

11 de Agosto 2022

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Lives Disrupted  
*Vidas Interrumpidas* 8

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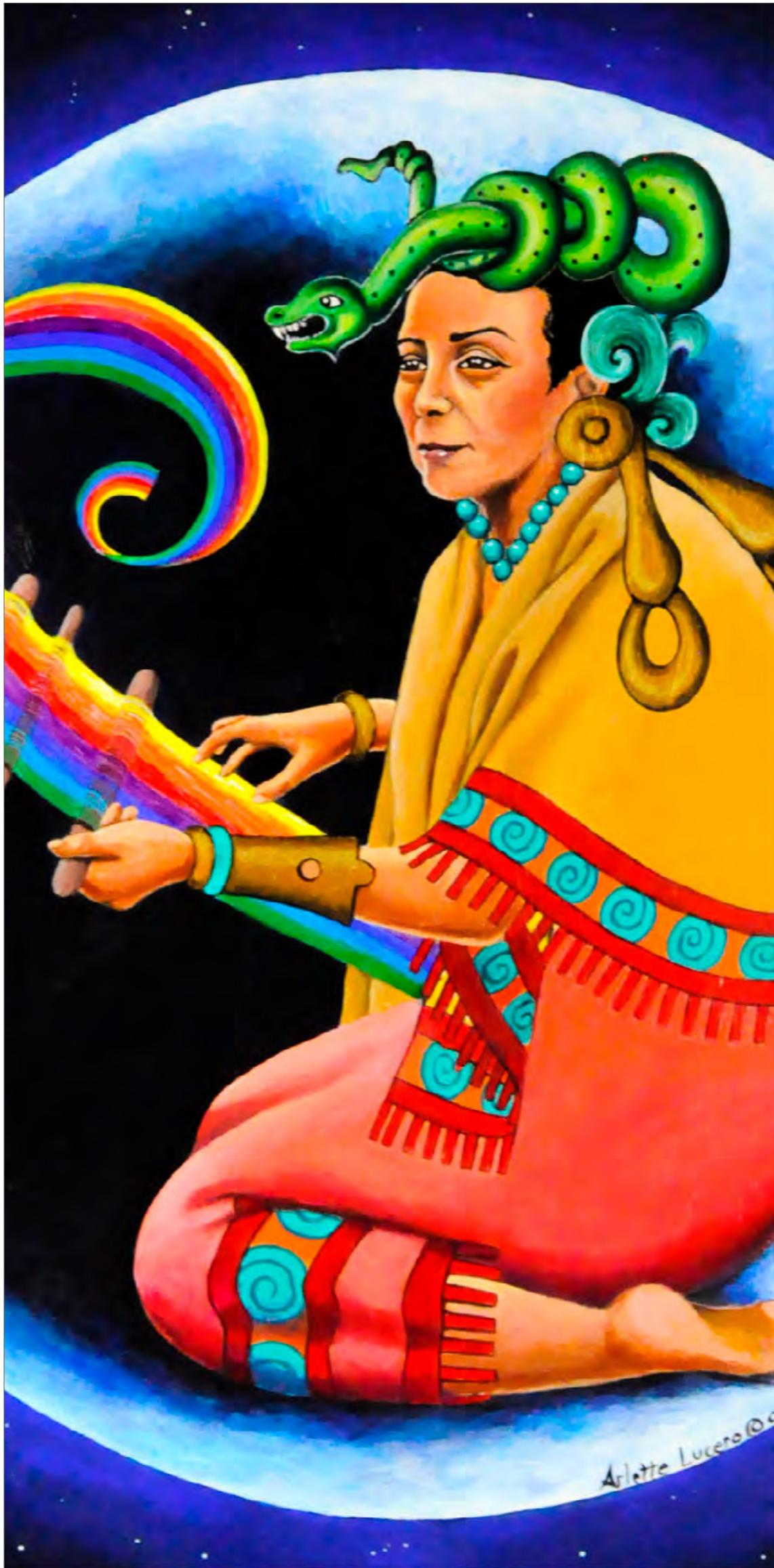


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## Anti-Immigrant Republican Extremism Positions Itself and Intensifies

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

**W**hether through state laws, city ordinances, executive orders, or federal measures, if anti-immigrant Republicans have anything in common it's that they are operating from the same, old playbook: promoting—and, oftentimes, implementing—measures that pretend to combat undocumented immigration but end up inflicting damage on minority communities. Those targeted are often Hispanics, especially through the use of racial profiling and the violation of civil rights.

It's an image that they created of themselves and which they cannot

With these draconian measures, someone who looks Hispanic—whether they are a citizen, often going back generations in this country, especially in states like Texas or Arizona, which used to be Mexican territory—is in imminent danger.

fight, not even the most moderate conservatives, since their silence in the face of the subjugation of the political sect that has formed in response to former President Donald

Trump has forever harmed their principles and values. If anything remains from all that, no one knows because they have permitted a racist and anti-immigrant movement to keep their party hostage to this day, out of convenience.

Greg Abbott, the governor of Texas who issued an executive order authorizing the Texas National Guard and Texas Department of Public Safety to detain undocumented immigrants and return them to the border—based on the argument that the administration of Joe Biden has shirked its federal responsibility to control the borders—provides the most recent example. Additionally, the so-called Operation Lone Star, another



Photo/Foto: América's Voice



Photo/Foto: América's Voice

er joint mission between the Texas Department of Public Safety and the state's National Guard began in March 2021, supposedly to control undocumented immigration and illegal drug trafficking.

This situation is proof that, from their perspective on race and power, the governor is willing to undermine federal law, in frank defiance

See Hastings & Torres on page 17

## El Extremismo Antiinmigrante Republicano Se Recrudece y Posiciona

Maribel Hastings y David Torres

**Y**a sea mediante leyes estatales, ordenanzas municipales, órdenes ejecutivas o medidas federales, si algo tienen en común los republicanos antiinmigrantes es que recurren al mismo libreto de siempre:

promueven —y en varias ocasiones implementan— medidas de presunto combate a la inmigración indocumentada que terminan infligiendo daños a comunidades minoritarias. Ese rechazo es en su mayoría contra hispanos, sobre todo mediante el uso del perfil racial y la violación de derechos civiles.

Es una imagen que se han creado de ellos mismos y contra la cual ya no pueden combatir, ni siquiera los conservadores más moderados, pues su silencio ante el avasallamiento de la secta política que se ha formado en torno al ex-presidente Donald Trump ha perjudicado para siempre sus principios y sus valores. Si algo les queda de

todo ello, nadie lo sabe porque han preferido que un movimiento racista y antiinmigrante mantenga secuestrado a su partido hasta hoy, a conveniencia.

El ejemplo más reciente lo provee el gobernador de Texas, Greg Abbott, quien con base en el argumento de que la administración de Joe Biden ha claudicado en su responsabilidad federal de controlar las fronteras, emitió una orden ejecutiva autorizando a la Guardia Nacional de Texas y al Departamento de Seguridad del estado a detener indocumentados y retornarlos a la frontera. Asimismo, la denominada *Operación Lone Star*, otra misión conjunta del Departamento de Seguridad Pública de Texas y el Departamento Militar del mismo estado, arrancó en marzo de 2021 supuestamente para controlar la inmigración indocumentada y el tráfico ilícito de drogas.

El caso es demostrar que, desde su perspectiva racial y de poder, el gobernador es capaz de rebasar la ley federal, en franco desafío contra un gobierno demócrata al que ataca un día sí y otro también, para ir posicionándose ante sus potenciales electores a escasos meses de la próxima elección.

Es decir, aparte de que dichas medidas usurpan el rol federal de aprobar y hacer cumplir las leyes de inmigración, de que son puramente políticas para mantener el apoyo de los votantes que conforman su base, estas iniciativas son la receta perfecta para el empleo del perfil racial.

La *Operación Lone Star*, por ejemplo, a la que ya se han destinado unos \$4 mil millones provenientes de fondos estatales y para

la que se han empleado 10,000 elementos de la Guardia Nacional no tiene el fin de "proteger" la frontera, sino el de criminalizar a los inmigrantes para deportarlos de forma expedita, alegando una supuesta "invasión", a pesar de que muchos de ellos vienen, paradójicamente, a buscar protección a Estados Unidos.

“

Con estas draconianas medidas corre peligro inminente alguien que luzca hispano, no importa que sea ciudadano, muchas veces de varias generaciones de este país, sobre todo en estados como Texas y Arizona, que eran territorio mexicano.

En efecto, con estas draconianas medidas corre peligro inminente alguien que luzca hispano, no importa que sea ciudadano, muchas veces de varias generaciones de este país, sobre todo en estados como Texas y Arizona, que eran territorio mexicano; también están en riesgo los residentes permanentes, temporales o los indocumentados. Nadie lleva su pasaporte o tarjeta verde pintada en la frente. De manera que es de anticiparse que los guardias nacionales y los policías recurran al uso de perfil racial.

Y no se trata únicamente de eso, sino de serias violaciones a



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Vea Hastings & Torres/Esp, página 16

## Monkeypox Response Must be Science-Based and Combat Misinformation

Jacob Carter

In early May, Massachusetts General Hospital confirmed that it was treating a patient with monkeypox – the first case of the rare virus in the United States in 2022. As of August 1, there are now 5,811 confirmed cases of the virus in the United States, and more than 23,000 cases have been reported across 76 countries. A study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in late July of this year found that 98 percent of those infected between April and June 2022 across 16 countries identified as men who have sex with men.

The monkeypox virus spreads through skin-to-skin contact, bodily fluids, and through respiratory droplets. It can infect anybody, regardless of sexual orientation or activity. And while the virus is primarily affecting gay and bisexual men at the moment, there is significant potential for it to spread to other groups over the coming months.

The situation is dire – the World Health Organization declared a global health emergency on July 23 and several US states, including California, Illinois, and New York have declared states of emergen-

cy. Many public health experts do not believe that the virus can be contained at this point and expect cases to continue to rise, although there is uncertainty to what extent.

On August 2, the White House announced that it had formed a team to lead a nationwide response to monkeypox. President Biden named Robert Fenton, Region 9 administrator of the Federal

tracking and fighting the spread of monkeypox, with state and local partners to ensure they have adequate supplies to test, treat and vaccinate at-risk individuals, with clinicians and providers on available testing, treatment and vaccination options, and with stakeholder communities on building public understanding of the virus and how to address it most effectively."

The administration's response team will certainly have their work cut out for them. The team will need to ensure its strategies are informed by the best available science free from undue political interference, and that the implementation of its strategies is equitable. Here's some information about what has happened so far, including the social dynamics this team will need to consider moving forward.

### Monkeypox Vaccine Fumbles

The Biden administration's response to the monkeypox virus hasn't been well-received by experts or by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, and Transgender (LGBTQ) community. When cases began rising, the administration was criticized by LGBTQ activists

for not moving fast enough to secure the effective Jynneos monkeypox vaccine to slow, and potentially halt, the spread of the virus in the United States.

The *New York Times* reported in July that the US government took a "wait-and-see" approach. For weeks while it was known that monkeypox was spreading, the administration let some 300,000 US-owned doses of ready-to-use Jynneos vaccine sit still in cold storage in Denmark, where the producer of the vaccine, Bavarian Nordic, is located.

The US government only requested 72,000 of these ready-to-use vaccines in the first weeks after the virus was detected. Federal officials said they were reluctant to request all available doses because US cold storage wasn't as cold as that in Denmark and it would have decreased the shelf life of the vaccines if they weren't all distributed. Aside from vaccines ready to be used, the US government also owns more than a million doses of the vaccine, but access to the supply was tied up by bureaucratic red tape as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had to inspect and certify a new facility



Photo: Union of Concerned Scientists

outside of Copenhagen that places the vaccine into vials.

Current supplies are expected to only cover about one-third of the estimated 1.6 million gay and bisexual men in the United States. Many states have opted to give only one dose of the two-dose Jynneos vaccine due to shortages. I have experienced being notified of this myself – DC health notified me that my second Jynneos vaccine appointment was postponed due to shortages of the vaccine.

Further supplies of the Jynneos vaccine are not expected to arrive until October. Some public health experts are concerned that, if cases continue to rise at their current rate, the virus will become permanently entrenched in the country.

See Carter on page 18

## Pine Ridge Banned Christian Missionaries

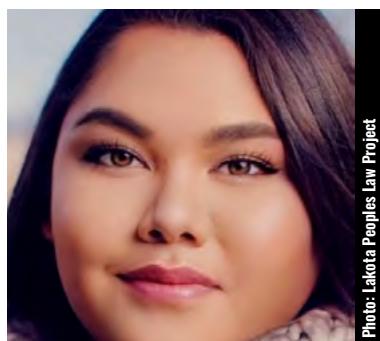


Photo: Lakota Peoples Law Project

DeCora Hawk

It's been quite a week here at Pine Ridge. On July 26, our Tribal Council temporarily suspended Christian missionary work within the Oglala Nation's boundaries after the distribution of an offensive brochure which labeled Tunkasilta, our Creator, as a "demon idol."

The ordinance was rescinded a few days later, mainly because folks had events — such as weddings and funerals — scheduled. Still, previous law requiring review and registration of religious entities will now be enforced with greater vigor, and my community is once again reckoning with the living history of colonization, particularly by western faith organizations.

As you probably know, our relationship as Native People to the Catholic Church is long and, for the most part, horrific. To this day, Federal Indian Law still cites the Doctrine of Discovery — which originated in the Catholic Church in the 1490s — as a justification for our subjugation. For five centuries, European powers "discovered" and colonized Indigenous lands using the legal argument that, because Christians didn't yet inhabit them, those lands were fair game.

As you probably know, our relationship as Native People to the Catholic Church is long and, for the most part, horrific.

Of course, we all know what happened in the wake of this colonization: forced migrations, broken treaties, the Indian boarding school

See Hawk on page 16

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## Fifty-Seven Years After its Enactment, the Voting Rights Act is in Peril



Photo: ACLU

**Sophia Lin Lakin**

Last week marked 57 years since the signing of the Voting Rights Act (VRA), landmark legislation that ensured the right to vote was protected for all Americans.

In the decades following the Civil War, states in the South enact-

ed discriminatory measures, such as poll taxes and literacy tests, in order to stop Black Americans from voting. Not to be deterred, voting rights activists protested and mobilized, but were met with brutal violence and intimidation. These efforts culminated in 1965, as voting rights activists seeking to march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama were severely beaten and bloodied. The nation watched, shocked and outraged, which pushed President Lyndon B. Johnson to call on Congress to pass comprehensive legislation to protect the right to vote. The result was the crown jewel of the civil rights movement: the VRA.

The VRA was designed to enforce voting rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution, and to secure the right to vote for racial minorities throughout the

country, especially for Black voters in the South. For decades since its signing, the VRA has stood as a bulwark against racially discriminatory voting practices and paved the way for 45 years of progress on voting rights. But over the last decade, instead of protecting the VRA and expanding access to the ballot box, the Supreme Court and courts across the country have dismantled and gutted crucial parts of the VRA.

First, in the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* case, the Supreme Court eviscerated Section 5, one of the VRA's most effective guardrails. Prior to this decision, states and counties with the worst histories and recent records of racial discrimination in voting had to obtain federal "preclearance" — that is, approval from the Department of Justice or a federal court — before

implementing any changes to voting laws and practices, to ensure they did not curtail the right to vote for minority voters. *Shelby County* struck down the formula used to identify which states and localities were required to do so, gutting the heart of the VRA and opening the floodgates to wave after wave of anti-voting legislation.

Then last year, the Supreme Court dealt another blow to the critical protections provided in the VRA. In *Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee*, the court erected significant new barriers to lawsuits brought under Section 2 of the act, the nationwide prohibition on racially discriminatory voting laws. The new standard is completely at odds with the VRA's purpose — to eradicate racial discrimination in voting, no matter how blunt or subtle.



We still have so much work ahead of us to ensure every eligible American has the right to vote.

The attacks on the VRA have not abated. Just last month, the Supreme Court reinstated Louisiana's congressional map, despite a federal court ruling that the map was racially discriminatory and likely violated the VRA. This is a repeat of what occurred earlier this year in Alabama. There, the Supreme Court allowed yet another <https://www.aclu.org/news/voting-rights/alabamas-new-electoral-lines-are-ra>

See **Lakin** on page 20

## Anti-Abortion Extremism Is Scaring Voters. It Should.

**Mitchell Zimmerman**

Our country may be divided on the issue of abortion. But when it comes down to it, most Americans believe

that it's a pregnant person's right to decide for themselves whether to continue a pregnancy.

