	D	В	Α	В
San Joaquin County	С	В	С	D	D
Stanislaus County	С	С	С	С	D
San Francisco City and County	N/A	N/A	B+	D	D

Findings – uses of funds

- Overall, how quickly and efficiently counties are setting up projects and spending money vary. Much is still on the table to be negotiated, especially in the Central Valley.
 - **Popular investments**: housing and homelessness services (82%), water & sewage infrastructure improvement (82%), COVID vaccinations (73%), mental & behavioral health services (64%), funding/contracts to CBOs (64%)
- Gaps & limitations: Many counties funneled significant funds to sheriff, probation, jails, etc, through personnel premium pay, payroll & overtime support, and data system improvements: San Diego, Orange, Sacramento, Fresno, Kern, Ventura, San Joaquin, San Francisco City and County
- **Best efforts:** Los Angeles County has a comprehensive spending plan, including \$47 million towards its "Care First, Jails Last" Initiative

Findings-promoting racial equity

• Best efforts:

- Most counties acknowledged racialized COVID health disparities (73%)
- A few counties leveraging existing racial equity infrastructure to implement funds
 - Los Angeles County: Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion Initiative
 - San Bernardino County: Equity Vision Element Workgroup
 - Ventura County: Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- A few counties using data to identify health disparities and guide equity strategies
 - Los Angeles County: <u>ARPA Equity Dashboard</u>
 - Orange County: Orange County Equity Map

• Gaps & limitations:

- Most counties fell short in securing or expanding capacity to operationalize racial equity (27%) and building in evaluation (27%)
- Fresno & Kern Counties: no mentioning of racial equity at all
- Counties need technical assistance!

Findings-community engagement

Overall

• Almost all counties announced this program with the public (91%) and about half hosted educational workshop or conducted surveys to gather input (55%)

• Best efforts:

- Ventura: engaging COVID-19 and Census CBO workgroup in ARPA conversations
- **Orange:** public comment portal on website
- Los Angeles: all departments have to submit an equity and community engagement plan

• Gaps & limitations:

- Sacramento: \$1.16 million to contract Deloitte to do a community survey without collecting demographic data
- Kern, Stanislaus, San Francisco: little evidence of community engagement

Findings-transparency, accountability and accessibility

• Best efforts:

- All 11 counties posted their 2021 annual recovery plans (required by the Treasury); many referenced the Treasury's guidance language in their compliance reports or websites (73%)
- Easy-to-navigate public websites that hosts ARPA information: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Ventura, Orange, Fresno, Sacramento
- Multi-lingual ARPA outreach: Ventura county

• Gaps & limitations:

- Few posted 2022 January spending report (27%); only half of the counties have a dedicated contact email/phone for ARPA inquiries (45%); only Orange county had a grievance or public comment process
- San Francisco City & County: no public accounting of spending information

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



Overview

The American Rescue Plan, signed into law on March 2021, provides \$350 billion in funding for state and local governments to build an equitable economic recovery from the devastating economic effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. Department of the Treasury specifically states that the goal of these State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund is to "promote and streamline the provision of assistance to individuals and communities in greatest need, particularly communities that have been historically disadvantaged and have experienced disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 crisis." The Treasury also identified the four main priorities for ARP funding:



American Rescue Plan Act Overview

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into federal law. Included in this \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill was the \$350 billion Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CSLFRF) to assist state, local, and tribal governments with pandemic recovery efforts.



American Rescue Plan ACT (ARPA)

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), signed into law in March 2021, is a federally approved stimulus plan that provides \$350 billion of stimulus funding to State and Local Governments out of the \$19 trillion-dollar bill. It supports an equitable economic recovery from the economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The share expected to be received by the County of Ventura is approximately \$164.3 million. For more information about the American Rescue Plan Act, please see Treasury guidance here.

Take the community survey by May 1, 2022

The County of Ventura wants to hear from community organizations and community members about how the County should prioritize using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act. The County's Board of Supervisors will consider community feedback as community projects are funded.



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Reports



Financial Information

Oversight Committees

Reports

1

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (H.R. 1319) Into law. The \$1,21 strillion package is intended to support communities in their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, address economic fallout and lay the foundation for a strong recovery. The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF), under ARPA, allocates \$350 billion in funding for eligible state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic; replace lost revenue to

strengthen support for vital public services and help retain jobs; support immediate economic stabilization for households and businesses; and address public health and other economic challenges. The SLFRF provides substantial flexibility for each government to meet local needs. All funds must be obligated within the period between March 3, 2021 and December 31, 2024, and expended to cover such obligations by December 31, 2026.

