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**Somos Un Pueblo Unido & Immigrants’ Rights Groups Unveil New Legislative Agenda to Defend and Protect Immigrant Families and Workers in New Mexico**

**SANTA FE, NM –** In response to the recent election results, immigrant-based and immigrant serving organizations are coming together to promote critical measures in 2025 aimed at **defending** immigrant workers and families.

Immigrant workers, entrepreneurs and consumers are essential to the state’s economy.  The proposed initiatives focus on preventing the misuse of public resources for detention, deportation and advocating for the economic well-being of mixed-status families. The proposals include:

* No state resources for enforcing civil and federal immigration laws,
* Limit the sharing of personal and sensitive information of New Mexico residents by state employees with outside individuals and organizations and ensure driver’s license data isn’t shared with ICE through data brokers.
* Additional funding to support nonprofit organizations that provide legal representation in deportation, adjustment of status, and citizenship cases, especially in rural communities,
* Economic relief for immigrant families with children who lose their work income due to I-9 audits, workplace raids, or other immigration enforcement.
* Restrict state and local governments from contracting with ICE for the purposes of civil immigration detention,
* Promote U-visa certification by local and state law enforcement officials to support undocumented victims of crime in accessing crucial public safety resources.
* Access to in-state tuition and financial aid for adult immigrant workers and Special Juvenile Immigrant Juvenile Status (SJIS) applicants enrolled in credit and noncredit workforce development programs,
* Funds for the Adult Education Department to provide more English language courses, GED, citizenship preparation tutoring, and other adult training programs,
* Flexible funds for regional workforce boards to expand their support services, such as providing computers, internet payments, travel stipends, etc,

In New Mexico, immigrants represent[11%](https://twitter.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0078cc8c2920ce0b0b5c25dc5&id=819d0286ec&e=18e130d811) of the workforce and play a dominant role in key sectors such as construction, agriculture, accommodation and food services, and oil and gas. Furthermore, the hundreds of billions of dollars immigrants pay in taxes help sustain essential government services and programs, including Social Security, unemployment insurance, and free or reduced-price school lunches. In total, New Mexico’s immigrant population contributes approximately [$1.4 billion](https://twitter.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0078cc8c2920ce0b0b5c25dc5&id=b699424553&e=18e130d811) in federal, state, and local taxes, with $554.6 million of that amount supporting public schools, hospitals, roads, and more.

Statements from New Mexico immigrant organizations:

“New Mexico has a strong tradition of rejecting anti-immigrant racism and advancing policies that recognize the full contribution of immigrant workers and families to the cultural and economic fabric of the state,” said **Zulema Chavero**, Citizenship Coordinator at Somos Un Pueblo Unido. “New Mexico cannot afford to lose immigrant workers, essential to the state’s general operating budget. The immigrants’ rights movement in New Mexico is bigger and stronger than it was during the first Trump administration, and we will work together to ensure state resources are not used to increase deportations, separate our families, and destabilize local economies.”

“We are proud of the economic, cultural, and civic contributions of immigrants in New Mexico,” said **Fabiola Landeros**, Civil Rights & Immigration Organizer at EL CENTRO de Igualdad y Derecho. “Immigrants make up a vital part of the state’s workforce, tax base, and economy. Threats of mass deportation do not reflect New Mexico's values. It’s also not sound economic policy, especially at a time of workforce shortages, to target the same essential workers who are the cornerstone of our economy and of the nation.  The majority of New Mexicans rejected Trumpism and there is a mandate for local elected officials to lean into the legacy of supporting immigrant integration we have created in order to protect our communities. We have proven in New Mexico, when we organize, we are able to pass protections for our families.”

"This legislative platform represents a bold step to protect immigrant workers and families in the face of federal threats,” said **Jessica Aguirre**, Staff Attorney at Santa Fe Dreamers Project. “By advancing measures like the U-visa certification process, we can ensure New Mexico remains a place of dignity, safety, and opportunity for all our communities."

“Immigrants are essential contributors to our economy and communities,” said **Teague Gonzalez**, Deputy Director of Programs, People, and Advocacy at New Mexico Immigrant Law Center. “Our policies must not just recognize these contributions, but prioritize their well-being. Economic resources generated by the hard work of immigrants should not be used against them by displacing families or funding immigrant detention. These resources should be spent helping our communities feel safe. New Mexico is home to the three detention centers with the worst conditions in the entire country. Too many immigrants are suffering in these facilities. In this upcoming legislative session, we are working on legislation to restrict state and local governments from contracting with ICE for the purposes of civil detention. We are also, with our partners at the Santa Fe Dreamers project, working on a bill that would streamline the U- visa certification for immigrant survivors of crime that will protect survivors of crime and create a pathway to citizenship.”

"At the Semilla Project we believe in an ecosystem that centers collective freedom and abundance by building strong economies with resilient jobs that protect our environment, energy, and our people,” said **Aline Castelan**, Campaign & Projects Director at The Semilla Project. “Part of building a thriving community is ensuring that we prepare our New Mexican workers with access to job training and certification programs including our immigrant workers. At a time where our state and country are in great need of a strong workforce, we should build our next generation of New Mexicans instead of criminalizing and pushing them out."

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***About Somos Un Pueblo Unido***
*Somos Un Pueblo Unido is a statewide immigrant-based civil and workers' rights organization with membership teams in eight counties and worker centers in Santa Fe, Hobbs, Roswell, and Farmington.*

***About EL CENTRO de Igualdad y Derecho***
*El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos is an Albuquerque-based civil rights, immigrants’ rights, and workers’ justice organization that advocates for just working conditions, dignified wages, and policies that ensure that all New Mexicans’ have the opportunity to thrive.*

***About Santa Fe Dreamers Project (SFDP)***
*Santa Fe Dreamers Project provides free legal services to immigrants to promote economic empowerment, community development, family unity, and liberation from detention.*

***About New Mexico Immigrant Law Center (NMILC)***
*New Mexico Immigrant Law Center’s mission is to advance justice and equity by empowering low-income immigrant communities through collaborative legal services, advocacy, and education.*

***About The Semilla Project***
*The Semilla Project’s mission is to provide the skills, knowledge, and community framework to prepare the upcoming leaders using a relevant practical critical framework approach that provides applied and tangible community solutions to address the problems in the communities of color around climate justice, racial and justice equity.*