That's not only a blue-state attitude — it's just as true in conservative states like Kansas.

By a margin of nearly 20 percentage points in an election with record turnout, Kansas voters just overwhelmingly rejected Republican efforts to cancel the state's constitutional right to personal

bodily autonomy, even after the U.S. Supreme Court deleted that right at the federal level.

Abortion rights loom front and center as a major political issue this fall. But anti-abortion forces are trying to deflect responsibility for the reversal of *Roe v. Wade* by claiming that Democrats are using "scare tactics" about abortion bans.

Scare tactics?

Yes, voters are scared — and they should be. Voters are scared about the horrific, real-world human consequences we've seen with our own eyes since states started banning abortion.



Many of the political issues being debated in this election season may seem abstract to voters. But nothing can be less abstract than control over one's own body. This fall's election will be as personal as it gets.

Forcing teenagers to drop out of college so they can care for a baby they don't wish to have is scary. Forcing married women to bear a second child when they don't have the resources to raise the child they already have is scary. Forcing children who are rape or incest victims to continue a pregnancy is scary.

Forcing women to continue a pregnancy they very much wanted after they learn that their fetus has

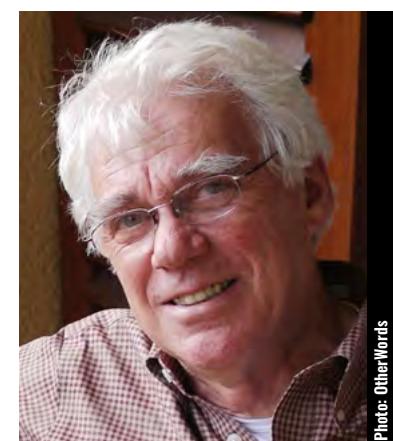


Photo: OtherWords

a heartbeat — but a fatal brain ailment — is scary.

Endangering the lives of women by forcing doctors to delay treatment until serious pregnancy complications worsen and they're approaching death is scary. Making doctors fear that they will be prosecuted for providing appropriate medical care during a miscarriage is scary.

Thanks to tireless organizers and plain old common sense, Kansas voters staved off these scary prospects for now. But no matter where you live, voters have our work cut out for us. Many states are rushing bans through, and Republican politicians have openly floated passing a federal abortion ban for the whole country if they take control of Congress.

Voters of both parties need to think hard about the possibility that they or someone they love might need medical care that will be seriously compromised if this happens.

See **Zimmerman** on page 21

**8/10 COLORADO VOTERS say it's more important than ever for insurance to cover mental health care.**

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## Experts Say Now is Not the Time to Drop Our Guard on Covid

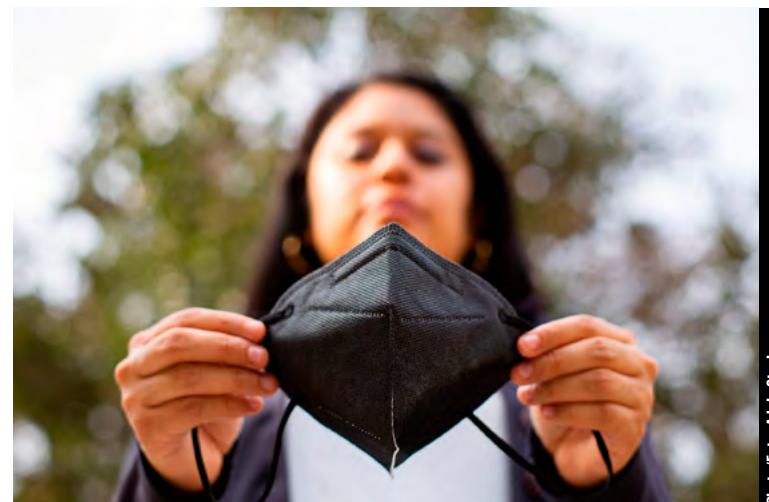
By Jenny Manrique

**H**ealth experts say that even as more people are vaccinated and boosted, the corona virus is here to stay. And they warn that future variants will likely keep medical practitioners and researchers on their toes as they work to keep both infections and the severity of infections down.

Their message to the public is, don't let your guard down.

"COVID is going to be with us for the foreseeable future," said Dr. William Schaffner, professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. "We're struggling to figure out how we can keep this virus down and minimize its damage, and still at the same time enjoy a reasonably normal life."

Schaffner was among a panel of speakers for a [July 29 media briefing](#) organized by Ethnic Media Services on the latest Covid variant, and the mounting questions around the pandemic and vaccine efficacy.



Health experts say that even as more people are vaccinated and boosted, the corona virus is here to stay. / Los expertos en salud afirman que, aunque más personas se vacunen con refuerzos, el coronavirus ha llegado para quedarse.

COVID 19 cases, deaths, and hospitalizations are once again on the rise in the US. More than two-thirds of Americans have tested positive for COVID, including President Joe Biden, who again tested positive for the second time in a case of Covid rebound. The BA5 subvariant of Omicron is now responsible for more than 78% of infections in the country, according to

data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

But public health experts say the figures could represent a severe undercount, with many people failing to report positive results from at-home tests.

Shaffner stressed that updated vaccines will continue to be an essential part of the broader strategy. "We need more durable, long-term

protection against a broader array of different variants, the ones we know and the ones we don't know yet," he said. "We would like vaccines that abort and prevent the actual infection at the surface of the mucous membranes, not just vaccines that protect against serious disease."

Nasal vaccines, which can be administered via a spray or dropper, are gaining more attention among clinical researchers and could offer another route to increasing vaccination rates. The NovaVax vaccine, recently authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was licensed for an initial two-dose series, but not yet for a booster.

But Dr. Ben Neuman, professor of biology and chief virologist of the Global Health Research Complex at Texas A&M University, has his doubts.

"NovaVax vaccine is fine, but it's about two years too late," he said, adding the drug does not replicate the virus as effectively as other vaccines. "NovaVax has this very delicate spike protein that is transport-

"We now have too many deaths, like 430 a day. We have to manage (the virus) and we have the tools to do that right now."

Dr. Peter Chin-Hong,  
University of California,  
San Francisco

ed and protected very carefully; a little bit survives to go into your body... With the mRNA vaccine, you get perfect pristine spikes exactly the way nature intended."

Neuman noted that to date there have been 15 mutations of the Omicron variant, including the newer BA.5 and BA2.75 subvariants, for which the current vaccines appear less effective.

"We are still vaccinating against the 2019 virus and it is now late 2022," he said. "We have a problem."

See [Covid](#) on page 19

## Los Expertos Afirman que no es el Momento de Bajar la Guardia con Respecto a Covid

Por Jenny Manrique

**L**os expertos en salud afirman que, aunque más personas se vacunen con refuerzos, el coronavirus ha llegado para quedarse. Y advierten que las futuras variantes probablemente mantendrán en vilo a los médicos e investigadores que trabajan para mantener a raya tanto las infecciones como su gravedad.

Su mensaje al público es que no hay que bajar la guardia.

"El COVID va a estar con nosotros en el futuro inmediato", dijo el Dr. William Schaffner, profesor de medicina en la División de Enfermedades Infecciosas de la Facultad de Medicina de la Universidad de Vanderbilt. "Nos esforzamos por averiguar cómo podemos mantener este virus a raya y minimizar sus daños, y seguir disfrutando al mismo tiempo de una vida razonablemente normal".

Schaffner fue uno de los ponentes de [una rueda de prensa](#) organi-

zada por Ethnic Media Services el 29 de Julio, sobre la última variante de Covid, y los crecientes interrogantes en torno a la pandemia y la eficacia de la vacuna.

**“Ahora tenemos demasiadas muertes, como 430 al día. Tenemos que controlar (el virus) y tenemos las herramientas para hacerlo ahora mismo.”**

Dr. Peter Chin-Hong,  
Universidad de  
California, San Francisco

Los casos, las muertes y las hospitalizaciones por COVID 19 vuelven a aumentar en los Estados Unidos. Más de dos tercios de los estadounidenses han dado positivo en la prueba de COVID, incluyendo el presidente Joe Biden, por

segunda vez en un caso de rebote de Covid. La subvariante BA5 de Omicron es ahora responsable de más del 78% de las infecciones en el país, según datos de los Centros para el Control y la Prevención de Enfermedades (CDC).

Pero los expertos en salud pública afirman que las cifras podrían representar un grave subregistro, ya que muchas personas no informan de los resultados positivos de las pruebas caseras.

Shaffner subrayó que las vacunas seguirán siendo una parte esencial de la estrategia más amplia. "Necesitamos una protección más duradera y a largo plazo contra un conjunto más amplio de variantes diferentes, las que conocemos y las que aún no conocemos", dijo. "Queremos vacunas que prevengan la infección real en la superficie de las mucosas, no sólo vacunas que protejan contra la enfermedad grave".

Las vacunas nasales, que pueden administrarse a través de

un aerosol o un gotero, están ganando más atención entre los investigadores clínicos y podrían ofrecer otra vía para aumentar las tasas de vacunación. La vacuna NovaVax, autorizada recientemente por la Administración de Alimentos y Medicamentos (FDA), fue autorizada para una serie inicial de dos dosis, pero aún no para un refuerzo.

Pero el Dr. Ben Neuman, profesor de biología y virólogo jefe del Complejo de Investigación de Salud Global de la Universidad de Texas A&M, tiene sus dudas.

"La vacuna NovaVax está bien, pero llega unos dos años tarde", dijo, y añadió que el medicamento no replica el virus con tanta eficacia como otras vacunas. "NovaVax tiene la proteína de espiga muy delicada que se transporta y se protege con mucho cuidado; solo un poco sobrevive para entrar en el cuerpo... Con la vacuna de ARNm, se obtienen espigas perfectas y prístinas, exactamente de

la forma en que la naturaleza las concibió".

Neuman señaló que hasta la fecha se han producido 15 mutaciones de la variante Omicron, incluidas las subvariantes más recientes BA.5 y BA2.75, para las que las vacunas actuales parecen ser menos eficaces.

"Seguimos vacunando contra el virus de 2019 y ya estamos a finales de 2022", dijo. "Tenemos un problema".

Casi un tercio de los estadounidenses siguen sin vacunarse, mientras que la mayoría de las muertes relacionadas con la COVID se están produciendo entre personas de 65 años o más, incluidas las que han sido vacunadas.

Los oradores destacaron que las mascarillas siguen desempeñando un papel fundamental para frenar la propagación del virus, especialmente en el caso de las personas que corren un alto

Vea [Covid/Esp](#), página 19

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## Seven Years After Spill Turns River Yellow, Navajo Farmers Still Seek Justice

by Michael Benanav

**O**n August 7, 2015, crews from the Navajo Nation Irrigation Office in Shiprock rushed to close the main gates of two irrigation canals that carry water from the San Juan River toward the fields of hundreds of Navajo farmers. It was peak growing season in the arid northwestern corner of New Mexico. Some 12,000 acres of crops had been planted. And a disaster was threatening all of them.

Two days earlier, 115 miles upstream in Colorado, the Environ-

mental Protection Agency accidentally released some 3 million gallons of acid mine water from the Gold King Mine, during the initial stages of a cleanup operation. Spilling from Cement Creek into the Animas River and then the San Juan, the waterways — poisoned with nearly 540 tons of arsenic, lead, cadmium and other toxic metals — turned a sickly yellow.

"It was coming like a big flow of mustard," recalled Shawn Mike, one of 222 Diné farmers and ranchers [suing the EPA](#) for their losses. The plume ultimately flowed more



Photo/Foto: Michael Benanav/Searchlight New Mexico

Shawn Mike in his cornfield along the Fruitland irrigation ditch on the Navajo Nation. "Everyone puts their heart and soul into what they grow," he said. "I'm glad our elders who taught us how to farm didn't see the spill." / Shawn Mike en su campo de maíz junto a la acequia de Fruitland, en la Nación Navajo. "Todos ponen su corazón y su alma en lo que cultivan", dijo. "Me alegro de que nuestros mayores, que nos enseñaron a cultivar, no vieran el vertido".

than 340 miles, coursing through tribal lands and three states to Lake Powell in southern Utah.

Seven years later, despite public promises to promote environmental justice for Indigenous communities and its admission of responsibility for the disaster, the EPA still refuses to compensate the farmers. Though the agency has settled lawsuits with state and tribal governments for some \$331 million, the Department of Justice, which represents the EPA in court, asserts that individual Navajos — who together are asking for \$49 million — have no right to sue.

The impact of the spill hit the irrigators like a one-two punch. First, their crops died from a lack of water when the canals were closed. Then, once the farmers were growing again, they found their produce impossible to sell.

Mike pulls water from the Fruitland ditch, west of Farmington, on land first cultivated by his grandfather. When his fields dried up, he lost over 10,000 corn plants, 1,000 squash plants and several acres of alfalfa.

"Corn is local farmers' bread-and-butter," he said. "It's used in a variety of ways, for eating and traditional uses, so it has a high value. It was a catastrophe." As the reality of their losses, both financial and cultural, began to sink in, "you could see tears in people's eyes."

Among those weeping was Bertha Etsitty, a 71-year-old farmer who with her husband, Allen, works about 20 acres near Shiprock. Their fields are fed by the Hogback ditch, and their views are framed by the

silhouettes of distant peaks — Ute Mountain in Colorado, the Carrizos in Arizona, and Shiprock itself. "Our corn was about 4 feet tall when they closed the gates," she said. "I knew we were going to lose it all. We even hauled water in and used cups to pour it for the plants. We saved a little of it, but..." she trailed off, leaving the tragic conclusion unspoken.

"Our income is what we grow. We need it to pay our bills and buy school clothes for our grandchildren. We didn't know how we were going to survive on just our Social Security checks," she said.

Thanks to the closing of the irrigation ditches, "no contamination reached the fields," said Steve Austin, senior hydrologist with the Navajo Nation EPA. Within about three weeks the level of contaminants in the San Juan had diminished and the water was declared safe to use. Although the Fruitland canal reopened before the end of August, "many farmers didn't trust it and wouldn't use it," Austin said. Irrigators on the Hogback canal voted to keep that ditch closed until the following spring.

When the 2016 harvest came in, farmers had trouble unloading it.

"People were afraid that the water was still contaminated," said Allen Etsitty, "the way grease stays in the bottom of a pan."

"We would try to sell our corn at flea markets and fairs, like in Gallup or Window Rock or Kayenta," Bertha Etsitty elaborated. "But we had to haul most of it, and our melons, back home. A lot of people know I sell corn pollen [about two table-

spoons of which go for \$50], and I lost all of those customers. Our bills piled up. We fell behind on our truck payments, tractor payments, and one of our tractors, 'Old Red,' is now broken because we couldn't afford to keep it maintained."



"We feel neglected, not heard, disrespected.

We wish they would remember that we have a beating heart, also, and a lot of what it beats on is our farms, no matter how small."

Shawn Mike

## Siete Años Después del Vertido, los Agricultores Siguen Buscando Justicia



Foto/Photo: Michael Benanav/Searchlight New Mexico

Bertha y Allen Etsitty en su granja cerca de Shiprock, con las montañas Carrizo al fondo. Antes de ser plantada, esta era la zona de pastoreo de su abuela. / Bertha and Allen Etsitty on their farm near Shiprock, with the Carrizo Mountains in the background. Before it was planted, this was her grandmother's grazing area.

por Michael Benanav

**E**l 7 de agosto de 2015, las cuadrillas de la Oficina de Riego de la Nación Navajo en Shiprock se apresuraron a cerrar las compuertas principales de dos canales de riego que llevan el agua del río San Juan hacia los campos de cientos de agricultores navajos. Era la temporada alta de cultivo en el árido extremo noroeste de Nuevo México. Se habían plantado unos 12.000 acres de cultivos. Y un desastre amenazaba a todos ellos.

Dos días antes, 115 millas río arriba, en Colorado, la Agencia de Protección del Medio Ambiente liberó accidentalmente unos 3 millones de galones de agua ácida de la mina Gold King, durante las etapas iniciales de una operación de limpieza. Al verterse desde Cement Creek en el río Animas y luego en el San Juan, los cursos de agua -envenenados con casi 540 toneladas de arsénico, plomo, cadmio y otros metales tóxicos- adquirieron un color amarillo enfermizo.

