

**Statement for the Record**  
**U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor**  
**Full Committee Markup**  
“Growing Up in Fear: How the Trump Administration’s  
Immigration Policies Are Harming Children”

Submitted to  
U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor

Submitted by  
**UnidosUS**  
Raul Yzaguirre Building  
1126 16th Street NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20036-4845

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## Introduction

UnidosUS, formerly the National Council of La Raza, is the largest national Latino\* civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States. For more than 50 years, we have worked to advance opportunities for Latino families to enhance their significant contributions to the social, economic and political tapestry of our great nation. In this capacity, UnidosUS and its Affiliate network of nearly 300 community-based organizations in 36 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, work to provide education, health care, immigration, housing, workforce development, free tax preparation, and other services to millions of Latinos in the United States each year.

Throughout our history as an organization, UnidosUS has united communities and diverse groups seeking common ground through collaboration and a shared desire to make our country stronger. Our approach to immigration policy is no different and has guided our advocacy efforts on every significant immigration conversation our country has had since 1968. UnidosUS has combined original research, policy analysis, and advocacy to support commonsense policy solutions to achieve an immigration system that is fair, just, and accountable to the rule of law—indeed, an immigration system of which we can all be proud.

This statement for the record highlights the urgent need for Congress to pass legislation that protects one of the most vulnerable child populations in the country: the U.S.-born American citizen children of undocumented and temporary immigrants. Four million Latino children in the U.S. have at least one undocumented parent – or roughly 1 in 4 Hispanic children.<sup>1</sup>

Even before taking office, then-candidate Trump exploited anti-immigrant rhetoric in his politics of division. Since 2017, the Trump administration has made a series of policy decisions that have upended the lives of millions of American families. Eighty percent of Latinos in the U.S. are American citizens;<sup>2</sup> of the remaining 20% who are not, half have legal permanent residency (green cards).<sup>3</sup> While only a small portion of Hispanic adults lack permanent legal immigration status, the threat of punitive U.S. immigration policy invades their families' lives and has an outsized impact on their American children. This stress spreads through entire communities and as a result, Latinos in the U.S. are bearing the brunt of the Trump administration's politics of hate. By 2060, it's estimated that nearly one in three Americans will be Hispanic.<sup>4</sup> The Latino children of today are America's future work force, voters, leaders, and service members. They are crucial to our national well-being, but federal anti-immigrant policies undermine their safety and stability and place the entire generation at risk.

It is past time that Congress provide these individuals, their families, and their communities, with the peace of mind and certainty that comes with a permanent legislative relief.

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\* 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.

## A Moral and Constitutional Obligation to Protect and Educate America's Children

Ninety-five percent of Hispanic children in the U.S. are U.S.-born citizens. Nearly half of these children have at least one parent who was born outside of the U.S.; a quarter have at least one parent who is undocumented. The Constitution clearly defines their rights, as Americans, to public K-12 education and equal protection under the law. Regardless of parental immigration status however, *including* naturalized citizens, research shows that the children of Hispanic immigrants in the U.S. experience the diffuse harms of punitive immigration policies,<sup>5</sup> such as fearing U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), toxic stress, and discrimination based on falsely imputed immigration status.<sup>6</sup>

Direct harms produced by anti-immigrant policies are only half the story; their indirect, or chilling, impacts can be far-reaching. The Trump administration has sought every opportunity to suppress Latino Americans through chilling: via the federal regulatory process, such as with the public charge rules; through indiscriminate, racialized immigration enforcement in the U.S. interior; and by creating a public environment in which Hispanics are falsely portrayed as villainous outsiders rather than lifelong, integral members of our community.

### Education

While Hispanic education outcomes have been consistently rising over the past two decades, the stress of an anti-immigrant climate threatens to undercut these gains. Three separate studies from the University of California, Los Angeles detail growth in behavioral and emotional problems in schools with large immigrant populations due to fears associated with immigration enforcement.<sup>7</sup> Teachers from primarily White schools report increasingly hostile school environments for ethnic minority students at levels unprecedented in their careers.<sup>8</sup> School is already a difficult developmental stage for all children. Hispanic children in the U.S.—in addition to experiencing common childhood anxieties—also fear family separation and share collective worries with their impacted classmates.

The following statistics offer a snapshot of life at school for children in states with the largest Hispanic populations and underscore the scope and magnitude of impact of the current anti-immigrant climate on a sizeable share of America's children.

