

# Executive Summary and Analysis: California

The following executive analysis is a compilation of UnidosUS primary and secondary research. The analysis and data presented is focused on the most important issues for the next president to address, including health care, jobs and the economy, and immigration.

## Latinos in California

- California is home to more than 15 million Latinos.<sup>1</sup> Currently, Latinos make up 39% of the state's population.<sup>2</sup> Nearly three-quarters (72%) of Hispanic adults in California are U.S. citizens;<sup>3</sup> among non-citizens, about 42% are legal permanent residents.<sup>4</sup>
- In California, Latino Households contributed more than \$64.4 million in federal, state, and local taxes in 2017. They also possessed a spending power exceeding \$208 million that year.<sup>5</sup>
- Ninety-seven percent of Hispanic children in California (ages 0-17) are U.S. citizens;<sup>6</sup> more than half (58%) have at least one foreign-born parent.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2018, more than half of Latinos in California were burdened by the high cost of rent, meaning that they spent more than 30% of their income on it.<sup>8</sup> Latinos in California are more likely (58%) to be burdened by high rental costs than Californians (54%) overall.<sup>9</sup>
- Hispanic workers in California continue to play outsized roles in major U.S. industries, most notably, in the construction and agricultural industries. Latinos account for 53% of construction workers and 79% of agricultural workers in the state.<sup>10</sup>

## Latinos and the 2020 Election

- Latino voters will play a decisive role in at least 23 of the most competitive House races in 2020, including seven in California.
- In the 2016 presidential election, nearly one in four Californians who cast a ballot was Latino.
- The number of potential voters is much greater—more than 40% of eligible Latino citizens in the state are still in need of registration.
- In California, there are more than seven million Latino citizens of voting age.<sup>11</sup>
- According to an UnidosUS poll, 91% of California's Latino voters are motivated to vote in the November 2020 election for president, Congress, and other offices.

- Among these voters, 82% say that participating in voting and elections can make a real difference in their lives.
- The most important candidate qualities for California's Latino voters are someone who values diversity and brings people together; who fights for their priorities and is willing to compromise to get things done; and who has realistic, achievable policy ideas and goals.<sup>12</sup>

**Health Care.** The Affordable Care Act (ACA) resulted with historic coverage gains and consumer protections that are vulnerable to being reversed. We must continue to strengthen the law so that it works for more Americans, including Latinos. More work is needed to increase access, affordability, and quality so that more families have the opportunity for health coverage and care.

- During the 2019 Open Enrollment Period, 1,513,883 individuals enrolled in Covered California, including 331,194 Latinos.<sup>13</sup>
- In 2018, the uninsured rate for Latinos in California was 12%, compared to 28% in 2013.<sup>14</sup>
- According to an UnidosUS poll, almost 40% of Latino voters in the state said that reducing health care costs would most help them save money for an emergency expense or for the future.
- According to the poll, 61% of Latinos in California say they would be much more likely to support a candidate who favored policies to lower the cost of prescription drugs, and another 50% would be much more likely to support a candidate who favored policies that provide increases in financial help to lower the cost of buying health insurance.

**Jobs and the Economy.** The national economy may be growing, but Latinos continue to struggle to get ahead. After paying bills and essentials, the majority of Latinos have no extra money at the end of the month.

- According to an UnidosUS poll, 90% of Latino voters in California say that in this economy, housing costs keep going up, and many hardworking Americans can't afford a place to live.
- Twenty-five percent of Latino voters surveyed said they spent more than 40% of their income on housing costs.
- More than half (56%) of Latino voters say that reducing housing costs would most help them save money for an emergency expense or for the future.
- More than half (54%) of Latinos said they would be much more likely to support a candidate for office who favored policies to build more affordable housing.
- Another 82% of Latino voters say wages are stagnant, and many people must work two or three jobs to get by.
- More than one-third (32%) said higher wages would make the most positive difference in their lives right now.
- According to the poll, more than 50% of Latinos in California said they would be much more likely to support a candidate for office who favored raising the minimum wage to \$15 dollars an hour nationwide (51%) and paid family and sick leave policies that allow all workers and employees to have some income while they take time away from work (52%).

**Immigration.** Hispanic immigrants play a critical role in our nation's economy. Federal policies attacking the security of Latino immigrants and their families, especially U.S.-born children, is placing the health, education, and economic outlooks of an entire generation of American young people at risk. And, by extension, the current trajectory of our immigration policy and political landscapes are undermining the nation's long term economic, social, and political health and vitality as well. We must urgently correct course.