"Llegaba como un gran flujo de mostaza", recuerda Shawn Mike, uno de los 222 agricultores y ganaderos diné que han demandado a la EPA por sus pérdidas. Al final, la pluma fluyó más de 340 millas, atravesando tierras tribales y tres estados hasta llegar al lago Powell, en el sur de Utah.

Siete años después, a pesar de las promesas públicas de promover la justicia medioambiental para las comunidades indígenas y de admitir su responsabilidad en el desastre, la EPA sigue negándose

a indemnizar a los agricultores. Aunque la agencia ha llegado a un acuerdo con los gobiernos estatales y tribales por unos 331 millones de dólares, el Departamento de Justicia, que representa a la EPA en los tribunales, afirma que los navajos a título individual -que en conjunto piden 49 millones de dólares- no tienen derecho a demandar.

El impacto del vertido afectó a los regantes como un golpe único. Primero, sus cultivos murieron por falta de agua cuando se cerraron los canales. Luego, una vez que los agricultores volvieron a cultivar, se encontraron con que sus productos eran imposibles de vender.

Mike extrae agua de la acequia de Fruitland, al oeste de Farmington, en las tierras que cultivó por

**“**  
"Nos sentimos desatendidos, no escuchados, no respetados. Nos gustaría que recordaran que también tenemos un corazón que late, y que gran parte de lo que late son nuestras explotaciones, por pequeñas que sean".

Shawn Mike

primera vez su abuelo. Cuando sus campos se secaron, perdió más de 10.000 plantas de maíz, 1.000 de calabaza y varias hectáreas de alfalfa.

pezaba a calar, "se podían ver lágrimas en los ojos de la gente".

Entre los que lloraban estaba Bertha Etsitty, una agricultora de 71 años que con su marido, Allen, trabaja unas 20 hectáreas cerca de Shiprock. Sus campos se alimentan de la acequia de Hogback, y sus vistas están emarcadas por las siluetas de picos lejanos: la montaña Ute en Colorado, los Carrizos en Arizona y el propio Shiprock. "Nuestro maíz tenía un metro y medio de altura cuando cerraron las compuertas", dijo. "Sabía que íbamos a perderlo todo. Incluso acarreamos agua y usamos vasos para verterla para las plantas. Salvamos un poco, pero...", se interrumpió, dejando la trágica conclusión sin decir.

"Nuestros ingresos son los que cultivamos. Lo necesitamos para pagar las facturas y comprar la ropa del colegio para nuestros niños. No sabíamos cómo íbamos a sobrevivir sólo con nuestros cheques de la Seguridad Social", dijo.

Gracias al cierre de las acequias, "la contaminación no llegó a los campos", dijo Steve Austin, hidrólogo principal de la EPA de la Nación Navajo. En unas tres sem-

anas, el nivel de contaminantes en el San Juan había disminuido y el agua fue declarada segura para su uso. Aunque el canal de Fruitland se reabrió antes de finales de agosto, "muchos agricultores no confiaban en él y no lo utilizaban", dijo Austin. Los regantes del canal de Hogback votaron por mantener esa acequia cerrada hasta la primavera siguiente.

Cuando llegó la cosecha de 2016, los agricultores tuvieron problemas para descargarla.

"La gente tenía miedo de que el agua siguiera contaminada", dijo Allen Etsitty, "de la misma manera que la grasa se queda en el fondo de una sartén".

"Intentábamos vender nuestro maíz en mercadillos y ferias, como en Gallup, Window Rock o Kayenta", explicó Bertha Etsitty. "Pero teníamos que transportar la mayor parte, y nuestros melones, de vuelta a casa. Mucha gente sabe que vendo polen de maíz [unas dos cucharadas de este producto cuestan 50 dólares], y perdí todos esos clientes. Las facturas se acumularon. Nos retrasamos en los pagos de los camiones, de los

Vea Justicia, página 23

Consumers for Quality Care

8/10

DE LOS VOTANTES DE COLORADO

dicen que es más importante que nunca que los seguros cubran la atención de la salud mental.



Más información >

## Summer Camp Prepares Students for Careers in Sports Journalism

### COLORADO

By Glavine Day

**L**aci González hates writing, but she loves sports. A soon-to-be ninth-grader at Arvada High School, Gonzalez attended the Write on Sports summer camp at Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU). The camp is designed, in part, to introduce middle-schoolers such as Lacey to the breadth of careers within the sports industry.

Even though almost 8 million students play high school sports in the U.S., less than half of 1% of them will have the opportunity to

“

“So as educators, it's our responsibility to teach this new generation of potential journalists the basic principles of what a journalist can be.”

Alfredo Sánchez,  
Professor, Metropolitan  
State University of Denver



Photo/Foto: Alyson McClaran for MSU RED

Laci González interviews volleyball player Ember Canty at the MSU Denver Athletic Complex during the Write on Sports camp. / Laci González entrevista a la jugadora de voleibol Ember Canty en el MSU Denver Athletic Complex durante el campamento de Write on Sports.

play professionally. But that's not the only way to make a career in sports. By 2030, sports-media jobs are projected to grow by 22%, and the global sports market is anticipated to reach \$826 billion.

“You don't have to be the athlete on the field to participate in sports,” said Wendy Menefee, vice president and board director for Write on Sports. “There's a myriad of other

kinds of occupations, whether it's coaching, management or media and journalism. Camp participants get to see that there are different ways that they can follow their passion, which is sports.”

During the most recent Write on Sports camp, students met Denver sports-media members such as Ryan O'Halloran from the Denver Post, worked on podcasts with

MSU Denver affiliate faculty member Ronan O'Shea, shot interviews with MSU Denver athletes and former Bronco Ryan Harris and watched from the press box as the Colorado Rockies won a game at Coors Field.

“(O'Halloran) inspired me because I am a person who hates

See **Students** on page 21

## El Programa Prepara a los Estudiantes para Carreras en el Periodismo Deportivo

### COLORADO

Por Glavine Day

**L**aci González odia escribir, pero le encantan los deportes. González, que pronto estará en el noveno grado de la Arvada High School, asistió al campamento de verano Write on Sports de la Metropolitan State University of Denver. El campamento está diseñado, en parte, para introducir a los estudiantes de secundaria como Lacey en la amplitud de las carreras dentro de la industria del deporte.

Aunque casi 8 millones de estudiantes practican deportes en la escuela secundaria en Estados Unidos, menos de la mitad del 1% de ellos tendrá la oportunidad de jugar profesionalmente. Pero esa no es la única forma de hacer carrera en el deporte. Para 2030, se prevé que los puestos de trabajo en los medios de comunicación deportivos crezcan un 22%, y que el mercado deportivo mundial alcance los 826.000 millones de dólares.

“No es necesario ser un atleta en el campo para participar en



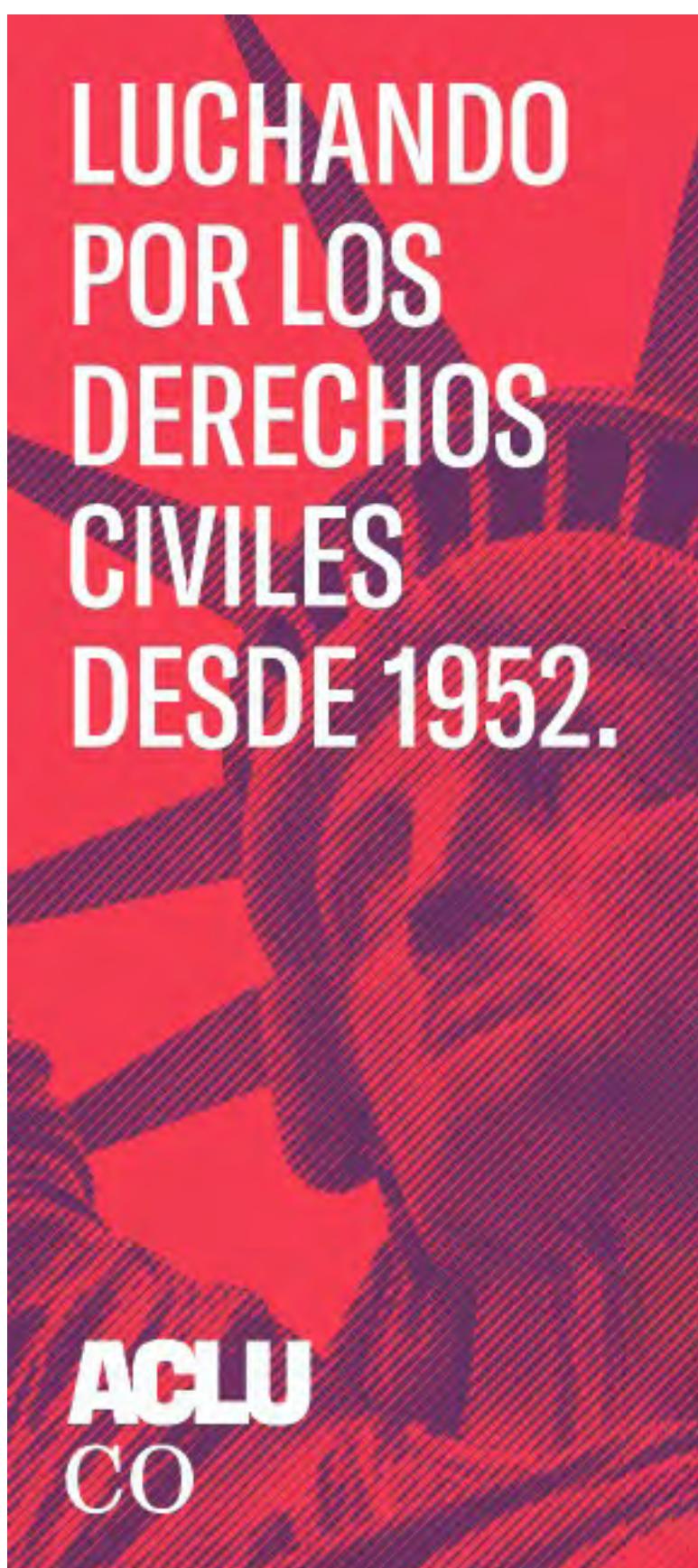
De izquierda a derecha, Wendy Menefee, miembro de la junta directiva de “Write on Sports”, los estudiantes Bella Campbell, Renee Hernández, Maxie Alexander y la profesora de Write on Sports Traci Hill escuchan y toman notas durante su entrevista con el exjugador de los Broncos Ryan Harris en el campamento de Write on Sports en el campus de Auraria. / From left to right, Write on Sports board member Wendy Menefee, students Bella Campbell, Renee Hernández, Maxie Alexander and Write on Sports teacher Traci Hill listen and take notes during their interview with former Broncos player Ryan Harris at the Write on Sports camp at Auraria Campus.

los deportes”, dice Wendy Menefee, vicepresidenta y directora de la junta directiva de Write on Sports. “Hay un sinfín de otros tipos de ocupaciones, ya sea como entrenador, gestor o en los medios de comunicación y el periodismo. Los participantes del campamento ven que hay diferentes maneras de seguir su pasión, que es el deporte”.

Durante el último campamento Write on Sports, los estudiantes conocieron a miembros de los

medios de comunicación deportivos de Denver, como Ryan O'Halloran del Denver Post, trabajaron en podcasts con Ronan O'Shea, miembro de la facultad afiliada a MSU Denver, grabaron entrevistas con atletas de MSU Denver y con el ex Bronco Ryan Harris y vieron desde el palco de prensa cómo los Colorado Rockies ganaban un partido en Coors Field.

Vea **Estudiantes**, página 18



Foto/Foto: Alyson McClaran for MSU RED

## Why Your Child's School Really Wants You to Apply for Free Lunch



Photo/Foto: Adobe Stock

Even if your children don't eat school lunch, there might be other benefits to qualifying for free or reduced-price meals. / Aunque tus hijos no consuman la comida de la escuela, calificar para comidas gratis o a precio reducido podría tener otros beneficios.

### COLORADO

By Yesenia Robles

**A**dd one more thing to your to-do list before school starts: an application for free and reduced-price lunch.

This year, school district leaders are renewing the push reminding parents to fill out this form. For the past two years, students could get school meals for free whether their parents filled out the form or not — but that won't be the case this fall.

Beth Wallace, the executive director for food and nutrition services for Jeffco Public Schools, said her district served about 30% more meals than before the pandemic.

At the same time, as the eligibility forms weren't required, districts saw a drop in the population identified as eligible for subsidized lunches. In Jeffco, eligibility dropped 10% to about 28% of the student population from the 2019-20 school year. Across the country, districts reported similar patterns.

District leaders and child advocates wanted the federal govern-

ment to allow schools to continue offering free lunches to all students, but the government has reinstated the requirement to prove a student's eligibility.

Colorado voters will consider a ballot measure in November to offer free school meals for all students, but that won't change anything for this coming school year. This fall, students must have a new form on file with their school district to determine if they're eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

"It's going to be a challenge," Wallace said. "Now we have second graders who have never gone into this process."

With the help of some district directors of school meal programs, Chalkbeat got answers to some basic questions about how it all works.

### Who has to fill out the form and when does it need to be filled out?

Any parent who feels they need help covering the cost of school meals should fill out the form. The form asks for information about your income and household size that will be used to figure out if you qualify. A family of four would qualify for free lunch if the household income was \$36,075 or less. The form also asks for the last four digits of a Social Security number, but that is not required to receive assistance.

There isn't a strict deadline for when to fill it out. Really, you could fill it out anytime during the school year, but the forms aren't retroactive. If you wait until October to fill it out, even if you are deemed eli-

gible for free lunch, you would still be charged for meals that your children take from the start of the school year, until whenever the school district approves your form.

And just because you've filled out a form in the past, that doesn't exempt you. The forms are never valid past June 30, so even if you fill one out in May, for example, it expires at the end of June. After July 1, every family needs to fill out the form again.

If a family experiences a change in the middle of the school year — like a new baby, or a loss of income — they can apply to change their status that year. Also, if you change school districts in the middle of the school year, you'll need to fill out a

See **Lunch** on page 24

## OneCO's 2022 LGBTQ+ Equality Legislative Scorecard



How do your state legislators score when it comes to guaranteeing a fair and just state for LGBTQ+ Coloradans and their families?



## State News / Noticias del Estado

## Colorado Cash Back Tax Refunds Are in the Mail

## COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis, Lieutenant Governor Dianne Primavera, Treasurer Young, Department of Revenue Executive Director Mark Ferrandino, and state legislators announced that Colorado Cash Back tax rebate checks of \$750 for individuals and \$1,500 for joint filers are being mailed out and urged Coloradans to check their mail throughout the month of August for their tax rebates. Governor Polis, in partnership with the legisla-

**“We are fighting to help save people money because Coloradans need real relief, and we are doing everything in our power to deliver it now.”**

Governor Jared Polis

ture, took bold action by passing legislation that will provide big and immediate relief to Colora-

dans and get the tax rebates out sooner than they otherwise would have gone out.

“We are fighting to help save people money because Coloradans need real relief, and we are doing everything in our power to deliver it now, when people need it - including through this rebate of \$750 for individuals and \$1,500 for joint filers. The government should not hold on to your money any longer than it has to. We are carrying out plans to help save people money and will continue to prioritize ways to lessen the burden on hardworking families and small businesses,” said Gov. Polis.

Colorado’s strong economic performance, closing special interest tax loopholes, and acceleration of the refund shows that Gov. Polis, in partnership with the legislature and Treasurer Young are getting people back their rebates faster than they would have and providing immediate economic relief.

Under Governor Polis’s lead-



Photo/Foto: Adobe Stock

Governor Jared Polis announced the Colorado Cash Back tax rebate checks of \$750 for individuals and \$1,500 for joint filers are being mailed out. / El gobernador Jared Polis anunció Colorado Cash Back de \$750 para individuos y \$1,500 para contribuyentes conjuntos e instaron a los residentes de Colorado a que revisen su correo.

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ership in partnership with the legislature, Colorado’s economy has grown stronger, and the Governor has closed special interest loopholes that have increased the size of this rebate by \$34-50 per person, cut taxes for small businesses, and cut property taxes. On top of these immediate rebates, now Coloradans are getting an income tax rate reduction for all income

earned in 2022 and an additional refund next April.

