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Invisible Toxins **8**
Toxinas Invisibles

Photo/Foto: Samuel Gilbert for Source NM

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Commentary/Comentario

Democratic Negligence and Republican Disinformation

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

A wise saying goes: "you snooze, you lose." And that fits, like a glove, the politicians and parties who rest on their laurels and wait, mistakenly, for the unconditional and immovable support of the voters, no matter what happens or does not happen. This is something the Democratic Party doesn't seem to understand, despite the evident examples of the urgency with which they should act to achieve what they promised for so long, especially to minorities and immigrants. Taking the support of this segment of the population for granted is not recommended, much less strategic. At any rate, it would be negligent and irresponsible, politically-speaking. And those debts always come due, sooner or later. For example, on June 14 there was a special election in Texas' 34th congressional district, which was represented by Congressman Filemón Vela before he resigned for a job in the private sector. Well, the seat was won by Republican Mayra Flores, over Democrat Dan Sánchez. And although there will

be a new election in November, and many hope it will be more favorable for the Democrats—given the new lines drawn for congressional districts—this occurrence is evidence of what happens when there is no investment in an 89% Hispanic district and in a state like Texas where, similar to Florida, Republicans continue to make inroads with Latino voters. That is, the Democrats' excess of

“The Democrats seem to continue to fail to grasp that Republicans' lies and disinformation have support from a part of the public that accepts them as reality.”

confidence in their much-ballyhooed fight for the Latino community results in cases which, as in the Texas election mentioned, become a monument to political negligence, in other words, disinterest with regard to the priorities of Hispanics that in the end will hurt the Democratic ranks. Flores, in fact, accepted donations

from Republican leaders like Elise Stefanik, third-ranking Republican member in the House of Representatives, who has echoed the racist conspiracy theories promoted by white supremacists and Republican leaders. Despite the fact that we already know that all of this political trash is focused on hurting the Latino immigrant community, Flores won irrefutably. This alone should have sounded the alarm bell such that Democrats paid more attention to their political strategies; but it seems that apathy—and hollow, grandiose promises—form part of their partisan performance. In an article in the *Texas Tribune*, Sánchez, the Democrat, explains it even better: "Too many factors were against us, including little to no support from the National Democratic Party and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC)." Although this is about a special election and a seat that will once again be in play in November, it's also a taste of what could be coming, if the Democrats continue leaving everything to chance—or the false notion that if they have always been supported by a group of voters, like Hispan-



ics, that support will be eternal. But nothing is eternal in politics, and anyone who aspires to a political position in any part of the world knows this very well. Even beyond ideologies, in a democracy it is the voter who puts everything in its rightful place, even if that means sending a candidate—or a party—to the dustbin of history. This is especially important at this juncture, when the midterm elections are coming to a head, at a time when voters' pocketbooks still have not recovered from the aftermath of the pandemic, or the war in Ukraine: high gasoline prices, plus everything is more expensive, from food to housing. And for certain groups of voters, legislative chang-

es have also not materialized, as in the case of immigration reform. This issue, for millions of human beings in this country, is one of the inflection points in their perspective about their personal and family lives, especially the goal of achieving immigration stability they have fought and waited for, for so long. Add to that picture the fact that the Democrats also have to deal with the disinformation campaigns that have become Republicans' favorite electoral strategy, in honor of the Liar-In-Chief—ex-President Donald Trump—well, it doesn't look so good. That is partly because the Democrats seem to continue to fail to

See **Disinformation** on page 25

La Dejader Demócrata y la Desinformación Republicana

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

Dice un sabio refrán que "a camarón que se duerme, se lo lleva la corriente". Y eso le cae como anillo al dedo a los políticos y partidos que se duermen en sus laureles y esperan, errados, que el apoyo de los votantes sea incondicional e inamovible, pase lo que pase o hagan lo que hagan.

Eso es algo que el Partido Demócrata no parece acabar de comprender, a pesar de las evidentes muestras de la urgencia con la que debería actuar para cumplir con lo que durante tanto tiempo ha prometido, sobre todo a las mi-

norías y especialmente a los inmigrantes. Dar por sentado el apoyo de ese segmento de la población ya no es ni recomendable, ni mucho menos estratégico. En todo caso, sería negligente e irresponsable en términos políticos. Y eso siempre se paga, tarde o temprano.

El 14 de junio, por ejemplo, hubo una elección especial en el Distrito 34 de Texas, que era representado por el congresista Filemón Vela, quien renunció por un trabajo en el sector privado. Pues bien, el escaño fue ganado por la republicana Mayra Flores frente al demócrata Dan Sánchez. Y aunque en noviembre habrá nuevamente elección y muchos esperan que sea más favorable para los

demócratas —dadas las nuevas líneas de redistribución de distritos congresionales—, lo ocurrido es muestra de lo que pasa cuando no se invierte en un distrito 89% hispano y en un estado como Texas que, al igual que en Florida, los republicanos siguen teniendo ganancias entre votantes latinos.

Es decir, el exceso de confianza de los demócratas en su tan careada lucha en favor de la comunidad latina resulta en esos casos, como en la elección mencionada en Texas, en un monumento a la dejader política o, en otras palabras, al desinterés en torno a las prioridades de los hispanos que en el fondo realmente privaría entre las filas demócratas.

Flores, de hecho, aceptó donaciones de líderes republicanos como Elise Stefanik, la tercera en mando en la Cámara Baja, quien se ha hecho eco de las teorías racistas conspirativas promovidas por supremacistas blancos y líderes republicanos. Y a pesar de que de antemano se sabe que toda esa basura política está enfocada en dañar a la comunidad latina inmigrante, Flores ganó irrefutablemente. Tan solo eso debería hacer sonar las alarmas para que los demócratas pusieran más atención en sus estrategias políticas; pero tal parece que la apatía —y las huecas promesas grandilocuentes— forman parte de su desempeño partidista.

“Los demócratas parecen seguir sin entender que las mentiras y la desinformación de los republicanos tienen un público que las apoya y las acepta como realidad.”

De hecho, en un artículo del *Texas Tribune*, el demócrata Sánchez lo explica mejor: "Demasiados factores estuvieron en nuestra contra, incluyendo muy poco o ningún apoyo del Partido Demócrata nacional y del Comité de Campañas Demócratas del Congreso (DCCC)".

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My View from the Frontlines of Abortion Access

Mariceli Alegria

Recently, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, upending 50 years of legal precedent and sparking protests across the country. It's easy to think *Roe* fell with the stroke of Justice Samuel Alito's pen, a legal battle lost in a courtroom. But as a clinic escort for the last decade, I've watched the fight for abortion access play out in real time on the sidewalks in front of abortion clinics in Missouri and Illinois.

As a volunteer clinic escort, it's my job to help patients get from their car door to the clinic door safely; to provide a shoulder to lean on and a gentle, welcome distraction. It might seem strange that a person would need accompaniment when walking such a short distance across a parking lot, but patients seeking health care from these clinics endure a lot of hostility in just a few yards. Anti-abortion protesters do everything they can to discourage patients from getting the care they need: yelling, pleading, praying, and even posing as clinic employees at the front gate of the clinic, next to a



Photo: Emily Geraghty via ACLU

sandwich board that says "Check in here."

The first time I encountered the roar of anti-abortion protesters outside a clinic, I wasn't an escort. I was going to a Planned Parenthood in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, where I'm from, for STI testing and birth control. The clinic I went to didn't even provide abortions; those were few and far between, even 11 years ago. Still, there they were on the sidewalk — little old ladies, holding signs and angrily yelling. I didn't understand why they were screaming at me just for being there, just for getting birth control. It's worth noting that those women were white, while the Rio Grande Valley is almost 94 percent Hispanic/Latino.

A few years later, when I saw an ad seeking clinic escorts after moving to Missouri, I remembered

how it felt to get yelled at just for seeking basic health care. Now, as a proud member of the pro-abortion community in Missouri and Southern Illinois, I count my fellow clinic escorts among my best friends. As troubling as the recent ruling is, I'm thankful to have this family to lean on. We support each other in every way possible, and we need that support more than ever now.

On June 24, Missouri became the first state with a "trigger ban" to outlaw nearly all abortions in the state. This is devastating, but we have been preparing to meet this moment. Clinic escorts previously assigned to a clinic in Missouri will have to direct their energy to the two clinics across the river in Illinois — Hope Clinic in Granite City and Planned Parenthood in Fairview Heights — which have also been preparing for an influx of thousands of patients. As we bolster our volunteer numbers in Illinois, we're also going to get our escorts plugged into other volunteer opportunities. While escorting is so important, it's just one of many ways people can get involved.

I understand that many people may feel hopeless, but I'm asking

you not to ignore this moment. We need all hands on deck. All of our love, hope, and even anger will be channeled into helping patients however we can, and you can help, too. You can donate to a local abortion fund, or become a clinic escort if you can. Find your local community of abortion supporters and ask them what they need. There are so many of us, even in red states and rural communities.

There's also something very simple that we should all be doing in this moment: When talking about abortion, say the word

“

I don't get the chance to say this to patients while I'm escorting them into the clinic, but I want them, and all abortion supporters, to know this: We love you, and we aren't going anywhere.

"abortion." Shying away from the word only perpetuates stigma. No one should feel shame for seeking abortion care, but that's exact-

See Alegria on page 19

What Is Wrong With Us?

Thomas Meisenhelder

We shoot each other. We shoot each other in the streets. We shoot each other in our homes. We shoot each other in rural towns and in big cities. We shoot ourselves in the suburbs and in the ex-burbs. We shoot each other in large mass shootings and in small individualized events. We shoot each other in schools, at concerts, and at parties. We shoot each other in stores, at work, and on vacations.

What is wrong with us? Is this who we are? Some say we shoot each other because we have too many guns (I agree); others, like the NRA, say we shoot each other because there are not enough guns (I disagree). Some say we shoot each other because we don't have good mental health care (I am all for better mental health care, but the mentally ill are more often the victims of violence than the perpetrators of it). I am sure there are lots of reasons why we are shooting each other so often, but that is not the why I am writing.

What astounds and angers me is that our society considers guns

and violence—graphic, brutal, and horrific—to be an acceptable form of popular entertainment. Our movies and television shows are

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What astounds and angers me is that our society considers guns and violence—graphic, brutal, and horrific—to be an acceptable form of popular entertainment.

stuffed full of beatings and shootings, microscopically depicted, glorified, and romanticized. In fact, loud and graphic images of deadly gun violence are perhaps the most defining commonplace element of our visual entertainment. A lot of money and efforts goes into making these colorfully exaggerated images of blood, gore, and brutality. Our films and programs, it seems, are based in the idea that guns and violence are entertaining. Is this really is who we are?

Please don't get me wrong: I am not saying that movies and

television cause us to shoot each other. It may do so (most scholars seem to feel that visual portrayals of violence do fairly often lead to increased aggression amongst viewers), but that is not my subject. What I am trying to point out is just the simple fact that in our country ugly and stark depictions of guns and violence are a favorite form of popular entertainment.

We are habituated to the notion that deadly interpersonal violence is somehow normal and is to be expected anywhere and everywhere. Of course, this is not true; shooting each other is not normal everywhere and it is not considered entertainment everywhere.

So, why is it this way? Who provides us with these images and who teaches us to enjoy violence so much? What kind of person would be so foolish and irresponsible as to produce, as entertainment, the kind of slow motion, graphic violence that characterizes so much popular entertainment made in the USA? And why would they do such a harmful and ugly thing?

See Meisenhelder on page 24

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To Defend Our Rights, Defend Our Democracy

Sulma Arias

Protesters have poured into the streets following the Supreme Court's decision to end reproductive freedom. As a mother of three, I share this anguish and anger. I fear for our lives in a country that so easily takes away a fundamental right.

But we shouldn't be surprised — this far-right court has been chipping away at democracy itself for years. And as [Justice Clarence Thomas has made clear](#), the court's newly emboldened conservatives want to take away more rights — including your right to family planning and the right to marry the person you love.

This is nothing short of a constitutional coup to impose extreme, minority views on our nation. But I still have hope. We can restore our rights if we stay disciplined and focused in our defense of democracy.

I lead [People's Action](#), a national coalition of grassroots groups with a vision of a multiracial democracy with room and opportunity for all.

I believe the key now isn't just to respond to one crisis after another. When we do that, we follow



Photo: People's Action

the playbook of the people who are taking our rights away. Instead, we need a long-haul campaign to defend and expand our democracy — and with it, all of our fundamental rights.

When I think about strategies that win, I think about the late [Congressman John Lewis](#). He was 20 when he led sit-ins to end racial segregation, 21 when he led Freedom Rides through the segregated South, and 25 when he marched from Selma to Montgomery to demand voting rights. Each time, he risked his life.

But even at his young age, Lewis was fully prepared. He stood on the shoulders of giants like Thurgood Marshall, whose legal work opened doors for the civil rights movement, and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.,

whom Lewis joined at the White House for the signing of the Voting Rights Act in August 1965 — just six months after he was brutally attacked by police in Selma.

I also think of [Gail Cincotta](#), the fiery Chicago housewife who co-founded [National People's Action](#) with organizer [Shel Trapp](#) in 1972.

Gail led and won the fight for the [Community Reinvestment Act of 1977](#), which forced banks to stop refusing to lend in Black, brown, and lower-income white communities. Gail led hundreds of protests, but she and Trapp also spent many hours training organizers who went on to found grassroots groups all across the country, and to demand the CRA live up to its promises.

That's why at my organization, we're doubling down to train a new generation — in both rural and urban areas — to defend democracy.

Through our [Organizing Revival](#) project, we're training thousands in the organizing fundamentals pioneered by Cincotta and Trapp, as well as new approaches like [deep canvassing](#) so organizers learn to listen and meet people where they are. Our deep canvassing played a

decisive role in changing hearts and minds during the 2020 election and can do so again.

Every fight endures setbacks, because the powerful never give up easily. But if we stay grounded in love and disciplined in our organizing, we can create the hope that together, we can build a democracy that respects the rights and dignity of all people.

When the big banks sought to gut the CRA, Gail helped create a wider national coalition to defend it. Before he passed away in 2020, Congressman Lewis introduced the Freedom to Vote Act to restore the democratic rights the Supreme Court had eroded. And [Democrats in Congress now plan to introduce bills](#) to restore reproductive freedom and proactively defend other rights.



make no mistake: This is a war, and one that will not be over soon. But if we are prepared, we will win.

We must pass this legislation swiftly. To protect it, we will need an army of Gail Cincottas and John Lewises. Because make no mistake: This is a war, and one that will not be over soon. But if we are prepared, we will win.

Sulma Arias is executive director of [People's Action](#). This op-ed was distributed by [OtherWords.org](#).

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An Ugly New Era of "States' Rights"

Peter Certo

The Supreme Court has overturned *Roe v. Wade* — and with it, half a century of constitutional precedent.