The County of Orange was allocated \$616.8 million in SLFRF. The legislation requires the funds be distributed in two equal tranches. The first tranche of \$308.4 million was received on May 21,2021. The second tranche of \$308.4 million is anticipated to be received no sooner than 12 months from the first payment, or no earlier than May 21, 2022. For additional information, please refer to the reports included in the section below.

Press Releases

Feb 1, 2022: County of Orange Opens Public Comment Period for ARPA
 Sep 24, 2021: Public Workshop on County's Strategic Financial Plan, Budget Development Processes and ARPA

Imperial Valley Equity & Justice Coalition

Story of a successful local ARPA campaign in Calexico City

Imperial County and City of Calexico



American Rescue Plan Act

Alexis Castro, MPA Community Organizer

> Imperial Valley Equity & Justice Coalition

Social Determinants of Health

next highest California county

More than 50% people of color Imperial County 20 COVID-19 deaths per 10,000 residents 15 10 0 100 0 50 % of residents who are people of color

Imperial's COVID-19 death rate is more than double the

Source: <u>Worked to death: Latino farmworkers have long been</u> <u>denied basic rights. COVID-19 showed how deadly racism could</u> be.

COVID-19 Deaths

Imperial County has 917 total confirmed COVID-19 deaths as of 05/10/2022. The local mortality rate is 504.33 per 100,000 population, which is MORE than the state average of 229.06.

COVID-19 Deaths, Crude Rate per 100,000 Population



Source: Salud America! Health Equity Report Card

Our Calexico coalition successfully advocated for 7.2 million in equitable projects for Calexico residents and workers.



Our coalition



Imperial Valley Equity & Justice Coalition







Planned Parenthood Action Fund







Calexico

Wellness Center



MPERIAL VALLE



San Diego and Imperial Counties







How did we make this happen?

APPROVED EXPENSES/GASTOS REALIZADOS

OCTOBER 6, 2021 - \$1,278,000

- City Council adopted resolution approving the city's use of ARPA funds for the replacement of public safety vehicles and authorizing the issuance of a request proposal.
- Fire Department: Two (2) Fire Rescue Ambulances, Three (3) Utility Vehicles
- Police Department: Six (6) Ford Explorer Equipped Patrol Vehicles, Two (2) Pickup Trucks Equipped Patrol Vehicles

NOVEMBER 3, 2021 - \$1,020,396

- City Council adopted a resolution approving the city's use of ARPA funds to provide up to \$7,000 per full time and par time eligible employee.
- At the approved date, eligible employees must be employed (active) full time and part time employees who worked between March 17, 2020, and June 30, 2021.

PROPOSED EXPENSE SUMMARY/RESUMEN DE GASTOS PROPUESTOS

Proposed Use	Cost	Balance	
			\$7,228,591.00
Public Facilities I/T Upgrades	\$850,000	\$6,378,591	
City Broadband Infrastructure	\$450,000	\$5,928,591	
Indoor Ventilation/Filtration for City Facilities	\$650,000	\$5,278,591	
Downtown Infrastructure	\$750,000	\$4,528,591	
City Park Infrastructure	\$1,000,000	\$3,528,591	
Library/Recreation Infrastructure Projects	\$350,000	\$3,178,591	
Emergency Response Equipment	\$1,000,000	\$2,178,591	
Water and Sewer Replacement Projects	\$1,000,000	\$1,178,591	
Airport Terminal Repair	\$100,000	\$1,078,591	
	Remaining Funds		\$1,078,591

Proposed PLAN B:			Proposed PLAN B:				
	PROPOSED USE	DETAIL	BUDGET ESTIMATE		PROPOSED USE	DETAIL	BUDGET ESTIMATE
	Complete Downtown- Shade structures and plants - Seating/eating structures - Additional Restrooms - Water stations. Drinking fountain/bottle refill	\$3,000,000		Emergency Response Equipment	Fire/Ambulance	\$1,000,000	
	9	 Min. 1 Public Cooling Station Beautification elements Trash Bins Establishment of sanctioned homeless encampment and safe parking lot 			Public Facilities I/T Upgrades	 Includes a Downtown free WI-FI zone as priority for commercial/social growth Free WI-FI areas from public facilities as allowed by 	\$1,048,591
	Relief Program *	Direct Payment to essential workers: grocery, pharmacy, farmworkers, etc. (As defined by council)	\$1,000,000			allotted funds	
					City Broadband Infrastructure	Capacity to support I/T and public WI-FI projects	\$450,000
	Outreach Specialist	(1) Full-time for 3 years, helps individuals and businesses navigate relief programs at all levels. Works with SBDC to	\$180,000	Emergency Park Infrastructure	Park Restroom and Water Access	\$500,000	
N ALL	-p-cinite	promote new post-pandemic business opportunities.			ESTIMA	ATED COST OF PL \$7,178,591	AN B:

Exhibit 3. How do you think Calexico COVID-19 recovery funds should be used?