Following the historic 2022 legislative session, Governor Polis announced the [100 ways the Polis Administration is saving Coloradans money](#), including saving Coloradans \$700 million through property tax relief for homeowners, small

See Cash on page 25

## Los Reembolsos de Impuestos de Colorado Están en el Correo

## COLORADO

El gobernador Jared Polis, la vicegobernadora Dianne Primavera, el tesorero Young, el director ejecutivo del Departamento de Ingresos Mark Ferrandino y los legisladores estatales anunciaron que se enviarán por correo cheques de devolución de impuestos de Colorado Cash Back de \$750 para individuos y \$1,500 para contribuyentes conjuntos e instaron a los residentes de Colorado a que revisen su correo durante todo el mes de agosto para ver su reembolso de impuestos. El gobernador Polis, en asociación con la legislatura, tomó medidas audaces pasando una ley que le brindará un alivio grande e inmediato a los habitantes de Colorado y obtener las devoluciones de impuestos antes de lo esperado.

“Estamos luchando para ayudar a ahorrar dinero a las personas porque los habitantes de Colorado necesitan un alivio real, y estamos haciendo todo lo que está a nuestro alcance para brindarlo ahora. cuando las personas lo necesitan, incluso a través de este reembolso de \$750 para individuos y \$1500 para contribuyentes conjuntos. El gobierno no debería retener su dinero más tiempo de lo debido. Estamos llevando a cabo planes para ayudar a ahorrar dinero a las

personas y continuaremos priorizando formas de disminuir la carga de las familias trabajadoras y las pequeñas empresas”, dijo el gobernador Polis.

**“**

“Estamos luchando para ayudar a ahorrar dinero a las personas porque los habitantes de Colorado necesitan un alivio real, y estamos haciendo todo lo que está a nuestro alcance para brindarlo ahora.”

Gobernador Jared Polis

El sólido desempeño económico de Colorado, el cierre de los vacíos tributarios de intereses especiales y la aceleración del reembolso muestran que el gobernador Polis, en colaboración con la legislatura y el tesorero Young, están logrando que se les devuelva sus reembolsos a las personas más rápido de lo esperado y brindando un alivio económico inmediato.

Bajo el liderazgo del gobernador Polis en asociación con la legislatura, la economía de Colorado se ha fortalecido y el gobernador ha cerrado los vacíos tributarios

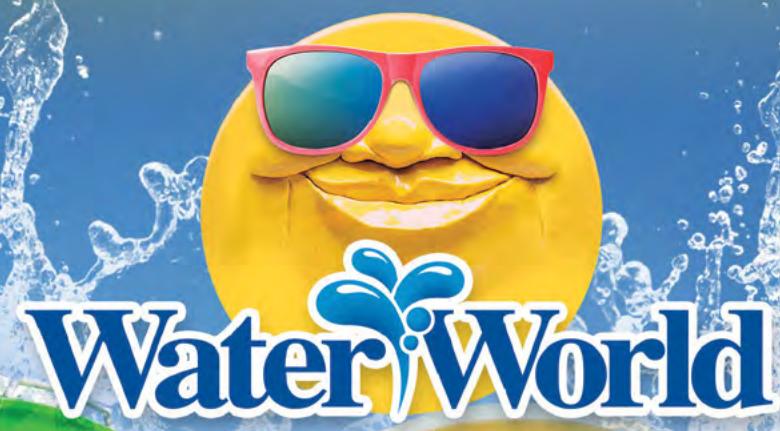
de intereses especiales que han aumentado el tamaño de este reembolso en \$34-50 por persona, reducido los impuestos para las pequeñas empresas y reducido los impuestos a la propiedad. Además de estos reembolsos inmediatos, ahora los habitantes de Colorado obtendrán una reducción de la tasa del impuesto sobre la renta para todos los ingresos obtenidos en 2022 y un reembolso adicional el próximo abril.

Después de la histórica sesión legislativa de 2022, el gobernador Polis anunció las [100 formas en que la Administración de Polis está ahorrando dinero a los coloradenses](#), incluido el ahorro de \$700 millones a los coloradenses a través del alivio de impuestos a la propiedad para propietarios de viviendas y [pequeñas empresas](#), poniendo fin al “impuesto sobre tampones y pañales” al eximir permanentemente estos artículos de impuesto estatal sobre las ventas, [reduciendo el costo](#) de un pase para parques estatales en más de la mitad a través del pase Keep Colorado Wild a partir de 2023, brindando tránsito gratuito y tarifas de autobús en todo Colorado este y el próximo verano.

“Este es un momento crucial para nosotros para devolver los

Vea Cash/Esp, página 20

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## State News / Noticias del Estado

## Anti-Abortion Resolution Passed in Alamogordo is Not Enforceable

**NEW MEXICO****By Susan Dunlap**

The city of Alamogordo recently passed a resolution designating the town of 31,000 as a "sanctuary city for the unborn," despite more public opposition to the resolution than support for it.

Of the public comments, 105 members of the public were opposed while 82 spoke in favor.

Last month the Otero County commissioners passed a resolution declaring the county as a sanctuary for the unborn.

The American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico sent letters

to both the city and the county with warnings that any attempt to prevent abortion in New México is in violation of the state's constitution and that the organization would pursue civil action.

During an anti-abortion rally in Las Cruces last month, one speaker from Mississippi told the crowd that the way to turn New México into an anti-abortion state was to start with the passage of a teenage consent law.

Another step in that direction is for individual counties and cities to pass sanctuary for the unborn resolutions, speakers during the Las Cruces rally said.

Nadia Cabrera-Mazzeo, an attorney with the American Civil Lib-

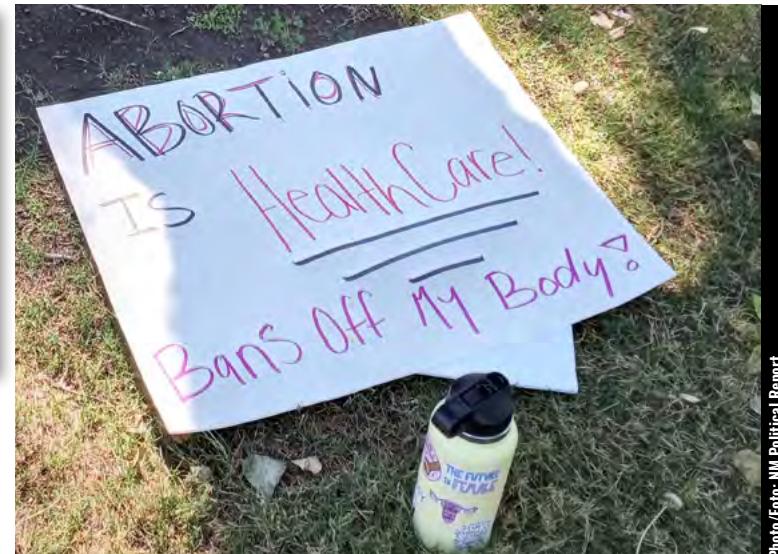
**“**

"These resolutions have no force of law and are a waste of taxpayer resources."

Ellie Rushforth,  
American Civil Liberties  
Union of New México

erties Union (ACLU) of New México, has said that abortion rights groups in New México have long expected anti-abortion activists to target the state once the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade.

See [Resolution](#) on page 21



Photo/Foto: NM Political Report

Abortion in New México is legal, despite a recent city of Alamogordo resolution. /  
El aborto en Nuevo México es legal, a pesar de una reciente resolución de la ciudad de Alamogordo.

## La Resolución Antiaborto Aprobada en Alamogordo No es Ejecutable

**Por Susan Dunlap**

La ciudad de Alamogordo ha aprobado recientemente una resolución que designa a esta localidad de 31,000 habitantes como "ciudad santuario para los no nacidos", a pesar de que el público se opone más a la resolución que la apoya.

De los comentarios del público, 105 personas se opusieron, mientras que 82 se pronunciaron a favor.

El mes pasado, los comisionados del condado de Otero aprobaron una resolución que declaraba al condado como santuario para los no nacidos.

La Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles de Nuevo México envió cartas tanto a la ciudad como al condado con advertencias de que cualquier intento de impedir el aborto en Nuevo México es una violación de la constitución del estado y que la organización emprendería acciones civiles.

Durante una manifestación contra el aborto en Las Cruces el mes pasado, un orador de Mississippi dijo a la multitud que la manera de convertir a Nuevo México en un estado antiabortista era comenzar con la aprobación de una ley de consentimiento para adolescentes.

Otro paso en esa dirección es que los condados y ciudades individuales aprueben resoluciones de santuario para los no nacidos, dijeron los oradores durante la manifestación de Las Cruces.

Nadia Cabrera-Mazzeo, abogada de la Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles (ACLU) de Nuevo México, ha dicho que los grupos por el derecho al aborto en Nuevo México esperaban desde hace tiempo que los activistas antiabortistas tuvieran como objetivo el estado una vez que el Tribunal Supremo de Estados Unidos anulara el caso Roe contra Wade.

**“**

"Estas resoluciones no tienen fuerza de ley y son un desperdicio de los recursos de los contribuyentes".

Ellie Rushforth, Unión Americana de Libertades Civiles de Nuevo México

La ACLU dijo en un comunicado que tales resoluciones no son legalmente vinculantes y no son ejecutables, pero tales resoluciones son tácticas de intimidación.

Un proveedor de abortos en Texas ha dicho que está buscando trasladarse a Nuevo México ahora que el aborto es ilegal en Texas. Una clínica de Mississippi ya se ha trasladado a Las Cruces.

Los municipios cercanos a la frontera con Texas permitirían que las personas embarazadas de Texas viajaren a Nuevo México para abortar legalmente.

El presidente Joe Biden firmó una orden ejecutiva el 3 de agosto para proteger a las personas embarazadas que viajen fuera del estado para abortar.

Ellie Rushforth, una abogada de ACLU-NM, dijo en una declaración a NM Political Report que la organización está "decepcionada de que la Comisión de la Ciudad de Alamogordo eligió ignorar el flujo de oposición a una resolución antiaborto legalmente inaplicable".

Estas resoluciones no sólo están fuera de contacto con los valores de la gran mayoría de los

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## Nuclear Waste Site Could Be Open 'Forever' Despite 2024 Closure Date

### NEW MEXICO

By Patrick Lohman

**S**hipments of nuclear waste to the nation's only deep geological repository for the hazardous material show no signs of slowing in the coming years, despite the current permit calling for the plant to begin closing in 2024.

The future of shipments to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) east of Carlsbad was the subject of debate and scrutiny during a meeting among a state legislative committee last Friday in Clovis. The site stores waste like clothing, rags, soils and tools contaminated with radioactive elements due to nuclear weapons research and assembly in places like Los Alamos National Laboratory and Idaho National Laboratory.

“

“WIPP is the only repository. It was supposed to be the first, but not only.”

Don Hancock,  
Southwest Research and  
Information Center

WIPP leaders are seeking renewal of the 10-year permit that allows the site to continue receiving shipments, plus the state's approval of an expansion of the plant to store more waste. But advocates closely watching the plant for decades say such approval could open the door to an unending stream of radioactive waste transported across the country into New México.

So far this fiscal year, WIPP has received 190 shipments. The material arrives from about 10 sites across the country, shipped in large drums on semi-trailers along state roads and interstates. The site has received more than 13,000 such shipments since 1999. When the waste arrives, and if it meets WIPP's safety standards, the material is “emplaced” for permanent disposal in one of eight large panels a half-mile below ground that are sealed when full.

The 1990 federal law that allowed WIPP to be created and an agreement between the state of New México and United States Department of Energy permits



An aerial view of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, in an undated photo.



A truck carries waste to Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, located east of Carlsbad, New México.

the site to permanently hold up to 175,000 cubic meters of the waste.

But WIPP needs more space to fulfill that mission, said Reinhard Knerr, manager of the DOE Carlsbad Field Office. Six of the eight panels are sealed, despite the facility having only disposed of 40% of the 175,000 cubic meters it can receive.

He said in a presentation that “waste packaging and emplacement inefficiencies” contributed to the bind WIPP finds itself in, likely referring to the premature closure of the first disposal panel in 1999, plus the fallout from a 2014 truck fire and radioactive release that resulted in about one and a half more panels being closed without being filled.

So WIPP is seeking to build two new panels for upcoming shipments, but they'll need approval from the New Mexico Environment Department. Panels are built by mining more space in the WIPP footprint. WIPP sits in a 250-million-year-old salt bed deemed ideal for nuclear waste storage.

“We additionally are doing mining out to the west, so that if we were able to get those panels permitted by NMED we'll be in a position to begin mining those panels at the time such approval might come through,” Knerr told members of the Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee.

But Don Hancock, who runs the nuclear waste program at the Southwest Research and Information Center, said WIPP leaders are seeking to abandon the principles set out when WIPP began. He also fears the DOE is trying to prime the site to become the nation's only recipient of this kind of radioactive waste for years to come.

Hancock testified last Friday that WIPP was meant to be a site that would permanently dispose of waste only until new repositories would be opened up across the country. The legislation creating WIPP says it would store “up to” 175,000 cubic meters, he noted,

ed, and he said lawmakers at the time fully expected that the site could be decommissioned without being filled completely.

But instead, other potential sites across America have been identified but not opened in the intervening years, Hancock said, and an official told him recently at a public meeting that the DOE currently had “no plan” for a waste repository elsewhere.

“WIPP is the only repository. It was supposed to be the first, but not only. Other repositories are necessary for legal reasons, agreements with the state of New México, technical reasons,” Hancock told lawmakers. “But now the Department of Energy is saying they have no plan for any other waste repository.”

Hancock said the state should use its role to push the Department of Energy to open up other sites elsewhere and should push

for specific closure dates when the permit comes up for renewal. He also is asking the state Legislature to push for more transparency from the DOE and more public involvement.

The state is hoping to have a revised permit for WIPP by May of 2023, a state official told the panel.

Hancock said the DOE has no longer even offered a potential closure date for WIPP in any of its recent permit applications. That's another tell, he said, that shows the DOE no longer has any interest in finding an alternative to WIPP.

The New Mexico Environment Department recently asked the feds to provide a potential closure date. The DOE said it could take as long as 2083 for WIPP to dispose of all current and projected waste being produced across the country.

Hancock, speaking to Source New Mexico after the meeting,

said the fact that DOE is being coy about the eventual closure of WIPP should concern generations of New Mexicans.

“When you're supposed to be from 1999 to 2024 and you now say 1999 to 2083, that looks like forever,” he said. “Because if you go 60 years more, why are you not going to say again, ‘Oh, well, we don't have any other place. So guess what?’”

Knerr, pressed about the issue during the committee meeting, said the 2083 date was just an estimate based on waste amounts being generated and projected at “waste generator” sites across the country. But he noted that it's taken about 20 years to get WIPP at 40% of the capacity it's allowed, so it's reasonable to think it'll take about 30 more years to fill the site.

See Nuclear on page 18

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los derechos civiles y daños irreparables a la economía del estado. Pero esas dañinas consecuencias no son de la importancia de republicanos como Abbott, pues prefieren sacrificar a los chivos expiatorios de siempre, como los inmigrantes, en función de un avance político en tiempo de elecciones.

Cómo olvidar los efectos de dos leyes como la SB 1070 de Arizona y la HB 56 de Alabama. America's Voice estuvo presente en ambos estados para reportar de primera

mano el efecto de estas leyes sobre la población hispana. No solo sembraron terror en la comunidad inmigrante sin documentos, sino en los latinos en general, ciudadanos que temían ser detenidos en cualquier momento solamente por el color de su piel, o en otros casos por hablar inglés con acento. Y no hablemos de los daños que ambas medidas tuvieron en las economías de estos estados.

En Alabama, por ejemplo, muchas cosechas se perdieron porque los indocumentados que

pizcaban los campos se fueron por miedo a ser detenidos. Los negocios locales dejaron de recibir a los clientes que los abarrotaban y el propio estado dejó de percibir impuestos sobre venta, pues no había consumidores.

Es decir, políticos como Abbott explotan el tema de la inmigración con fines políticos sin pensar o, peor aún, sabiendo el impacto que estas medidas puedan tener en hispanos que son votantes y que quizás votaron por él; sin pensar en los daños que puedan infligir a su

propia economía o a la imagen de su estado.