At least [26 states](#) are now likely to criminalize abortions, often without exceptions for rape, incest, or life-threatening pregnancies. In Louisiana, people seeking abortions could even [face execution](#), which doesn't strike me as particularly pro-life.

A few states are already [rushing to attack contraception too](#), with officials in Idaho and Louisiana pushing to ban IUDs, the morning after pill, and other common birth control methods. Hardline lawmakers are also likely to ban methods of [conception](#), including in-vitro fertilization, or IVF.

Down the line, experts warn that the rights to interracial marriage, same-sex marriage, and even divorce, parental custody, and the right to accept or refuse medical treatment could be in jeopardy. People's control over [their own intimate decisions and private lives is at stake](#).

But among the most alarming things in the ruling is its sneering pretense that this is somehow about safeguarding democracy. "It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives," wrote Justice Samuel Alito.

That's the same "states' rights" deceit once used to defend segregation. The truth is that in many states, so-called "elected representatives" pick their voters — not vice versa. And that's leading to a new wave of extremism in statehouses.



When politicians can do whatever they want to us, everyone loses.

Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis once called states "laboratories of democracy." These days, as former Hamilton County, Ohio commissioner David Pepper

See Certo on page 17

Genetic Screening Results Just Got Harder to Handle Under New Abortion Rules

By Sara Reardon

Ann was 15 weeks pregnant with her fourth child when the results of her prenatal genetic test came back last August. The test suggested that her daughter, whom she and her husband planned to name Juliet, was missing one of her two X chromosomes — a condition called Turner syndrome that can cause dwarfism, heart defects, and infertility, among other complications.

Many people decide to terminate their pregnancies after this diagnosis, a genetic counselor told Ann and her husband. But the counselor had more bad news: In two days, the family would no longer have that option in their home state of Texas. A law, in effect as of Sept. 1, 2021, allows anyone to sue those who assist any person in getting an abortion in Texas after six weeks' gestation — and the state provides a \$10,000 bounty to plaintiffs if they win. The genetic counselor told Ann she could no longer discuss termination with her for this reason.

"At the time I thought, 'It doesn't matter; we're not giving up on this pregnancy,'" said Ann, who asked

that only her middle name be used out of concerns about privacy and potential legal repercussions for her medical providers, her husband, or herself under Texas' unclear legal framework. She considered herself pro-life, and the diagnosis still needed to be confirmed through amniocentesis and ultrasound.

But after reading about the condition, she realized how devastating it could be. If Juliet survived birth, which was statistically unlikely, the child would be hospitalized frequently and might need daily hormone shots, costing \$60,000 per year. Ann and her husband began to worry about how having this child would affect their three other children.

The vast majority of abortions occur at or before 13 weeks, and people who seek abortions later than that frequently cite barriers to accessing care or discovery of a medical complication. But Texas' law has effectively banned virtually all abortions in the state because many women don't even know they are pregnant at six weeks. No prenatal tests can diagnose genetic conditions before 11 weeks.

Situations like Ann's will soon

happen across the country. The U.S. Supreme Court on June 24 upheld Mississippi's statute that outlaws abortion after 15 weeks, and overturned the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that guarantees the right to abortion. At least half the states are likely to ban abortion, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research organization that supports abortion rights.

Before the court's decision, only 10 states with gestational limits on abortion have had exemptions for conditions lethal before or at birth. None allow exemptions for serious but nonlethal conditions. Without such exemptions, people who can neither afford to raise a child with a disability nor travel to a clinic out of state could be left in a difficult spot.

For families who've just learned their child may not survive birth or will have a debilitating condition, such legal issues add one more trauma to an already traumatic decision.

Lauren Westerfield, a prenatal genetic counselor in Houston, said the Texas law has made it impossible for her to fully do her job. She expects that, for that reason, many counselors will choose not to practice in Texas or other states where



Little is known about the outcomes for people unable to terminate a pregnancy with genetic anomalies. / Se sabe poco sobre los resultados para las personas que no pueden interrumpir un embarazo con anomalías genéticas.

abortion is now illegal — or soon will be — because of trigger laws launched by the Supreme Court decision.

When patients ask about termination, "I tell them, 'Legally, in Texas, you don't have that option,'" she said. "I don't have words to describe the look that comes over their face when they hear that."

Many patients have no choice but to carry the pregnancy to term. Westerfield estimated at least 75% of her patients who would have terminated their pregnancies have

been prevented by the state law since it passed.

Little is known about the outcomes for people unable to terminate a pregnancy with genetic anomalies. But a study that tracked 1,000 women who were turned away from abortion clinics because they were past gestational limits found they were far more likely to fall into poverty and had worse overall health than those who had gotten abortions.

See [Genetic](#) on page 17

Bajo las Nuevas Reglas para Abortos, es Más Difícil Lidar con Resultados de Pruebas Genéticas

Por Sara Reardon

Ann estaba embarazada de 15 semanas de su cuarto hijo cuando llegaron los resultados de la prueba genética prenatal, en agosto pasado. El resultado sugirió que a su hija, a quien ella y su esposo planeaban llamar Juliet, le faltaba uno de sus dos cromosomas X, una afección llamada síndrome de Turner que puede causar enanismo, defectos cardíacos e infertilidad, entre otras complicaciones.

Muchas personas deciden interrumpir sus embarazos después de este diagnóstico, les dijo un asesor genético a Ann y a su esposo. Pero el consejero tenía más malas noticias: en dos días, la familia ya no tendría esa opción en su estado natal de Texas.

Una ley, vigente desde el 1 de septiembre de 2021, permite que cualquier persona demande a quienes ayuden a alguien a abortar en Texas después de seis semanas de gestación, y el estado ofrece una recompensa de \$10,000 a los demandantes, si ganan. El asesor genético le dijo a Ann que ya no podía hablar con ella sobre terminar el embarazo por ese motivo.

"En ese momento pensé, 'No importa; no vamos a renunciar a este embarazo'", dijo Ann, quien pidió que solo se usara su segundo nombre por preocupaciones sobre la privacidad y las posibles repercusiones legales para sus proveedores médicos, su esposo o ella misma bajo el marco legal poco claro de Texas.

Se consideraba a sí misma pro-vida, y el diagnóstico aún

necesitaba ser confirmado a través de una amniocentesis y una ecografía.

Pero después de leer sobre la afección, se dio cuenta de lo devastadora que podía ser. Si Juliet sobrevivía al nacimiento, lo que era estadísticamente improbable, la niña sería hospitalizada con frecuencia y podría necesitar inyecciones diarias de hormonas, a un costo de \$60,000 anuales. Ann y su esposo comenzaron a preocuparse por cómo esto afectaría a sus otros tres hijos.

La gran mayoría de los abortos ocurren a las 13 semanas o antes, y las personas que buscan abortar después de ese límite con frecuencia mencionan las barreras para acceder a la atención o el descubrimiento de una complicación médica.

Pero la ley de Texas ha prohibido prácticamente todos los abortos en el estado porque muchas mujeres ni siquiera saben que están embarazadas a las seis semanas. Ninguna prueba prenatal puede diagnosticar condiciones genéticas antes de las 11 semanas.

Situaciones como la de Ann pronto se repetirán en todo el país. El 24 de junio, la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos confirmó el estatuto de Mississippi que prohíbe el aborto después de las 15 semanas de embarazo, y anuló la decisión *Roe vs. Wade* de 1973 que garantiza el derecho al aborto.

Es probable que al menos la mitad de los estados prohíban el aborto, según el Instituto Guttmacher, una organización de investigación que apoya el derecho al aborto.

Antes de la decisión de la corte, solo 10 estados con límites de gestación para el aborto tenían exenciones para condiciones letales antes o durante el nacimiento. Ninguno permite exenciones para condiciones graves pero no letales. Sin tales exenciones, las personas que no pueden permitirse criar a un niño con una discapacidad ni viajar a una clínica fuera del estado podrían verse en una situación difícil.

Para las familias que acaban de enterarse de que es posible que su hijo no sobreviva al nacimiento o que tenga una condición debilitante, estos problemas legales agregan un trauma más a una decisión ya de por sí traumática.

Lauren Westerfield, consejera genética prenatal en Houston, dijo

Vea [Genéticas](#), página 19

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Harms of Pollution from Uranium, Coal, Oil and Gas Industries

By Samuel Gilbert

In her 30 years working as a health care professional in the Navajo Nation, Adella Begaye witnessed the health impacts of extractive industries on Indigenous communities in the Southwest.

"We know these toxins can impact the respiratory system, your heart and the lungs. All parts of the body," she said, speaking to the harms of pollution from the uranium, coal, and oil and gas industries.

Begaye's a former nurse and retired public health administrator

working in the central part of the Navajo Nation.

In New México, the second-largest oil-producing state in the U.S., residents' proximity to oil and gas facilities has become a growing public health concern.

According to the [Oil and Gas Threat Map](#) by the nonprofits FracTracker Alliance and Earthworks, over 144,000 people in New México live within a half-mile of an oil and gas facility. That number includes 20% of the state's Indigenous residents.

This "threat radius" is correlated



Don Schreiber enters his barn at the Devils Spring Ranch located in the San Juan Basin. / Don Schreiber entra en su establo del rancho Devils Spring, situado en la cuenca de San Juan.

with adverse health outcomes, including [cancer](#), [respiratory illness](#), [fetal defects](#), [blood disorders](#), and [neurological problems](#) stemming from chemicals associated with oil and gas production.

"There are billowing clouds of methane and toxics like benzene from pretty much every oil and gas facility," said Earthwork's Information Systems Director Alan Septoff during a presentation of the updated map.

Pollutants from more than 62,000 oil and gas facilities in New México include the carcinogen benzene, hydrogen sulfide (similar in toxicity to carbon monoxide), and "volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that can contribute to the formation of [ground-level ozone \(smog\)](#)," according to the EPA.

A spokesperson from the New Mexico Environment Department confirmed oil and gas activities impact the health of people living nearby. "The most widespread reported symptoms include respiratory problems like asthma and coughing, eye, nose, and throat irritation, headaches, nausea, dizziness, trouble sleeping, and fatigue," spokesperson Mathew Maez wrote in an email.

According to the American Lung Association, the four major oil- and gas-producing counties in New México received failing grades for high ozone days.

"That means that people are being exposed to asthma-exacerbating air pollution," said Camilla Feibelman, the Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter director.

Begaye said many oil and gas companies are aware of the harms but lack transparency or accountability to the public.

"The problem with all these industries is they do not tell you the health impacts," said Begaye, president of Diné Citizens Against Ruining our Environment (Diné CARE), a nonprofit that works with Navajo communities affected by energy and environmental issues.

Poor regulation and monitoring

In New México, the release of methane and other pollutants has been enabled in the past by lax regulations and insufficient resources to monitor the industry and fine companies for violations.

"The Permian and San Juan Basins are two of the largest sources of methane in the nation and are huge sources of ozone precursors," Tannis Fox, staff attorney for the Western Environmental Law Center, wrote in an email response to questions. "New México's prior rules allowed the emission of these harmful pollutants without consequence."

“The problem with all these industries is they do not tell you the health impacts.”
Adella Begaye, Diné CARE

According to year-end data from the Oil Conservation Division, producers in New México vented and flared enough natural gas to power nearly 39,000 homes. That's around the number of households in Las Cruces, N.M. the state's second-largest city, according to reporter [Jerry Redfern's](#) January article.

When asked about health hazards for those living near oil and gas facilities, division director Adrienne Sandoval wrote in an email that in 2020, the state's Environment Department and OCD held "a community impacts meeting to hear from members of the public and their concerns surrounding health impacts."

In response to questions about the racial disparities in health outcomes related to oil and gas production, Maez wrote in an email that "NMED understands that proximity to oil and gas wells has an impact on communities in New México, and especially the most vulnerable communities living in close proximity to these sources."

Maez added that NMED oil and gas rules "specifically target emissions from smaller, leak-prone wells and protect those living closest to development with more frequent inspections and leak detection and repair requirements."

OCD, the division that regulates oil and gas activity in New México, remains understaffed. The agency has 11 inspectors tasked with monitoring more than 60,000 wells. In the 2022 legislative session, OCD requested 25 additional staff members, eight of whom would have been inspectors.

"Unfortunately, we only received an additional 5 FTEs [full-time employees], one of which will be dedicated to inspections," Sandoval said.

There has been progress. This year, New México adopted ozone precursor rules that, according to the Environmental Department, will remove hundreds of millions

Los Daños de la Contaminación de las Industrias del el Petróleo y el Gas



Foto/Photo: Samuel Gilbert for Source NM

Don Schreiber alimenta el primer caballo de su mujer, un macho blanco de 33 años llamado T-Bone. / Don Schreiber feeds his wife's first horse, a white 33-year-old male named T-Bone. / Don Schreiber alimenta el primer caballo de su mujer, un macho blanco de 33 años llamado T-Bone.

Por Samuel Gilbert

En sus 30 años de trabajo como profesional de la salud en la Nación Navajo, Adella Begaye fue testigo de las repercusiones sanitarias de las industrias extractivas en las comunidades indígenas del suroeste.

"Sabemos que estas toxinas pueden afectar al sistema respiratorio, al corazón y a los pulmones. Todas las partes del cuerpo", dijo, refiriéndose a los daños de la contaminación de las industrias del uranio, el carbón y el petróleo y el gas.

Begaye es una antigua enfermera y administradora de salud pública jubilada que trabaja en la parte central de la Nación Navajo.

En Nuevo México, el segundo estado productor de petróleo de EE.UU., la proximidad de los residentes a las instalaciones de petróleo y gas se ha convertido en una preocupación creciente para la salud pública.

Según el Mapa de Amenazas del Petróleo y el Gas, elaborado por las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro FracTracker Alliance y Earthworks, más de 144.000 personas en Nuevo México viven a menos de media milla de una instalación de petróleo y gas. Esta cifra incluye el 20% de los residentes indígenas del estado.

Este "radio de amenaza" está relacionado con resultados adversos para la salud, como cáncer, enfermedades respiratorias, defectos fetales, trastornos sanguíneos y problemas neurológicos

derivados de las sustancias químicas asociadas a la producción de petróleo y gas.

"Hay nubes de metano y sustancias tóxicas, como el benceno, procedentes de casi todas las instalaciones de petróleo y gas", dijo el Director de Sistemas de Información de Earthwork, Alan Septoff, durante la presentación del mapa actualizado.



"El problema de todas estas industrias es que no informan de los impactos en la salud".

Adella Begaye, Diné CARE

Entre los contaminantes procedentes de más de 62.000 instalaciones de petróleo y gas en Nuevo México figuran el benceno, un carcinógeno, el sulfuro de hidrógeno (de toxicidad similar al monóxido de carbono) y "compuestos orgánicos volátiles (COV) que pueden contribuir a la formación de ozono a nivel del suelo (smog)", según la EPA.