### Texas

- 50% of children in Texas (ages 0-17) are Hispanic. 95% of Hispanic children in Texas are U.S. citizens.<sup>9</sup>
- 49% of Hispanic children in Texas (ages 0–17) have at least one foreign-born parent.<sup>10</sup>
- 53% of K–12 students in Texas are Hispanic.<sup>11</sup>
- 33% of Hispanic K–12 students in Texas are designated English learners (EL)<sup>12</sup> despite 95% having been born in the U.S.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 1: Texas Attainment on the Nation’s Report Card (NAEP 2019)<sup>†</sup>**

Exam	Percent of students with passing score or higher		
	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic	Hispanic English Learners
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Math	92%	84%	71%
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Reading	80%	61%	34%
4-year HS graduation rate	90%	88%	77%
% of college-going HS graduates*	52%	46%	n/a

\* Denotes high school graduates who enroll in any form of higher education within 16 months of graduation

Table sources: U.S. Department of Education, “NAEP Data Explorer,” National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC, 2019, <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/xplore/NDE> (accessed September 23, 2019); and Texas Education Agency, *Enrollment in Texas public schools, 2018–19*, July 2019, [https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll\\_2018-19.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll_2018-19.pdf) (accessed October 31, 2019); and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, *High School Graduates Enrolled in Higher Education*, 2019, <http://www.txhighereddata.org/index.cfm?objectId=77D62E90-D970-11E8-BB650050560100A9> (accessed October 31, 2019).

## California

- 52% of children (ages 0-17) in California are Hispanic.<sup>14</sup> 97% of Hispanic children in California are U.S. citizens.<sup>15</sup>
- 58% of Hispanic children in California have at least one foreign-born parent.<sup>16</sup>
- 55% of K–12 students in California are Hispanic.<sup>17</sup>
- 31% of Hispanic K–12 students in California are designated English learners (EL)<sup>18</sup> despite 96% having been born in the U.S.<sup>19</sup>

**Table 2: California Attainment on the Nation’s Report Card (NAEP 2019)**

Exam	Percent of students with passing score or higher		
	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic	Hispanic English Learners
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Math	85%	76%	41%
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Reading	80%	65%	27%
4-year HS graduation rate	87%	81%	66%
% of college-going HS graduates*	70%	58%	37%

\*Denotes high school graduates who enroll in any form of higher education within 16 months of graduation.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, “NAEP Data Explorer,” National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC, 2019, <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/xplore/NDE> (accessed September 23, 2019); and California Department of Education, “DataQuest,” <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/> (accessed October 21, 2019).

<sup>†</sup> The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is “the largest continuing and nationally representative assessment” of student knowledge and ability in key subjects. The congressionally mandated program is managed by the U.S. Department of Education and is commonly used by researchers to compare academic progress across states.

## Florida

- 32% of children (ages 0-17) in Florida are Hispanic. 91% of Hispanic children in Florida are U.S. citizens.<sup>20</sup>
- 49% of Hispanic children in Florida (ages 0–17) were born in the U.S. and have at least one foreign-born parent.<sup>21</sup>
- 34% of K–12 students in Florida are Hispanic.<sup>22</sup>
- 24% of Hispanic K–12 students in Florida are designated as English Learners (EL)<sup>23</sup> despite nearly 90% having been born in the U.S.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 3: Florida Attainment on the Nation’s Report Card (NAEP 2019)**

Exam	Percent of students with passing score or higher		
	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic	Hispanic English Learners
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Math	95%	90%	69%
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Reading	86%	82%	33%
HS graduation rate	89%	85%	74%
% of college-going HS graduates*	71%	70%	45%

\* Denotes high school graduates who enroll in any form of higher education within 16 months of graduation

Table sources: U.S. Department of Education, “NAEP Data Explorer,” National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC, 2019, <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/xplore/NDE> (accessed September 23, 2019); and “2018–2019 Florida Report Card,” Florida Department of Education. Tallahassee, 2018. <https://edstats.fldoe.org/SASPortal/main.do> (accessed August 31, 2019).

## Illinois

- 25% of children (ages 0-17) in Illinois are Hispanic. 97% of Hispanic children in Illinois (ages 0–17) are U.S. citizens.<sup>25</sup>
- 57% of Hispanic children in Illinois have at least one foreign-born parent.<sup>26</sup>
- 26% of K–12 students in Illinois are Hispanic.<sup>27</sup>
- 32% of Hispanic K–12 students in Illinois are designated English learners (EL)<sup>28</sup> despite 96% having been born in the U.S.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 4: Illinois Attainment on the Nation’s Report Card (NAEP 2019)**

Exam	Percent of students with passing score or higher		
	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic	Hispanic English Learners
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Math	89%	86%	64%
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Reading	80%	71%	41%
4-year HS graduation rate (2018)	86%	82%	72%*

\*4-year graduation rate applies to all English Learners in Illinois

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, “NAEP Data Explorer,” National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC, 2019, <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/xplore/NDE> (accessed November 6, 2019); and Illinois State Board of Education, *2018 Annual Report*, <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/2018-Annual-Report.pdf> (accessed November 6, 2019).