Tan no les importa, que incluso recurren a otras estrategias aún más siniestras, como si el daño autoinfligido no fuera suficiente. Por ejemplo, los republicanos han invitado al primer ministro de Hungría, Viktor Orban, a participar en la Conferencia de Acción Política Conservadora en Dallas en la semana pasada, a sabiendas de la carga neonazi de las ideas del político europeo. Orban dijo el mes pasado que "hay países donde se mezclan pueblos no europeos con los europeos, mientras que en Europa Central solo quedan los europeos. No somos de razas mixtas y tampoco queremos serlo".

¿Qué significado tiene traer a un personaje tan xenófobo y tan racista a Estados Unidos en el preciso momento en que se libra una batalla épica por erradicar el sentimiento antiinmigrante de este país? Obviamente es una provocación cínica y peligrosa a la vez de incalculables consecuencias, pero que a los republicanos simplemente les tiene sin cuidado.

De hecho, tampoco les importa que su retórica racista y sus reclamos de una "invasión" tengan consecuencias letales como la masacre de El Paso, Texas, 3 de agosto cumple su tercer aniversario, y en la que el supremacista blanco Patrick Crusius acribilló a 23 personas en una tienda de Walmart, motivado por el discurso de odio, intolerancia y fanatismo que se intensificó contra las minorías, especialmente la latina, desde la presidencia de Donald Trump.

En fin, en el caso de la orden ejecutiva de Abbott, demócratas de Texas y activistas han denunciado el peligro de la iniciativa; y en

el caso de la Operación Lone Star, el diario *The Texas Tribune* y *Pro Publica* reportaron que, de acuerdo con récords estatales, el Departamento de Justicia estaría investigando posibles violaciones de derechos civiles.

La SB 1070 fue posteriormente declarada anticonstitucional por la Corte Suprema en 2012, y la HB 56 se fue bloqueando mediante demandas judiciales, hasta que un acuerdo de 2013 entre el estado, el Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) y grupos de derechos civiles que habían demandado argumentando la inconstitucionalidad de la ley, Alabama bloqueó permanentemente las cláusulas más onerosas de la misma.

Pero su huella tan nefasta como tan perjudicial quedó para siempre, como una especie de ensayo para los tiempos por venir que nos alcanzaron en este siglo, irremediablemente.

Así, el extremismo republicano se ha rerudecido y este partido ha seguido sumando gubernaturas y asambleas estatales que son terreno fértil para este tipo de medidas, como vemos en Texas. Peor aún, se aproximan las elecciones de medio tiempo donde existe el potencial de que los republicanos retomen el control de una o ambas cámaras del Congreso, y es de anticiparse que impulsen una agenda migratoria tan extremista como las figuras que controlan al Partido Republicano.

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

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## Hawk

era, and the continued taking of our children by state agencies. And recently, while Pine Ridge was confronting yet another manifestation of the colonial mindset, Pope Francis took a trip to Canada to apologize for the Church's role in the boarding school era — later even acknowledging it as genocide. I, for one, am happy to see progress; but I'll be happier when he rescinds the Doctrine of Discovery.

Obviously, we still have a long way to go and many truths to tell before we, as Native peoples, can heal from the generational trauma inflicted by centuries of colonization. It's going to have to be one step at a time. In the meantime, I'm proud of my friends — the activists who brought their concerns to the attention of our Tribal Council at

Pine Ridge. I actually helped to establish the Oglala Lakota chapter of the International Indigenous Youth Council, which spearheaded that organizing.

I'm hopeful that we can move forward with better understanding. Churches will now have to register with the Oglala Sioux Tribe, and existing religious establishments will have until Oct. 24 to clear their activities with the Tribal Council. It's a start.

*Wopila tanka* — thank you for your understanding and solidarity.

*DeCorra Hawk is a Field Organizer with The Lakota People's Law Project.*

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## Hastings &amp; Torres

of a democratic government he attacks every other day, in order to position itself before potential voters, scarcely months before the next election.

Basically, in addition to the fact that these measures usurp the federal role of approving and enforcing immigration laws, and are purely political games to maintain the support of voters who make up their base, these initiatives are also the perfect recipe for the use of racial profiling.

Operation Lone Star, for example, which has been allocated some \$4 billion from state coffers and engaged 10,000 members of the National Guard, does not wind up "protecting" the border, but criminalizing immigrants in order to deport them in an expedited fashion, alleging that there is supposedly an "invasion," despite the fact that many are coming, paradoxically, to find protection in the United States.

With these draconian measures, someone who looks Hispanic—whether they are a citizen, often going back generations in this country, especially in states like Texas or Arizona, which used to be Mexican territory—is in imminent danger; permanent residents, temporary visa holders, and undocumented people are also at risk. No one carries their passport or green card pinned to their forehead. Therefore, it's expected that the National Guard soldiers and police will rely on the use of racial profiling.

And that's not the only issue: add in serious violations of civil rights and irreparable harm to the state's economy. But those damaging consequences aren't of importance to Republicans like Abbott, since they prefer to use immigrants as sacrificial scapegoats, like always, for their political advantage at election time.

Who can forget the effects of two laws, SB 1070 in Arizona and HB 56 in Alabama? America's Voice was in both states reporting firsthand about the effect of these laws on the Hispanic population. Not only did they sow fear in the undocumented immigrant community, but among Latinos in general; citizens who feared being detained at any moment, solely because of the color of their skin; or, in other cases, for speaking English with an accent. Not to mention the damage both measures had on the states' economies.

In Alabama, for example, many crops were lost because undocumented people who worked in the fields left, for fear of being detained. Local businesses lost the customers who frequented them

and the state itself lost out on sales taxes, having fewer consumers.

It's that politicians like Abbott exploit the immigration issue for political reasons without thinking about or, worse still, understanding the impact that these measures can have on Hispanics who are voters and perhaps even voted for him—without thinking about the damage that can be inflicted on their own economy or state's image.

This matters so little that they even resort to other, more sinister strategies—as if the self-inflicted damage was not already enough. For example, Republicans have invited the prime minister of Hungary, Viktor Orban, to participate in the Conservative Political Action Conference in Dallas last week, knowing the neo-Nazi tint of this European politician's ideas. Last month, Orban said: "There is a world in which European peoples are mixed together with those arriving from outside Europe. Now that is a mixed-race world. And there is our world, where people from within Europe mix with one another... This is why we have always fought: we are willing to mix with one another, but we don't want to become peoples of mixed-race."

What is the significance of bringing such a xenophobic and racist person to the United States at the very moment an epic battle is being waged to eradicate anti-immigrant sentiment from this country? Obviously, it is both a cynical and dangerous provocation, with incalculable consequences, about which Republicans simply do not care.

Moreover, they also do not care that their racist rhetoric and claims of an "invasion" have lethal consequences such as the El Paso, Texas massacre, on its third anniversary August 3, and where the white supremacist Patrick Crusius shot 23 people in a Walmart store, motivated by the hate speech, intolerance, and fanaticism that intensified against minorities, often Latino minorities, during Donald Trump's presidency.

When it comes to Abbott's executive order, Democrats and activists in Texas have denounced the initiative's danger and, in the case of Operation Lone Star, the daily *Texas Tribune* and ProPublica reported that according to state records, the Department of Justice will be investigating potential civil rights violations.

SB 1070 was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court

in 2012, and HB 56 was blocked by lawsuits, until a settlement was negotiated in 2013 between the state, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), and civil rights groups who sued, arguing the law's unconstitutionality. Alabama permanently blocked the law's most onerous provisions.

But their footprint, as nasty as it is prejudicial, will remain in perpetuity, like a dress rehearsal for the future that we reached this century, irremediably.

Republican extremism has intensified and the party has continued to take governorships and state assemblies that are fertile

ground for this type of measure, as we see in Texas. Worse still, the midterm elections are near, where the potential exists for the Republicans to re-take control of one or both chambers of Congress. And it's expected that they will push a migration agenda as extremist as the figures who control the Republican Party.

**Maribel Hastings** is a Senior Advisor to *América's Voice*. **David Torres** is a Spanish-language Advisor at *América's Voice*.

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**El Semanario** THE WEEKLY ISSUE  
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**Obstacles of Stigma, Misinformation, and Racism**

The administration's monkeypox response team will not only have to work past the prior fumbles in acquiring the vaccine, but also will face obstacles in deploying it. One of those obstacles will be in how the team navigates its messaging to avoid stigmatizing the LGBTQ community.

Already, homophobic politicians, right-wing pundits, and other public figures are targeting and blaming the LGBTQ community for the spread of monkeypox, leading to stigmatization and discrimination of gay and bisexual men in particular, which is reminiscent of public health mistakes made during the HIV/AIDS crisis. For example, the *Daily Mail* recently published an article about two cases of

monkeypox confirmed in children, but the headline seemingly places the blame on gay and bisexual men; it has been widely criticized on social media. In a comment on the monkeypox outbreak, a University of Texas at Dallas lecturer, Timothy P. Farage, tweeted "Can we at least try to find a cure for homosexuality, especially among men?" Homophobic comments on articles have been liked thousands of times on social media platforms and have been allowed to remain online. The stigma generated by this hate has very real repercussions on the health of everyone. Infected people who may not want to be open about their sex lives are less likely to seek treatment or vaccinate themselves, which inevitably makes controlling the monkeypox outbreak more difficult.

The response team will also need to ensure that access to monkeypox treatments and vaccines are distributed equitably. *The Washington Post* reported in late July that most reported US patients infected with monkeypox are people of color. Yet, Black people only accounted for 17 percent of patients to receive the antiviral treatment known as TPox. New York City's approach in June for distributing vaccines was criticized for favoring privileged individuals who were able to take off from work and wait in long lines at a clinic in Chelsea, an upscale, historically gay neighborhood. Some Black men even began what they called the "Black queer underground railroad of assistance," to acquire the vaccine. The response team will need to combat these in-

equities to ensure their strategies target and support those from underserved communities in an equitable manner.

**Science Must be at the Center of Response**

The administration's response team has many challenges moving forward. Its response should be informed by the best available social and natural science to ensure that it combats monkeypox equitably and with the best available knowledge. There are many lessons to be learned from the government's response to COVID-19, especially that the administration should not politicize its strategies to combat this virus, and that they will need to act now to combat disinformation and misinformation that is already being spread. Science will need to

be at the center of every strategy deployed by this response team: testing, tracking cases, keeping up-to-date on monkeypox research, effective messaging, vaccine distribution, and more.

If you need further information about the monkeypox virus, please visit the CDC's webpage that provides the best available information on signs and symptoms, how the virus spreads, updates on the 2022 outbreak, and information about available vaccines: [Monkeypox | Poxyvirus | CDC](#).

**Jacob Carter** is a senior scientist for the Center for Science and Democracy at the [Union of Concerned Scientists](#).

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**Estudiantes**

"(O'Halloran) me inspiró porque soy una persona que odia escribir ensayos", dijo González. "Pero una vez que me dio una idea de cómo empezar y meterme más en ello, me pareció mucho más fácil de lo que esperaba".

Eso es música para los oídos de Jim Epstein, fundador y director ejecutivo de Write on Sports Denver, quien dijo que el campamento comenzó como un programa estrictamente de escritura. "Creemos que la escritura es importante para todo, desde solicitar un trabajo hasta escribir un correo electrónico", dijo. Hace un par de años, el programa introdujo el podcasting, el video y otras formas digitales de comunicación.

Alfredo Sánchez, profesor adjunto de Periodismo en MSU Denver y miembro de la junta directiva e instructor de Write on Sports, es un apasionado de la enseñanza a

la próxima generación de los principios y la ética del periodismo en un campo que está en constante evolución.

"Ahora, casi todo el mundo con un teléfono móvil puede ser potencialmente un periodista", dijo Sánchez. "Así que, como educadores, es nuestra responsabilidad enseñar a esta nueva generación de potenciales periodistas los principios básicos de lo que puede ser un periodista. Queremos ampliar la brecha entre (los periodistas y) los YouTubers y los influenciadores de los medios."

Maxie Alexander, alumna de octavo grado en Arvada K-8, dijo que las sesiones de medios digitales fueron su parte favorita del campamento.

"Llegar a entrevistar a todos estos atletas y personas famosas como Ryan Harris, Chris Dempsey (que cubre los Denver Nuggets

para Altitude Sports), Reggie Rivers (un ex locutor deportivo y Bronco de Denver) y Ryan O'Halloran me inspiró a trabajar duro para seguir mi sueño", dijo Alexander. "Me alegra de que todo el mundo tenga esta oportunidad de trabajar en las habilidades sociales o en la creación de equipos o de probar algo nuevo. Ha sido una experiencia genial".

Y la experiencia no tiene por qué terminar cuando se acaba el campamento. La MSU de Denver ha creado una vía para que los estudiantes sigan trabajando en su carrera deportiva. Después de asistir al campamento, los estudiantes pueden inscribirse en el Instituto de Negocios Deportivos de la Escuela Secundaria de Arvada y luego asistir a MSU Denver para recibir una licenciatura en Gestión Deportiva o una especialización en Medios Deportivos.

Se trata de mantenerse fiel a la misión principal de Write on Sports: ofrecer oportunidades a los estudiantes en situación de riesgo para que mejoren sus habilidades de escritura creativa aprovechando su pasión por el deporte.

"Y esperamos que también mejoren su pensamiento crítico, su autoestima y su confianza", dijo Epstein.

**Glavine Day para la Universidad Estatal Metropolitana de Denver. Esta historia apareció originalmente en [MSU Denver RED](#).**

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

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**Nuclear**

A 2020 analysis by the [National Academies of Sciences](#) found that all waste that has been generated or is planned to be, will exceed WIPP's legal capacity by at least 10%. That's another issue the DOE has not responded to publicly. Hancock said.

The bi-partisan legislative committee, made up of state senators and representatives, ultimately voted to send a letter to the Department of Energy asking questions about shipments and seeking more transparency.

**Patrick Lohmann** is a Reporter with Source New Mexico. This article is republished from [Source New Mexico](#) under a Creative Commons license.

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## Covid/Esp

riesgo debido a la edad o a enfermedades subyacentes.

En la actualidad, ningún estado impone el uso de mascarillas en público, aunque varios estados siguen exigiendo el uso de mascarillas en entornos de alto riesgo, como hospitales y centros de atención a largo plazo.

En abril, un juez federal anuló el requisito de uso de mascarilla impuesto por el gobierno de Biden en el transporte público, las aerolíneas y los centros de transporte. Se espera que el Departamento de Justicia apele la sentencia.

Mientras tanto, un tercio de los estadounidenses ha conseguido evitar totalmente la infección por el virus. Según el Dr. Peter Chin-Hong, decano asociado de los campus regionales de la Universi-

dad de California en San Francisco, hay cuatro factores que ayudan a explicar esta tendencia.

Algunas personas pueden estar genéticamente dispuestas a tener una mayor resistencia al virus, dijo Chin-Hong, algo que los médicos vieron durante los primeros años de la crisis del VIH/SIDA. Estas personas podrían desempeñar un papel en la futura investigación sobre tratamientos de la COVID, señaló Chin-Hong.

El comportamiento podría ser otro factor, "ya que algunas personas del mismo hogar pueden tomar más precauciones" en cuanto a usar una mascarilla o tener un contacto estrecho con otras personas. El momento en que se administran las vacunas también influye, ya que los riesgos

de infección han fluctuado a lo largo de la pandemia.

Por último, dice Chin-Hong, algunas personas pueden haber estado infectadas y simplemente no se han dado cuenta, ya sea porque eran asintomáticas o porque nunca se hicieron la prueba.

Chin-Hong cree que las inspecciones de las aguas residuales pueden ayudar a aclarar el panorama en torno a las tasas reales de infección. A diferencia de lo que ocurre con las pruebas y las declaraciones de los propios afectados, las aguas residuales pueden ayudar a los investigadores a comprender el grado de propagación del virus en una comunidad.

"Por ejemplo, en California, el nivel del virus en las aguas residu-

iales es muy similar (a los niveles de Covid notificados) en enero, cuando más personas se hacían las pruebas", explicó Chin-Hong. Según estos datos, las tasas actuales de casos serían muy superiores a las 130.000 infecciones diarias que se notifican ahora.