Un portavoz del Departamento de Medio Ambiente de Nuevo México confirmó que las actividades relacionadas con el petróleo y el gas repercuten en la salud de las personas que viven cerca. "Los síntomas más comunes son problemas respiratorios como el asma y la tos, irritación de ojos, nariz y garganta, dolores de cabeza, náuseas, mareos, problemas para dormir y fatiga", escribió el por-

tavoz Mathew Maez en un correo electrónico.

De acuerdo con la Asociación Americana del Pulmón, los cuatro principales condados productores de petróleo y gas en Nuevo México recibieron calificaciones reprobatorias por los días de alto ozono.

"Eso significa que la gente está expuesta a una contaminación del aire que agrava el asma", dijo Camilla Feibelman, directora del Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter.

Begaye dijo que muchas empresas petroleras y de gas son conscientes de los daños, pero no son transparentes ni rinden cuentas al público.

"El problema de todas estas industrias es que no informan de los impactos en la salud", dijo Begaye, presidente de Diné Citizens Against Ruining our Environment (Diné CARE), una organización sin ánimo de lucro que trabaja con las comunidades navajo afectadas por cuestiones energéticas y medioambientales.

Regulación y control deficientes

En Nuevo México, la emisión de metano y otros contaminantes se ha visto favorecida en el pasado por la laxitud de la normativa y la insuficiencia de recursos para controlar la industria y multar a las empresas por las infracciones.

"Las cuencas del Pérmico y de San Juan son dos de las mayores fuentes de metano del país y son enormes fuentes de precursores del ozono", escribió Tannis Fox, abogado del Western Environmental Law Center, en una re-

spuesta por correo electrónico. "Las normas anteriores de Nuevo México permitían la emisión de estos contaminantes nocivos sin consecuencias".

Según los datos de fin de año de la División de Conservación del Petróleo, los productores de Nuevo México ventearon y quemaron suficiente gas natural para alimentar casi 39.000 hogares. Según el artículo de enero del periodista Jerry Redfern, esa cifra equivale al número de hogares de Las Cruces, la segunda ciudad más grande del estado.

Quando se le preguntó sobre los peligros para la salud de quienes viven cerca de las instalaciones de petróleo y gas, la directora de la división, Adrienne Sandoval, escribió en un correo electrónico que en 2020 el Departamento de Medio Ambiente del estado y la OCD celebraron "una reunión sobre los impactos en la comunidad para escuchar a los miembros del público y sus preocupaciones en torno a los impactos en la salud."

Vea [Contaminación](#), página 24



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Affordability Exclusion Threatens Housing Stability in Colorado

COLORADO

By Sara Wilson

Mobile home residents and activists are calling for a meeting with Colorado Gov. Jared Polis to question why he worked to remove a rent stabilization measure in a recently signed law for mobile home resident protections.

"We hope Gov. Polis will agree to meet with mobile park residents to see our full humanity, understand the risk of us losing our homes without rent stabilization. No matter what we look like, where we come from or how much is in our wallets, we all deserve a safe, sustainable place to call home," Susan Gibson, the president of the homeowners association at Table Mesa Village in Boulder County, told a few dozen rally goers at the state Capitol last Thursday evening.

Gibson said that since a real estate investor bought the mobile home park she lives in about six years ago, the monthly rent for her lot has nearly doubled. It was similar to the testimonies many other mobile home owners shared at



Mobile home residents and activists including Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry of the Boulder Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, left, rally at the Colorado Capitol on June 30, 2022. / Residentes de casas móviles y activistas, incluida la reverenda Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry de la Boulder Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, a la izquierda, se manifiestan en el Capitolio de Colorado el 30 de junio de 2022.

the rally organized by advocacy groups 9to5 Colorado and Together Colorado.

There are about 100,000 mobile homes in Colorado. Mobile home residents face a unique challenge, because they often own the structure they live in, but not the land it is on.

The organizers and attendees on June 30, said they wanted to call out Polis for causing the removal of what they view as a key

affordability provision in legislation he recently signed into law. They said the exclusion threatens their housing stability.

The bill, [House Bill 22-1287](#), originally included provisions to extend the time period residents have to buy for-sale mobile home parks, expand protections for residents when parks close, and cap lot rent increases to 3% annually or the local rate of inflation, whichever is higher.

That rent cap was axed from the bill, however, when Polis threatened a veto if it remained, [according to Colorado Public Radio](#). His thinking reportedly was that rent stabilization could lead to increased closure or abandonment of those mobile home communities.

Polis signed the amended bill into law in May. It will go into effect in October.

Those who attended last week's rally however, see the combination of ever-increasing rent at the whims of corporate owners and stagnant wages in a tough economy as one that forces choices between rent and other necessities like groceries and utility bills. Many of the speakers noted that they live on a low or fixed income.

"As it stands now, it is becoming more difficult to pay my lot rent and my other expenses like food, gas, medicine and other necessities. Someone my age, who has owned her home for years, should not have to worry about becoming homeless simply because the land under her home continues to rise in rent," Gibson said, reading a statement on behalf of her neighbor Anne who has lived at Table Mesa Village for 20 years.

“

"We hope Gov. Polis will agree to meet with mobile park residents to see our full humanity, understand the risk of us losing our homes without rent stabilization."

Susan Gibson, Table Mesa Village

The rent stabilization was the only major part of the bill to be cut, but activists said it was a crucial protection that mobile home residents deserve.

"There are many provisions in the bill about protections for mobile park residents that did pass, but when tenants are not protected from excessive rent increases, those other protections lose their meaning," Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry of the Boulder Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship said. "Rent increases of 10, 20 and 30% force people to choose between food or medical care or shelter, and increase the chance of people losing their housing all together."

See [Affordability](#) on page 18

La Exclusión de la Asequibilidad Amenaza la Estabilidad de la Vivienda

COLORADO

Por Sara Wilson

Los residentes de casas móviles y los activistas están pidiendo una reunión con el gobernador de Colorado Jared Polis para cuestionar por qué trabajó para eliminar una medida de estabilización de alquiler en una ley recientemente firmada para las protecciones de los residentes de casas móviles.

"Esperamos que el gobernador Polis acepte reunirse con los residentes de los parques móviles para ver nuestra humanidad completa, entender el riesgo de que perdamos nuestros hogares sin la estabilización del alquiler. No importa cómo seamos, de dónde venamos o cuánto haya en nuestras carteras, todos merecemos un lugar seguro y sostenible al que llamar hogar", dijo Susan Gibson, la presidenta de la asociación de propietarios de Table Mesa Village, en el condado de Boulder, a unas cuantas docenas de asistentes a la manifestación en el Capitolio estatal el pasado jueves por la noche.

Gibson dijo que desde que un inversor inmobiliario compró el parque de casas móviles en el que vive hace unos seis años, el alquiler mensual de su parcela casi se ha duplicado. Fue similar a los testimonios que muchos otros propietarios de casas móviles compartieron en la manifestación organizada por los grupos de defensa 9to5 Colorado y Together Colorado.

En Colorado hay unas 100.000 casas móviles. Los residentes de casas móviles se enfrentan a un desafío único, porque a menudo son propietarios de la estructura en la que viven, pero no del terreno en el que se encuentra.

Los organizadores y los asistentes el 30 de junio, dijo que quería llamar a Polis para causar la eliminación de lo que ellos ven como una disposición clave de asequibilidad en la legislación que recientemente firmó en la ley. Dijeron que la exclusión amenaza su estabilidad habitacional.

El proyecto de ley, House Bill 22-1287, originalmente incluía disposiciones para ampliar el período de tiempo que los residentes

tienen que comprar para la venta de parques de casas móviles, ampliar las protecciones para los resi-

“

"Esperamos que el gobernador Polis acepte reunirse con los residentes de los parques móviles para ver nuestra humanidad completa, entender el riesgo de que perdamos nuestros hogares sin la estabilización del alquiler"

Susan Gibson, Table Mesa Village

dentes cuando los parques se cierran, y los aumentos de alquiler de lote tope al 3% anual o la tasa local de inflación, lo que sea mayor.

Sin embargo, el límite de los alquileres se eliminó del proyecto de ley cuando Polis amenazó con vetarlo si se mantenía, según

Vea [Asequibilidad](#), página 18

Kali Fajardo-Anstine's New Novel Highlights Intergenerational Timeline

COLORADO

By Cory Phare

Time and place shape the stories we live.

Over a decade in the making, Kali Fajardo-Anstine's novel *"Woman of Light"* weaves vibrant characters through a nonchronological, intergenerational timeline. Anchored in 1930s Denver with the nearby Lost Territory an omnipresent backdrop, the story interrogates the impact of past family members' actions, which ripple like the water in protagonist Luz's teacup before one of her prophetic readings.

"To be able to write about my ancestors is the most joyous thing ... It's made me understand them, myself and my culture," she told author Steven Dunn at her Tattered Cover reading last month.

Fajardo-Anstine's storytelling is quick and sharp, iridescent and expansive. The result is a rollicking summer read that's easy to dive into and hard to put down.

MSU RED interviewed Fajardo-Anstine, author of the National Book Award-nominated short-story collection *"Sabrina & Corina"* and an English and Chicana/o Studies graduate of Metropolitan State University of Denver, to discuss the widely anticipated work, released by Penguin Random House on June 7.

What made you decide to pursue an intergenerational timeline for this novel?

"Woman of Light" opens with an abandoned baby, Pidre, in 1868. He's left by his mother under mysterious circumstances near a pueblo on the banks of an arroyo. Though Pidre is just an infant when we first meet him on that starry night, throughout the novel we follow the lives of his children and grandchildren — all of whom possess special gifts. Luz, our protagonist, can read tea leaves with the ability to see back and forth in time. Her brother, Diego, is a snake charmer and a factory worker.

These characters, while living nearly 60 years apart in time, showcase how the past informs the present. This is especially important for the Lopez family, as their history and stories are at risk of being obliterated.

This is a story that is not uncommon for many Chicax families of Colorado, and throughout my time living in various parts of the state while writing this novel, each time period came into sharper focus.



Kali Fajardo-Anstine signs books during her release at Tattered Cover Bookstore in Denver.

Photo: Alison McClaran

There's a musical quality to the syntax that causes the narrative to sing. How do sound and music factor into your writing? How do oral traditions affect the storytelling?

Throughout *"Woman of Light,"* storytelling is used both as a form of entertainment but also as a means of cultural survival. When we first meet Luz, it's downtown at a chile-harvest festival on the banks of the Platte River, reading the fortune of an old man in a cowboy hat, as she sees his struggle with health problems. Later in the novel, Luz's Auntie Maria Josie, who cares for her and her brother, says she for-

got her mother and father because the stories related to them and their untimely deaths are too hard to recall.

With a character like Luz, who through her gifts can access lost family stories, there's a certain level of magic. The lyrical prose and storytelling in *"Woman of Light"* are a means of re-creating the singsong quality of our ancestral stories — it's a fully immersive way to go along with Luz on this adventure.

Amid backdrops of violence, exploitation and loss, "Woman of Light" offers a message of love

and hope. How can historical fiction help us address contemporary struggles to find the same?

"Woman of Light" addresses many pressing issues of today — from the impacts of historical trauma, racism, class struggle and more. But one of the big questions I'm asking with this novel is: "How has human culture evolved over time, and how have we changed or remained the same?"

After Luz goes to work for David, a young Greek American attorney in Denver, she sees how the bureaucracy of the city functions to uphold the status quo. David's big case involves the police killing of a young Mexican man from the Westside. Though this young man was brutally beaten to death, the police claim he had simply fallen to his death as an accident.

My question for readers is: "How does this differ or feel similar to our current reality and relationship with brutality in the United States?"

Your mom is also a prolific storyteller. How does her work influence the work you're doing?

Like Luz in *"Woman of Light,"* I'm not the first storyteller in my family. My mother, Renee Fajardo, who

runs the Journey Through Our Heritage Program at MSU Denver, is a voracious and gifted storyteller. Her passion for preserving our cultural history and stories was undoubtedly passed down to me, much in the same way the characters in *"Woman of Light"* pass their gifts between different generations.

This is an aspect of our community and culture that I love — I'm thinking of friends who are fourth- or fifth-generation bead workers, painters or musicians. So much of our artistic and cultural expression is passed down like stories.

What are you working on next?

I'm excited to move to Texas later this summer as the endowed chair in Creative Writing at Texas State University. I'll be teaching in the MFA program and am beyond delighted to work with these promising writers.

Cory Phare, Metropolitan State University of Denver. This story originally appeared on MSU Denver RED.

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Jeffco School District Planning Multiple Elementary School Closures

COLORADO

By Yesenia Robles

The Jeffco school district is preparing to make recommendations this fall to close multiple elementary schools, kicking off its long-term plan to downsize its number of schools.

Jeffco district leaders say 49, or 58% of district elementary schools, currently have fewer than 250 students, and/or use less than 60% building capacity. Six elementary schools, in six different areas of the district, have fewer than 200

students, and also utilize less than 60% of their building's capacity.

"While we have a large issue in this district, there are a few schools that are really facing dire situations with how small they are going into next school year and we must confront those," said Lisa Relou, Jeffco's chief of strategy and communications, who is overseeing the plan's creation.

Jeffco, like many districts throughout the country and the metro area, has seen a steady decline in enrollment for years, which was aggravated by the pandemic. The district in 2021-22

served approximately 78,000 students, down from a peak of more than 86,700 in the fall of 2015. Districts say student populations have decreased due to lower birth rates, as well as higher costs of living in metropolitan areas pushing families out. Projections show the number of students in the next few years likely will continue to drop.

With fewer students, the district gets less money from the state, and then schools get less money from the district. While parents often



Photo/Foto: AdobeStock

The Jeffco school district is preparing to make recommendations this fall to close multiple elementary schools. / El distrito escolar de Jeffco está preparándose para hacer recomendaciones este otoño de cerrar varias escuelas primarias.

See [Jeffco](#) on page 25

Distrito Escolar de Jeffco Planea Cerrar Múltiples Escuelas Primarias

COLORADO

Por Yesenia Robles

El distrito escolar de Jeffco está preparándose para hacer recomendaciones este otoño de cerrar varias es-

cuelas primarias, empezando así su plan a largo plazo de reducir la cantidad de escuelas.

Los líderes del distrito de Jeffco dicen que unas 49 escuelas primarias (un 58%) actualmente tienen menos de 250 estudiantes y/o están usando menos de un 60% de

la capacidad de su edificio. Otras seis escuelas primarias, en seis áreas diferentes del distrito, tienen menos de 200 estudiantes y también están usando menos de un 60% de la capacidad de su edificio.

