

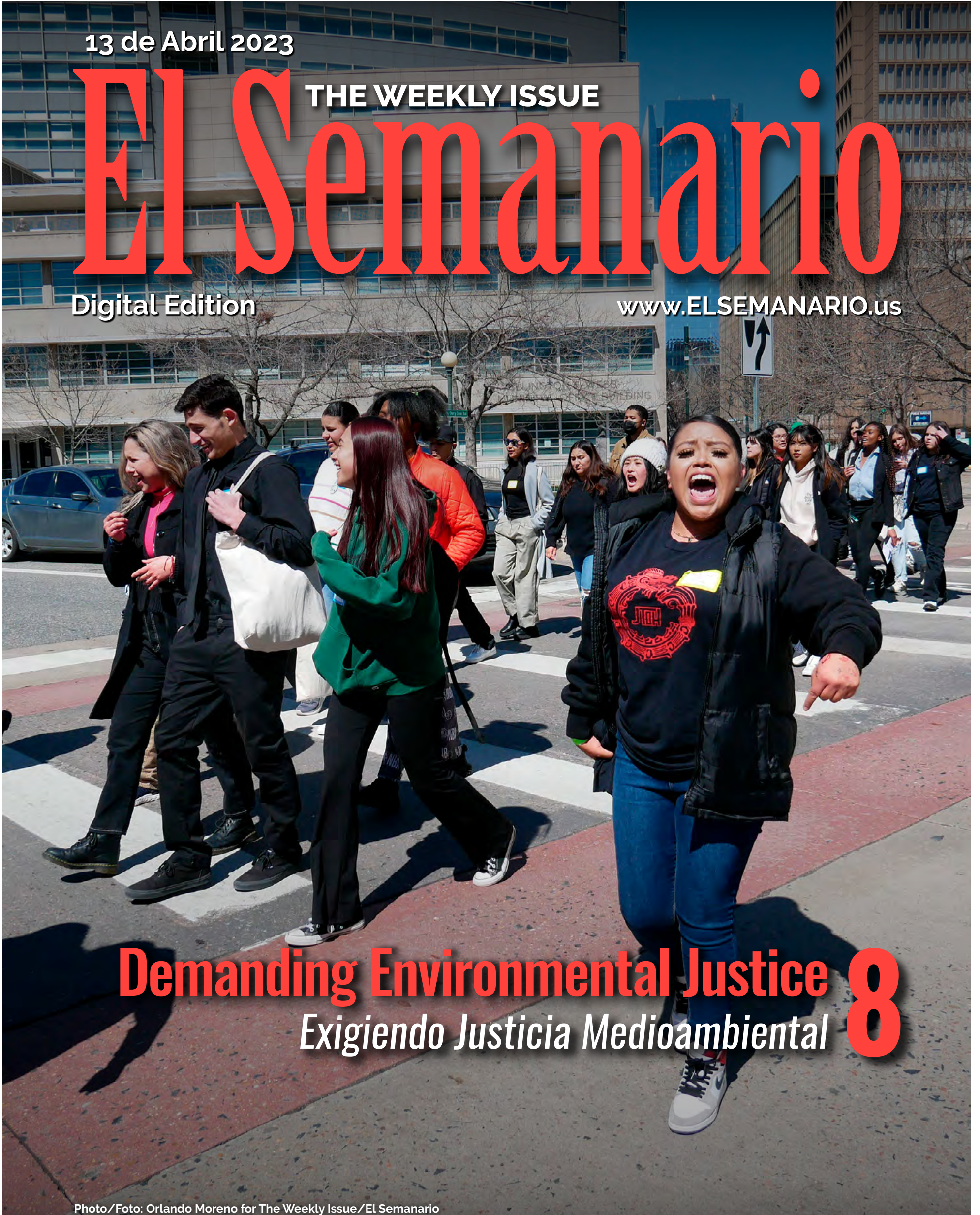
13 de Abril 2023

THE WEEKLY ISSUE

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**Demanding Environmental Justice** 8  
*Exigiendo Justicia Medioambiental*

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**Chris M. Fresquez**  
President / CEO - Publisher

**Toni C. Fresquez**  
Editor

**Juan Carlos Uribe**  
Spanish Editor

**Raya Tkachenko**  
Layout/Production

**THE WEEKLY ISSUE / El Semanario**

**Mailing Address:**  
P.O. Box 460428, Glendale CO 80246



800-886-4054  
303-672-0800  
720-368-5387 Fax



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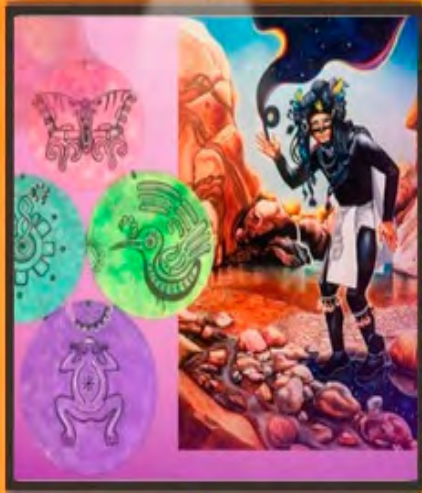
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# UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS



## Flor Y Canto

Located at CHAC Gallery in Lakewood

Opening: April 7th

## Amor Es Amor

Located at Northglenn Arts

Opening: April 14th

## Food & Culture

Located at OZ Gallery in Thornton

Opening: June 13th

# Bone Chilling News Out of Antarctica

Javier Sierra

Glaciologists have for the first time detected alarming signs in the world's coldest place—East Antarctica. Due to recent years of extraordinarily warm temperatures, its ice shelves and glaciers are showing weakening symptoms, which are triggering fears that a region with a potential global sea level rise of 52 meters could enter an unstoppable melting cycle.

Almost at the same time, the UN Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change issued its most unequivocal report ever—in order to avoid the catastrophic effects of warming the atmosphere beyond 1.5 degree Celsius, humanity must stop expanding the use of fossil fuels at once, and warned us that we are on our way to 2.8 degrees of warming by 2100.

Even so, the oil and gas industry, with its overwhelming influence over the world's governments, continues to behave as if we were in 1950. The Biden Administration has approved the Willow Project, a huge dirty energy venture in Alaska that will spew close to 300 million tons of CO2 into the atmosphere, and has opened 1.6 million



Washington, DC, rally to pressure banks backing fossil fuels. / Manifestación en Washington, DC, contra la financiación de combustibles fósiles. (Photo/Foto: courtesy/cortesía Ben Cushing)

acres in the Gulf Of Mexico to oil and gas extraction.

This planetary negligence demands a historic response. More than two dozen states and localities have filed lawsuits against this industry seeking compensation for the disasters unleashed by the climate crisis, plus the costs of future disasters. The

industry witnessed another legal battle with profound disappointment. The 8th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that these lawsuits must be contested in local courts, where the industry confronts an uphill battle to prevail. And the virtual impunity this industry operates with is unleashing unprecedented pushback, including a

study that proposes to press homicide charges against it.

“The fossil fuel industry have not simply been lying to the public,” states the study, in part sponsored by Public Citizen. “They have been killing members of the public at an accelerating rate, and prosecutors should bring that crime to the public’s attention. What’s on their ledger in terms of harm, there’s nothing like it in human history.”

So far, the most effective response has been impacting where it hurts the most, their pockets. The environmental movement has launched a national campaign to press the banks that continue to finance the expansion of fossil fuels. Even though a year ago, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Chase and Citibank committed themselves to reach net-zero climate emissions, these banks still are the strongest financial backers of this industry in the US. The Willow Project alone will require some \$10 billion in investments.