Una oleada estival del virus respiratorio sincitial (VRS), que puede causar síntomas similares a los del Covid, también podría explicar por qué mucha gente ha recibido resultados negativos en sus kits de pruebas caseras, dijo Shaffner.

"Las pruebas rápidas también son menos aptas para dar un resultado positivo en esta era del BA5... por eso los CDC siguen centrándose en las hospitalizaciones, porque nos recuerdan que existe este importante problema de salud pública".

## Covid

Nearly a third of Americans remain unvaccinated, while a majority of Covid-related deaths are occurring among people 65 and over, including those who have been vaccinated.

Speakers stressed that masks continue to play a critical role in slowing the spread of the virus, particularly for those who are at high risk because of age or underlying conditions.

Currently no state mandates mask wearing in public, though several states still require mask wearing in high risk settings, including hospitals and long-term care facilities.

In April, a federal judge struck down the Biden administration's mask requirement for public transit, airlines and transportation hubs. The Justice Department is expected to appeal the ruling.

Meanwhile, one-third of Americans have managed to avoid being infected by the virus altogether. According to Dr. Peter Chin-Hong, associate dean for Regional Campuses at the University of California, San Francisco, four factors help explain this trend.

Some people may be genetically disposed to having higher resistance to the virus, said Chin-Hong, something doctors saw during the early years of the HIV/AIDS crisis. These individuals could play a role in future research on therapeutics for Covid, Chin-Hong noted.

Behavior could be another factor, "as some people in the same household may be taking more precautions" in terms of wearing a mask or having close contact with other people. The timing of vaccines also plays a role, as the risks of infection have fluctuated over time during the pandemic.

Finally, says Chin-Hong, some people may have been infected and just did not realize it, either because they were asymptomatic or because they were never tested.

Chin-Hong believes that wastewater inspections can help to clarify the picture around actual infection rates. Unlike relying on tests and self-reporting, wastewater can help researchers understand the extent to which the virus is spreading within a community.

"For example in California, the level of wastewater virus is very similar to (reported Covid levels) in January, when more people were getting tested," explained Chin-Hong. Based on this data, current case rates would be far higher than the 130,000 daily infections now being reported.

A summer surge of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), which can cause Covid-like symptoms, could also explain why a lot of people have received negative results on their home testing kits, said Shaffner.

"The rapid tests are also less apt to give you a positive result in this BA5 era... that is why the CDC keeps focusing on hospitalizations, because they remind us that there is this important public health problem."

Therapeutics such as PAXLOVID have proven to be effective in preventing more severe diseases, mostly among older adults. And there is a monoclonal antibody that can be given to some people who are resistant to PAXLOVID. But experts insist that vaccines remain the most essential tool to fight the virus.

"We now have too many deaths, like 430 a day," says Chin-Hong.

Terapias como PAXLOVID han demostrado su eficacia en la prevención de enfermedades más graves, sobre todo entre los adultos mayores. Y existe un anticuerpo monoclonal que puede administrarse a algunas personas resistentes al PAXLOVID. Pero los expertos insisten en que las vacunas siguen siendo la herramienta más esencial para combatir el virus.

"Ahora tenemos demasiadas muertes, como 430 al día", dice Chin-Hong. "Tenemos que controlar (el virus) y tenemos las herramientas para hacerlo ahora mismo", concluye.

*Jenny Manrique is a Reporter with Ethnic Media Services. Reproduced with permission by Ethnic Media Services.*

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"We have to manage (the virus) and we have the tools to do that right now," he concluded.

*Jenny Manrique es Reportera de Ethnic Media Services.  
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reembolsos de impuestos a los contribuyentes, por lo que estamos aquí para informarles a las personas que estén atentos a su reembolso de impuestos de Colorado Cash Back. Los reembolsos comenzarán a llegar a sus buzones de correos hoy y se seguirán enviando por correo de forma continua hasta septiembre", dijo el tesorero Dave Young.

"Estamos procesando más de 2.4 millones de pagos para devolver el dinero a las personas lo más rápido posible, brindando alivio a los habitantes de Colorado y sus familias", dijo Mark Ferrandino, director ejecutivo del Departamento de Ingresos.

"Con los desafíos de la cadena de suministro y la inflación global que restringe los presupuestos de las familias, aprobamos una ley este año para crear el plan Colorado Cash Back, que pronto enviará a los habitantes de Colorado cheques de reembolso de \$750 para contribuyentes únicos o de

\$1,500 para contribuyentes conjuntos", dijo el representante Tony Exum, D-Colorado Springs. "Debido a nuestro trabajo en el capitolio para ahorrarle dinero a la gente, impulsar nuestra economía y reformar nuestro código tributario, los trabajadores de Colorado verán miles de dólares en sus bolsillos. Duplicamos los créditos fiscales para las familias trabajadoras, redujimos los impuestos a la propiedad en \$700 millones, bajamos los impuestos a los beneficiarios del seguro social y creamos un preescolar universal gratuito que, junto con los cheques de Colorado Cash Back, ayudará a millones de habitantes de Colorado con el aumento del costo de vida".

"Cuando presté juramento como Senador estatal de Pueblo, sabía que con la inflación obligando a los habitantes de Pueblo a hacer más con sus cheques de pago con menos, tenía que tomar medidas audaces para ayudar a apoyar a las familias trabajadoras que

más lo necesitan", dijo el Senador Nick Hinrichsen, D.-Pueblo. "Es por eso que aprobé el proyecto de ley para acelerar los cheques de ayuda que tanto necesitan las familias de Pueblo a través del programa Colorado Cash Back. Al acelerar el cronograma y hacer que los cheques de ayuda sean más equitativos, les brindamos a los contribuyentes de Pueblo el dinero en efectivo que necesitan cuando lo necesitan para pagar las cuentas y hacer compras diarias como pañales y comestibles — son más de \$400 para la familia promedio de Colorado de lo que hubiesen recibido por los mecanismos tradicionales de reembolso. Este alivio no podría llegar en un mejor momento, y me enorgullece dar a los trabajadores de Colorado el impulso que necesitan para ayudar a sus familias, vecinos y comunidades a prosperar".

"Empezando pronto, los habitantes de Colorado verán un alivio inmediato del plan Colorado

Cash Back para ayudar con los costos crecientes, la gasolina, los alimentos y las necesidades diarias", dijo la representante Lindsey Daugherty, demócrata de Arvada. "Los habitantes de Colorado están recibiendo su dinero antes, cuando más lo necesitan, porque tomamos medidas para enviar estos cheques lo antes posible. El superávit de ingresos récord que estamos reembolsando a través del plan Colorado Cash Back es el resultado de nuestra sólida recuperación y nuestros pasos concretos para cerrar vacíos tributarios en los intereses especiales, gobernar de manera responsable durante la pandemia e impulsar el Regreso de Colorado".

"Los demócratas están muy enfocados en ahorrarle dinero a las familias de Colorado, y nuestro plan Colorado Cash ayudará a aliviar el dolor que todos sentimos debido al aumento de la inflación al devolverle a la gente cheques de reembolso importantes lo antes posible", dijo el Senador Robert Rodríguez, D.-Denver. "Gracias a nuestro proyecto de ley, junto con el presupuesto responsable de los demócratas y un superávit estatal récord, este alivio crítico ayudará a aliviar la carga financiera con la que luchan las personas en todo nuestro estado en el momento en que más lo necesitan".

Los contribuyentes que no presentaron una declaración antes del

30 de junio aún pueden presentar una declaración de impuestos estatal (para ver la información en español, utilice el traductor automático al pie de la página web) antes del 17 de octubre de 2022. Aquellos que presenten su declaración en octubre pueden esperar recibir su cheque de reembolso en enero de 2023. Cada residente de Colorado de un año completo que tenía al menos 18 años el 31 de diciembre de 2021 debe presentar una declaración de Colorado para reclamar el reembolso de devolución de Colorado Cash Back, incluso si no tenían ingresos imponibles. En promedio, alrededor del 90 % de los contribuyentes declaran a tiempo antes del 15 de abril, y el 10 % restante declara antes de la fecha límite extendida del 17 de octubre.

El Departamento de Ingresos proporciona recursos comunitarios (para ver la información en español, utilice el traductor automático al pie de la página web) para ayudar a los habitantes de Colorado con la declaración de impuestos. A partir de mañana, los habitantes de Colorado pueden llamar al 303-951-4996 o visitar [coloradocashback.com](http://coloradocashback.com) (para ver la información en español, utilice el traductor automático al pie de la página web) para recibir información actualizada sobre los reembolsos de impuestos.

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## Lakin

cially-gerrymandered-here's-why racially discriminatory congressional map to stand in the face of a federal court ruling that it likely violated the VRA. It's clear the robust federal safeguards instated by the VRA to protect the right to vote are quickly being rolled back.

At the same time, politicians across the country continue to push the big lie that the 2020 election was stolen. This lie not only led to the attack we saw on the Capitol on January 6, but is fueling even more voter suppression legislation across the country.

In 2021 alone, more than 400 anti-voter measures were introduced by states across the country, many of which will disproportionately burden voters of color. This relentless assault on voting rights shows no signs of receding. These measures run the gamut from restricting access to vote by mail, eliminating Election Day registration, and making it more difficult to vote early in person to criminalizing efforts by local election administrators to assist voters. Additionally, like in Louisiana, several states have enacted

new electoral maps that systematically minimize the voting strength of Black voters.

As we reflect on the 57th anniversary of VRA, there should be no question that the right to vote is under siege and that these efforts to interfere with and minimize our right to vote fall heaviest on already marginalized people, especially Black communities. We still have so much work ahead of us to ensure every eligible American has the right to vote. Here at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) we've redoubled our efforts to fight for voting rights in courts, in state legislatures, and on the streets. For over 100 years we've protected the civil liberties of all Americans, and we'll continue to be on the frontlines of this fight to protect our rights.

*Sophia Lin Lakin is the Deputy Director for the American Civil Liberties Union Voting Rights Project.*

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## Students

writing essays," González said. "But once he gave me an idea on how to start and get more into it, I thought it was lot easier than I expected."

That's music to the ears of Jim Epstein, founder and executive director of Write on Sports Denver, who said the camp started as strictly a writing program. "We think writing is important for everything from applying to a job to writing an email," he said. A couple of years ago, the program introduced podcasting, video and other digital forms of communication.

Alfredo Sánchez, assistant professor of Journalism at MSU Denver and a board member and instructor for Write on Sports, is passionate about teaching the upcoming generation the principles and ethics of journalism in a field that's constantly evolving.

"Now, pretty much everyone with a cellphone can potentially be a journalist," Sánchez said. "So as educators, it's our responsibility

to teach this new generation of potential journalists the basic principles of what a journalist can be. We want to widen the gap between (journalists and) the YouTubers and media influencers."

Maxie Alexander, an eighth-grader at Arvada K-8, said the digital-media sessions were her favorite part of the camp.

"Getting to interview all these athletes and famous people like Ryan Harris, Chris Dempsey (who covers the Denver Nuggets for Altitude Sports), Reggie Rivers (a former sportscaster and Denver Bronco) and Ryan O'Halloran inspired me to work hard to follow my dream," Alexander said. "I'm glad that everybody gets this opportunity to work on social skills or team-building or to try something new. It's been a pretty cool experience."

And the experience doesn't have to end when the camp is over. MSU Denver has created a path-

way for students to keep working toward a career in sports. After attending the camp, students can enroll in the Arvada High School Sports Business Institute and then attend MSU Denver to receive a bachelor's degree in Sport Management or minor in Sport Media.

It's all about staying true to the core mission of Write on Sports: providing opportunities for at-risk students to improve their creative-writing skills by tapping into their passion for sports.

"And we hope that they improve their critical thinking, self-esteem and confidence as well," Epstein said.

*Glavine Day for Metropolitan State University of Denver. This story originally appeared on MSU Denver RED.*

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## Resolution

The ACLU said in a statement that such resolutions are not legally binding and are not enforceable, but such resolutions are tactics of intimidation.

An abortion provider in Texas has said they are looking to relocate to New México now that abortion is illegal in Texas. A Mississippi clinic has already relocated to Las Cruces.

Municipalities near the border with Texas would better enable pregnant individuals from Texas to travel to New México for legal abortion.

President Joe Biden signed an executive order on Aug. 3 to protect pregnant individuals traveling out of state for an abortion.

Ellie Rushforth, an attorney with ACLU-NM, said in a statement to NM Political Report that the organization is "disappointed that the Alamogordo City Commission chose to ignore the outpouring of opposition to a legally unenforceable anti-abortion resolution.

"Not only are these resolutions out-of-touch with the values of the vast majority of New Mexicans but reflect a level of disrespect for their constituents' ability to make their own personal medical decisions. The ACLU of NM will con-

inue to monitor and address any attempts to restrict safe and legal reproductive health care, including abortion care, in New México at all levels." She said in a statement.

Rushforth also said both the city and county could face litigation in the future.

"These resolutions have no force of law and are a waste of taxpayer resources. Local bodies like the Alamogordo City Commission and the Otero County Commission are on notice that any attempt to enforce these resolutions would violate our constitution and numerous other state laws opening up those communities to potentially costly litigation. We've said it before, and we'll say it again, ACLU of New México stands ready to defend New Mexicans' right to abortion and all reproductive health care in every corner of our state," she said.

*Susan Dunlap is a Reporter with New Mexico Political Report. This story was originally published by New Mexico Political Report.*

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## Zimmerman

Voters of both parties need to think hard about the possibility that they or someone they love might want to make their own decision about how their life will unfold — whether they go to college, whether they pursue a career, whether they have the child they want on their own time table. Few voters want extremist politicians or religious leaders they don't follow to make these choices for them.

Republican leaders spent decades manipulating the selection

of Supreme Court justices so extremist judges could strip Americans of a right they've had for half a century. So they can't claim it's a "scare tactic" to warn that other fundamental rights, like the right to use contraception or marry a partner of their choice, could fall. Especially not when far-right Justice Clarence Thomas has promised to attack those very rights, too.

Many of the political issues being debated in this election season may seem abstract to voters. But

nothing can be less abstract than control over one's own body. This fall's election will be as personal as it gets.

*Mitchell Zimmerman is an attorney, longtime social activist, and author of the anti-racism thriller Mississippi Reckoning. This op-ed was distributed by OtherWords.org.*

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## Resolución

nuevos mexicanos, sino que reflejan un nivel de falta de respeto por la capacidad de sus constituyentes para tomar sus propias decisiones médicas personales". La ACLU de NM continuará monitoreando y abordando cualquier intento de restringir el cuidado de la salud reproductiva segura y legal, incluyendo el cuidado del aborto, en

Nuevo México en todos los niveles." Dijo en un comunicado.

Rushforth también dijo que tanto la ciudad como el condado podrían enfrentar litigios en el futuro.

"Estas resoluciones no tienen fuerza de ley y son un desperdicio de los recursos de los contribuyentes. Los organismos locales como la Comisión de la Ciudad

de Alamogordo y la Comisión del Condado de Otero están sobre aviso de que cualquier intento de hacer cumplir estas resoluciones violaría nuestra constitución y otras numerosas leyes estatales abriendo esas comunidades a un litigio potencialmente costoso. Lo hemos dicho antes, y lo diremos de nuevo, la ACLU de Nuevo México está dispuesta a defender el derecho de los nuevos mexicanos al aborto y a todos los servicios de salud reproductiva en cada rincón de nuestro estado", dijo.

*Susan Dunlap es Reportera de Justicia Reproductiva de New Mexico Political Report. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por New Mexico Political Report.*

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

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Foto/Foto: Michael Benanav/Searchlight New Mexico

Calvin Yazzie, who lost alfalfa estimated in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. "The EPA is playing a game, like they're going to hold off as long as they can while people who depend on the river are losing out." / Calvin Yazzie, que perdió alfalfa estimada en cientos de miles de dólares. "La EPA está jugando, como si fuera a aguantar todo lo que pueda mientras la gente que depende del río sale perdiendo."



Foto/Foto: Michael Benanav/Searchlight New Mexico

The San Juan River west of Farmington, in July 2022. / El río San Juan al oeste de Farmington, en julio de 2022.

as quickly as possible, and the fastest way for that to happen is for it to come from the EPA.

"Justice delayed is justice denied," she said, "and some of the plaintiffs have died since this lawsuit began. They'll never see justice."