"Aunque tenemos un problema grande en este distrito, hay varias

escuelas que están realmente enfrentando situaciones difíciles por tener tan pocos estudiantes para el próximo año escolar, y tenemos que confrontar eso," dijo Lisa Relou, jefe de estrategia y comunicaciones de Jeffco, y que está a cargo de la creación del plan.

Jeffco, como muchos distritos del país y del área metro, ha visto una reducción sostenida en la matrícula por años, la cual fue agravada por la pandemia. En el año 2021-22 el distrito tuvo

Vea [Jeffco/Esp](#), página 16



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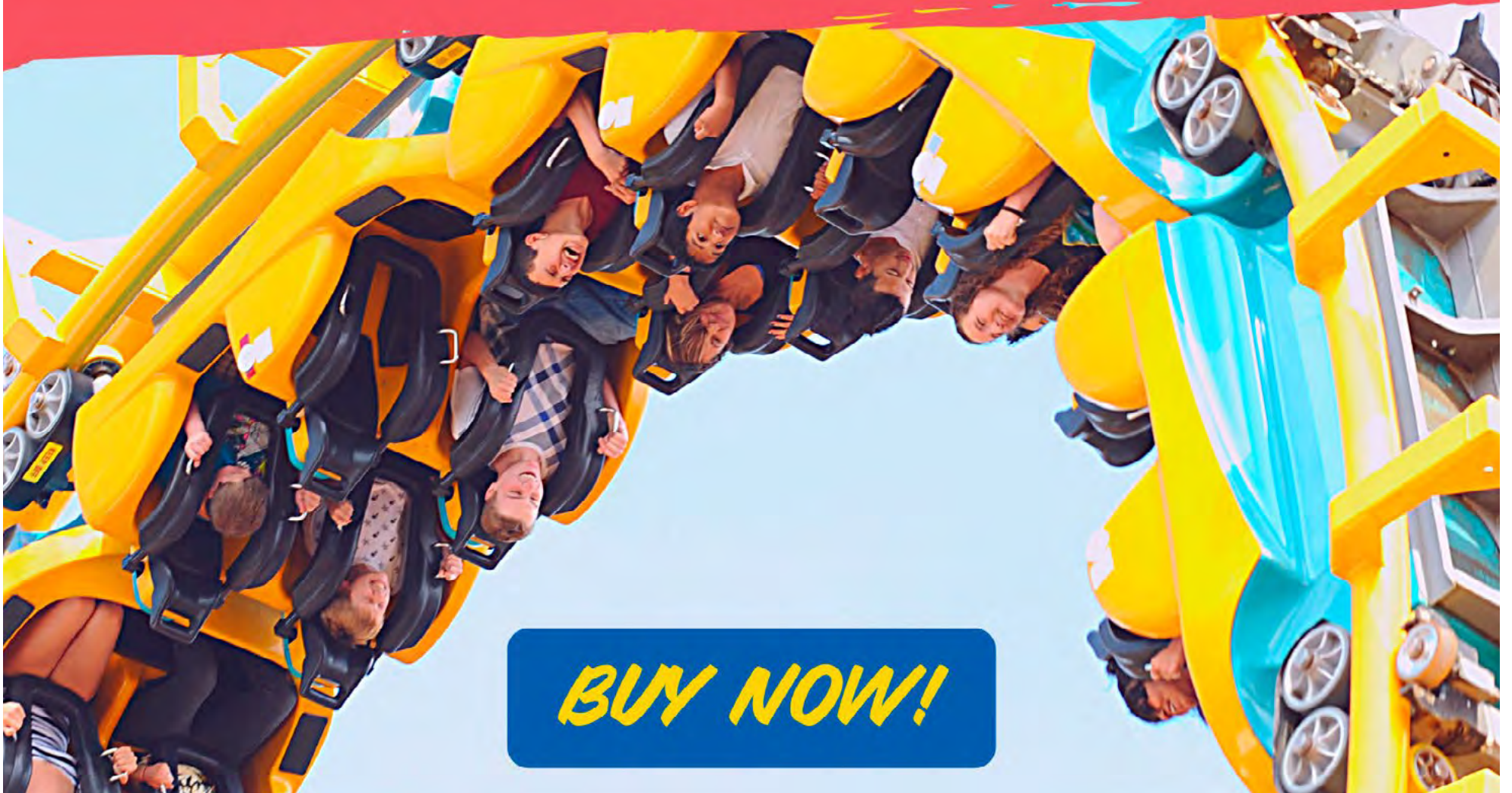
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State News / Noticias del Estado

All New México Employers Must Now Provide Paid Sick Leave

NEW MEXICO

By Austin Fisher

Lucila Lozoya is a child care worker and mother of three. When there was a COVID surge at her workplace, her boss did not have the best response, she said, which caused more positive cases.

"During this time, our employer never gave us federal paid sick leave, making decisions about our health and feeding my family even more difficult," she said. "Finally, I decided not to go back to work because of the multiple cases there."

She needed the time off to get surgery to treat her cancer.

"Never in my life had I gone through such difficult and extreme financial situations," Lozoya said. "We almost lost everything."

The experience made Lozoya realize that paid sick leave is a human right.

"I am very proud of being part of the essential workers that have been at the front of this pandemic and that we continue organizing to improve our working conditions," Lozoya said.



All workers at Nexus Brewery in Albuquerque earn \$15 an hour and received paid sick leave before the new law took effect. / Todos los trabajadores de la cervecería Nexus, en Albuquerque, ganan 15 dólares la hora y recibían la baja por enfermedad pagada antes de que entrara en vigor la nueva ley.

She is also community leader with El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos.

She said Burqueño families have been fighting to get paid sick leave since 2015. The pandemic impacted many low-income, working families like hers, Lozoya said, especially when it came to health and financial stability.

Lozoya was speaking at a virtual news conference celebrating New México's statewide sick leave law that applies to all private employ-

ers called the Healthy Workplaces Act, which went into effect Friday.

She was joined by other workers, organizers and state lawmakers including Rep. Christine Chandler (D-Los Alamos) who carried the bill through the Legislature in 2021 before Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signed it.

The new law requires all employers to provide workers with up to 64 hours of paid sick leave per year, accrued according to how many hours they work.

The movement that brought paid sick leave to New México was led by workers, said Lan Sena, policy director at the Center for Civic Policy and a former Albuquerque city councilor.

"We are happy that this finally has been turned into reality and that everybody — all the workers in New México, independent of what industry they work in — will be covered," Lozoya said.

People seeking work don't always have protections like paid sick leave, "especially as COVID is still roaming," Sena said. Nearly all residents of the United States were in areas of high or substantial COVID transmission this week, according to CDC data.

Is New México prepared to enforce the law?

It remains to be seen how many bosses will follow the law, and how many of those who don't will become the subject of complaints filed either with the state Department of Workforce Solutions or in civil courts across the state.

As of June 22, the department's Labor Relations Division had nine full-time labor law investigators, with seven based in Albuquerque

and two in Las Cruces, a DWS spokesperson said.

It also has three administrative assistants, one wage and hour investigator supervisor, one business operations specialist and one mediator who handle allegations of labor law violations.



"We are happy that this finally has been turned into reality and that everybody — all the workers in New México, independent of what industry they work in — will be covered."

Lucila Lozoya, El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos

That is two fewer full-time investigators than what they had in October 2021, when the department said it had 11 investigators.

The department asked lawmakers for \$893,444 to pay for five new investigator positions but received only \$735,000, department

See [Employers](#) on page 22

Empleadores Deben Proporcionar Licencia por Enfermedad Pagada

NEW MEXICO

Por Austin Fisher

Lucila Lozoya es una cuidadora de niños y madre de tres hijos. Cuando hubo una oleada de COVID en su lugar de trabajo, su jefe no tuvo la mejor respuesta, dijo, lo que provocó más casos positivos.

"Durante este tiempo, nuestro empleador nunca nos dio la licencia federal por enfermedad pagada, lo que hizo que las decisiones sobre nuestra salud y la alimentación de mi familia fueran aún más difíciles", dijo. "Finalmente, decidí no volver al trabajo debido a los múltiples casos que había".

Necesitaba el tiempo libre para operarse del cáncer.

"Nunca en mi vida había pasado por situaciones financieras tan difíciles y extremas", dijo Lozoya. "Casi lo perdimos todo".

La experiencia hizo que Lozoya se diera cuenta de que la baja por enfermedad pagada es un derecho humano.

"Estoy muy orgullosa de formar parte de los trabajadores es-

enciales que han estado al frente de esta pandemia y de que sigamos organizándonos para mejorar nuestras condiciones de trabajo", dijo Lozoya.



"Estamos contentos de que esto finalmente se haya convertido en una realidad y que todos - todos los trabajadores de Nuevo México, independientemente de la industria en la que trabajen - estarán cubiertos".

Lucila Lozoya, El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos

También es líder comunitaria de El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos.

Dijo que las familias de Burqueño han estado luchando para obtener la licencia por enfermedad pagada desde 2015. La pandemia afectó a muchas familias

Vea [Empleadores](#), página 23

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Retired Educators Eligible to Return to Work Without Losing Pension Benefits

NEW MEXICO

New México's 48,000 retired K-12 and higher education educators now have the opportunity to return to the classroom without losing their retirement benefits thanks to a new law enacted by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham this year.



"This is a win-win for New México teachers and New México students, as retired educators can now go back into classrooms without losing their hard-earned retirement benefits."

Gov. Lujan Grisham

Retired teachers and college faculty receiving pension benefits from the New México Educational Retirement Board can now return to teaching for an additional three years within a New México public school district, college, or university without forfeiting their retirement benefits.

"This is a win-win for New México teachers and New México students, as retired educators can now go back into classrooms without losing their hard-earned retirement benefits," said Gov. Lujan Grisham. "I thank the dedicated professionals who go back to the classroom."

"This law is one of the many ways that Gov. Lujan Grisham is supporting teachers and ensuring that New México's students can benefit from having caring and experienced educators in their classroom," Public Education Secretary Kurt Steinhaus said. "This law is a

great move for teachers who yearn to be back in the classroom and for all of public education in New México."

"Many retired teachers and professors are ready and willing to return to work, and with this program, we are recognizing them for their continued commitment to serving New México students," Higher Education Secretary Stephanie M. Rodríguez said. "Making it easier for experienced educators to reenter the classroom and not penalizing them for that decision will go a long way toward meeting the needs of our students and schools today."

Retired educators who wanted to return to the classroom were previously forced to suspend their retirement or work quarter time and earn less than \$15,000. The new return-to-work program allows retirees to go back to work without salary or work hour limits. Applicants must observe a 90-day layout period prior to becoming eligible for the program.

The Lujan Grisham administration is pursuing every available avenue to recruit new teachers. In addition to raising pay to the highest in the region earlier this year, the state now offers scholarships and tuition-free education options for education assistants and other students in teacher preparation programs, loan forgiveness, alternative licensing and support and mentoring for high school and early college students interested in teaching careers.

Educational Retirees Returning to Work Act (House Bill 73) was sponsored by Representatives Garratt, Figueroa, and Lane, and was signed into law by Gov. Lujan Grisham in March.

"House Bill 73 is a great example of proactive legislation addressing New México's urgent need to staff

our schools with quality educators. The result of strong bipartisan collaboration, this legislation, led by Rep. Garratt and supported by the Lujan Grisham administration, will ease restrictions around return-to-work policies for retired educators, while maintaining the financial security of our educational pension fund," said AFT New México president Whitney Holland. "We already know this legislation is working, with many of our retired members actively pursuing a return to the classroom, which is a win for our students, our communities, and our profession."

"This law ultimately supports New México students with the gift of an experienced educator and provides a new pathway for these educators to return to work with-

out penalty to their retirement. We thank Gov. Lujan Grisham and Rep. Garratt for implementing strategies to support New México students and educators," said National Education Association New México President Mary Parr-Sánchez.

"House Bill 73 creates an immediate mechanism for recently retired teachers and professors to return to work quickly with quality pay. These professionals are one of our best resources for filling educator openings, particularly in high-need positions," said bill sponsor Rep. Joy Garratt. "I'm delighted that our recently retired teachers who want to come back to the classroom can return without sitting out for an extended period."

To participate in the program, retirees must apply with the New

México Educational Retirement Board (NMERB) and be approved prior to beginning work. Applications can be obtained via the ERB website at nmerb.org/forms. The NMERB offices are open to the public Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Staff is available to assist members with any questions regarding their return-to-work options to help members and schools prepare for the school year. If you have questions about eligibility or an existing pension, please visit the office or contact the NMERB at 866-691-2345 or member.help@state.nm.us.

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5901 Paradise Blvd NW, 87114

Raya and the Last Dragon
Saturday, June 11
Los Vecinos Community Center
478 NM-333, Tijeras, NM 87059

Jungle Cruise
Saturday, June 18
Los Padillas Community Center
2117 Los Padillas Rd SW, 87105

Luca
Saturday, June 25
Vista Grande Community Center
15 La Madera Rd, Sandia Park, NM, 87047

The Addams Family 2
Saturday, July 9
Mountain View Community Center
201 Prosperity Ave SE, 87105

Sing 2
Saturday, July 16
Paradise Hills Little League
9801 La Paz Dr, 87114

Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings
Saturday, July 23
Altura Park
4101 Aspen Ave NE, 87110

The Sandlot
Saturday, July 30
North Valley Little League
4007 Edith Blvd NE, 87107

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aproximadamente 78,000 estudiantes, una reducción después de haber tenido un máximo de más de 86,700 en el otoño de 2015. Los distritos dicen que las poblaciones de estudiantes se han reducido debido a bajas en la tasa de nacimientos, y también porque los altos costos de vivir en áreas metropolitanas están causando que las familias se vayan. Las proyecciones de matrícula muestran que la cantidad de estudiantes en los próximos años probablemente continúe reduciéndose.

Por tener menos estudiantes, el distrito recibirá menos dinero del estado, y a su vez las escuelas recibirán menos dinero del distrito. Aunque los padres a menudo valoran que el tamaño de las clases sea pequeño, los distritos dicen que tener múltiples escuelas pequeñas está haciendo que los recursos no den abasto, y por consecuencia, esas escuelas tienen programas educativos menos adecuados.

Los líderes de Jeffco cerraron dos escuelas primarias en los últimos dos años, diciendo que eran cierres de emergencia, citando que estaban teniendo problemas para mantener los programas, y dándoles poco aviso a los padres. El plan nuevo del distrito, llamado *Regional Opportunities for Thriving*

Schools (Oportunidades regionales para escuelas prósperas), fue lanzado después del cierre este año de la escuela Fitzmorris como una manera de tratar de prevenir cierres de emergencia en la primavera y para darles más aviso a los padres.