This is an international scandal. The International Energy Agency has also warned us that to limit the warming to 1.5 degrees, it’s imperative that the world ceases to expand fossil fuels.

Since the signing of the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015, however, the banking sector has loaned \$4.6 trillion to this industry. And even though it has been around for 150 years, the world keeps supporting it as if it were a startup. According to the International Monetary Fund, in 2020, the industry received \$5.9 trillion in subsidies, or 6.8 percent of the world’s GDP.

“

*This planetary negligence demands a historic response.*

The fossil fuel industry, regardless of its obscene profits, finds itself in a corner. The lawsuits and intense social pressure are spreading out to other sectors of the economy, who are afraid that the financial and social consequences of this international scandal may splatter all over them as well.

It’s good that not only the innocent feel the chill down our spines.

Javier Sierra writes the monthly bilingual column *Sierra & Tierra*.

Read More Commentary: [ElSemanarioOnline.com](http://ElSemanarioOnline.com)

# Se Le Hiel a Uno la Sangre Antartica

Javier Sierra

De la Antártica nos llegan recientes noticias que le hielan a uno la sangre.

Glaciólogos han detectado por primera vez alarmantes signos de debilidad del lugar más frío del mundo—la Antártica Oriental. Debido a recientes años extraordinariamente cálidos, sus plataformas de hielo y glaciares se están debilitando, lo cual hace temer que la región con un potencial de elevación del nivel del mar global de 52 metros

entre en un ciclo imparable de derretimiento.

Casi al mismo tiempo, el Panel Intergubernamental sobre Cambio Climático de la ONU emitió su reporte más tajante y concluyente: para evitar los catastróficos efectos de calentar la atmósfera más de 1,5o centígrados, la humanidad no puede expandir el uso de combustibles fósiles ni un día más, y nos advierte que vamos camino de los 2,8o para 2100.

Aun así, la industria petrolera y gasera, con su abrumadora influen-

cia en los gobiernos del mundo, sigue comportándose como si estuviéramos en 1950. La administración Biden ha aprobado el Proyecto Willow, una enorme iniciativa de energía sucia en Alaska que emitirá a la atmósfera cerca de 300 millones de toneladas de dióxido de carbono, y ha abierto el acceso a 1,6 millones de acres del Golfo de México a la extracción petrolera y gasera.

Esta negligencia planetaria exige una respuesta histórica. Más de 20 estados y ciudades han presentado

pleitos contra esta industria en busca de compensación por los desastres desatados por la crisis climática, además los costos de otros desastres que sin duda nos deparará el futuro. La industria presencié el desenlace de otra batalla legal con el alma en vilo. La Corte Federal de Apelaciones del 8o Circuito decidió que estos pleitos deben dilucidarse en el ámbito local, donde la industria tiene menos probabilidades de triunfar. Y la hasta ahora práctica impunidad con la que opera esta industria está desatando reacciones sin precedentes, incluyendo un estudio que propone querrellarse por homicidio.

“La industria de combustibles fósiles no solo ha estado engañando al público,” declara el estudio, en parte patrocinado por el grupo Public Citizen. “También ha matado a miembros del público a un ritmo acelerado, y los fiscales deben traer ese crimen a la atención pública. No hay nada parecido a este comportamiento en la historia humana”.

La respuesta más eficaz hasta el momento ha sido impactar donde más duele, en el bolsillo. El movimiento ambiental nacional ha lanzado una intensa campaña para presionar a los bancos que continúan financiando la expansión de los combustibles fósiles. Pese a que hace un año Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Chase y Citibank se comprometieron a alcanzar cero emisiones climáticas, estos bancos siguen siendo el mayor respaldo financiero de esta industria en Estados Unidos. Solo el Proyecto

Willow requiere de unos \$10.000 millones para implementarlo.

Este es un escándalo mundial. Pese a que la Agencia Internacional de Energía nos ha advertido que para limitar el calentamiento a los 1,5o centígrados, es imperativo que no se expanda la explotación de combustibles sucios. Desde la firma del Tratado Climático de París en 2015, sin embargo, la industria bancaria mundial ha prestado \$4,6 billones (*trillions* en inglés) al sector de combustibles fósiles. Pese a que esta desastrosa industria lleva más de un siglo en existencia, el mundo sigue apoyándola como si acabara de nacer. Según el Fondo Monetario Internacional, en 2020, el sector recibió \$5,9 billones en subsidios, o el 6,8% del PNB mundial.

“

*Esta negligencia planetaria exige una respuesta histórica.*

La industria de combustibles fósiles, pese a sus escandalosas ganancias, cada vez está más acorralada. Los pleitos y la presión social contra ella se están extendiendo a otras industrias temerosas de que las consecuencias financieras de este histórico escándalo les salpique.

Es bueno que no solo a los inocentes se nos hiele la sangre.

Javier Sierra escribe la columna mensual bilingüe del *Sierra & Tierra*.

Leer Más Comentarios: [ElSemanarioOnline.com](http://ElSemanarioOnline.com)

# When Republican Extremism Is No Longer Hidden

Maribel Hastings and David Torres

The same week that we commemorated the 55th anniversary of the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis, Tennessee, the Tennessee General Assembly in Nashville, majority-Republican, expelled two young, Black Democratic representatives on April 6. The reason? Leading their constituents in a gun control protest on the floor. Days earlier, a school shooting in that city took the lives of six people, including three nine year-old children.

“

*It is well-said that there is nothing more evident than a racist being racist.*

But the vote, in reality, was to expel three Democrats: one woman, Gloria Johnson, and the two young, Black men, Justin Pearson and Justin Jones. However, something very particular happened, though not too shocking these days, according to the Republican racial code: Johnson, who is white, kept her place by one vote. (Jones was reinstated to his position on Monday following a vote of the Nashville City



Council, the city he represents in the state's General Assembly.)

It is well-said that there is nothing more evident than a racist being racist; it doesn't matter if their rejection of someone for their color takes place in a store, an airport, a school, or a legislative body. It's something intrinsic to their way of being and thinking, the culture in which they were raised and the education they received in their family. Despite all the efforts of various generations, it's sad to realize that Rev. Dr. King's dream has yet to be realized.

Basically, racist acts today are just as obvious as ever, even at the height of the fight for civil rights. And Republicans do not even try to hide it. Why? Because there is a considerable segment of the U.S. population that still abides by the anachronistic standard of white privilege, which translates, in electoral times, into guaranteed votes, based on the old-fashioned promise of a United



States where white was the color that dominated everything.

Take this, for example: chamber Republican leaders argued that they did not expel Johnson because her participation in the protest was not as "active" as Pearson and Jones', although Johnson herself told the press that it was ob-

vious that the difference in treatment was due to "the color of our skin."

Nor did those same Republican leaders opt for sanctions less than expulsion because, according to them, they had to send a message that this type of conduct would not be accepted in the middle of a session.

What's more, some had the audacity to compare a peaceful demonstration in Tennessee with the assault on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, by fanatic followers of Donald Trump, where mob violence resulted in destruction and death. But they are two distinct and separate occurrences. In Tennessee, it was about stopping the use of guns that destroy lives, as part of a never-ending epidemic of mas-

sacres; in Washington, it was about a *coup d'état* in real-time, with the whole world as a witness while it unfolded.

But the more complicated matter is evidence of how Republicans use their majorities in state assemblies and governors' mansions around the country in order to silence their opponents, particularly if they are female or people of color.

At the governorship level, one only has to look at the record of Republicans in states like Florida, for example.