- In 2017, more than half of three million Hispanic entrepreneurs in the United States were immigrants.<sup>15</sup>
- While Hispanic immigrants made up only 6% of the U.S. population in 2017, they comprised nearly 10% of the country's entrepreneurs.<sup>16</sup>
- Roughly 186,120 Californians are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)<sup>17</sup> recipients.<sup>18</sup> Estimates show as many as 72,600 U.S.-born children in California may have a DACA recipient parent.<sup>19</sup>
- As of 2017, 55,000 Hispanic Californians had Temporary Protected Status (TPS).<sup>20</sup> They have at least 54,700 U.S.-born children.<sup>21</sup>
- With the Department of Homeland Security's new public charge regulation in effect, the ripple effects are expected to cost the California economy \$3.2 to \$7 billion and 21,800 to 47,700 jobs.<sup>22</sup>

## About

UnidosUS, previously known as NCLR (National Council of La Raza), is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an Affiliate Network of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers that affect Latinos at the national and local levels.

For more than 50 years, UnidosUS has united communities and different groups seeking common ground through collaboration, and that share a desire to make our country stronger. For more information on UnidosUS, visit [www.unidosus.org](http://www.unidosus.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

## Endnotes

- 1 UnidosUS calculations using U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 2 UnidosUS calculations using U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 3 U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey," Table B05003I.
- 4 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).
- 5 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau, "2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B05003I," *American Community Survey*, data.census.gov (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 7 UnidosUS calculation using IPUMS-CPS, University of Minnesota, 2019.

- 8 [http://publications.unidosus.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/1994/unidosus\\_latinosincalifornia.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://publications.unidosus.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/1994/unidosus_latinosincalifornia.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- 9 [http://publications.unidosus.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/1994/unidosus\\_latinosincalifornia.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://publications.unidosus.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/1994/unidosus_latinosincalifornia.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- 10 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 11 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 12 UnidosUS June 2019 Latino Electorate poll
- 13 [https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Marketplace-Products/2019\\_Open\\_Enrollment](https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Marketplace-Products/2019_Open_Enrollment)
- 14 <https://www.kff.org/uninsured/state-indicator/rate-by-raceethnicity/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>
- 15 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 16 <https://research.newamericaneconomy.org/report/hispanic-americans-2019/>
- 17 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) data show that approximately 95% of DACA recipients are of Hispanic origin.
- 18 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (2019), *Approximate Active DACA Recipients: As of September 30, 2019*, [https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/DACA\\_Population\\_Receipts\\_since\\_Injunction\\_Sep\\_30\\_2019.pdf](https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/DACA_Population_Receipts_since_Injunction_Sep_30_2019.pdf) (accessed January 28, 2020).
- 19 Nicole Prchal Svajlenka, "What We Know About DACA Recipients, by State," (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, September 2019), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2019/09/12/474422/know-daca-recipients-state/> (accessed February 5, 2020).
- 20 Temporary Protected Status is a designation that USCIS can grant eligible nationals who are present in the U.S. at the time that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) deems their country of residence temporarily unsafe for return, e.g., due to ongoing conflict or natural disaster.
- 21 Robert Warren, "A Statistical and Demographic Profile of the U.S. Temporary Protected Status Populations from El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti," *Journal on Migration and Human Security* (August 8, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1177/233150241700500302> (accessed October 21, 2019).
- 22 David Dyssegaard Kallick, "Only Wealthy Immigrants Need Apply: The Chilling Effects of 'Public Charge'" (Washington, DC: Fiscal Policy Institute, November 2019), <http://fiscalspolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/FINAL-FPI-Public-Charge-2019-MasterCopy.pdf> (accessed November 25, 2019).