El distrito no ha dicho cuántas escuelas recomendará cerrar en la primera ronda del plan. Sin embargo, el distrito está preparando un informe que incluirá detalles sobre los factores que la junta escolar quiere considerar al momento de decidir si va a cerrar una escuela.

Se espera que para el 31 de agosto la superintendente haga sus recomendaciones sobre cuáles escuelas primarias cerrarán al final del año escolar 2022-23. La junta votará por esas recomendaciones antes de que termine noviembre.

Las recomendaciones de este otoño se basarán mayormente en la matrícula y el porcentaje de uso del edificio, pero otros factores podrían tener un rol mayor en decisiones futuras, como por ejemplo si la escuela es sede de un programa único, o qué opciones de transporte existen si los estudiantes tienen que irse a otra escuela.

"La estrategia está todavía evolucionando," dijo Relou. "Todas son

cosas que necesitamos evaluar. Todos son componentes importantes, pero creo que algunas cosas sobresaldrán más que otras."

Además de las recomendaciones del distrito, los líderes están planeando apoyar a los directores que están elaborando sus propios planes para unir escuelas. Esas uniones voluntarias de escuelas se podrían considerar al mismo tiempo.

Relou dijo que el distrito quiere limitar cuántas escuelas se cierran en un año para que el personal del distrito pueda brindarles apoyo a las familias y estudiantes desplazados.

El otro asunto que no se ha decidido es si el distrito en algún momento establecerá una "raya definida" — es decir, un criterio contundente que resulte en cierre seguro. Algunos miembros de la junta escolar dijeron que tener criterios más claros de lo que se considera 'muy pocos' estudiantes podría ser útil para los padres.

No obstante, tener ese tipo de reglas estrictas también podría eliminar la habilidad del distrito para considerar otros factores.

En Jeffco, por ejemplo, Relou ha dicho que algunos edificios fueron construidos para poblaciones estudiantiles pequeñas, lo cual significa que, aunque tienen pocos

estudiantes, es posible que estén cumpliendo o superando el límite de capacidad. De todos modos, los miembros de la junta escolar y líderes de Jeffco quieren enfocarse en si las escuelas pueden ofrecer programas buenos.

En el caso de los últimos dos cierres de emergencia en Jeffco, los líderes del distrito dijeron que las escuelas tuvieron que combinar grados, lo cual causó que los maestros enfrentaran diferentes estándares, y a veces diferentes currículos, para los estudiantes de la misma clase. Y en esos casos, los maestros no tenían colegas de ese grado con quienes planear y colaborar. Antes de cerrar, los líderes de la escuela Fitzmorris también describieron haber tenido dificultad para ofrecer programas después de la escuela porque hasta los proveedores privados se mostraban reacios a darles servicios a tan pocos estudiantes.

Ahora Jeffco está tratando de definir qué se necesita para que el distrito considere que una escuela está "prosperando".

Una medida que se está discutiendo es asegurar que una escuela sea lo suficientemente grande como para tener de dos a tres salones de clase por cada grado para que los maestros puedan colaborar entre sí. Los líderes del distrito también han dicho que cada escuela necesita tener maestros a tiempo completo de arte, música y educación física para que los estudiantes puedan tomar esas clases consistentemente, en vez de tomarlas una vez cada varias semanas, como es el caso de algunas escuelas que comparten maestros.

Los miembros de la junta también le dijeron al personal del distrito que ellos quieren que el distrito lleve cuenta de los estudiantes que han sido desplazados por los cierres con la esperanza de prevenir que los mismos estudiantes se vean afectados más de una vez.

Después de noviembre, el enfoque del plan se volverá más amplio y contemplará también las escuelas intermedias y secundarias. Esto significa fijarse en cómo las escuelas primarias fluyen a las escuelas secundarias, pero también considerando el cierre de escuelas de grados más altos.

Los líderes de Jeffco dicen que este es uno de los muchos pasos que se necesitan para eventualmente manejar los problemas de presupuesto del distrito.

La matrícula se ha reducido más rápidamente que la cantidad de personal, dijo Relou. A medida que el distrito trata de aumentar los salarios del personal, probablemente

usando sus reservas de fondos, el distrito va a tener que recortar gastos para poder pagar salarios más altos en los años futuros.

Mientras el distrito trabaja en el plan de los cierres escolares, Jeffco también ha contratado a un consultor para evaluar cómo usa su dinero. El distrito, como la mayoría de los otros, les asigna fondos a las escuelas según su matrícula usando un proceso conocido como 'presupuestación en base al estudiantado' (o *student-based budgeting*), el cual comenzó en Jeffco durante el año escolar 2015-16.

Este método de asignación de fondos les da a los directores flexibilidad para decidir cómo emplear sus presupuestos. Pero como las escuelas han tenido menos matrícula, el distrito ha tenido que intervenir para ayudar a las escuelas a pagar por gastos esenciales. Para ayudar en eso, Jeffco creó un sistema en el que, si una escuela tiene más de cierto nivel de matrícula, tiene que devolver parte de su asignación de fondos por estudiante para ayudar a subsidiar a las escuelas que no tienen suficientes estudiantes. La superintendente Tracy Dorland dijo que el proceso está causando frustración para los directores, ya que tienen que lidiar con complicadas reglas de asignación de fondos.

El consultor contratado por el distrito analizará los gastos del distrito, ayudará al personal a crear una fórmula nueva para la presupuestación a base del estudiantado, y ayudará a capacitar a los directores a fin de prepararlos mejor para crear los presupuestos de sus escuelas.

El distrito también contratará a un consultor para dirigir la participación comunitaria antes de la votación en noviembre con respecto a los cierres. Los planes del distrito son formar comités en cada área afectada, pero enfatizó que la participación no se enfocará en evaluar si una escuela debe cerrar o no sino en cómo cambiar los límites geográficos, y cómo apoyar a los estudiantes en transición.

Yesenia Robles es reportera para Chalkbeat Colorado y cubre asuntos relacionados con los distritos escolares K-12 y la educación multilingüe. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Chalkbeat. Traducido por Milly Suazo-Martinez.

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Laura Hercher, a genetics expert and ethicist at Sarah Lawrence College, worries that restrictive abortion laws will mean genetic disorders will eventually occur almost exclusively among poor families, particularly as technological advances provide better prenatal diagnoses. Wealthier people could travel to other states for an abortion — or undergo in vitro procedures that screen out embryos with genetic anomalies.

"Ultimately, it will create a situation where one part of the population says, 'This can't happen to me,'" she said — and everyone else who cannot afford that privilege will be stuck without options.

Dr. Brian Skotko, a medical geneticist at Massachusetts General Hospital and an advocate for people with Down syndrome, said lack of education and awareness about genetic conditions is already a problem for people living with these disorders, as well as for parents choosing whether to continue a pregnancy. Prenatal counselors, he said, should provide expectant parents with accurate, up-to-date information about the reality of those conditions so they can make informed decisions.

As prenatal testing has become more common, so too have selective terminations of pregnancies involving genetic conditions. A published review of studies suggests that 67% of pregnancies with a diagnosis of Down syndrome end in abortion.

Among abortion opponents, however, terminating a pregnancy after such a diagnosis is seen as an act of injustice against a weaker party. John Seago, president of Texas Right to Life, called such situations "tragic" but added that "we have to have better answers than 'the only solution is to cause the death of the child.'"

Seago said his organization supports a Texas bill known as the Preborn Non-Discrimination Act, which would require genetic counselors to inform patients about prenatal palliative care services and support groups to help them carry the pregnancy to term. Right now, he said, "the only voices" that pregnant people hear in medical conversations are pro-abortion.

For Ann in Texas, there were no simple answers. A week after the initial test results, an amniocentesis and an ultrasound to see Juliet's anatomy confirmed the worst: Juliet had a severe heart condition, muscular problems, and other complications.

Ann began joining Turner syndrome support groups and reading about people living with the dis-

order. Many, she learned, die from heart conditions in their 20s and 30s. She also saw a video of a little girl with Turner syndrome getting her daily hormone injection. The child was screaming in pain.

That was when Ann decided to end the pregnancy, fearing the pain Juliet would have experienced every day. "This decision is out of love," she said. "It's taking the pain away from them by experiencing it yourself."

She made an appointment with a clinic in Colorado in late September. Because the pregnancy was 19 weeks along, the procedure would be complicated and expensive, requiring her to stay in Colorado for a week.

She knows she was fortunate to have the option to travel, which many people in her situation could not do. "I was really angry, because I felt like this was something that should be done by your doctor and your hospital," she said.

Soon after the amniocentesis results, she began experiencing severe cramping. But she didn't tell the obstetrician she'd been seeing, worried that the practice would face the choice of dropping her as a patient or being sued under Texas law for abetting an abortion.

Seago said the law applies only to abortions performed within Texas; helping someone obtain an abortion outside the state would not be a crime.

Still, Hercher and others worry that this kind of fear and uncertainty may end up hurting those who are pregnant. Although Texas' and most other states' laws provide exemptions to protect a mother's health, it's unclear how this will be interpreted in each state.

Ann had her abortion on Sept. 28 — a month after the initial diagnosis had turned the family's joy into a nightmare. Before having Juliet cremated, she held her daughter.

In recent months, she has joined support groups for mothers who have terminated their pregnancies for medical reasons. Besides providing a loving and understanding community, they are the only people who can fully understand her family's situation.

"At no point does it feel like a decision," she said. "The diagnosis is a decision that's been made for you."

Sara Reardon is a Journalist. Kaiser Health News is a nonprofit news service covering health issues. It is an editorially independent program of the Kaiser Family Foundation, which is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

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put it in his book of the same name, many have become "laboratories of autocracy."

Pepper and I share a home state that's a case in point. In Ohio, a Trump-appointed federal judge just allowed Ohio Republicans to force illegally gerrymandered maps on voters, who twice voted overwhelmingly for fairer districts. The state Supreme Court ruled four times that the maps illegally diluted Ohioans' voting power, but we're stuck with them anyway.

Most Ohioans are pro-choice, but thanks to maps like these we now have one of the strictest abortion bans in the country. That's why "returning power over basic civil rights to illegally gerrymandered states like Ohio is an absolute disaster in waiting," concludes David DeWitt in the *Ohio Capital Journal*.

It gets even more absurd elsewhere.

In states like Wisconsin, Michigan, and North Carolina, Democratic lawmakers have repeatedly gotten more votes than their Republican counterparts. But rigged maps keep giving Republicans sizable majorities — which they've then used in all three states to strip power from Democratic governors elected statewide.

Across the country, methods like these are used to ram through extreme legislation that ignores the will of voters. For example, recent polling suggests at least 34 states plus D.C. have pro-choice majorities or pluralities. Many are banning abortion anyway.

It's not just abortion. Again and again, unaccountable state governments are showing themselves incapable of decent governance.

Florida is ripping up K-12 math books — yes, math books — that allegedly teach "critical race theory." Unhinged Tennessee lawmakers are calling for literal book burnings. And one-party states nationwide are making it harder to vote.

Frankly, things aren't much better at the federal level — and Alito should know.

Five of the six conservative seats on the Supreme Court, including Alito's, were appointed by Republican presidents who initially lost the popular vote — and confirmed by Republican Senate "majorities" representing a minority of Americans.

The same Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld extreme gerrymandering and voter suppression while lifting bans on money in politics. This court, in short, has

made it much harder for people to choose their own representatives.

The loser here isn't the big-D Democratic Party. It's small-d democracy. When politicians can do whatever they want to us, everyone loses.

Decades ago, it took a national civil rights movement and federal legislation to reclaim common sense and decency from extremist state governments. Today, it's also going to take reforming the Supreme Court.

Peter Certo is the editorial manager of the Institute for Policy Studies and editor of OtherWords.org.

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VACCINES FOR KIDS

THE COVID-19 VACCINE IS NOW AUTHORIZED BY THE FDA FOR KIDS AS YOUNG AS 6 MONTHS!

Children from the ages of 6 months and older can get a COVID-19 vaccine. Choose to protect your child from COVID-19. Find the nearest pediatric vaccine clinic at covid19.colorado.gov/kids-vaccines.

La Radio Pública de Colorado. Al parecer, su pensamiento era que la estabilización de los alquileres podría conducir a un mayor cierre o abandono de esas comunidades de casas móviles.

Polis firmó la ley modificada en mayo. Entrará en vigor en octubre.

Los asistentes a la manifestación de la semana pasada, sin embargo, consideran que la combinación de un alquiler cada vez

más elevado, según los caprichos de los propietarios de las empresas, y el estancamiento de los salarios en una economía difícil, obliga a elegir entre el alquiler y otras necesidades, como los alimentos y las facturas de los servicios públicos. Muchos de los oradores señalaron que viven con ingresos bajos o fijos.

"Tal y como están las cosas, cada vez es más difícil pagar el alquiler

de mi lote y mis otros gastos como la comida, la gasolina, las medicinas y otras necesidades. Alguien de mi edad, que ha sido propietaria de su casa durante años, no debería tener que preocuparse por quedarse sin hogar simplemente porque el alquiler del terreno bajo su casa siga subiendo", dijo Gibson, leyendo una declaración en nombre de su vecina Anne, que lleva 20 años viviendo en Table Mesa Village.

La estabilización de los alquileres fue la única parte importante del proyecto de ley que se recortó, pero los activistas dijeron que era una protección crucial que los residentes de casas móviles merecen.

"Hay muchas disposiciones en el proyecto de ley sobre las protecciones para los residentes de parques móviles que sí se aprobaron, pero cuando los inquilinos no están protegidos de los aumentos

excesivos de los alquileres, esas otras protecciones pierden su significado", dijo la reverenda Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry, de la Hermandad Unitaria Universalista del Valle de Boulder. "Los aumentos de alquiler del 10, 20 y 30% obligan a la gente a elegir entre la comida o la atención médica o el refugio, y aumentan la posibilidad de que la gente pierda su vivienda por completo".

El jueves, los activistas pidieron a Polis que se reuniera con ellos y dieron a entender que iban a emprender una nueva campaña para derogar la prohibición estatal del control de los alquileres para todo tipo de viviendas. Acudieron a la oficina del gobernador a primera hora del día para entregar cartas con esas demandas.

"No nos vamos a ir y no hemos terminado de luchar", dijo Heather Malone, vicepresidenta de la Cooperativa Comunitaria Golden Hills y líder de Together Colorado. "Volveremos en la próxima sesión legislativa para exigir que se actúe y se garantice una vivienda digna y equitativa para todos".

Sara Wilson es reportera de Colorado Newline. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Colorado Newline.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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Affordability

Activists on Thursday called on Polis to meet with them and hinted at a new campaign aimed at repealing the state's ban on rent control for all types of housing. They went to the governor's office earlier in the day to deliver letters with those demands.

"We are not going away and we are not done fighting," Heather Malone, vice president of the Golden Hills Community Cooperative and leader with Together Colorado, said. "We will be back next legislative session to demand action and ensure dignity and equitable housing for all."