#### Hózhó disrupted

Alongside a well-earned mistrust of government information, many Navajos evaluated the lasting impact of the mine spill with criteria that went beyond measurable contaminant levels.

"The San Juan is a deity that Navajos revere," said Karletta Chief, professor of environmental science and director of the Indigenous Resilience Center at the University of Arizona. Navajo herself, she led research teams that as-

sessed the environmental impact of the spill, communicated their findings to farmers, and tried to understand how the community perceived the risks posed to their health and way of life.

"Their connection to the world, their sense of balance in the world, is related to the river. So when the spill happened, that balance, that hózhó, was disrupted. Everything related to the river was also out of balance — it's a complete system, all interconnected. Because the river was imbalanced, even the corn pollen was disrupted," she said. And that could have a negative impact on traditional ceremonies, even if samples showed no significant uptake in arsenic or lead in corn. "You can tell people that the water meets standards for drinking, for irrigating, but for

people who are more spiritually connected, when is it OK to use it again?"

#### 'Drastic' discharges

The basic facts in the case are not in dispute: The Gold King Mine, in the mountains north of Silverton, Colorado, operated on and off between about 1887 and 1922. During that time, it produced over 700,000 tons of gold and silver.

Fast-forward to the 1990s, when the sealing of the nearby Sunnyside Mine redirected groundwater into Gold King. Though a cave-in blocked Gold King's entrance, by the early 2000s, toxic water was leaking out in alarming amounts. It was "a drastic new high-quality discharge...of extremely poor quality water, making this site one of the

worst draining mines in the State of Colorado," the state Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety reported. It had to be cleaned up.

In 2015, after a few preliminary efforts, the EPA's on-scene coordinator, Steve Way, approved a plan to drain the mine, created in consultation with an experienced independent contractor. Similar to an approach that had been successful at a neighboring mine, Gold King would be drilled into from above in order to figure out just how much water it contained, then pumped out in a safe and controlled manner. Only then would workers begin digging into the debris that was plugging the mine entrance, which dammed the water inside. Had this plan been followed, "the blowout would not have occurred," the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation concluded.

Instead, Way went on vacation. His temporary replacement, Hays Griswold, had no familiarity with Gold King before arriving at the site. Nevertheless, he quickly surveyed the scene and abandoned the work plan, concluding that what needed to be done "was very simple," according to a sworn deposition. His decisions, which he said were based on a plan that he drew up in his head, directly led to the blowout.

The matter now before the U.S. District Court in New México is not whether the EPA was responsible — it admits as much — but whether the Navajo farmers have a right to sue under the Federal Tort Claims Act. The latter allows individuals to sue federal agencies but also grants agencies broad immunities, particularly in situations "when an employee's acts involve the exercise of judgment or choice." The government asserts in court filings that Griswold exercised "just the type of discretionary, policy-based conduct" that is immune from tort claims. It is seeking to have the suit dismissed.

Kate Ferlic, the lead attorney for the plaintiffs, argues that immunity does not apply in this case, pointing out that the government isn't shielded from lawsuits when employees violate policies that they are bound to follow. "Griswold was reckless and ended up poisoning a river system," she said. "If immunity is granted under these circumstances, plans designed to protect public safety become meaningless."

It would cost less for the EPA to compensate the farmers than to keep battling them in court, she said. "The government has spent

more money on this case, in time and experts, than it would have taken to pay out all of the claims."

#### It's 'just wrong'

Calvin Yazzie, a 71-year-old Navy veteran and former mine worker who lost alfalfa crops valued in the hundreds of thousands of dollars following the spill, said, "If you made a mistake and fessed up to it, you don't need to try to swindle people and then smirk when you get away with it. It seems like that's what the government is doing. To me, that's just wrong."

In principle, the EPA appears to agree. The agency says it has aligned with the Biden Administration's emphasis on advancing environmental justice for communities, "including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by poverty and inequality." In an April 2021 memo outlining its environmental justice goals, one bullet point stands out: "Assist and seek to obtain restitution for victims of environmental crimes."

When asked whether the government's posture in the lawsuit contradicted the memo, the EPA replied by email that it is "committed to delivering environmental justice for underserved communities and overburdened communities, including Tribal nations."

As the seventh anniversary of the spill approaches, the farmers are only seeing more delays. On June 24, the trial date that had been set for early November was vacated and postponed for an indefinite period of time. It has not yet been rescheduled.

"We're just waiting for some good news," said a frustrated Ernest Benally, "but it's going on and on and on."

Standing beside him, Shawn Mike agreed. "We feel neglected, not heard, disrespected. We wish they would remember that we have a beating heart, also, and a lot of what it beats on is our farms, no matter how small."

See a video of the Gold King Mine discharging toxic metals.

**Michael Benanav** is a writer, photographer and digital storyteller based in northern New México. This article was originally published by Searchlight New Mexico, a non-partisan, nonprofit news organization dedicated to investigative reporting in New México.

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Ernest Benally, en uno de sus campos de alfalfa. / Ernest Benally, in one of his alfalfa fields.

cias amplias inmunidades, especialmente en situaciones "cuando los actos de un empleado implican el ejercicio de un juicio o una elección". El gobierno afirma en los archivos judiciales que Griswold ejerció "justo el tipo de conducta discrecional y basada en la política" que es inmune a las reclamaciones por daños y perjuicios. Por ello, solicita que se desestime la demanda.

Kate Ferlic, la abogada principal de los demandantes, sostiene que la inmunidad no se aplica en este caso, señalando que el gobierno no está protegido de las demandas cuando los empleados violan las políticas que están obligados a seguir. "Griswold fue imprudente y acabó envenenando un sistema fluvial", dijo. "Si se concede la inmunidad en estas circunstancias, los planes diseñados para proteger la seguridad pública carecen de sentido".

A la EPA le costaría menos compensar a los agricultores que seguir luchando contra ellos en los tribunales, dijo. "El gobierno ha gastado más dinero en este caso, en tiempo y en expertos, de lo que habría costado pagar todas las demandas".

#### Es "simplemente un error"

Calvin Yazzie, un veterano de la Marina de 71 años y antiguo trabajador de la mina que perdió cultivos de alfalfa valorados en cientos de miles de dólares tras el vertido, dijo: "Si cometiste un error y lo confesaste, no tienes que intentar estafar a la gente y luego sonreír cuando te sales con la tuya. Parece que eso es lo que está haciendo el gobierno. Para mí, eso está mal".

En principio, la EPA parece estar de acuerdo. La agencia dice que se ha alineado con el énfasis de la Administración Biden en el avance de la justicia ambiental para las comunidades, "incluyendo a las personas de color y otras que han sido históricamente desatendidas,

marginadas y afectadas negativamente por la pobreza y la desigualdad". En un memorando de abril de 2021 en el que se describen sus objetivos de justicia medioambiental, destaca un punto: "Asistir y tratar de obtener la restitución de las víctimas de delitos ambientales".

Cuando se le preguntó si la postura del gobierno en el juicio contradecía el memorándum, la EPA respondió por correo electrónico que está "comprometida a ofrecer justicia ambiental a las comunidades desatendidas y sobre cargadas, incluidas las naciones tribales".

A medida que se acerca el séptimo aniversario del vertido, los agricultores sólo ven más retrasos. El 24 de junio, la fecha del juicio que se había fijado para principios de noviembre fue anulada y aplazada por tiempo indefinido. Todavía no se ha reprogramado.

"Sólo estamos esperando buenas noticias", dijo un frustrado Ernest Benally, "pero esto sigue y sigue".

A su lado, Shawn Mike coincidía. "Nos sentimos desatendidos, no escuchados, no respetados. Nos gustaría que recordaran que también tenemos un corazón que late, y que gran parte de lo que late son nuestras explotaciones, por pequeñas que sean."

Vea un [video](#) de la mina Gold King vertiendo metales tóxicos.

**Michael Benanav** es escritor, fotógrafo y narrador digital afincado en el norte de Nuevo México. **Searchlight New Mexico** es una organización de noticias no partidista y sin fines de lucro dedicada al reportaje de investigación en Nuevo México.

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tractores, y uno de nuestros tractores, el 'Viejo Rojo', está ahora estropeado porque no podíamos permitirnos su mantenimiento."

Shawn Mike, que cultiva a 16 kilómetros río arriba de los Etsittys, tuvo una experiencia similar. "El agua está arruinada - to' tíso - decía la gente en navajo". Su vecino, Ernest Benally, que cultiva alfalfa en 12 acres, dice que, incluso ahora, algunas personas siguen siendo "escépticas con las cosas que se cultivan por aquí. Vendo a productores comerciales de carne de vacuno, y no me compran desde hace un par de años".

Los legisladores son conscientes de las pérdidas sufridas. Entre ellos, la diputada Teresa Leger Fernández dice que ha escrito al Departamento de Justicia instándole a resolver el caso e indemnizar a los agricultores. "Deberían hacer lo correcto", dijo en una entrevista telefónica. "Quiero que reciban la restitución lo antes posible, y la forma más rápida de hacerlo es que venga de la EPA".

"La justicia retrasada es justicia denegada", dijo, "y algunos de los demandantes han muerto desde que comenzó este pleito. Nunca verán la justicia".

#### Hózhó afectado

Junto a una bien ganada desconfianza en la información gubernamental, muchos navajos evaluaron el impacto duradero del vertido de la mina con criterios que iban más allá de los niveles medibles de contaminantes.

"El San Juan es una deidad que los navajos veneran", dijo Karletta Chief, profesora de ciencias ambientales y directora del Centro de Resiliencia Indígena de la Universidad de Arizona. Siendo ella misma navajo, dirigió equipos de investi-

gación que evaluaron el impacto medioambiental del vertido, comunicaron sus conclusiones a los agricultores e intentaron comprender cómo percibía la comunidad los riesgos que suponían para su salud y su modo de vida.

"Su conexión con el mundo, su sentido del equilibrio en el mundo, está relacionado con el río. Así que cuando se produjo el vertido, ese equilibrio, ese hózhó, se rompió. Todo lo relacionado con el río también se desequilibró: es un sistema completo, todo interconectado. Como el río estaba desequilibrado, incluso el polen del maíz se vio alterado", dijo. Y eso podría tener un impacto negativo en las ceremonias tradicionales, incluso si las muestras no mostraran una absorción significativa de arsénico o plomo en el maíz. "Se puede decir a la gente que el agua cumple las normas para beber, para regar, pero para la gente que está más conectada espiritualmente, ¿cuándo se puede volver a usar?".

#### Vertidos "drásticos"

Los hechos básicos del caso no se discuten: La mina Gold King, situada en las montañas del norte de Silverton (Colorado), funcionó de forma intermitente entre 1887 y 1922. Durante ese tiempo, produjo más de 700.000 toneladas de oro y plata.

En la década de 1990, el cierre de la cercana mina Sunnyside devió las aguas subterráneas hacia Gold King. Aunque un derrumbe bloqueó la entrada de Gold King, a principios de la década de 2000 el agua tóxica se filtraba en cantidades alarmantes. Se trataba de "un nuevo y drástico vertido de gran cantidad... de agua de muy mala calidad, lo que convertía a este emplazamiento en una de las

minas con peor drenaje del Estado de Colorado", según informó la División de Recuperación, Minería y Seguridad del Estado. Había que limpiarla.

En 2015, después de algunos esfuerzos preliminares, el coordinador de la EPA en el lugar, Steve Way, aprobó un plan para drenar la mina, creado en consulta con un contratista independiente con experiencia. Al igual que un enfoque que había tenido éxito en una mina vecina, Gold King se perforaría desde arriba para averiguar cuánta agua contenía, y luego se bombaría de forma segura y controlada. Sólo entonces los trabajadores empezarían a excavar en los escombros que taponaban la entrada de la mina, que embalsaban el agua en su interior. Si se hubiera seguido este plan, "el reventón no se habría producido", concluyó la Oficina de Recuperación de los Estados Unidos.

En cambio, Way se fue de vacaciones. Su sustituto temporal, Hays Griswold, no estaba familiarizado con Gold King antes de llegar al lugar. Sin embargo, rápidamente inspeccionó el lugar y abandonó el plan de trabajo, concluyendo que lo que había que hacer "era muy sencillo", según una declaración jurada. Sus decisiones, que según él se basaron en un plan que elaboró mentalmente, condujeron directamente al reventón.

La cuestión que se plantea ahora ante el Tribunal de Distrito de EE.UU. en Nuevo México no es si la EPA fue responsable -lo admite- sino si los agricultores navajos tienen derecho a demandar en virtud de la Ley Federal de Reclamaciones por Agravios. Esta última permite a los particulares demandar a las agencias federales, pero también concede a las agen-

new form again because districts don't share the forms with each other.

#### **Are there options for how to fill it out?**

Yes! Many parents fill out the forms online, but your district should have paper copies available as well. Additionally, some districts, like Jeffco, set up computer cubicles where parents can come in and fill out these forms while receiving guidance.

Many districts also provide the forms in different languages. If you need help filling out the form or want to request a paper or translated copy, call your district's lunch services department.

#### **Who sees the information I put on my form?**

Usually only one or two people read and process forms, depending on the school district, leaders say.

The school districts have to report how many students applied and were deemed eligible for the federal government to pay for the lunches those students receive, but that information is given to the government in aggregate. The federal departments don't get copies

of the forms parents fill out. District directors say schools never share these forms with immigration officials either.

Other than that, state auditors sometimes request to look at some of the forms from a district to verify that the district is processing forms correctly. "They don't look at any information beyond that," said Tony Jorstad, director of nutrition services for the 27J school district.

#### **If I don't qualify for free lunch, or my child doesn't eat school food, why should I fill it out?**

District leaders point out that there are other benefits to families, and to schools, other than the reduced cost of school meals.

For example, a family that qualifies for free or reduced-price meals might also qualify for waivers or fee reductions for various school or district services and activities like sports, transportation, and technology. Outside of school, internet providers also offer households a reduced price for internet access if children qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

The amount of funding schools get from the federal government, the state, and the district can depend on how many of their stu-

dents qualify for the subsidized meals. The forms are used to measure poverty, which may qualify schools to receive more resources for students.

And even without the federal government waiver that allowed all meals to be free for all students, when a school has a particularly high level of students living in poverty, it may still be able to offer free breakfasts and lunches to all students.

#### **If school lunch departments have less money coming in, will students see a difference in the meals that are offered?**

School lunch directors say no. Although all districts are expecting fewer students to eat school lunches, because fewer will qualify for subsidies, officials also expect a bump in reimbursement per meal, compared with pre-pandemic levels.

However, supply chain difficulties and increased costs of food could affect what foods show up on menus.

"We really try to plan our menus to work within the reimbursement that we think we're going to be getting," Jorstad said. "Right now we're not looking at changing any menu

products of fruit and veggie choices that we offer. We're pretty proud of the fresh fruit and veggie choices that we offer each day."

#### **If families don't qualify for free or reduced-price meals, but still can't send their child with lunch or money for a school meal, can schools offer other help?**

District lunch directors said this is a tough question. Parents should talk to their school about other options. Federal rules prevent school districts from giving school meals away for free.

Often, a school may allow a student to take meals without paying, but will bill the families for the meals. Before the pandemic began, many school districts worried about how much debt families

were accumulating. Some schools have a discretionary budget specifically for these situations. In other cases, districts have received donations to help clear debt that students may accumulate for school meals.

"Don't be afraid to ask," Jorstad said. "But the first thing, the most important thing, is filling out that form, that information, to figure out that determination."