Ron DeSantis, whose is seen as an aspiring Republican presidential nominee in 2024, has launched a veritable crusade against immigrants, in a state

See Hastings & Torres on page 21



APRIL 2023

April 16

6:30 - DC Emancipation Day Panel

April 17

11:45 - Housing Task Force Meeting, Land Use, Prop 123, and Housing

April 17

6:30 - Alternative Voting Methods Task Force

April 19

12:00 - Elections Task Force

April 20

5:30 - Reproductive Justice Task Force



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# Cuando el Extremismo Republicano Ya No Se Disimula

Maribel Hastings y David Torres

En la misma semana en que se conmemoró el 55to aniversario del asesinato del líder de los derechos civiles Martin Luther King, Jr. en Memphis, Tenesí, la Cámara de Representantes de Nashville, de mayoría republicana, expulsaba el 6 de abril a dos jóvenes representantes demócratas y afroamericanos. ¿La razón?: Liderar desde el pleno una protesta de sus representados en favor del control de armas. Días antes, un tiroteo en una escuela de esa ciudad cobró la vida de seis personas, incluyendo dos niñas y un niño de nueve años de edad.

“

*Bien dicen que nada hay más evidente que un racista siendo racista.*

Pero esa votación, en realidad, fue para expulsar a tres demócratas: una

mujer, Gloria Johnson, y los dos jóvenes afroamericanos, Justin Pearson y Justin Jones. Sin embargo, sucedió algo muy particular pero no tan extraño en los tiempos actuales, según el código racial republicano: Johnson, que es blanca, mantuvo su cargo por un voto. (Jones fue restituido en su cargo el lunes tras un voto del concejo de la ciudad de Nashville, a la que representa en la Cámara Baja del estado.)

Bien dicen que nada hay más evidente que un racista siendo racista, no importa que su rechazo contra alguien por su color lo lleve a cabo en una tienda, un aeropuerto, una escuela o un recinto legislativo. Es algo intrínseco a su forma de ser y de pensar, a la cultura en que creció y a la educación familiar que recibió. De tal modo que, a pesar de todos los esfuerzos de distintas generaciones, es lamentable concluir que el sueño del reverendo King sigue sin cumplirse.

En efecto, los actos racistas son hoy tan abiertos como antes, como en lo más intenso de la lucha por los derechos

Vea Hastings & Torres/Esp, página 20

# Migrant Deaths in Mexico Put Spotlight on US Policy

Raquel Aldana

The fire-related deaths of at least 39 migrants in a detention facility in Ciudad Juárez, just across the U.S. border with Mexico, will likely be found to have had several contributing factors.

There was the immediate cause of the blaze, the mattresses apparently set alight by desperate men in the center to protest their imminent deportation. And then there is the apparent role of guards, seen on video walking away from the blaze.

But as an expert on immigration policy, I believe there is another part of the tragedy that can't be overlooked: the decadeslong immigration enforcement policies of the U.S. and Mexican governments that have seen the number of people kept in such facilities skyrocket.

In the aftermath of the fire, Felipe González Morales, the United Nations special rapporteur for human rights of migrants, commented on Twitter that the "extensive use of immigration detention leads to tragedies like this one."

And the United States is a big part of that "extensive use" on both sides of the border.

## Lengthy stays and fear of deportation

Today, Mexico maintains a very large detention system. It comprises several dozen short- and long-term detention centers, housing more than 300,000 people in 2021.

By comparison, the U.S. immigration detention system is the world's largest. It maintains 131 facilities comprised of government-owned Service

Processing Centers, privately run Contract Detention Facilities, and a variety of other detention facilities, including prisons.



*The likelihood is the policy will only worsen the migrant processing bottleneck in Mexico.*

Mexico has laws in place that are supposed to guarantee that migrants in detention only endure brief stays and are afforded due process, such as access to lawyers and interpreters. The law also states that they should have adequate conditions, including access to education and health care.

But in reality, what migrants often face at these detention centers is poor sanitary conditions, overcrowding, lengthy stays and despair over the near certainty of deportation.

The fire in Ciudad Juárez was started after the migrants – men from Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela, El Salvador, Colombia and Ecuador – learned that they were to be sent back to those nations, according to Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. Deportation would have ended their hopes of asylum in the U.S.

## US immigration enforcement shifts south

Why Mexico was doing the deporting, not the U.S., has a great deal to do with how the two nations have collaborated to control illegal migration headed to the U.S., especially since the turn of



the century. In the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks of 2001, U.S. authorities increasingly viewed immigration as a security issue – a pivot that affected not only U.S. domestic legislation on immigration but its bilateral relations with Mexico.

In 2006, Mexican President Felipe Calderón joined efforts with President

See Aldana on page 21

# Supreme Court's Dangerous Donziger Decision

Chase Iron Eyes

The U.S. Supreme Court just keeps getting things wrong. In late March, it declined to review attorney Steven Donziger's appeal of his criminal conviction for contempt of court. If Donziger's name sounds familiar to you, that's perhaps because

he's a good man who helped win a landmark \$9.5 billion judgment against Chevron on behalf of thousands of Indigenous People in the Ecuadorian Amazon. More than a decade ago, the oil giant was found guilty of causing disastrous health problems via its brazen environmental pollution of the world's largest rainforest.

Chevron, represented by Big Oil law firm Gibson Dunn, relentlessly contested Donziger's legal victory in Ecuador, eventually securing a challenge in U.S. federal court. You're probably also familiar with Gibson Dunn — the same firm now representing the plaintiffs seeking to dismantle the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) at the Supreme

Court. We feel that's no coincidence, and it's one reason we met with Mr. Donziger while he was confined at a halfway house about a year ago.

A few other things make this case particularly concerning. Atypically, after the federal prosecutor in Manhattan declined to bring criminal contempt charges against Donziger, a federal judge — who held investments in Chevron at the time of his decision — appointed a private law firm to prosecute anyway. A second federal judge delegated to oversee that prosecution served on the board of the Federalist



Donziger appealed his conviction to the Supreme Court, but the justices, in March's 7-2 decision, denied his petition. It may surprise you to learn the two dissenting justices who supported hearing Donziger's case were Brett Kavanaugh and Neil Gorsuch. These two deeply conservative men raised concerns about judicial overreach and constitutional protections requiring separation of powers, while the liberal wing of the Court strangely remained silent.

It's critical that we continue to pay attention to the Supreme Court, and not just on ICWA. It's difficult to fathom the rationale behind some of their recent decisions, but in other cases, it may be entirely too clear. This court seems eager to roll back our freedoms despite years of precedent, as it did when it overturned *Roe v. Wade*. And, as it has done here, it appears willing to allow new degrees of overreach by activist judges with obvious conflicts of interest.

Wopila tanka — thank you for paying attention and standing for justice!

Chase Iron Eyes is the Co-Director and Lead Counsel at The Lakota People's Law Project.

Read More Commentary: [ElSemnarioOnline.com](https://ElSemnarioOnline.com)



*It's critical that we continue to pay attention to the Supreme Court, and not just on ICWA.*

Society, a far-right think tank known for helping stack the federal judiciary with conservative judges and regularly receiving donations from, you guessed it, Chevron.

It should come as no surprise, then, that Donziger was subsequently convicted. He ended up serving nearly two months behind bars and spent another two and half years under house arrest. In 2021, during his incarceration, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called for Donziger's release, stating that his pre-trial detention was illegal.



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# With Expulsion of Tennessee Black Lawmakers, Republicans Lost GenZ

Heather MacDonald

Following a [school shooting in Nashville last month](#), hundreds of protesters gathered in the Tennessee capital demanding lawmakers act to address the out of control gun violence that once again unnecessarily took innocent lives.

In response, the Tennessee's Republican-controlled state House [took the historic and extraordinary action](#) of expelling two Black Democratic lawmakers for joining their constituents in demanding justice. This egregious overreaction not only gave us permission to drop the "theory" from critical race theory, it also gave us a masterclass in the dying efficacy of respectability politics.