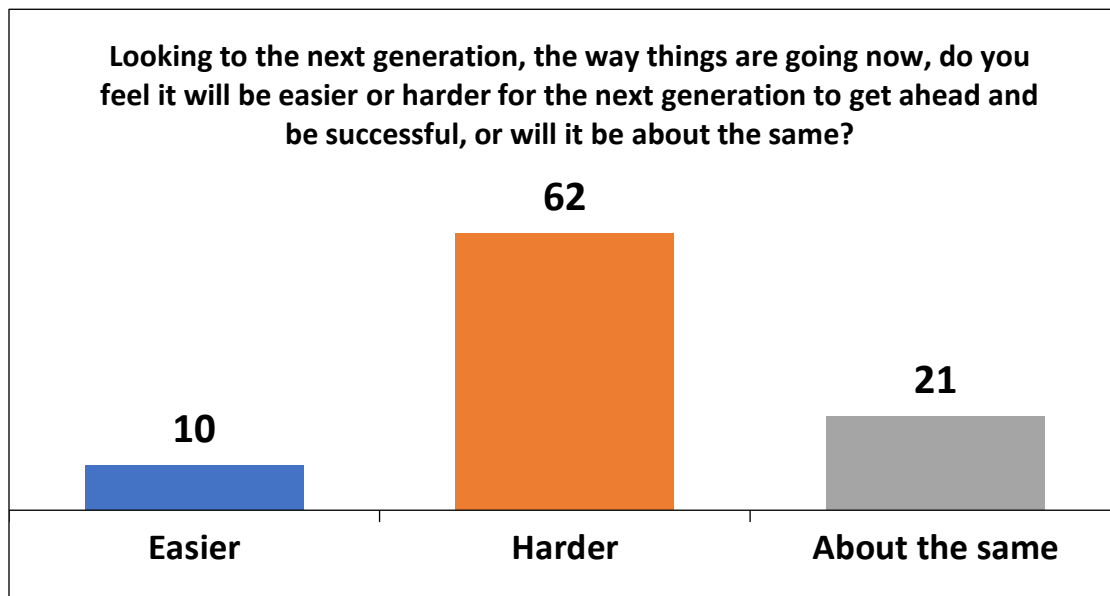
# California Latino Voters Poll Results

## A snapshot of top Latino voting issues

This memo presents the key findings based on our recent survey of likely Latino voters in California.<sup>1</sup> The survey reached 345 likely Latino voters in California concurrent with a larger national survey of Latino voters. It shows an electorate with high motivation and belief in the power of voting, deep economic concerns, and solid support for progressive economic policies to address those concerns.

This sample of likely voters includes 83% who say they are almost certain to vote and 17% who say probably or that the chances are 50/50. Latino voters in California are highly motivated to vote this year: 91% rate themselves a 6 or higher on a 0 to 10 motivation scale (**62% are a 10**). Further, these voters solidly see the value of voting: 82% agree that **“Participating in voting and elections can make things better for me and my family”** (52% agree strongly).

These voters come into the election with deep concerns about the future. Just over 6 in 10 (**62%**) feel it will be **harder** for the next generation to get ahead, and only one in 10 (10%) believe it will be easier.



<sup>1</sup>Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey that was conducted between February 5 - 17, 2020 by live telephone interview and text-to-online. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish and reached 1,750 likely general election voters nationally from Latino, Hispanic, or Spanish-speaking backgrounds. It included oversamples in Nevada, Florida, Arizona, Texas, and California. The total sample has a margin of error of +/-2.3% and for the California voters it is +/- 5.3.

Latino voters in California acknowledge growth in the national economy but are not convinced all are benefitting. They strongly believe that housing costs and stagnant wages are fundamental impediments to success and opportunity.

- “In this economy, housing costs keep going up, and many hard-working Americans can't afford a place to live” (90% agree, 66% strongly).
- “In this economy, wages are stagnant, and many people have to work 2 or 3 jobs to get by” (82% agree, 58% strongly).
- “The national economy may be growing, but people like me cannot get ahead” (75% agree, 44% strongly).<sup>2</sup>

The top issue these voters want the next President to focus on is health care, followed by the economy and immigration. For those who are renters, housing costs are also a top presidential issue.