**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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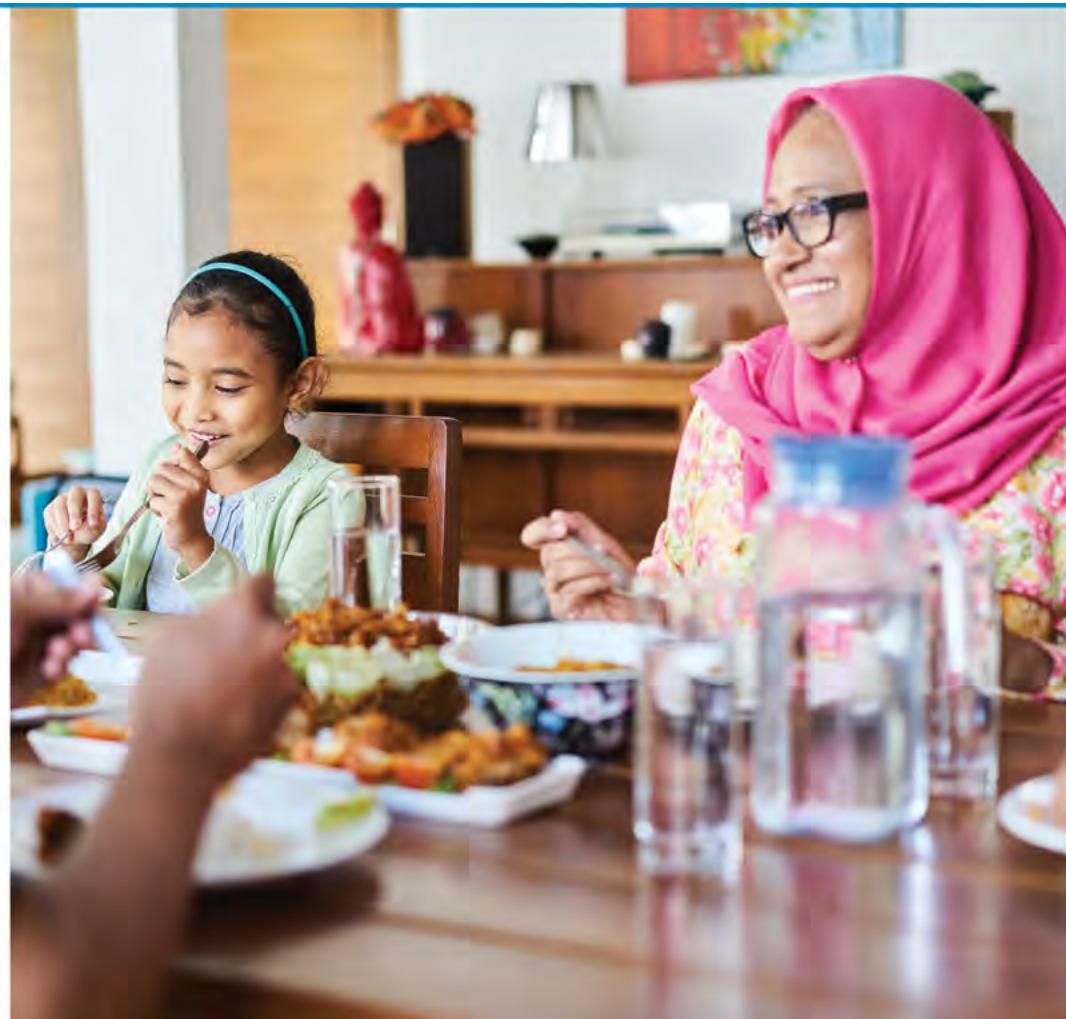


## **El plomo pesa mucho en nuestras mentes.**

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## Comidas

beat obtuvo respuestas a algunas de las respuestas básicas sobre cómo todo funciona.

#### **¿Quién tiene que llenar el formulario y cuándo necesita hacerlo?**

Todo padre o madre que siente que necesita ayuda para cubrir el costo de las comidas en la escuela debe llenar el formulario. Este formulario pide la información sobre tus ingresos y el tamaño de la familia, y eso se usará para determinar si calificas. Una familia de cuatro personas califica para las comidas gratuitas si los ingresos del hogar son \$36,075 o menos. El formulario también pide los últimos cuatro dígitos de un número de Seguro Social, pero no es requisito para recibir asistencia.

No hay fecha límite para llenar el formulario. En realidad, se puede llenar en cualquier momento durante el año escolar, pero los beneficios no son retroactivos. Si esperas hasta octubre para llenar el formulario, y se determina que eras elegible para recibir las comidas gratuitamente, de todos modos tendrás que haber pagado por las comidas que tus hijos consumieron desde el comienzo del año escolar hasta que el distrito aprobó tu solicitud.

Y haber llenado un formulario en el pasado no tiene ningún efecto. Los formularios nunca son válidos después del 30 de junio, y por eso si llenas uno en mayo (por ejemplo), se vencerá al final de junio. Es decir, cada familia tiene que llenar el formulario nuevamente después del 1 de julio.

Si una familia tiene un cambio a mitad del año escolar — por ejemplo, nace un bebé o se pierden ingresos — ellos pueden solicitar para cambiar de estatus ese año. Además, si cambias de distrito escolar a mitad de año, necesitarás llenar un formulario nuevo otra vez porque los distritos no comparten los formularios.

#### **¿Hay diferentes opciones para llenar el formulario?**

¡Sí! Muchos padres llenan los formularios en línea, pero tu distrito debe tener copias en papel disponibles también. Además, algunos distritos (como Jeffco) han preparado computadoras en las que los padres pueden llenar estos formularios y recibir orientación.

Muchos distritos también ofrecen los formularios en varios idiomas. Si necesitas ayuda para llenar el formulario, o quieres pedir una copia en papel o en otro idioma, llama al departamento de servicios de comida de tu distrito.

#### **¿Quién puede ver la información que incluiré en mi formulario?**

Dependiendo del distrito escolar, usualmente una o dos personas son quienes leen y procesan los formularios, dijeron los líderes.

Los líderes escolares tienen que reportar cuántos estudiantes solicitaron y cuántos son elegibles para que el gobierno federal pague por sus comidas, pero esa información se le envía al gobierno de manera colectiva. Los departamentos federales no reciben copias de los formularios llenados por los pa-

dres. Los directores de distritos dicen que las escuelas no comparten los formularios con los funcionarios de inmigración tampoco.

A parte de eso, los auditores del estado a veces piden ver algunos formularios de un distrito solo para verificar que los esté procesando correctamente. "No se fijan en ninguna otra información", dijo Tony Jorstad, director de servicios de nutrición del distrito escolar 27J.

#### **Si no califico para comidas gratis, o si mi hijo no consume la comida de la escuela, ¿por qué debo llenar el formulario?**

Los líderes del distrito señalan que aparte del costo reducido por comidas escolares, hay otros beneficios para las familias y para las escuelas.

Por ejemplo, una familia que califica para comidas gratuitas o a precio reducido podría también calificar para waivers o descuentos en varios servicios de la escuela o el distrito, y para actividades como deporte, transporte y tecnología. Fuera de la escuela, las compañías de internet también ofrecen acceso a internet con descuento si los niños califican para comidas gratuitas o a precio reducido.

La cantidad de fondos que las escuelas reciben del gobierno federal, el estado y el distrito puede depender de cuántos estudiantes califican para comidas con subsidio. Los formularios también se usan para medir el índice de pobreza, que podría hacer que las escuelas reciban más recursos para los estudiantes.

Y hasta sin el programa federal que permitió que todas las comidas fueran gratis para todos los estudiantes, cuando una escuela tiene un nivel particularmente alto de estudiantes en pobreza, podría de todos modos ofrecer desayunos y comidas gratis para todos los estudiantes.

#### **Si los departamentos de comida de las escuelas están recibiendo menos dinero, ¿habrá una diferencia en las comidas que ofrecerán?**

Los directores de comedores escolares dicen que no. Aunque todos los distritos están anticipando que menos estudiantes comerán al mediodía porque menos de ellos calificarán para un subsidio, los funcionarios también esperan un aumento en el reembolso por cada comida (en comparación con la cantidad de antes de la pandemia).

No obstante, es posible que los menús se vean afectados por problemas en la cadena de suministro y el aumento en el costo de los alimentos.

"Realmente tratamos de planear nuestros menús según el reembolso que esperamos recibir", dijo Jorstad. "Ahora mismo no estamos contemplando cambiar ninguna de las opciones de frutas y verduras de nuestro menú. Estamos bastante orgullosos de las frutas y verduras frescas que ofrecemos diariamente".

#### **Si las familias no califican para recibir comidas gratis o a precio reducido, pero de todos modos**

**no pueden darles dinero a sus hijos para comer en la escuela, ¿las escuelas tienen alguna otra ayuda?**

Los directores de comedores escolares del distrito dicen que es una pregunta difícil de contestar. Los padres deben acudir a las escuelas para hablar acerca de otras opciones. Las reglas federales previenen que los distritos escolares puedan dar comidas gratis.

A menudo una escuela puede permitir que un estudiante coma sin pagar en ese momento, pero le enviará una factura a la familia después. Antes de comenzar la pandemia, a muchos distritos escolares les preocupaba la cantidad de deudas que las familias estaban acumulando. Algunas escuelas cuentan con un presupuesto específico para estas situaciones. En otros casos, los distritos han recibido donativos para ayudar a saldar las deudas acumuladas por los estudiantes que no podían pagar.

"No tengan miedo de preguntar", dijo Jorstad. "Pero lo primero, y lo más importante, es llenar ese formulario y dar la información para nosotros poder determinar si son elegibles".

**Yesenia Robles es reportera para Chalkbeat Colorado y cubre asuntos relacionados con los distritos escolares K-12 y la educación multilingüe.**

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## Cash

businesses, farmers, and ranchers, ending the "tampon and diaper tax" by permanently exempting these items from state sales tax, cutting the cost of a state parks pass by more than half through the Keep Colorado Wild Pass starting in 2023, providing free transit and bus fares across Colorado this and next summer.

"This is a crucial time for us to get tax refunds back to taxpayers, which is why we are here to let folks know to keep an eye out for their Colorado Cash Back tax refund. Refunds will continue to be mailed out on a rolling basis through September," said Treasurer Dave Young.

"We are processing more than 2.4 million payments to get money back to people as quickly as possible, providing relief for Coloradans and their families," said Department of Revenue Executive Director Mark Ferrandino.

"With supply chain challeng-

es and global inflation squeezing families' budgets, we passed legislation this year to create the Colorado Cash Back plan, which will soon send Coloradans refund checks of \$750 for single filers or \$1,500 for joint filers," said Rep. Tony Exum, D-COLORADO SPRINGS. "Because of our work at the capitol to save people money, boost our economy and reform our tax code, hardworking Coloradans will see thousands of dollars back in their pockets. We doubled tax credits for hardworking families, reduced property taxes by \$700 million, lowered taxes on social security beneficiaries, and created free universal preschool, which along with the Colorado Cash Back checks, will help millions of Coloradans with the rising cost of living."

"When I was sworn in as Pueblo's state Senator, I knew that with inflation forcing Pueblans to stretch their paychecks farther for less, I had to take bold action

to help support the working families who need it most," said Senator Nick Hinrichsen, D-PUEBLO. "That's why I carried the bill to expedite badly-needed relief checks for Pueblo families through the Colorado Cash Back program. By speeding up the timeline and making relief checks more equitable, we're getting Pueblo taxpayers the cash they need when they need it to pay the bills and afford everyday purchases like diapers and groceries - over \$400 more for the average Colorado family than they would've received under traditional refund mechanisms. This relief couldn't come at a better time, and I am proud to be giving hard working Coloradans the boost they need to help their families, neighbors, and communities thrive."

"Starting soon, Coloradans will see immediate relief from the Colorado Cash Back plan to help with rising costs, gas, groceries, and everyday necessities," said Rep. Lind-

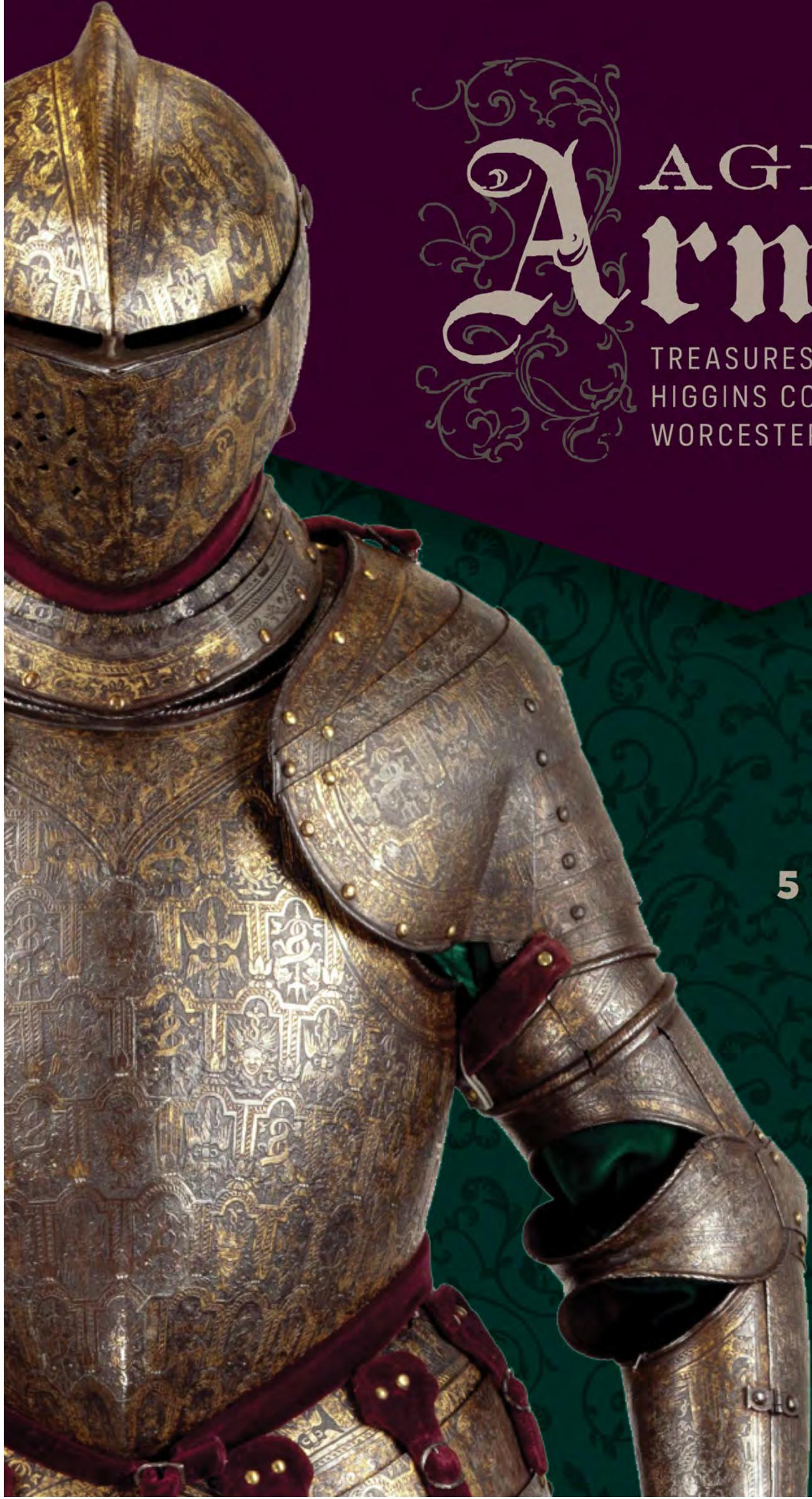
sey Daugherty, D-ARVADA. "Coloradans are getting their money back earlier, when they need it most, because we took action to send these checks as soon as possible. The record surplus revenue we are refunding through the Colorado Cash Back plan is the result of our strong recovery and our concrete steps to close tax loopholes on the special interests, govern responsibly through the pandemic and power the Colorado Comeback."

"Democrats are laser focused on saving Colorado families money, and our Colorado Cash Back plan will help ease the pain we're all feeling due to rising inflation by giving folks big refund checks back as soon as possible," said Senator Robert Rodriguez, D-DENVER. "Thanks to our bill, coupled with Democrats responsible budgeting and a record state surplus, this critical relief will help ease the financial burden folks across our state are struggling with at

a time when they need it most." Taxpayers who did not file a return by June 30 can still file a state tax return before Oct. 17, 2022. Those who file in October can expect to receive their refund check in January 2023. Every full-year Colorado resident who was at least 18 years old on December 31, 2021 should file a Colorado return to claim the Colorado Cash Back Rebate even if they did not have taxable income. On average, about 90% of filers file on time by April 15, with the remaining 10% filing by the extended deadline of October 17.

The Department of Revenue provides community resources to assist Coloradans with tax filing. Starting tomorrow, Coloradans can call 303-951-4996 or visit [coloradocashback.com](http://coloradocashback.com) to receive up-to-date information about the tax rebates.

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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 5/8 x 4 1/8 in), 47 lb, 15  
oz (peso). Colección John Woodman Higgins Armory, 2014.112. Imagen ©2021  
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