











Latinos in Nevada: Protecting and Defending Progress in the Silver State

Hit particularly hard by the economic crisis, Hispanic* Nevadans have seen commonsense policies put in place and their hard work begin to pay off following the Great Recession. Gains across several economic indicators point to improved economic security for Latinos, despite ongoing inequities where Latinos lag behind other Nevada residents.¹

Given the Latino community's size, work ethic, and resilience, they have contributed to the Silver State's economic resurgence. However, challenges lie ahead as the nation finds itself with a new Congress, a new president, and a public that is deeply divided. One common thread that emerged over the past election cycle is that despite gains, too many Americans perceive that they have been left behind by policymakers and the

economy. Examining Latinos' status across a range of indicators in Nevada can help lawmakers and advocates better understand how far the Latino community has come since the Great Recession, what is at stake for the Silver State's economic future if policies and protections are rolled back, and what more can be done to ensure that Latinos and all Nevadans continue to advance their economic security.

* The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish, and other Hispanic descent; they may be of any race.

Nevada Hispanic Snapshot for 2011 and 2015 ²		Latinos in Nevada		All of Nevada	
		2011	2015	2011	2015
	Population	737,221	813,394	2,723,322	2,890,845
	Foreign-Born	302,082	307,523	522,463	558,170
	Bachelor's Degree	6.2%	5.9%	14.9%	15.5%
	Labor Force Participation Rate*	69.9%	70.9%	65.1%	63.5%
	Unemployed	9.8%	5.9%	8.2%	5%
	Median Household Income	\$39,604	\$45,665	\$48,927	\$52,431
	Poverty Rate	23.1%	20%	15.9%	14.7%
	Uninsured Rate	36.5%	22.8%	21.9%	12.3%
	Renters Facing High Rental Costs†	54.8%	51.4%	52.3%	49.5%
	Homeownership Rate	44.5%	43.1%	56.3%	54%

Latino Gains Since the Great Recession are at Stake

At the height of the Great Recession, Hispanic families were in severe financial distress. In 2011, Latinos faced a national unemployment rate of 11.5%, and a rate of 9.8% in Nevada.³ To help the American economy recover from the crisis, a series of critical pieces of legislation were put in place to bolster Latino economic security and reward hard work. For example, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), one of the most important accomplishments of Wall Street reform, has already returned nearly \$12 billion in relief to 29 million consumers in five short years.⁴ Additionally, 25,000 Nevadans have become eligible for work authorization under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.⁵ There are also more than four million Latinos who have gained health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act.⁶ These and other actions to strengthen our economy have led to improved economic footing for Nevada's Latinos.

- **Hispanic Gains in Health Coverage:** Between 2011 and 2015, Nevada's rate of uninsured Hispanics dropped from 37% to 23%, a 38% reduction in the uninsured rate among Latinos in just four years. Nevadans overall also saw a drop in the uninsured rate from 22% in 2011 to 12% in 2015, a 44% reduction in the overall uninsured rate. This reduction was largely driven by the 82,403 Latino Nevadans who acquired health insurance, accounting for 35% of the overall reduction.⁷

* Foreign-born workers comprised 25% of Nevada's labor force in 2011 and 2015, per the U.S. Census Bureau's American FactFinder.

† Those defined as cost-burdened spend 30% or more of their monthly income on rent and utilities.