## Respectability Politics

The lawmakers in question, state Reps. Justin Jones and Justin Pearson were expelled for "breach of decorum," and a third lawmaker, Democratic Rep. Gloria Johnson, narrowly survived expulsion by a single vote. On Monday, the Metro Nashville Council [voted to reappoint Jones to his seat](#), the Tennessee Lookout, a sibling site of the Pennsylvania Capital-Star, reported.

In the lead up to the vote, Republican Rep. Andrew Farmer did little to disguise his haughty disdain saying, "Just because you don't get your way, you can't come to the well, bring your friends and throw a temper tantrum with an adolescent bullhorn."

The unspoken sentiment was clear, "Know your place."

Respectability politics rely on the idea that that process and procedure are paramount in all scenarios. Those in power create invisible hierarchies to label their behavior as proper and the behavior of their foes as problematic. It is historically a tool of those in power as a way to slow progress, disparage the marginalized, and justify harm. As have many shameful lawmakers before them, Tennessee Republicans weaponized the rules of conduct to punish elected officials who disagree with them.

The contrived cloak of dignified decorum starts to seriously fray when the subject at hand is children gunned

down at school. Protests led by students erupted through the capital doors, while lawmakers, shielded by police, hung their heads as they maneuvered through the crowds.

The typical heartless platitudes post-mass shooting did nothing but fan the flames of discontent. Republican leaders nationwide mindlessly tweeted out their classic slap-in-the-face response of *thoughts and prayers*, and they were met with unflinchingly honest chants from hundreds of students: *Shame! Enough! Do your job! You ban books, you ban drag, kids are still in body bags!*

“

*“Your overreaction, your flexing of false power has awakened a generation of people who will let you know that your time is up.”*  
Tennessee State Rep. Justin Jones

Kids are still in body bags.

In case it was not abundantly clear: respectability politics mean nothing to GenZ. Rehearsing dodging bullets in your classroom will do that to you.

If such glaring issues as gun violence, healthcare, and climate change were not enough to engage the youth, watching racism and inequality so blatantly on display certainly did the job.

Jones said as much on his way out, "Your overreaction, your flexing of false power has awakened a generation of people who will let you know that your time is up."

## Consider the numbers:

- 63% of 18-29 year olds believe gun laws should be stricter
- 70% of 18-29 year olds voted for U.S. John Fetterman, D-Pa., (That was similar to the numbers for Pennsylvania Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro)
- 77% of GenZ voted for Democratic candidates for Congress in 2022
- And just last week, 87% of students voted for the Democrat in Wisconsin's Supreme Court race

Guns are now the leading cause of death for children, and until lawmakers address the issue head-on, GenZ will never vote Republican. Republican rhetoric sounds old and lame to a generation taught how to play dead just in case they become one of the 19,000 kids per year that will be shot.

Gun-obsessed Republican lawmakers should stop hiding behind 2nd Amendment rhetoric and tell GenZ point blank that some of them will have to die so they can keep their hobby, that they would rather build schools with curved hallways to stop bullets rather than try to keep them safe.

## Good Trouble

Decorum being front and center in the same week that a former President Donald Trump was indicted on 34 felonies including paying a porn star hush money shows how painfully out of touch Republican messaging really is.

Even more stunningly tone deaf, one Tennessee lawmaker compared the student led protest to an insurrection. Another asked the children gathered in the capital which gun they preferred being shot with. The Tennessee GOP has been fundraising boasting that they were just getting started.

While egregious, this authoritari-



Rep. Justin Jones, left, and Justin Pearson, right, were expelled from the Tennessee House. (Photo: John Partipilo/Tennessee Lookout).

an behavior is yet more proof that the right has run out of ideas. This hideous attempt to silence dissent has the potential to become a cultural touchstone for years to come.

When Tennessee Republicans inadvertently grabbed the national spotlight, it was the chants of the protestors that were amplified, the speeches of the subverted that were canonized, and "the Tennessee 3" who embodied the often-cited "Good Trouble" credo of the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., an icon of the civil rights movement.

They used their power and their social capital to pour into a city in grief, and in the end, they paid a high price for being the only leaders in a room full of cowards.

Leaving our nation's youth to protest alone is not an option, and they recognize genuine governance when they see it. The small men hiding behind their wagging fingers of decorum will be remembered only for their proximity to the voices they tried to silence.

History will celebrate the good not the evil, the response not the accusation, the comeback not the dismissal.

Heather MacDonald is a co-founder of [The Good Trouble Project](#). This commentary is republished from [Pennsylvania Capital Star](#) under a Creative Commons license.

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# Students Take Action for Environmental Justice and School Safety



Environmental Advocates on the lawn of the Colorado State Capitol on April 5, 2023. / Defensores del medio ambiente en el césped del Capitolio del Estado de Colorado el 5 de abril de 2023. (Photo/Foto: Orlando Moreno for El Semanario)



Patricia Ferrero, Leadership Development Manager, Protége, speaks to youth at an environmental advocacy training on April 5, 2023 in Denver, Colorado. / Patricia Ferrero, Directora de Desarrollo de Liderazgo de Protége, habla a los jóvenes en una formación sobre defensa del medio ambiente el 5 de abril de 2023 en Denver, Colorado. (Photo/Foto: Victoria Acuña / El Semanario)

By Victoria Acuña

Youth from high schools all around the Denver metro area gathered last week at the Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU) Protect Our Future! event, a student environmental justice advocacy day designed to educate youth on climate activism.

Colorado students from Aurora Central High School, Sheridan High School, Empower Community High School, Environmental Learning for Kids, and MSU Denver learned about current climate bills in Colorado—[SB23-213](#) and [HB23-1257](#)—sponsored

by environmental organizations such as Conservation Colorado.

Renee Millard-Chacón, Executive Director and Co-Founder of [Womxn From the Mountain](#), opened the event by addressing the significance of environmental justice.

“Environmental racism has started with stolen land and stolen resources,” she said. “As of right now, the United Nations has officially ruled in the Geneva Convention that countries are responsible for environmental racism. That means the U.S. is responsible for how they’ve treated every BIPOC community, from stealing our resources, to redlining, to gentrification.”

Millard-Chacón encouraged those in attendance to continue their environmental efforts and challenged the youth to come together and create a monumental movement.

“What I’m asking of all of you is to move with awareness. Move gently, be educated...Most of all, I need y’all to step up. I need you to have *ganas* and come and join us, because we can’t do this alone,” added Millard-Chacón.

Patricia Ferrero, Leadership Development Manager, for Protége, explained to the students what it means to be a constituent.

“There’s a difference between being a constituent and being a voter.

Constituents are much more than just voters, they’re anyone who lives in the district. And all of you, regardless of whether you can vote or not, are bosses,” she said.

“We want to teach our family and friends how to get involved as well. Today, you guys are doing this [lobbying]. Tomorrow, you can tell your caregivers and friends how easy it was. Today, we are giving you tools and resources to take home and do with it what you want,” explained Ferrero.

After the advocacy training session, the group of students marched to the Colorado State Capitol from the Auraria Campus. As they approached the Capitol, there were several other high school students on the west steps of the building. These students were participating in a [national walkout](#) against

gun violence, after a series of gun violence incidents at East High School that led Denver Public Schools to [reinstate armed school resource officers in schools](#).

Both groups stood on the steps of the Capitol to hold up their signs and join each other in chants for both gun violence and the environment. There was a certain level of excitement that was felt as the groups came together. During the training day at MSU, students were quite shy and reserved. But when they saw that there was another youth group at the Capitol, there was a sudden change in energy, as the groups cheered for each other.