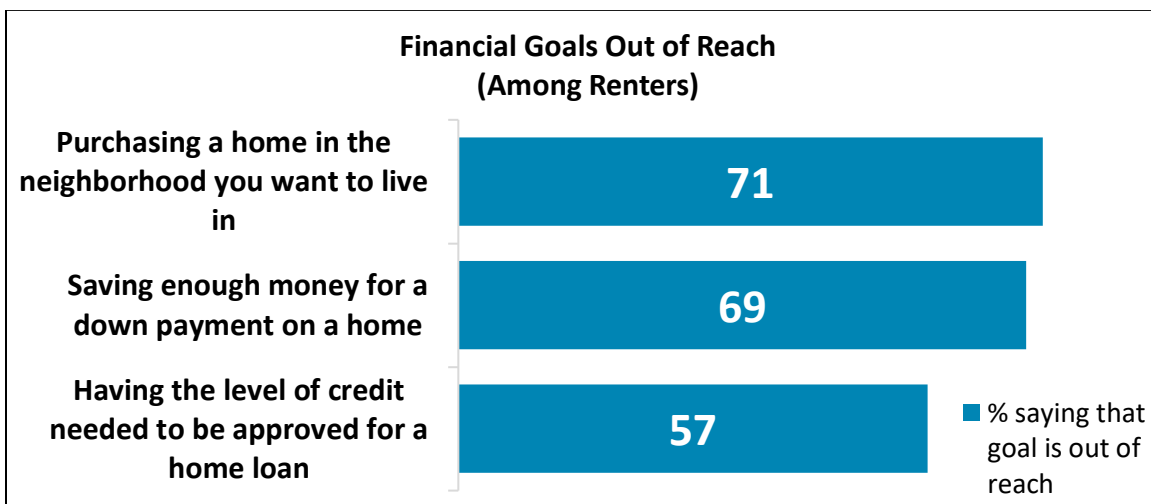
Which one or two of the following issues do you think it is most important for the next President to focus on?	Total	Homeownership	
		Owner	Renter
Health care	30	33	27
Jobs and the economy	24	21	28
Immigration	21	18	25
Education	17	17	16
Corruption in government	17	23	10
The cost of housing	16	10	23
Climate change	16	17	14
Unifying the country	14	16	14
Gun violence	13	12	16
Discrimination and racism	11	8	14

When it comes to their own financial situation, housing costs are a dominant concern. A little more than half of Latino voters in California (55%) say they do not have extra money at the end of the month after paying bills and essentials. Housing costs are at the top of list of costs that prevent them from saving money, and even more so for renters.

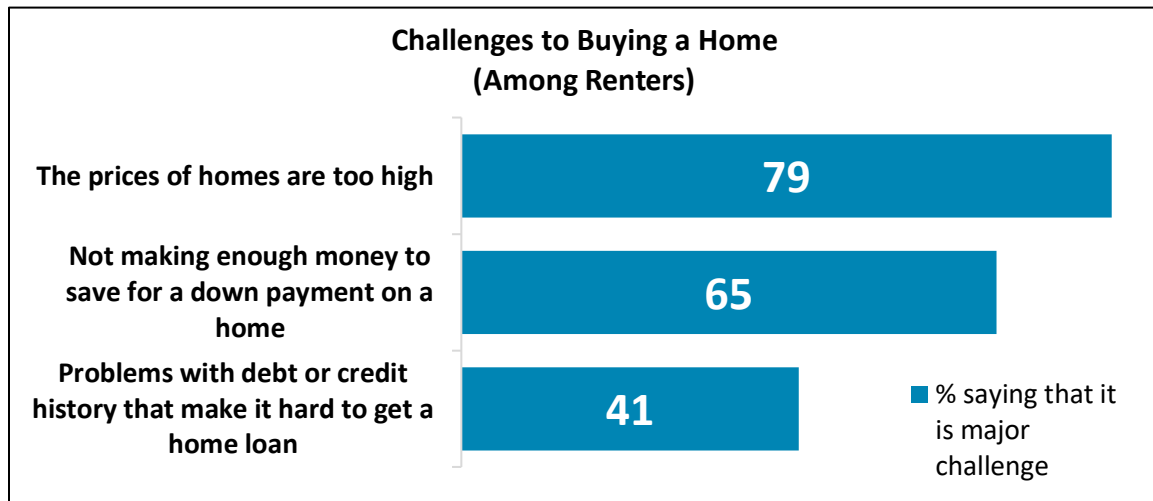
<sup>2</sup> Split sampled.

If you could get help in reducing these costs, which one or two of them would MOST help you to be able to save money for emergency expenses, retirement, or making big purchases?	Total	Homeownership	
		Owner	Renter
Housing costs	56	48	64
Health care costs	39	42	36
Debt, including credit card and student loans	32	31	35
Transportation costs, including care payment	26	23	30
Child care costs	6	5	7

Owning their own home seems out of reach for many Latino voters in California. **Among renters, 71% say that purchasing a home in a neighborhood they want to live in is out of reach for them**, and 69% say saving for a down payment is out of reach.