COVID-19 Relief Fund Community Priorities



Community Survey

Exhibit 2. Do you agree that essential workers in Calexico like health care, hospital, clinic, pharmacy, grocery, and farmworkers should benefit from the COVID-19 relief funds?


Organize

- Create an escalation plan
- Build your base
- Use all tools at your disposal
 - News/Media
 - Research
 - Policy Advocacy
 - Narrative and Storytelling
 - Strategy and Tactics
 - Powermap



Actions to consider

- Send a joint advocates letter to the County Board of Supervisors asking for ARPA allocation for equitable uses
- Attend city council or board of supervisor meetings and make public comment about ARPA
- Submit joint proposals for equitable projects
- Publish op-eds (see ours <u>here</u>)

- Get involved in ARPA advocacy in your city
- Ask County/City boards to increase transparency, accountability, and public input when making decisions about ARPA
- Join coalitions and other groups in the advocacy for equitable uses
- Highlight alternate funding opportunities/grants

Resources

bit.ly/IVCLXARPA



Feel free to reach out to us at info@ivequityjustice.org **@IVEquityJustice** with questions or comments

How can I get involved with my county or city's ARPA process?

Tools and Resources

How to get involved:



Assess how your city or county is engaging communities in their ARPA decisions

- Create a list of demands that reflect your community needs and wants
- Connect with your local budget coalitions and/or build your coalition
- Advocate for a people's ARPA spending plan

1. Understand what your county or city is currently doing with their ARPA funds

Frequently asked:

- How much money is left undecided?
- What programs or projects has my local government decided to spend money on?

Where to find:

- The Treasury: <u>all spending information</u> up until January 2022 has been posted on the Treasury's ARPA <u>landing page</u>
 - Upcoming: 2022 Annual Recovery Plans are due on July 31, 2022
- Your local government:
 - Check to see if the city/county has an ARPA website or posted any ARPA information
 - Review Board of Supervisors/City Council meeting minutes
 - Reach out directly: controller/auditor, CEO office
- **CPEHN's** county scorecard analyses: https://www.cpehn.org/ARPAscorecards/

2. Assess how your city or county is engaging communities in using their ARPA funds

Has your local government done these?

(refer to questions #35-41 on CPEHN equity metric)

- Setting up an ARPA website
- Setting up a dedicated ARPA contact email or phone number
- Posting spending and compliance reports
- Hosting educational workshops (outside of regular BOS or Council meetings)
- Conducting multi-lingual community surveys
- Opening a public comment period on existing decisions
- Directly reaching out to CBO stakeholders
- Leveraging existing COVID-19 and other community workgroups with CBOs

3. Advocate for a people's ARPA spending plan

- Create a list of demands that reflect your community needs and wants
- Connect with your local budget coalitions and/or build your coalition
- CPEHN is here to support you with technical analyses, best practices, advocacy letters/templates, brainstorming solutions, etc
 - An example of the letter we sent to Calexico City Council:
 - https://app.box.com/s/znojlxz0ksi8vj3zkydhc2lvoy67kiqp
 - Get in touch! <u>wzhang@cpehn.org</u>



Resources to Advocate for a people's ARPA spending plan

Topics:

- <u>ARPA</u> (Collected Resources)
- Building a Framework: Defunding/Divesting from Policing and Investing Community Safety & Resources
- Putting it into Practice: Budget Advocacy/Participatory Budgeting Toolkit
- City/County Budget Advocacy
 - People's Budget Coalitions in California: <u>LA</u>, <u>Sacramento</u>, <u>Long Beach</u>, <u>Orange County</u>
 - <u>Redwood City</u>, <u>Bakersfield</u>, <u>Oakland</u>, <u>Vallejo</u>, <u>Hayward</u>, <u>San Jose</u>, <u>Merced</u>, <u>Central Valley Empowerment Alliance</u>

Questions?













Thank You!



Pomona Economic Opportunity Center



PUBLIC HEALTH A D V O C A T E S