After spending time together, most of the walkout students entered the

See [Students](#) on page 17

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# Los Estudiantes Actúan por la Justicia Ambiental y la Seguridad Escolar



Los estudiantes ejercieron presión en el Capitolio del Estado de Colorado el 5 de abril de 2023; jóvenes activistas medioambientales (izquierda) y jóvenes que abogan contra la violencia armada protagonizaron una marcha (derecha). / Students lobbied at the Colorado State Capitol on April 5, 2023; young environmental activists (left) and youth advocating against gun violence led a walkout (right). (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez / El Semanario)



Estudiantes marcharon al Capitolio del Estado de Colorado el 5 de abril de 2023 para presionar en favor de la justicia medioambiental y de una legislación climática progresista. / Students marched to the Colorado State Capitol on April 5, 2023, to lobby for environmental justice and progressive climate legislation. (Photo/Foto: Orlando Moreno for El Semanario)

## Por Victoria Acuña

Jóvenes de institutos de toda el área metropolitana de Denver se reunieron la semana pasada en la Universidad Estatal Metropolitana de Denver (MSU) para ¡Protejamos nuestro futuro!, una jornada estudiantil de

defensa de la justicia medioambiental diseñada para educar a los jóvenes en el activismo climático.

Los estudiantes de Colorado de Aurora Central High School, Sheridan High School, Empower Community High School, Environmental Learning for Kids, y MSU Denver aprendieron

sobre los proyectos de ley climáticos actuales en Colorado—[SB23-213](#) y [HB23-1257](#)—patrocinados por organizaciones ambientales como Conservation Colorado.

Renee Millard-Chacón, directora ejecutiva y cofundadora de [Womxn From the Mountain](#), abrió el acto abor-

dando la importancia de la justicia medioambiental.

“

*"Si no te sacrificas por lo que quieres, lo que quieres se convertirá en el sacrificio".*

*Zachary, Estudiante de Empower Community High School*

“El racismo medioambiental comenzó con el robo de tierras y recursos”, afirmó. “A partir de ahora, las Naciones Unidas han dictaminado oficialmente en la Convención de Ginebra que los países son responsables del racismo medioambiental. Eso significa

que EE.UU. es responsable de cómo ha tratado a todas las comunidades BI-POC, desde el robo de nuestros recursos hasta el aburguesamiento”.

Millard-Chacón animó a los asistentes a continuar con sus esfuerzos medioambientales y retó a los jóvenes a unirse y crear un movimiento monumental.

“Lo que os pido a todos es que os mováis con conciencia. Moveros con suavidad, educaros... Sobre todo, necesito que deis un paso al frente. Necesito que tengáis ganas y vengáis a uniros a nosotros, porque no podemos hacerlo solos”, añadió Millard-Chacón.

Patricia Ferrero, Directora de Desarrollo de Liderazgo de Protége, te,

Ve [Estudiantes](#), página 20

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# Inside One of the Country's Few Recovery High Schools

COLORADO

By Stephanie Daniel

Every weekday at 5280 High School in Denver starts the same way.

Students in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction gather on the steps of the school's indoor auditorium to discuss a topic chosen by staff members. One recent morning, they talked about mental health and sobriety. A teenage boy dressed in tan corduroys, a black hoodie, and sneakers went first.

"I didn't want to have, like, any emotion," he said. "So I thought, like, the best way to, like, put it down would be to do more and more and more drugs."

A classmate said she started doing drugs for fun and then got hooked. Another student said his addiction negatively impacts his mental health. A third announced an upcoming milestone.

"In, like, two days, I'll be six months sober," she said, as her classmates cheered.

The students attend Colorado's only recovery high school — one of 43 nationwide. These secondary schools are designed for students who are recovering from substance use disorder and

might also be dealing with related mental health disorders. The Denver school opened in 2018 as a public charter school that today enrolls more than 100 students annually.

One of those cheering classmates was sophomore Alexis Castillo, 16, who listened supportively during that recent morning meeting. She is in recovery for alcohol and fentanyl addictions. Several of her friends attended the school when she enrolled during her freshman year and initially loved it. But after a while some of Castillo's friends left

Castillo relapsed and school staffers helped her get into rehab. Three months later she was back at the school, sober and ready to do the work.

The school's mission is to help kids learn to live a substance-free life while receiving an education.

"They can go on to college or a career and really handle anything that life throws at them," said 5280's founder and executive director, Dr. Melissa Mouton.

In 2022, nearly a third of 12th graders and 1 in 5 10th graders reported using an illicit drug in the previous year, according to a national survey from the Monitoring the Future project conducted by the University of Michigan Survey Research Center. Those numbers have steadily decreased over the past 25 years. However, data from UCLA shows overdose deaths among teens doubled in the first year of the pandemic, mainly attributed to the increased prevalence of fentanyl-laced drugs.

The first recovery high school opened in Silver Spring, Maryland, in 1979 and similar programs now operate in 21 states. Compared with their peers at regular schools who have gone through treatment, recovery high school students have better attendance

“The No. 1 step is just letting them know out of the gate, no matter what’s going on, that we love them. We are here for them.”  
Brittany Kitchens, 5280 High School

and she grew disillusioned. She stopped going to class and wasn't motivated to work her recovery steps.

"They give you a lot of accountability," she said. "That was not something I wanted."



5280 High School in Denver is one of 43 secondary schools in the U.S. with a program designed for students recovering from substance use disorder and related mental health disorders. / La escuela secundaria 5280, en Denver, es una de las 43 escuelas del país diseñadas para estudiantes que se están recuperando de adicciones y afecciones de salud mental relacionadas. (Photo/Foto: Stephanie Daniel for KHN)

and are more likely to stay sober, and their graduation rate is at least 21% higher, according to one study.

"For this particular group of young people who have these disorders, this can be a lifesaver," said John Kelly, director of the Recovery Research Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital. "It can help them create a social norm of recovery."

There are three components to effective drug and alcohol treatment, according to Dr. Sharon Levy, a pediatrician and addiction medicine specialist at Boston Children's Hospital. The first part is medical, which includes seeing a doctor, drug testing, and using medications like buprenorphine to treat opioid addiction. The second is emotional support from counseling to address co-occurring mental health disorders. And there is a behavioral health component that, for kids, can include recovery schools.

"Recovery schools offer an opportunity really for peer support and mutual aid in a kind of a supervised and structured way," Levy said.

Recovery high schools often weave components of treatment into the school day — activities like 5280's daily recovery program meeting. In the afternoon, the school offers wellness electives such as basketball and journaling.

Recovery schools do face challenges. Most are publicly funded charter or alternative schools that carry a higher cost of educating students than traditional schools do. This is due to a smaller enrollment, the need for mental health and recovery personnel, higher faculty-to-student ratios, and other factors.

The Denver school enrolls about 100 students annually, making it one of the biggest recovery high schools in the nation. This year, the per-pupil cost is about \$25,000 per student but the school receives only about \$15,000 from federal, state, and local funding, according to Mouton. The remaining money comes from donors.

Given the complex needs of the students, "recovery schools will always be small," she said.

Pooling such students together may also raise a concern that students will trigger one another to use drugs and alcohol and relapse, but, Levy said, that's a risk with any social interaction.

"So, if you're in an environment where the recovery is kind of front and center and people are watching and monitoring and supervising," she said, "I think that's helpful for a lot of kids."

The school in Denver purposely keeps enrollment under capacity so additional teens can enroll anytime during the school year. A student won't get kicked out if they relapse, but there are two requirements: They must want to be sober and attend an outside recovery program.

"The No. 1 step is just letting them know out of the gate, no matter what's going on, that we love them," said Brittany Kitchens, the school's recovery coach. "We are here for them."