## Arizona

- 49% of children (ages 0-17) in Arizona are Hispanic. 98% of Hispanic children in Arizona are U.S. citizens.<sup>30</sup>
- 47% of Hispanic children in Arizona (ages 0–17) have at least one foreign-born parent.<sup>31</sup>
- 46% of K–12 students in Arizona are Hispanic.<sup>32</sup>
- 12% of Hispanic K–12 students in Arizona are designated English learners (EL)<sup>33</sup> despite 96% having been born in the U.S.<sup>34</sup>

**Table 5: Arizona Attainment on the Nation’s Report Card (NAEP 2019)**

Exam	Percent of students with passing score or higher		
	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic	Hispanic English Learners
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Math	91%	75%	36%
4 <sup>th</sup> grade Reading	80%	57%	16%
4-year HS graduation rate (2018)	85%	76%	35%*

\*4-year graduation rate applies to all English Learners in Arizona

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, “NAEP Data Explorer,” *National Center for Education Statistics*. Washington, DC, 2019, <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/xplore/NDE> (accessed November 6, 2019); and Arizona State Board of Education, *2018 Annual Report*, <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/2018-Annual-Report.pdf> (accessed November 6, 2019).

History shows that righting this ship is possible, but we have much to lose if the status quo prevails. Based on current population trends, our future as a nation hangs in the balance if we do not cultivate and promote the full health, talents, and abilities of our Hispanic children.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Wyatt Clarke, Kimberley Turner, and Lina Guzman, “One Quarter of Hispanic Children in the United States Have an Unauthorized Immigrant Parent,” (Bethesda, Maryland: National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families, October 4, 2017), <https://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/research-resources/one-quarter-of-hispanic-children-in-the-united-states-have-an-unauthorized-immigrant-parent/> (accessed December 16, 2019).
- <sup>2</sup> UnidosUS calculations using U.S. Census Bureau, “2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates,” *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>3</sup> Migration Policy Institute analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2012–2016 pooled American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2008 Survey of Income and Program Participation, with legal status assignments using a unique MPI methodology developed in consultation with James Bachmeier of Temple University and Jennifer Van Hook of the Pennsylvania State University, Population Research Institute (unpublished tables, Migration Policy Institute, 2018).
- <sup>4</sup> Sandra L. Colby and Jennifer M. Ortman, “Projections of the Size and Composition of the U.S. Population: 2014 to 2060,” *Current Population Reports*, 25–1143, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2014.
- <sup>5</sup> Joanna Dreby, “The burden of deportation on children in Mexican immigrant families,” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 74 (2012): 829–845, doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2012.00989.x (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>6</sup> Lisseth Rojas-Flores, *Latino U.S.-Citizen Children of Immigrants: A Generation at High Risk* (Foundation for Child Development, October 2017), [https://www.fcd-us.org/assets/2017/10/F\\_FCD\\_YSP-Summary\\_010918.pdf](https://www.fcd-us.org/assets/2017/10/F_FCD_YSP-Summary_010918.pdf) (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>7</sup> Patricia Gándara and Jongyeon Ee, “U.S. Immigration Enforcement Policy and Its Impact on Teaching and Learning in the Nation’s Schools” (University of California, Los Angeles: The Civil Rights Project, February 28, 2018), <https://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/immigration-immigrant-students/u.s.-immigration-enforcement-policy-and-its-impact-on-teaching-and-learning-in-the-nations-schools> (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>8</sup> John Rogers et al., “Teaching and Learning in the Age of Trump: Increasing Stress and Hostility in America’s High Schools” (University of California, Los Angeles: UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access, October 2017), <https://idea.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/teaching-and-learning-in-age-of-trump> (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B050031,” *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Division of Research and Analysis Office of Governance and Accountability, *Enrollment in Texas Public Schools, 2018–19*, Texas Education Agency, July 2019, [https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll\\_2018-19.pdf](https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/enroll_2018-19.pdf) (accessed October 31, 2019).
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> UnidosUS calculation using U.S. Census Bureau, “American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018,” *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Tables S0201 & B050031,” *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>15</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B050031,” *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> California Department of Education, “Fingertip Facts on Education in California—CalEdFacts 2018–19,” <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/ceffingertipfacts.asp> (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> UnidosUS calculation using U.S. Census Bureau, “American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018,” *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>20</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B050031,” *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- <sup>21</sup> UnidosUS calculations using Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles and J. Robert Warren. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 6.0 [ASEC]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V6.0> (accessed Nov 22, 2019).
- <sup>22</sup> Florida Department of Education, “Florida K–12 Education Information Portal: Enrollment Data,” <https://edstats.fl DOE.org/SASPortal/main.do> (accessed October 15, 2019).

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> UnidosUS calculation using U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).

<sup>25</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B05003I," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Illinois State Board of Education, "Illinois State Report Card, 2018–2019," <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/> (accessed November 6, 2019).

<sup>28</sup> English learner population estimated using English learners who speak Spanish at home as a proxy for Hispanic. Illinois State Board of Education, *2018 Annual Report*, <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/2018-Annual-Report.pdf> (accessed November 6, 2019).

<sup>29</sup> UnidosUS calculation using U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B05003I," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Arizona State Board of Education, "Arizona State Report Card, 2018–2019," <https://www.Arizonareportcard.com/> (accessed November 6, 2019).

<sup>33</sup> English learner population estimated using English learners who speak Spanish at home as a proxy for Hispanic. Arizona State Board of Education, *2018 Annual Report*, <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/2018-Annual-Report.pdf> (accessed November 6, 2019).

<sup>34</sup> UnidosUS calculation using U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 2018," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).