Sara Wilson is a Reporter with Colorado Newline. This article is republished from Colorado Newline under a Creative Commons license.

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SNAP SUPPORTS COLORADANS GET HEALTHY FOOD ON YOUR DINNER TABLE

WHAT'S SNAP?

SNAP, federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, exists to ensure families and individuals can purchase groceries. It supports working families, children and older adults to help weather life storms.

- **SNAP is like social security:** A portion of your tax dollars funded SNAP, and now it's here to help you!
- **SNAP supports the economy:** When you spend SNAP dollars you support local business owners and grocers. In 2018, SNAP contributed more than \$1 billion to Colorado's economy.
- **SNAP is guilt free:** SNAP exists to help you make ends meet during tough times. The program is large enough to help you, your family & your neighbors!

HOW DOES IT WORK?

SNAP, previously known as food stamps, is run by the USDA and provides qualifying households with monthly funds to help purchase groceries. The amount received depends on household size, income, and expenses.

Every month, funds are loaded onto a Quest Electronic Benefit Transfer (or EBT) card. EBT cards are then used like a debit card* at grocery stores, convenience stores and select farmers markets.

**EBT cards do not allow for cash withdrawals.*

BENEFITS OF SNAP

- Supports better health, overall well-being and happiness
- Lowers health care costs and improves long-term health
- Enhances work productivity
- Keeps older adults stable and independent
- Supports local farmers, ranchers, producers and business owners
- Improves academic achievement
- Increases the likelihood of completing high school

SNAP FUELS HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIVES!

Contact the Food Resource Hotline to speak with a food assistance navigator and get help finding food resources, like food pantries, in your area and assistance with your SNAP application. The hotline is free, bilingual and confidential. Call for immediate assistance (Monday – Friday, 8 am – 4:30 pm), no appointments necessary.



HungerFreeColorado.org [f/HungerFreeColorado](https://www.facebook.com/HungerFreeColorado) [@HungerFreeCO](https://twitter.com/HungerFreeCO)

Hunger Free Colorado connects families and individuals to food resources and fuels change in policies, systems and social views, so no Coloradan goes hungry.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Genéticas

que la ley de Texas le ha impedido hacer su trabajo por completo. Cree que, por esa razón, muchos consejeros optarán por no practicar en Texas u otros estados donde el aborto ahora es ilegal, o pronto lo será, debido a las leyes que ha desencadenado la decisión de la Corte Suprema.

Cuando los pacientes preguntan sobre el procedimiento, "les digo: 'Legalmente, en Texas, no tienes esa opción'", dijo. "No tengo palabras para describir la mirada que aparece en sus rostros cuando escuchan eso".

Muchas pacientes no tienen más remedio que llevar el embarazo a término. Westerfield estimó que, desde que se aprobó la ley estatal, al menos el 75% de sus pacientes que habrían interrumpido sus embarazos no han podido hacerlo.

Se sabe poco sobre los resultados para las personas que no pueden interrumpir un embarazo con anomalías genéticas. Pero un estudio que siguió a 1,000 mujeres que fueron rechazadas de las clínicas de aborto porque habían superado los límites de gestación halló que tenían muchas más probabilidades de caer en la pobreza y tenían peor salud en general que aquellas que habían abortado.

A Laura Hercher, experta en genética y especialista en ética del Sarah Lawrence College, le preocupa que las leyes restrictivas sobre el aborto signifiquen que los trastornos genéticos eventualmente ocurrirán de manera casi exclusiva entre las familias pobres, en particular porque los avances tecnológicos brindan mejores diagnósticos prenatales. Las perso-

nas más ricas podrían viajar a otros estados para abortar o someterse a procedimientos in vitro que descartan embriones con anomalías genéticas.

"En última instancia, creará una situación en la que una parte de la población diga: 'Esto no me puede pasar a mí'", dijo, y todos los demás que no pueden pagar ese privilegio se quedarán sin opciones.

El doctor Brian Skotko, genetista médico del Hospital General de Massachusetts y defensor de las personas con síndrome de Down, dijo que la falta de educación y conciencia sobre las condiciones genéticas ya es un problema para las personas que viven con estos trastornos, así como para los padres que deciden continuar con un embarazo. Dijo que los consejeros prenatales deben proporcionar a los futuros padres información precisa y actualizada sobre la realidad de esas condiciones para que puedan tomar decisiones informadas.

A medida que las pruebas prenatales se han vuelto más comunes, también lo han hecho las interrupciones selectivas de embarazos que involucran condiciones genéticas. Una revisión publicada de estudios sugiere que el 67% de los embarazos con diagnóstico de síndrome de Down terminan en aborto.

Sin embargo, entre los opositores al aborto, interrumpir un embarazo después de un diagnóstico de este tipo se considera un acto de injusticia contra un grupo más débil. John Seago, presidente de Texas Right to Life, calificó estas situaciones de "trágicas", pero agregó que "debemos tener

mejores respuestas que 'la única solución es provocar la muerte del niño'".

Seago dijo que su organización apoya un proyecto de ley de Texas conocido como Preborn Non-Discrimination Act (Ley de No Discriminación Prenatal), que requeriría que los consejeros en genética informen a las pacientes sobre los servicios de cuidados paliativos prenatales y los grupos de apoyo para ayudarlas a llevar el embarazo a término. En este momento, dijo, "las únicas voces" que escuchan las embarazadas en las conversaciones médicas son a favor del aborto.

Para Ann de Texas, no había respuestas simples. Una semana después de los resultados de las pruebas iniciales, una amniocentesis y una ecografía para ver la anatomía de Juliet confirmaron lo peor: Juliet tenía una afección cardíaca grave, problemas musculares y otras complicaciones.

Ann se unió a grupos de apoyo para el síndrome de Turner y a leer sobre personas que vivían con el trastorno. Muchos, aprendió, mueren de problemas cardíacos entre los 20 y los 30 años. También vio un video de una niña pequeña con síndrome de Turner recibiendo su inyección diaria de hormonas. Gritaba de dolor.

Fue entonces cuando Ann decidió interrumpir el embarazo, temiendo por el dolor que Juliet habría experimentado todos los días. "Esta decisión es por amor", dijo. "Es quitarles el dolor al experimentarlo uno mismo".

Hizo una cita en una clínica en Colorado a fines de septiembre. Debido a que el embarazo tenía 19 semanas, el procedimiento sería complicado y costoso, y requeriría quedarse en Colorado por una semana.

Sabe que tuvo la suerte de tener la opción de viajar, cosa que muchas personas en su situación no podrían hacer. "Estaba realmente enojada, porque sentí que esto era algo que su médico y su hospital deberían haber hecho", dijo.

Poco después de los resultados de la amniocentesis, comenzó a experimentar calambres severos. Pero no le dijo al obstetra que había estado viendo, preocupada de que la práctica enfrentara la opción de dejarla como paciente o ser demandada bajo la ley de Texas por instigar un aborto.

Seago dijo que la ley se aplica solo a los abortos realizados dentro de Texas; ayudar a alguien a obtener un aborto fuera del estado no sería un delito.

Aún así, a Hercher y a otros les preocupa que este tipo de miedo e

incertidumbre pueda terminar perjudicando a las embarazadas. Aunque las leyes de Texas y la mayoría de los otros estados brindan exenciones para proteger la salud de la madre, no está claro cómo se interpretará esto en cada estado.

Ann tuvo su aborto el 28 de septiembre, un mes después de que el diagnóstico inicial convirtiera la alegría de la familia en una pesadilla. Antes de Juliet fuera cremada, la sostuvo en sus brazos.

En los últimos meses se ha unido a grupos de apoyo para madres que han interrumpido sus embarazos por motivos médicos. Además de brindar una comunidad amorosa y comprensiva, son las únicas personas que pueden comprender completamente la situación de su familia.

"En ningún momento se siente como una decisión", dijo. "La decisión la ha tomado el diagnóstico".

Sara Reardon es periodista. Esta historia fue producida por Kaiser Health News, un programa editorialmente independiente de la Kaiser Family Foundation que no está relacionado con Kaiser Permanente.

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Alegria

ly what those protesters outside the clinics are trying to do. They're not just trying to prevent patients from getting to their appointments — they're trying to perpetuate abortion stigma that enables bad policies, harmful rhetoric, and misinformation. Exacerbating abortion stigma was a key tactic anti-abortion actors used that has led to this terrifying ruling from the Supreme Court. But we don't have to stand for it. Abortion is health care, and we should talk about it like we would any other kind of health care we seek.

In the almost decade that I've been escorting patients, I've occasionally encountered folks coming from other states. But in more recent years, and especially in the last six months after Texas passed SB 8, it's become much

more common. Now, those numbers are going to climb even higher, as people get pushed out of states that ban abortion and are forced to travel long distances for care. Regardless of how far people have to travel, Pro-Choice Missouri clinic escorts will continue to support patients in Illinois, now and always. I don't get the chance to say this to patients while I'm escorting them into the clinic, but I want them, and all abortion supporters, to know this: We love you, and we aren't going anywhere.

Mariceli Alegria is a Clinic Escort and Pro-Choice Missouri Clinic Support Manager.

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Aunque se trate de una elección especial y de un escaño que volverá a estar en juego en noviembre, se trata de una probadita de lo que puede estar por venir si los demócratas siguen dejando todo a la suerte o a la falsa noción de que si siempre han sido apoyados por un grupo de votantes, como los hispanos, ese apoyo será eterno.

Pero nada es eterno en política, y eso lo sabe muy bien todo aquel

que aspira a un puesto público en cualquier parte del mundo. Es decir, más allá de ideologías, en una democracia es el votante el que pone todo en el lugar que le corresponde, incluso si se trata de enviar a un candidato —o a un partido— hacia el basurero de la historia.

Eso es especialmente importante en esta coyuntura en que se llevarán a cabo las elecciones

intermedias, en momentos en que el bolsillo de los votantes aún no se recupera de las secuelas de la pandemia, ni de la guerra en Ucrania: altos precios de la gasolina, además de que todo cuesta más caro, desde la comida hasta la vivienda. Y para ciertos sectores de votantes, tampoco se han concretado cambios a nivel legislativo, como es el caso de la reforma migratoria.

Y ese tema, para millones de seres humanos en este país, es uno de los puntos centrales de su perspectiva de vida personal y familiar, sobre todo para lograr la estabilidad migratoria por la que tanto tiempo han luchado y esperado.

Si a ese cuadro le sumamos que los demócratas también tienen que lidiar con las campañas de desinformación que se

han convertido en la estrategia electoral favorita de los republicanos, haciendo honor al desinformador en jefe —el expresidente Donald Trump—, pues el panorama no pinta nada bien.

Esto es en parte porque los demócratas parecen seguir sin entender que las mentiras y la desinformación de los republicanos tienen un público que las apoya y las acepta como realidad. Si no, baste recordar la intentona de golpe de estado del 6 de enero de 2021 fundamentada en una mentira de que a Trump le "robaron" la elección de 2020 y que, al sol de hoy, Trump mismo y sus secuaces siguen repitiendo y explotando con fines electorales.

En efecto, las audiencias del Congreso sobre el asalto del 6 de enero han expuesto detalles que aunque deberían ser condenados por toda la sociedad, toda vez que fue un ataque directo a nuestra democracia, lamentablemente son aceptados por ese sector de la sociedad y del electorado que sigue apoyando a Trump.

¿Cuánto tiempo durará ese apoyo? Pues el que dicte la ignominia republicana, por una parte, y la desidia demócrata, por la otra.

Es decir, los demócratas no pueden seguir pensando que todo el pueblo estadounidense se indignará por lo ocurrido el 6 de enero, pues un amplio sector de la sociedad lo justifica. Es una desafortunada y triste realidad con la que tiene que lidiar de hoy en adelante la historia de Estados Unidos, país que está dejando escapar de ese modo el liderazgo internacional como "modelo" de sociedad.

En otras palabras, los demócratas no se pueden dar el lujo de subestimar las campañas de desinformación porque eso, sumado al hecho de que muchas promesas de campaña demócratas no se han cumplido —con el agravante de las presiones económicas que sufre el pueblo estadounidense—, pueden convertirse en una receta electoral para el desastre en el Partido Demócrata en noviembre de este año y de cara a los comicios generales de 2024. Y eso no se puede arreglar de la noche a la mañana, sobre todo cuando el tiempo empieza a rebasar a los demócratas en su intención de mantenerse en el poder.

Maribel Hastings es Asesora Ejecutiva de América's Voice. David Torres es Asesor en Español de América's Voice.

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SNAP BENEFICIA A COLORADO LLEVA A TU MESA COMIDA SALUDABLE.

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Photo/Foto: Samuel Gilbert for Source NM

Don Schreiber points to a scored piece of wood that was cut many centuries before with a stone axe. / Don Schreiber señala un trozo de madera rayado que fue cortado muchos siglos antes con un hacha de piedra.

of pounds of emissions, including 851 million pounds of methane annually.

"The ozone rule will likely reduce those harmful health effects through the reduction of the oil and gas emissions and is expected to have the greatest impact on fence-line communities closest to oil and gas operations," NMED spokesperson Maez said.

Life in an oil field

These new rules will impact areas like the San Juan Basin, where 80% of residents live within a quarter-mile of an oil and gas operation.

Don Schreiber (cover photo) is one of them. He and his wife Jane live on a ranch in the San Juan Basin surrounded by 122 natural gas wells.

"I don't like the term natural gas. It's only natural when it's in the ground," he said while driving his diesel Dodge truck towards the entrance of the 3,000-acre property located in one of the most active areas of natural gas production in the country. "When you take it out, all hell breaks loose."

Don, a former insurance salesman, and his wife Jane, a retired fourth-grade schoolteacher, bought the property in 1999 after retiring from their jobs in nearby Farmington, where he grew up.

The plan was to improve the rangeland through holistic ranching and explore the expansive acreage on horseback — a passion of Jane's.

"If it involved horses, Jane was in," Don said. They met at Jumbo Ciminos's Bar, "the best dance floor in Farmington," he said. Jane grew up in El Dorado, Arkansas, in a re-

gion transformed from an agricultural area into a center of oil and gas production — much as the San Juan Basin has been.

"Thirty to 50 years of relentless fragmentation here," Don said, climbing a small hill to a gas well near the couple's house. The equipment at the well site near the ranch house is painted an earth-toned "Juniper Green," according to the Bureau of Land Management's color tool for painting oil gas equipment throughout the state. This particular shade is an attempt by the agency — which leases the subsurface mineral rights to oil and gas companies — to blend the equipment into the landscape. Other color schemes include "Carlsbad Canyon," "Sudan Brown," and "Beetle."

"We can never be on one well location and not see another," he said, parking the truck at the cleared and leveled well site cut into the hillside.