Kitchens teaches students how to navigate recovery and regulate their emotions. She likens herself to a hall monitor, constantly checking in with students and looking for changes in behavior.

"I tend to be the first kind of line that the kids will come to when they're experiencing something that is just a little bit too big for them to process," she said.

Some of these difficulties stem from traumas students have experienced, including sex and drug trafficking, and abandonment. Students also deal with traumas they have caused, Kitchens said, actions that landed them in jail or on probation. Kitchens, who is in recovery herself, shares coping mechanisms with the students.

"A lot of times it just starts with, 'Hey, take a breath, breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth,'" she said.

Alexis has been sober for nearly a year, she said. The morning meetings where she and her classmates talk about mental health, sobriety, and other topics are an opportunity to build a community of friends who support one another, something she said she didn't have when she was using drugs.

"It's really hard to get sober young," she said.

Stephanie Daniel is Senior Managing Editor, and Reporter, KUNC. This story is part of a partnership that includes KUNC, NPR and Kaiser Health News.

For More Colorado News: [EsemanarioOnline.com](http://EsemanarioOnline.com)



# Dentro de Una de las Pocas Escuelas Secundarias para Adolescentes con Adicciones

COLORADO

By Stephanie Daniel

Todos los días de la semana empiezan de la misma forma en la escuela secundaria 5280, en Denver. Los estudiantes en recuperación por adicciones a drogas y alcohol se reúnen en las escalinatas del auditorio para discutir un tema específico.

Una mañana reciente, hablaron sobre salud mental y sobriedad. Un adolescente vestido con pantalones de cordero marrón, una sudadera con capucha negra y zapatillas, fue el primero en participar.

“No quería tener... ninguna emoción”, dijo. “Así que pensé que la mejor manera de anularlas sería consumiendo más y más drogas”.

Una compañera dijo que empezó a consumir drogas por diversión y luego quedó atrapada. Otro estudiante dijo que su adicción afecta negativamente su salud mental.

Otra anunció un próximo hito. “En unos dos días cumpliré seis meses sobria”, dijo, mientras sus compañeros de clase la aplaudían.

Los estudiantes asisten a la única escuela secundaria de recuperación de Colorado, una de las 43 en todo el país.

Estas secundarias están diseñadas para estudiantes que se están recuperando de una adicción, y que también podrían estar lidiando con trastornos de salud mental relacionados. La escuela de Denver abrió sus puertas en 2018 como una escuela autónoma pública que hoy inscribe a más de 100 estudiantes al año.

Una de las que aplaudían y escuchaba apoyando en esa reunión matutina era la estudiante de segundo año Alexis Castillo, de 16 años. Está en recuperación por adicciones al alcohol y al fentanilo. Durante su primer año en la escuela, varios de sus amigos también se matricularon, y al principio les encantó.

Pero después de un tiempo, algunos se fueron y Castillo se desilusionó. Dejó de ir a asistir a clase y no estaba motivada para seguir sus pasos de recuperación.

“Te dan mucha responsabilidad”, dijo. “Eso no era algo que yo quisiera”.

Castillo recayó, y la escuela la ayudó a entrar en rehabilitación. Tres meses después estaba de regreso, sobria y lista para hacer su trabajo.

La misión de la escuela es ayudar a los jóvenes a aprender a vivir una vida libre de drogas mientras reciben una educación.

“Pueden ir a la universidad o hacer una carrera y realmente lidiar con cualquier cosa que les depara la vida”, dijo la doctora Melissa Mouton, fundadora y directora ejecutiva de 5280.

En 2022, casi un tercio de los estudiantes de 12° grado, y uno de cada 5 de 10° grado, informaron haber usado una droga ilegal el año anterior, según una encuesta nacional del proyecto Monitoring the Future realizada por el Centro de Investigación de Encuestas de la Universidad de Michigan.

“

*“El primer paso es hacerles saber desde el principio, sin importar lo que esté pasando, que los amamos. Estamos aquí para ellos”.*

*Brittany Kitchens, 5280 High School*

Esas cifras han disminuido constantemente en los últimos 25 años. Sin embargo, datos de la UCLA muestran que las muertes por sobredosis entre los adolescentes se duplicaron en el primer año de la pandemia, lo que se atribuye principalmente al aumento de la prevalencia de drogas con fentanilo.

La primera escuela secundaria de recuperación se inauguró en Silver

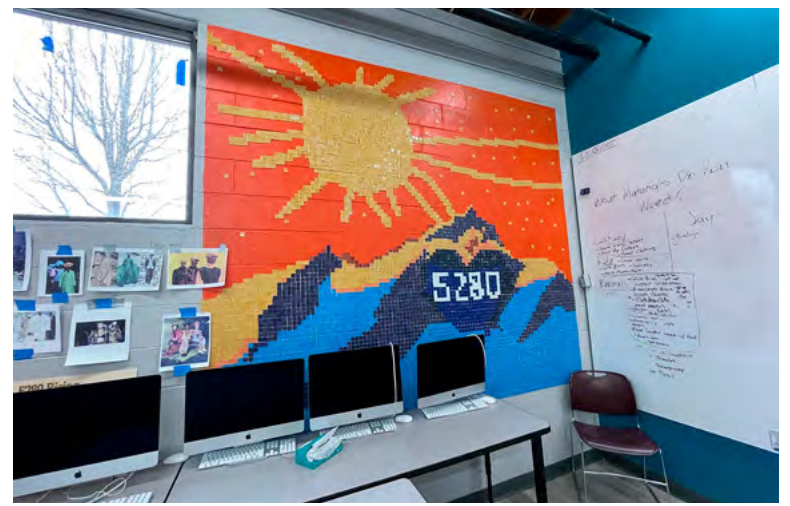
Spring, Maryland, en 1979, y en la actualidad, programas similares operan en 21 estados.

En comparación con sus compañeros en las escuelas regulares que han pasado por tratamiento, los estudiantes de secundaria en recuperación tienen una mejor asistencia y es más probable que permanezcan sobrios, y su tasa de graduación es al menos un 21% más alta, según un estudio.

“Para este grupo particular de jóvenes que tienen estos trastornos, esto puede ser un salvavidas”, dijo John Kelly, director del Instituto de Investigación de Recuperación del Hospital General de Massachusetts. “Puede ayudarlos a crear una norma social de recuperación”.

Para la doctora Sharon Levy, pediatra y especialista en medicina de adicciones del Hospital de Niños de Boston hay tres componentes para un tratamiento eficaz contra las adicciones. La primera parte es médica, que incluye ver a un doctor, pruebas de detección de drogas y el uso de medicamentos como la buprenorfina para tratar la adicción a los opioides.

El segundo es el apoyo emocional de la consejería para abordar los trastornos de salud mental concurrentes. Y



Un mosaico en el laboratorio de computación de la escuela secundaria 5280, en Denver. La única escuela secundaria de Colorado con un programa de recuperación abrió en 2018 como una escuela pública charter. /A mosaic in the computer lab at 5280 High School in Denver. Colorado's only high school with a recovery program opened in 2018 as a public charter school. (Foto/Photo: Stephanie Daniel for KHN)

hay un componente de salud conductual que, para los jóvenes, puede incluir escuelas de recuperación.

“Las escuelas de recuperación ofrecen una oportunidad real para el apoyo entre pares y la ayuda mutua de una manera supervisada y estructurada”, dijo Levy.

Estas escuelas a menudo incorporan componentes de tratamiento en el día escolar, actividades como la reunión diaria del programa de recuperación de 5280. Por la tarde, se ofrecen actividades optativas de bienestar como baloncesto y cómo escribir un diario.

