**Oregon Passes Racial Impact Statement Legislation**

On June 25, [Oregon](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253Dz75cQ6E81kDzmvpZffuCWvW40emEFT8j) became the third state to pass [racial impact statement](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253DaqD74oRqhGdLrW%25252FlcdnoFvW40emEFT8j) legislation. The new [law](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253DHAfgh%25252F3x0eLax5a0NoehtHUUVrTbcp0y) requires the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to issue a statement that evaluates how proposed legislation would affect the racial composition of Oregon’s prison population when legislators from both major political parties request such a statement. The law also requires the commission to analyze the racial make-up of crime victims affected by such legislation. Senator Chip Shields, a Democrat from Portland, first introduced the racial impact statement legislation in 2007, aided by Rep. Joe Gallegos in the House.

Oregon joined Iowa and Connecticut in adopting racial impact statement legislation as a means to address the racial disparities in their prison populations. While black Oregonians make up only 2% of the state’s population, they constitute 9% of its prisoners.

**North Carolina Repeals Racial Justice Act**

North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory signed the [repeal](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253DIrIpIgleigz9I4lGzTKK7%25252FW40emEFT8j) of the state’s Racial Justice Act on June 19, stating that the law effectively banned capital punishment in the state. The law allowed North Carolina’s death row inmates to challenge their sentences by using statistical analysis to show that race played a role in the sentencing process. McCrory said nearly every death row inmate in the state had challenged their death sentence under the act.

At least four inmates had their sentences reduced from death to life in prison since the state enacted the law in 2009 after judges ruled that racial bias had influenced their sentences. More than 50% of the inmates on North Carolina’s death row are black, although African Americans constitute 22% of the state’s population. Whether death row inmates with pending appeals under the act will be allowed to proceed is not yet clear.

**New York City Allows Citizens to Challenge Racial Profiling Practices in State Court**

The New York City Council has approved a [measure](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253DQu%25252FdWbAxRiPtxwnSicyhB3UUVrTbcp0y) to allow citizens to sue the New York Police Department in state court not only for individual instance of racial discrimination but also to challenge police practices that disproportionately affect racial minorities without serving any significant law enforcement goal. The bill, known as the Community Safety Act, passed by a veto-proof majority—vital because Mayor Michael Bloomberg has promised to veto the measure. The bill also expands the definition of bias-based profiling to include age, gender, housing status, and sexual orientation.

**FBI to Track Latino Arrests in Annual Crime Report**

The FBI will begin [collecting data on ethnicity](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253Du964cK3McExBwEM88WPx7HUUVrTbcp0y) for its annual Uniform Crime Report next year, allowing arrest data for Latinos to be analyzed for the first time. The FBI currently tabulates arrest data only by race, which does not account for a multiracial ethnic group such as Latinos.  The FBI was originally authorized to collect data on ethnicity in 1980. The agency abandoned the effort seven years later, however, leaving a dearth of information regarding arrest patterns of Latinos in particular.

**sentencing**

**Texas Executes 500th Inmate, a Black Woman, Since Reinstating the Death Penalty**

On June 26, Texas executed its 500th inmate since reinstating the death penalty in 1982. [Kimberly McCarthy](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253DcpllOU6MTkJ%25252FHr92Aos3rXUUVrTbcp0y), a 52-year-old black woman, was executed for the 1997 murder of her white neighbor. McCarthy’s attorney had asked the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals to halt her execution on the grounds that Dallas County prosecutors improperly excluded black jurors from her trial. All but one of her 12 jurors were white. The court denied the appeal, however, ruling that McCarthy’s claims were untimely and should have been raised earlier. Texas has been responsible for nearly 40% of the more than 1,300 executions in the United States since 1976, when the Supreme Court reinstated capital punishment.

**Research**

**Study Finds Racial Bias in Pretrial Diversion Programs**

Prosecutors are more likely to grant pretrial diversions to white defendants than black or Latino defendants, according to a new [study](https://webmail.east.cox.net/do/redirect?url=http%253A%252F%252Forg2.salsalabs.com%252Fdia%252Ftrack.jsp%253Fv%253D2%2526c%253DbvZxisfg0yIzFPs150KtL3UUVrTbcp0y) by Traci Schlesinger of DePaul University. Pretrial diversion programs provide an alternative to prosecution and give defendants access to rehabilitative services while allowing them to avoid a felony record. The study, published in the latest issue of *Race and Justice*, examined racial disparities among men charged with felony crimes in metropolitan counties from 1990 to 2006.