The odor near the facility is intense. Like "opening a can of paint thinner in an enclosed space," he said. Leaked and vented hydrocarbons waft past in a toxic breeze.

This particular well — one of many visited by Source New Mexico in late May — was venting methane and toxic chemicals into the atmosphere, Don said. The effect above the storage tank's valve is a subtle shimmer in the air, like the atmospheric haze caused by heat radiating off asphalt on a summer day.

"If you're still and look at the piñons behind it, you can see the distortion," he said.

Natural gas and hydrocarbon vapors flow out of the pressure re-

lief valve, obscuring the view of the trees on the hill beyond.

This kind of pollution, invisible



"Climate change is immediate and real to us. It's underfoot."

Don Schreiber, San Juan Basin Resident

and insidious, has become the primary health concern for the Schreibers and their family. Their 10 grandchildren frequently visit the ranch, exploring the expansive property on foot and horseback.

"When you felt you had surface threats from oil and gas, you could teach kids about that," he said.

Those threats include waste tanks holding toxic chemicals and oil and other contaminated areas commonly associated with the oil and gas facilities.

"That all changed when we began to understand the threat of the venting and flaring. We had to change our behavior."

For Don, the turning point came in 2007 when they received nine notices of intent to drill or near their property. The Schreibers do not own the subsurface mineral rights on their property, or deeded lands, enabling companies to drill nearly at will. It was nearing Christmas time, and Jane had purchased and restored a single cinched western child-sized riding saddle to give to their first grandchild.

The gift brought up mixed emotions, Don said. It held the prospect

of exploring the land with his first grandchild and the simultaneous dread that his home was being poisoned.

"That saddle had so much hope in it, so much expectation of the future," said Schreiber, "I thought, where is that kid going to ride? Where will she be able to ride safely?"

The couple gave up ranching that year, and Don dedicated himself to environmental activism.

Fifteen years later, he's had some notable wins in deterring new oil and gas development. There are also many more losses, and now in his 70s, he speaks with emotion about the industry's impact on the ranch, his family and the planet.

"Climate change is immediate and real to us," he said. "It's underfoot."

While lamenting the impact of these wells on the ranch, Don makes sure to check his privilege. He motions toward Gobernador Knob, a mountain sacred to the Diné.

Native American residents are disproportionately impacted by the industry in the San Juan Basin. According to census data used in the Threat Map, over 50% of Native Americans live within a half-mile of an oil and gas facility.

The oil and gas industry is part of the larger "energy sacrifice zone," said Robyn Jackson, interim executive director of Diné CARE.

"The San Juan basin is dealing with the historical legacy of resource extraction and pollution," Jackson said. "When those sites

are impacted, it affects future generations. It impacts their connection to the land and our cultural traditions."

While the threats of living near oil and gas facilities are well-documented, few authoritative health studies have examined the impact on Indigenous communities.

The Counselor Chapter Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Committee conducted a wellness survey in 2018 on the impacts of oil and drilling in three Navajo chapters (Counselor, Torreon and Ojo Encino) near Chaco Canyon National Historical Park in the San Juan Basin.

The results of the Tri-Chapter HIA provide a glimpse of the impact. In the Counselor Chapter, over 80% of participating Diné residents reported health concerns, including respiratory issues, headaches, nosebleeds, and itching and burning eyes and skin associated with living near one of the 400 nearby oil and gas facilities.

It's long past time to move away from these fossil fuels, Jackson said.

"We would like an economy that is not resource extraction-based," she said. "Our people and lands are being sacrificed, and we have this reality of the collective human problem of climate change."

Samuel Gilbert, Journalist.

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spokesperson Stacy Johnston said. The money will help pay for more five labor law investigators, one staff attorney, one paralegal, one administrative assistant, one technical support analyst and one systems analyst.

N.M. Senate President Pro Tem Mimi Stewart (D-Albuquerque) said the department is "very organized."

"I think they're ready — and even if they're not, we're going forward," Stewart said. Most New México state agencies struggle during the pandemic, she added.

She pointed to the department-produced poster that tells workers what their rights are that is now required to be posted by employers in the workplace.

"We certainly increased their budget for this specifically," Stewart said. "We will continue to look at this, and adjust the budget upwards for that department, if they need more. They're not shy about telling us when they need more workers."

As of last Thursday, the department had not filled or advertised for the new positions funded by the Legislature. The positions began posting last Friday, the beginning of the new fiscal year, the spokesperson said.

Essential workers more likely to catch, die from COVID

The racist effects of the pandemic won't all be solved with paid sick leave, Sena said, but it's a step in the right direction.

Research shows that paid sick leave reduces the number of workers who go into work while ill.

Low-income, Black and Brown Americans lost more work than others during COVID surges, according to a new analysis of Census data between August 2020 and June 2022 by Julia Raifman, an assistant professor at the Boston University School of Public Health, and Aaron Sojourner, a labor economist at the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management.

The analysis, published on June 28, found that families earning less than \$50,000 in 2019 were 12 times more likely to report missing seven days of work due to COVID-19 than those earning at least \$200,000.

Hispanic and Black people were more than twice as likely to report missing work due to COVID symptoms as white or Asian Americans, the analysis found. This is consistent with other data showing that

Black, Hispanic and Indigenous people are more likely to contract coronavirus and die of COVID, the analysts wrote.

They also found that low-income people were at a higher risk of being exposed to coronavirus even when they accounted for vaccination status.

The disproportionate loss of work was consistent with high exposure to the virus through work, household crowding and community.

Other studies have found that when COVID disrupts a worker's income and schedule, they not only suffer from short- and long-term health effects of the disease but also do not have enough food to eat, especially when there is no paid sick leave available to them.

A lack of food and housing can affect people's entire lives and make it even harder for low-income communities to move out of poverty, according to the analysis, and this inequality spills over into the rest of the economy.

"Lower income workers are much less likely to have paid sick leave, which would offer material help to their families during times of lost income, even though they are the ones who need it most," the analysts wrote, which raises the risk of poor health and poverty.

The researchers recommended routine, direct vaccine delivery to low-income neighborhoods and workplaces as a way to achieve more equitable vaccination rates and boosting. They conclude that we must expand our definition of who is at "high-risk" of severe illness if infected with coronavirus to include Black, Hispanic, Indigenous and low-income Americans.

Rep. Angelica Rubio (D-Las Cruces) agreed that policymakers should consider the idea.

"When it comes to policy, I know it's a lot harder to have this conversation in terms of expanding definitions, but I certainly think that it's valid to consider those options moving forward, not necessarily just for COVID, but for other public health issues," Rubio said.

Austin Fisher is a journalist based in Santa Fe, New México.

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Empleadores

trabajadoras de bajos ingresos como la suya, dijo Lozoya, especialmente en lo que respecta a la salud y la estabilidad financiera.

Lozoya hablaba en una conferencia de prensa virtual para celebrar la ley estatal de baja por enfermedad de Nuevo México que se aplica a todos los empleadores privados, llamada Ley de Lugares de Trabajo Saludables, que entró en vigor el viernes.

Se le unieron otros trabajadores, organizadores y legisladores estatales, entre ellos la diputada Christine Chandler (demócrata de Los Álamos), que llevó a cabo el proyecto de ley a través de la Legislatura en 2021 antes de que la gobernadora Michelle Luján Grisham lo firmara.

La nueva ley exige a todos los empleadores que proporcionen a los trabajadores hasta 64 horas de baja por enfermedad pagada al año, que se acumulan en función del número de horas que trabajan.

El movimiento que trajo la licencia por enfermedad pagada a Nuevo México fue liderado por los trabajadores, dijo Lan Sena, director de políticas del Centro de Política Cívica y ex concejal de Albuquerque.

"Estamos contentos de que esto finalmente se haya convertido en una realidad y que todos - todos los trabajadores de Nuevo México, independientemente de la industria en la que trabajen - estarán cubiertos", dijo Lozoya.

Las personas que buscan trabajo no siempre cuentan con protecciones como la baja por enfermedad pagada, "sobre todo porque el COVID sigue vagando", dijo Sena. Casi todos los residentes de Estados Unidos se encontraban en zonas de alta o considerable transmisión de COVID esta semana, según los datos de los CDC.

¿Está preparado Nuevo México para hacer cumplir la ley?

Queda por ver cuántos jefes cumplirán la ley y cuántos de los que no lo hagan se convertirán en objeto de denuncias presentadas ante el Departamento de Soluciones Laborales del estado o en los tribunales civiles de todo el estado.

A partir del 22 de junio, la División de Relaciones Laborales del departamento tenía nueve investigadores de la ley laboral a tiempo completo, con siete en Albuquerque y dos en Las Cruces, dijo un portavoz del DWS.

También tiene tres asistentes administrativos, un supervisor de investigación de salarios y horas, un especialista en operaciones

comerciales y un mediador que manejan las denuncias de violaciones de la ley laboral.

Eso es dos investigadores a tiempo completo menos de lo que tenían en octubre de 2021, cuando el departamento dijo que tenía 11 investigadores.

El departamento pidió a los legisladores 893.444 dólares para pagar cinco nuevos puestos de investigador, pero sólo recibió 735.000 dólares, dijo la portavoz del departamento Stacy Johnston. El dinero ayudará a pagar más cinco investigadores de derecho laboral, un abogado de planta, un asistente legal, un asistente administrativo, un analista de apoyo técnico y un analista de sistemas.

La Presidenta Pro Tem del Senado de N.M., Mimi Stewart (D-Albuquerque), dijo que el departamento está "muy organizado".

"Creo que están preparados - e incluso si no lo están, vamos a seguir adelante", dijo Stewart. La mayoría de las agencias estatales de Nuevo México luchan durante la pandemia, agregó.

Señaló el póster producido por el departamento que indica a los trabajadores cuáles son sus derechos y que ahora es obligatorio que los empleadores coloquen en el lugar de trabajo.

"Ciertamente aumentamos su presupuesto para esto específicamente", dijo Stewart. "Seguiremos estudiando este asunto y ajustaremos el presupuesto al alza para ese departamento, si necesitan más. No son tímidos a la hora de decirnos cuándo necesitan más trabajadores".

Hasta el 30 de junio, el departamento no había cubierto o anunciado los nuevos puestos financiados por la Legislatura.

Los puestos comenzaron a publicarse el viernes pasado, al comienzo del nuevo año fiscal, dijo el vocero.

Los trabajadores esenciales tienen más probabilidades de contraer y morir de COVID

Los efectos racistas de la pandemia no se solucionarán todos con las bajas por enfermedad pagadas, dijo Sena, pero es un paso en la dirección correcta.

Las investigaciones demuestran que las bajas por enfermedad pagadas reducen el número de trabajadores que acuden al trabajo estando enfermos.

Los estadounidenses de bajos ingresos, negros y morenos perdieron más trabajo que otros durante los aumentos de COVID, según un nuevo análisis de los datos del Censo entre agosto de

2020 y junio de 2022 realizado por Julia Raifman, profesora asistente de la Escuela de Salud Pública de la Universidad de Boston, y Aaron Sojourner, economista laboral de la Escuela de Administración Carlson de la Universidad de Minnesota.

El análisis, publicado el 28 de junio, descubrió que las familias que ganaban menos de 50.000 dólares en 2019 tenían 12 veces más probabilidades de informar que habían perdido siete días de trabajo debido a COVID-19 que las que ganaban al menos 200.000 dólares.

Las personas hispanas y negras tenían más del doble de probabilidades de informar que faltaban al trabajo debido a los síntomas de COVID que los estadounidenses blancos o asiáticos, según el análisis. Esto concuerda con otros datos que muestran que los negros, los hispanos y los indígenas tienen más probabilidades de contraer el coronavirus y de morir de COVID, escribieron los analistas.

También descubrieron que las personas con bajos ingresos tenían un mayor riesgo de estar expuestas al coronavirus incluso cuando se tenía en cuenta el estado de vacunación.

La pérdida desproporcionada de trabajo era coherente con la

alta exposición al virus a través del trabajo, la aglomeración de personas en el hogar y la comunidad.

Otros estudios han constatado que cuando el COVID interrumpe los ingresos y el horario de un trabajador, éste no sólo sufre los efectos de la enfermedad sobre su salud a corto y largo plazo, sino que además no tiene suficiente comida para alimentarse, especialmente cuando no dispone de una baja laboral remunerada.

La falta de alimentos y de vivienda puede afectar a toda la vida de las personas y dificultar aún más la salida de la pobreza de las comunidades de bajos ingresos, según el análisis, y esta desigualdad se traslada al resto de la economía.

"Los trabajadores con ingresos más bajos tienen muchas menos probabilidades de contar con una baja por enfermedad pagada, lo que ofrecería una ayuda material a sus familias en épocas de pérdida de ingresos, a pesar de que son los que más la necesitan", escribieron los analistas, lo que aumenta el riesgo de mala salud y pobreza.

Los investigadores recomendaron la entrega rutinaria y directa de vacunas en los barrios y lugares de trabajo de bajos ingresos como una forma de lograr tasas

de vacunación más equitativas y de refuerzo. Concluyen que debemos ampliar nuestra definición de quién está en "alto riesgo" de enfermedad grave si se infecta con el coronavirus para incluir a los estadounidenses negros, hispanos, indígenas y de bajos ingresos.

La diputada Angélica Rubio (demócrata de Las Cruces) se mostró de acuerdo en que los responsables políticos deberían considerar la idea.

"Cuando se trata de política, sé que es mucho más difícil tener esta conversación en términos de ampliar las definiciones, pero ciertamente creo que es válido considerar esas opciones en el futuro, no necesariamente sólo para el COVID, sino para otras cuestiones de salud pública", dijo Rubio.

Austin Fisher es reportero de Source New Mexico. Este artículo ha sido publicado por Source New Mexico bajo una licencia Creative Commons.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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En respuesta a las preguntas sobre las disparidades raciales en los resultados de salud relacionados con la producción de petróleo y gas, Maez escribió en un correo electrónico que "NMED entiende que la proximidad a los pozos de petróleo y gas tiene un impacto en las comunidades de Nuevo México, y especialmente las comunidades más vulnerables que viven cerca de estas fuentes."

Maez añadió que las normas de petróleo y gas de NMED «se dirigen específicamente a las emisiones de los pozos más pequeños y propensos a las fugas y protegen a los que viven más cerca del desarrollo con inspecciones más frecuentes y requisitos de detección y reparación de fugas.»

La OCD, la división que regula la actividad del petróleo y el gas en Nuevo México, sigue teniendo poco personal. La agencia tiene 11 inspectores encargados de supervisar más de 60.000 pozos. En la sesión legislativa de 2022, la OCD solicitó 25 miembros adicionales del personal, ocho de los cuales habrían sido inspectores.

"Desgraciadamente, sólo hemos recibido 5 ETC [empleados a tiempo completo] adicionales, uno de los cuales se dedicará a las inspecciones", dijo Sandoval.