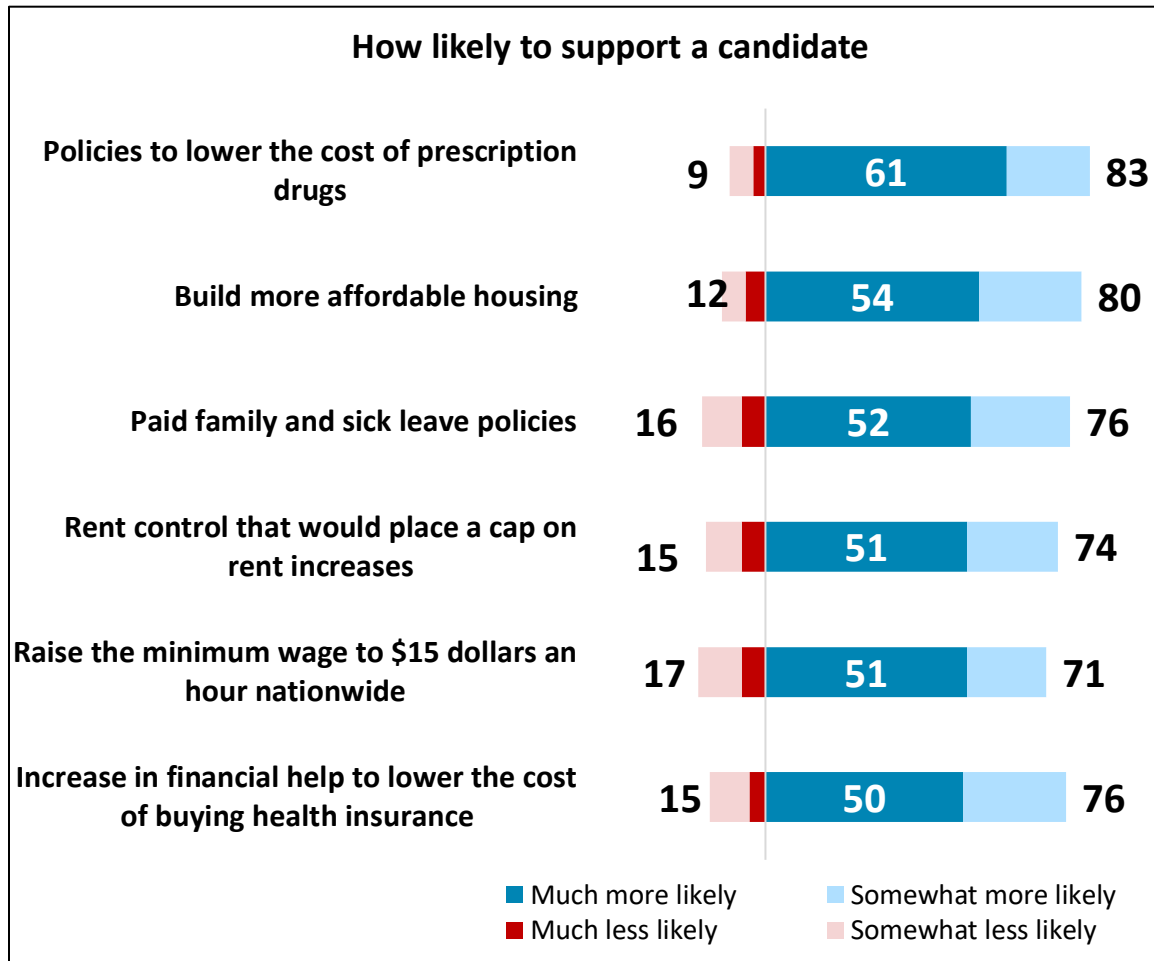


**Close to eight in ten Latino voters (79%) point to the high prices of homes**, followed by not having enough money to save for a down payment, as the key challenges to buying a home.



All of these concerns translate into an appetite for expansive policy proposals. Latino voters in California strongly favor a range of proactive economic policies that would drive their support for candidates. The top policies include **lowering prescription drug costs**, building more **affordable housing**, **rent control**, and **paid family and sick leave**. Policies to reduce housing costs are especially salient to renters, including rent control and building affordable housing. Three-quarters or more support these proposals, including majorities who strongly support them.





Much more likely to support a candidate who favored that policy	Total	Homeownership	
		Owner	Renter
Policies to lower the cost of prescription drugs	61	62	62
Build more affordable housing	54	45	65
Paid family and sick leave policies	52	48	56
Rent control that would place a cap on rent increases	51	41	64
Raise the minimum wage to \$15 dollars an hour nationwide	51	46	57
Increase in financial help to lower the cost of buying health insurance	50	45	56

**Demographics of Latino Voters in California**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Percent</b>
18-29	28
30-39	20
40-49	15
50-64	21
65+	16
<b>Household Income</b>	
Below \$50k	54
Above \$50k	41
<b>Homeownership</b>	
Owner	54
Renter	44
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employee full-time	52
Employed part-time	14
Unemployed	7
Retired	18
Full student	4
Homemaker	5