Las escuelas de recuperación enfrentan desafíos. La mayoría son escuelas charter o alternativas financiadas con fondos públicos que tienen un costo más alto para educar a los

estudiantes que las escuelas tradicionales. Esto se debe a una inscripción más pequeña, la necesidad de personal de recuperación y salud mental, una mayor proporción de profesores por estudiante y otros factores.

La escuela de Denver inscribe a unos 100 estudiantes al año, lo que la convierte en una de las escuelas secundarias de recuperación más grandes del país. Este año, el costo es de aproximadamente \$25,000 por estudiante, pero la escuela recibe solo alrededor de \$15,000 de fondos federales, estatales y locales, según Mouton. El dinero restante proviene de donantes.

Dadas las complejas necesidades de los estudiantes, “las escuelas de recuperación siempre serán pequeñas”, dijo.

Ve **Escuelas**, página 17

Please contact COLOR about upcoming community forums on the **“Know Your Rights”** training for immigrant families and the **“What’s At Stake?”** information sessions regarding your health care coverage.

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El Semanario Community Partners

# Is Colorado Ready to Serve English Learners Under New Universal Preschool?

## COLORADO

By Yesenia Robles

Every morning, students in the Early Excellence Program in north Denver start their day with a song in Spanish and English. Story time and reading circles also happen in the two languages. Kids are encouraged, but never forced, to speak both.

These are some of the ways teachers at this highly-rated preschool try to give students a strong foundation in their home language as they prepare for school — something researchers agree is [helpful for young bilingual learners](#).

As the state prepares to roll out universal preschool, a [new taxpayer-funded program starting in the next school year](#) that offers preschool hours for free to all 4-year-olds and some younger children, officials have given priority to children who don't speak English at home. The state will offer those children more hours of tuition-free preschool and is promising — for the first time — that programs

will need to use teaching strategies proven to help multilingual learners.

But with the launch just months away, big questions still remain about whether enough is being done to get the word out, what programming will look like, and what help providers will get to improve their offerings.

Early Excellence leader Jennifer Rodríguez-Luke says the families she works with are confused about how to apply or if they qualify. She has assigned a staff member to help them through the process, but has had limited success in getting new applicants.

So far, the only preschoolers that appear will match to her program are the ones it already serves, who they have helped walk through the application.

“For a level 5 in the heart of Denver, we were hoping to at least have 10 new students,” Rodríguez-Luke said.

She's worried it means vulnerable families across Colorado may not be applying for universal pre-K — and may miss out on learning that has been shown to set children on the path to educational success.

Under Colorado law, 4-year-olds identified as English learners are eligi-

ble for additional hours of preschool. The additional hours — 30 instead of 15 — are dependent on state funding. The state first has to make sure it can cover the cost of some preschool for all 4-year-olds who apply. Three-year-old multilingual learners can qualify for 10 hours per week of free preschool.

English language learners are among the children who could most benefit from preschool, which is one of the reasons these students are eligible for more preschool hours.

But in the current school year, only 29 preschool students statewide are currently identified as English language learners, according to data provided by the Colorado Department of Education.

Although it's unclear what the new system will look like this fall, creating a process to identify multilingual learners and establishing standards for how they are taught will be a benefit for students, even if it's still a work in progress, researchers say.

“You're trying to create a system that I don't even know is there,” said Guadalupe Díaz Lara, assistant professor in the Department of Child and Adolescent



As the state prepares to roll out universal preschool, officials have given priority to children who don't speak English at home. / Mientras el estado se prepara para poner en marcha el preescolar universal, las autoridades le han dado prioridad a los niños que no hablan inglés en el hogar. (Photo/Foto: Adobe Stock)

Studies at California State University. “If we're thinking of these investments, why don't we do it in the way that's the most high quality for kids?”

### Number of families with multilingual learners applying is still unclear

Colorado leaders have rushed to set up new universal pre-K, which will replace a smaller state-funded preschool program for children from low-income families or who have other risk factors.

But even as [applications opened in January](#), critical parts of the program are still not in place.

The law that created universal preschool also directs the new state de-

partment to establish quality standards that participating preschool providers will have to meet. Those will include standards on identifying, testing, and serving students who are dual language learners. But those standards haven't been created yet.

Previously, under various state and federal programs for preschool age children, providers followed different rules for educating the youngest English learner students. Preschool, unlike K-12, has had no consistent requirements for identifying children in need of language support and no standards for how they should be taught.

See [Preschool](#) on page 18



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# ¿Está Colorado Preparado para Atender a los Estudiantes de Inglés Con el Nuevo Preescolar Universal?

## COLORADO

Por Yesenia Robles

Cada mañana, los estudiantes del Early Excellence Program del norte de Denver empiezan el día con una canción en inglés y español. Los cuentos y las sesiones de lectura también se hacen en ambos idiomas. A los niños se les anima que hablen ambos, pero nunca se les obliga.

Éstas son algunas de las formas en que los maestros de este prestigioso preescolar tratan de darles a sus estudiantes una base sólida en su lengua materna mientras se preparan para la escuela, algo que los investigadores coinciden en que es útil para los niños más pequeños que están en programas bilingües.

Mientras el estado se prepara para poner en marcha el preescolar uni-

versal, un nuevo programa financiado por los contribuyentes a partir del próximo año escolar y que ofrece horas de preescolar gratuitas para todos los niños de 4 años y a algunos más pequeños, las autoridades le han dado prioridad a los niños que no hablan inglés en el hogar. El estado les ofrecerá a esos niños más horas de educación preescolar gratuita y promete — por primera vez — que los programas tendrán que utilizar estrategias de enseñanza que hayan comprobado ser de ayuda para los estudiantes multilingües.

Sin embargo, a pocos meses de que empiece el programa, todavía hay grandes interrogantes sobre si se está haciendo lo suficiente para darlo a conocer, cómo será la programación, y qué ayuda obtendrán los proveedores para mejorar lo que ofrecen.

Vea [Preescolar](#), página 19

# DMV, Donate Life Colorado Raise Awareness Donate Life Month

## COLORADO

In celebration of the generosity of Coloradan donors and honoring those awaiting a lifesaving transplant, the Colorado Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and Donate Life Colorado hoisted a flag Monday, April 10 at the DMV's main office in Lakewood.

Flag-raising ceremonies commemorating National Donate Life Month began with various hospitals throughout the U.S. National Donate Life Month is a month-long celebration in

April which honors the generosity of organ, eye and tissue donors and their families, and commemorates all transplant recipients and those still waiting for a lifesaving transplant.

When obtaining or renewing a license or ID at the DMV, Coloradans are asked if they would like to save a life by registering to be an organ, eye and tissue donor. The question helps save hundreds of lives each year by signing up selfless Coloradans on the Donate Life Colorado organ, eye and tissue donor registry. The registry is key to Do-

nate Life Colorado and its mission to save and heal lives.

"It may seem like a simple question at the DMV — would you like to register as an organ, eye and tissue donor — but your answer can mean a new lease on life for someone else," DMV Senior Director Electra Bustle said. "Donate Life Colorado is a tremendous partner and we are proud of the role we play in our mutual missions of saving lives. This flag-raising event represents our

See [Life](#) on page 17



The Division of Motor Vehicles and Donate Life Colorado hosted a flag-raising ceremony to commemorate National Donate Life Month. / La División de Vehículos Motorizados y Done Vida Colorado organizaron una ceremonia de izamiento de bandera para conmemorar el Mes Nacional Done Vida. (Photo/Foto: Derek Kuhn/CDOR Photo)

# Colorado Sensibiliza en el Mes de Dona Vida

## COLORADO

Para celebrar la generosidad de los donantes de Colorado y honrar a aquellos que esperan un trasplante que les salve la vida, la División de Vehículos Motorizados de Colorado (DMV, por sus siglas en inglés) y Done Vida Colorado izaron una bandera el lunes 10 de abril en la oficina principal del DMV en Lakewood.