Ha habido avances. Este año, Nuevo México adoptó normas sobre precursores del ozono que, según el Departamento de Medio Ambiente, eliminarán cientos de millones de libras de emisiones, incluyendo 851 millones de libras de metano al año.

"La norma sobre el ozono probablemente reducirá esos efectos nocivos para la salud gracias a la reducción de las emisiones de petróleo y gas, y se espera que tenga el mayor impacto en las comunidades cercanas a las operaciones de petróleo y gas", dijo Maez, portavoz del NMED.

La vida en un campo petrolífero

Estas nuevas normas afectarán a zonas como la cuenca de San Juan, donde el 80% de los residentes viven a menos de 400 metros de una explotación de petróleo y gas.

Don Schreiber (foto en la portada) es uno de ellos. Él y su esposa Jane viven en un rancho de la cuenca de San Juan rodeado de 122 pozos de gas natural.

"No me gusta el término gas natural. Sólo es natural cuando está en el suelo", dijo mientras conducía su camión Dodge diésel hacia la entrada de la propiedad de 3.000 acres situada en una de las zonas más activas de producción de gas natural del país. "Cuando lo sacas, se desata el infierno".

Don, antiguo vendedor de seguros, y su esposa Jane, maestra de cuarto grado jubilada, compraron la propiedad en 1999 tras jubilarse de sus trabajos en la cercana Farmington, donde él creció.

El plan era mejorar los pastizales mediante una ganadería holística y explorar la extensa superficie a caballo, una pasión de Jane.

"Si se trataba de caballos, Jane se apuntaba", dice Don. Se conocieron en el bar Jumbo Ciminis, "la mejor pista de baile de Farmington", dijo. Jane creció en El Dorado (Arkansas), en una región que pasó de ser una zona agrícola a un centro de producción de petróleo y gas, como lo ha sido la cuenca de San Juan.

"Aquí hay entre 30 y 50 años de implacable fragmentación", dijo Don, subiendo una pequeña colina hasta un pozo de gas cerca de la casa de la pareja. El equipo del pozo, cerca de la casa del rancho, está pintado de un tono terroso, el "verde Juniper", según la herramienta de colores de la Oficina de Administración de Tierras para pintar el equipo de gas petrolífero en todo el estado. Este tono concreto es un intento de la agencia -que arrienda los derechos minerales del subsuelo a las empresas petroleras y de gas- de integrar el equipo en el paisaje. Otros esquemas de color son "Cañón de Carlsbad", "Marrón Sudán" y "Escarabajo".

"Nunca podemos estar en una ubicación de pozos y no ver otra", dijo, aparcando el camión en el lugar de los pozos despejado y nivelado, cortado en la ladera.

El olor cerca de las instalaciones es intenso. Es como "abrir una lata de disolvente en un espacio cerrado", dijo. Los hidrocarburos filtrados y ventilados pasan en una brisa tóxica.

Este pozo en concreto -uno de los muchos que visitó *Source New México* a finales de mayo- estaba expulsando metano y sustancias químicas tóxicas a la atmósfera, dijo Don. El efecto sobre la válvula del tanque de almacenamiento es un sutil brillo en el aire, como la bruma atmosférica causada por el calor que irradia el asfalto en un día de verano.

"Si te quedas quieto y miras los piñones que hay detrás, puedes ver la distorsión", dijo.

Los vapores de gas natural e hidrocarburos salen de la válvula de alivio de presión, oscureciendo la vista de los árboles de la colina de más allá.

Este tipo de contaminación, invisible e insidiosa, se ha convertido en la principal preocupación sanitaria de los Schreiber y su familia.

Sus 10 nietos visitan con frecuencia el rancho, explorando la extensa propiedad a pie y a caballo.

"Cuando uno siente que hay amenazas en la superficie por el petróleo y el gas, puede enseñar a los niños sobre eso", dijo.

Entre esas amenazas se encuentran los depósitos de residuos que contienen productos químicos tóxicos y petróleo y otras zonas contaminadas que suelen asociarse a las instalaciones de petróleo y gas.

"Todo eso cambió cuando empezamos a comprender la amenaza del venteo y la quema en antorcha. Tuvimos que cambiar nuestro comportamiento".



"El cambio climático es inmediato y real para nosotros. Está bajo los pies".

Don Schreiber, Residente de San Juan Basin

Para Don, el punto de inflexión se produjo en 2007, cuando recibieron nueve avisos de intención de perforación o cerca de su propiedad. Los Schreiber no son dueños de los derechos minerales del subsuelo de su propiedad, ni de las tierras escrituradas, lo que permite a las empresas perforar casi a voluntad. Se acercaba la Navidad y Jane había comprado y restaurado una silla de montar del oeste de tamaño infantil para regalar a su primer nieto.

El regalo provocó sentimientos encontrados, dijo Don. Contenia la perspectiva de explorar la tierra con su primer nieto y el temor simultáneo de que su hogar estuviera siendo envenenado.

"Esa silla de montar tenía tanta esperanza, tanta expectativa de futuro", dijo Schreiber, "que pensé, ¿dónde va a montar esa niña? ¿Dónde podrá cabalgar con seguridad?".

La pareja dejó la ganadería ese año y Don se dedicó al activismo medioambiental.

Quince años más tarde, ha conseguido algunas victorias notables en la disuasión de nuevas explotaciones de petróleo y gas. También hay muchas más pérdidas, y ahora, a sus 70 años, habla con emoción del impacto de la industria en el rancho, su familia y el planeta.

"El cambio climático es inmediato y real para nosotros", dijo. "Está bajo los pies".

Mientras se lamenta del impacto de estos pozos en el rancho, Don se asegura de comprobar su

privilegio. Señala hacia Gobernador Knob, una montaña sagrada para los diné.

Los residentes nativos americanos se ven desproporcionadamente afectados por la industria en la cuenca de San Juan. Según los datos del censo utilizados en el Mapa de Amenazas, más del 50% de los nativos americanos viven a menos de media milla de una instalación de petróleo y gas.

La industria del petróleo y el gas forma parte de la más amplia "zona de sacrificio energético", dijo Robyn Jackson, director ejecutivo interino de Diné CARE.

"La cuenca de San Juan se enfrenta al legado histórico de la extracción de recursos y la contaminación", dijo Jackson. "Cuando esos lugares sufren un impacto, afecta a las generaciones futuras. Afecta a su conexión con la tierra y a nuestras tradiciones culturales".

Aunque las amenazas de vivir cerca de las instalaciones de petróleo y gas están bien documentadas, son pocos los estudios sanitarios autorizados que han examinado el impacto en las comunidades indígenas.

El Comité de Evaluación del Impacto en la Salud (HIA) del Capítulo de Counselor realizó una encuesta de bienestar en 2018 sobre los impactos del petróleo y la perforación en tres capítulos navajos (Counselor, Torreón y Ojo Encino) cerca del Parque Histórico Nacional del Cañón del Chaco en la Cuenca de San Juan.

Los resultados de la EIS de los tres capítulos ofrecen una visión del impacto. En el capítulo de Counselor, más del 80% de los residentes diné participantes declararon tener problemas de salud, como problemas respiratorios, dolores de cabeza, hemorragias nasales y picor y ardor en los ojos y la piel, asociados a vivir cerca de una de las 400 instalaciones de petróleo y gas cercanas.

Ya es hora de abandonar estos combustibles fósiles, dijo Jackson.

"Nos gustaría tener una economía que no se base en la extracción de recursos", dijo. "Nuestra gente y nuestras tierras están siendo sacrificadas, y tenemos esta realidad del problema humano colectivo del cambio climático".

Samuel Gilbert, periodista. Este artículo ha sido publicado por Source New Mexico bajo una licencia Creative Commons.

Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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The only answer I can think of is that these images are the results of self-interested decisions made by the very wealthy people who create our visual mass media culture. These people, who sometimes preach to us about peace and love, seem to have no problem making movies and programs full of abhorrent images of guns and violence, blood and guts. They decry violence in our society while getting rich by producing and promoting violent images. They are the producers, writers, directors, and actors who we think of as glamorous celebrities.

To understand that it doesn't have to be this way, all you have to do to compare most European television shows about cops and law enforcement to American ones. The foreign shows can go a whole season without even one scene of blood and gore, while the shows made in the USA will contain several scenes of violence and a whole armory of weapons in a single episode.

Surely the "celebrities" who make our entertainment are aware of this, but they choose to make entertainment that is violent. Why? I can only guess it's because it's an easy way to get rich. They will probably say something like "we are only giving the people what they want," but that is not adequate as an answer or a justification. After all, the guy selling speed, the CEO pushing opioids, or the company selling cancerous pesticides is "only giving people what they want." In truth, all of them use advertising and other manipulative techniques to form our tastes and desires. Years and years of cross cultural research tells us that human beings are not "naturally" violent. It is not our genes that are the problem, it is our entertainment industry.

What do I propose? Well, let's start with the idea proposed by Hannah Arendt at the beginning of her book "The Human Condition" in which she wrote: "What I propose therefore is very simple: it is nothing more than to think about what we are doing."

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value small classroom sizes, districts argue having multiple small schools is stretching resources too thin, and making for less adequate educational programming.

Jeffco leaders closed two elementary schools in the past two years, calling them emergency closures, citing problems maintaining programs, and giving little notice to parents. The district's [new plan, Regional Opportunities for Thriving Schools](#), was launched after [the closure of Fitzmorris this year](#) as a way to try to prevent emergency closures in the spring and provide parents more notice.

The district hasn't said how many schools will be recommended for closure in the first round of the plan. But, the district is drafting a report that will detail factors the school board wants to consider in deciding whether to close a school. By August 31, the superintendent will make recommendations on which elementary school to close at the end of the 2022-23 school year. The board will vote on those recommendations before the end of November.

This fall's recommendations will be based largely on enrollment and building utilization, but other factors might play a bigger role in future decisions such as whether the school hosts a unique program or what transportation options exist if students must go elsewhere.

"The approach is still evolving," Relou said. "They're all things we need to look at. They are all important components, but I think some things will stick out more than other things."

In addition to district recommendations, district leaders are also planning to support principals

who are working on plans of their own to merge schools. Those voluntary school mergers could be considered at the same time.

Relou said the district wants to limit how many schools are closed in one year so that district staff can support displaced families and students.

The other issue that hasn't been decided is whether the district at some point will create a "bright line" – a number that would trigger closure. Some school board members said that having more clear benchmarks for what is considered "too few" students, might help parents.

But having such strict rules also might remove some of a district's ability to consider other factors.

In Jeffco, for instance, Relou has said that some school buildings were made for small student populations, meaning that while they may have few students, they may be at or above building capacity. Regardless, Jeffco school board members and leaders want the focus to be on whether schools can provide good programs.

In the case of the last two emergency closures in Jeffco, district leaders said that the [schools had to combine grade levels causing teachers](#) to deal with different standards, and sometimes different curriculum resources, for students in one class. And in those cases, teachers didn't have co-workers to plan and collaborate with for their grade levels. Before closing, Fitzmorris school leaders also described having a hard time offering after-school programming because even private providers were reluctant to offer services for so few students.

Now Jeffco is trying to define what it takes for a school to be what the district calls "thriving."

One measure being discussed is ensuring a school is big enough to have two to three classes per grade level, so teachers can collaborate with co-workers. District leaders also have discussed that each school needs to have full-time art, music, and physical education teachers, so that students can have those classes consistently, rather than once every few weeks as is the case in some schools with shared teachers.

Board members also told district staff they want the district to track students who have been displaced by closures, in hopes of preventing the same students from being impacted more than once.

After November, the plan's focus will become more broad, looking at middle and high schools as well. That means looking at how elementary schools feed into secondary schools, but also considering closing schools in higher grade levels.

Jeffco leaders say that this is one of many steps needed to eventually manage the district's budget problems.

Enrollment has decreased faster than staffing levels, Relou said. And, as the district negotiates to increase staff salaries, likely using reserves for now, the district is going to have to cut expenditures to afford higher salaries in coming years.

As the district is working on the plan for school closures, Jeffco also has hired a consultant to [evaluate how it spends its dollars](#). The district, like most others, allocates dollars to schools based on enroll-

ment, called student-based budgeting, which began in Jeffco in the 2015-16 school year.

The method of funding gives principals flexibility to decide how to use their budgets. But as schools have had less enrollment, the district has had to step in to help schools pay for essentials. To help do that, Jeffco created a system where, if a school has more than a set level of enrollment, those schools must give back some of their per-student funding, to subsidize schools with too few students. Superintendent Tracy Dorland said the process is causing frustration for principals, as leaders must navigate confusing funding rules.

The consultant hired by the district will analyze the district's spending, help district staff create a new formula for student-based budgeting, and help train principals so they are better prepared

for creating their school budgets.

The district also will hire a consultant to run community engagement before the November vote on closures. The district plans to form committees in each affected articulation area, but stressed that the engagement would not be focused on whether a school should or should not close, but rather on how boundaries would shift, and how to support students in a transition.

Yesenia Robles is a reporter for Chalkbeat Colorado covering K-12 school districts and multilingual education. This story was originally published by Chalkbeat.

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Disinformation

grasp that Republicans' lies and disinformation have support from a part of the public that accepts them as reality. Just remember the coup attempt on January 6, 2021, based on the lie that the 2020 election was "robbed" from Trump; a lie which, to this day, Trump and his minions continue to repeat and exploit for electoral ends. Indeed, the congressional hearings about the January 6 attack have exposed details that—although they should be condemned by all of society, since this was a direct attack on our democracy—are unfortunately accepted by this segment of society and the electorate that continues to support Trump. How long will this support last? This will be decided by the level

of Republican shame, on the one hand, and Democratic disinterest, on the other.

The Democrats cannot continue to think that the entire U.S. population is angry about what happened on January 6, since a wide sector of society justifies it. That is an unfortunate and sad reality that the history of the United States will have to deal with, from today onward—a country that is losing its international leadership role as a "model" society. In other words, Democrats do not have the luxury of underestimating disinformation campaigns because these—on top of the fact that many campaign promises from Democrats have not been accomplished, and with the ag-

gravating factor of the economic pressure the U.S. American people are suffering—could become an electoral recipe for disaster for the Democratic Party in November and for the general elections in 2024. And that can't be fixed overnight, especially when Democrats are running out of time in their effort to remain in power.

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AGE OF Armor

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Pompeo della Cesa, Armadura de combate de una guarnición, alrededor de 1595. Acero, hierro, latón, oro, plata, cuero, tela; 56.6 x 10.5 cm (22 1/4 x 4 1/8 in), 47 lb, 15 oz (peso). Colección John Woodman Higgins Armory, 2014.112. Imagen ©2021 Worcester Art Museum, todos los derechos reservados.

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