- **More Latinos Own a Home:** The number of Hispanics who own a home increased by 10,468 households between 2011 and 2015, representing a 13% increase in the number of Latino homeowners. However, the Latino homeownership rate is still lower in 2015 (43%) than it was in 2011 (44.5%) and is 11 percentage-points lower than the state average of 54% in 2015.⁸ Although many housing markets across the country have rebounded, a large portion of Nevadans still live under the threat of foreclosure. Four Nevada cities have some of nation's highest incidence of negative home equity:* North Las Vegas (43%), Las Vegas (35%), Henderson (31%), and Reno (28%).⁹ While relatively higher than the national average (2.09%), Nevada's foreclosure rate of 2.73% in 2015 is remarkably lower than its foreclosure rate of 10.3% in 2010.¹⁰
- **More Latino Households Are Fully Banked:** The number of Hispanic households in Nevada that are fully-banked increased by 48,195 between 2011 and 2015. This increase in the number of fully-banked Latino households accounts for 40% of the statewide increase in fully-banked[†] households. However, many Nevada Latinos remain outside of the financial mainstream. Likely due to the growth in the foreign-born population, the Hispanic unbanked rate also increased from 14% to 19% between 2011 and 2015, even though the national Latino unbanked rate decreased from 20% to 16% during this period.¹¹ Additionally, more than 50,000 Latino households reported using an alternative financial service (e.g., payday loans, check cashing, prepaid cards) in 2015 than in 2011. Hispanic households account for 83% of the statewide increase in alternative financial product usage between 2011 and 2015.¹²
- **Increase in Latino-Owned Businesses:** The number of Latino-owned businesses in Nevada increased by 87% between 2007 and 2012. During this same period, the overall self-owned business rate increased by only 3%. In 2012, Latinos in Nevada owned 33,678 businesses, compared to more than 200,000 self-owned businesses statewide. Latino-owned businesses in Nevada generated \$5.6 million in gross receipts in 2012, a 79% increase from \$3.2 million in 2007.¹³

These gains are threatened by proposals to undermine progress. For example, actions targeting immigrants will have a profound effect on the state. An immigration policy of mass deportation would cause deep economic harm. Removing Nevada's 129,000 undocumented individuals would cause the state's GDP to decline by \$5.74 billion annually.¹⁴ Further, attempts to end the refundable Child Tax Credit (CTC) for immigrant workers who pay taxes using an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) would strip support for their children, most of whom are U.S. citizens. Nationally, more than 80% of ITIN filers losing the CTC would be Latino.¹⁵ In 2013, 17.5% of Nevada households received the CTC.¹⁶ Additionally, some members of Congress have proposed legislation to roll back CFPB protections that would weaken the consumer agency's ability to rein in unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices in the financial marketplace—practices that helped give rise to the housing crisis and Great Recession. Finally, there are also attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would take health care coverage away from 30 million Americans, including six million Latinos.¹⁷

* Negative equity means that home mortgages are worth more than the value of the home.

† According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, fully-banked households hold a bank account and do not use an alternative financial service. Those who are unbanked do not have checking or savings accounts.



Ways to Protect and Build Gains

- Protect the progress of the Affordable Care Act. Protect the progress of the Affordable Care Act.
- Enact comprehensive immigration reform and oppose mass deportation.
- Preserve homeownership for distressed borrowers and keep rent affordable.
- Put more money in worker's pockets by restoring the value of the minimum wage, expanding access to refundable tax credits, and ensuring that infrastructure investments result in jobs where they are needed most.
- Enhance long-term economic security by curbing the growth of predatory lending institutions and increasing access to safe financial products and workplace-based retirement plans.
- Strengthen the social safety net and maintain its structure.

Conclusion

The gains of Latinos in recent years have been the result of targeted economic policies that invest in maintaining and increasing progress for all Nevadans. As the Latino community continues to drive growth and contribute to Nevada's workforce and prosperity, it is critical that local, state, and national leaders defend the progress that has been made since the Great Recession. At the same time, opportunities to continue positive trends also exist. Upcoming proposals for tax reform and infrastructure investments have the power to provide increased opportunities for more workers and families—if the policies are crafted to embody the American values of inclusivity and equity. Progress must continue, because a stronger Latino community means a stronger America.

Endnotes

All sources were accessed February 2017.

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- 8 Ibid.
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- 11 Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, *2015 FDIC National Survey of Unbanked and Underbanked Households* (Washington, DC: FDIC 2015), Table 3.2.
- 12 Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, "Economic Inclusion: Custom Data Tool," <https://www.economicinclusion.gov/custom-data/index.html>.
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