Las ceremonias de izado de banderas que conmemoran el Mes Nacion-

al de Done Vida comenzaron en varios hospitales de los EE. UU. El Mes Nacional de Done Vida es una celebración de un mes de duración en abril que honra la generosidad de los donantes de órganos, ojos y tejidos y sus familias, y conmemora a todos los receptores de trasplantes y aquellos todavía esperando un trasplante que le salve la vida.

Al obtener o renovar una licencia o identificación en el DMV, se les pregunta a los habitantes de Colorado si les gustaría salvar una vida registrándose

como donantes de órganos, ojos y tejidos. La pregunta ayuda a salvar cientos de vidas cada año al inscribir desinteresadamente a los habitantes de Colorado en el registro de donantes de órganos, ojos y tejidos de Done Vida Colorado. El registro es clave para Done Vida Colorado y su misión de salvar y sanar vidas.

"Puede parecer una pregunta simple en el DMV: ¿le gustaría registrarse como donante de órganos, ojos y tejidos?, pero su respuesta puede significar

una nueva oportunidad de vida para otra persona", dijo Electra Bustle, directora sénior del DMV. "Done Vida Colorado es un gran socio y estamos orgullosos del papel que desempeñamos en nuestras misiones mutuas de salvar vidas. Este evento de izamiento de la bandera representa nuestro compromiso con la donación de órganos, ojos y tejidos y celebra este programa que salva vidas".

El DMV trabaja mano a mano con Done Vida Colorado para salvar vidas

mediante el registro de donantes, el intercambio de información y recursos sobre donaciones, así como la recepción de donaciones para el Fondo de Concientización sobre la Donación de Órganos y Tejidos Emily Keyes — John W. Buckner en las oficinas del DMV en todo el estado.

Si bien esta ha sido una larga tradición con los hospitales, el DMV de Colorado es una de las pocas divisiones estatales de vehículos motorizados en todo el país que organiza un evento de izamiento de la bandera de Done Vida.

Ve [Vida](#), página 22

# Ortiz's Bill to Improve Basic Access for People with Disabilities Moves Forward

## COLORADO

The Colorado House passed legislation on April 11, on a 45 to 17 vote, to bolster basic access at places of public accommodations for people with disabilities. The legislation is sponsored by Rep. David Ortiz, D-Littleton and Sen. Robert Rodríguez.

"Coloradans living with a disability should be able to visit and enjoy the restaurants, museums and retail stores in their community without having to worry about whether they'll be able to navigate the space," said Rep. David Ortiz, D-Littleton. "This legislation empowers Coloradans living with a disability by allowing them to pursue legal action if a public accommodation space is not accessible. I'm committed to making our public places more accessible and accommodating so they can be enjoyed by everyone."

HB23-1032 ensures that individuals with a disability have legal recourse if they are discriminated against by any place of public accommodation. Accord-



State Representative David Ortiz, D-Littleton. (Photo: Colorado House Democrats)

ing to the [Americans with Disabilities Act National Network](#), places of public accommodation include restaurants, theaters, doctors' offices, pharmacies, hotels, retail stores, museums, libraries, amusement parks, private schools and day care centers. HB23-1032 aims to improve accessibility for all Coloradans.

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# Law to Ban High-Level Nuclear Waste Storage Facility Effective in June

## NEW MÉXICO

By Danielle Prokop

A state ban on high-level nuclear waste will go into effect in June, blocking a private company's ability to build a contentious storage facility in southern New Mexico.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signed [Senate Bill 53](#) into law March 17. The bill did not have the votes for an emergency enactment, so it goes into effect June 15.

The new law has two provisions.

The first expands the scope and duties for a task force to consult state agencies on nuclear disposal and investigate its impacts on New Mexico.

The second bans storage of high-level nuclear waste. The ban is in effect until two conditions are met – the state agrees to open a facility to handle waste, and the federal government has adopted a [permanent underground storage site](#) for nuclear waste.

“We do need a permanent solution. But New Mexico can't just be the convenient sacrifice zone for the country's contamination,” said Sen. Jeff Steinborn (D-Las Cruces) in an interview.

High level radioactive waste is extremely toxic. Some types will remain highly radioactive for thousands, if not tens of thousands of years. Short doses of exposure can be fatal. If radioactive waste leaches into the groundwater or soils, it can move through the food chain.

The state ban would include regulations on Holtec International's plans for an underground facility for spent nuclear fuel from nuclear power reactors and other high-level radioactive waste from across the country.

At its peak, Holtec projected the facility could hold 176,600 metric tons of waste aboveground on more than 1,000 acres between Hobbs and Carlsbad.

“This bill is another major obstacle that will prevent this site from ever receiving any nuclear waste,” said Don Hancock, Nuclear Waste Safety program director and administrator at the nonprofit Southwest Research and Information Center.

“

*“New Mexico can't just be the convenient sacrifice zone for the country's contamination.”*  
State Senator Jeff Steinborn

The region already hosts the Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP), an underground site that stores clothes, tools, rags and other items contaminated with radioactive waste. The new law does not impact WIPP.

In July 2021, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, a federal agency that

oversees nuclear operations, gave preliminary nod to the facility in an environmental impact statement, over the objections of [people living there](#), the [governor](#) and members of the [congressional delegation](#). Days after the law was signed, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission pushed back, issuing its final decision to license the facility. In a [March 20 letter](#) to Holtec, the agency wrote it will publish a final safety evaluation and determine if a license will be issued in May 2023.

Steinborn, who sponsored the bill in the past two legislative sessions, said the task force will now also report each year to the Radioactive and Hazardous Materials interim committee. The task force is made up of secretaries or appointees from seven state departments, now including the Indian Affairs Department and the State Land Office.

Kayleigh Warren, a member of Santa Clara Pueblo and a health and



New Mexico State Sen. Jeff Steinborn (D-Las Cruces). / Senador Jeff Steinborn (D-Las Cruces). (Photo/Foto: NM Legislature)

justice coordinator at the nonprofit Tewa Women United, called the four-page bill “an important first step.”

“It's a way our state can start to communicate to the rest of our county that we've done our part,” Warren said. “We're not interested in being a sacrifice zone for the country's waste anymore.”

Tewa Women United protests the [impacts of toxins](#) from Los Alamos

See [Nuclear Waste](#) on page 15



## WOMEN IN BLUE

Come join the women in blue of the Albuquerque Police Department for an “If I can, YOU can” event providing guidance and education for those curious about a career in law enforcement. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in conversations with female officers, join them on a group run and physical fitness activities. If you are not ready to participate in the physical fitness activities, receive information on physical fitness. Officers want to share with you their journeys into law enforcement and how rewarding this career can be. Lunch and childcare will be provided during this event.

When:  
April 14, 2023  
August 26, 2023

Where:  
Albuquerque Police Academy  
5412 2nd St NW, Albuquerque,  
NM 87107



Register Here



For questions please email:  
ccarter@cabq.gov

# Ley Prohibirá el Almacenamiento de Residuos Nucleares de Alta Actividad

## NEW MÉXICO

Por Danielle Prokop

Una prohibición estatal sobre los residuos nucleares de alto nivel entrará en vigor en junio, bloqueando la capacidad de una empresa privada para construir una instalación de almacenamiento polémico en el sur de Nuevo México.

La Gobernadora Michelle Luján Grisham firmó la Ley 53 del Senado el 17 de marzo. El proyecto de ley no tenía los votos para una promulgación de emergencia, por lo que entrará en vigor el 15 de junio.

“

*“Nuevo México no puede ser simplemente la zona de sacrificio conveniente para la contaminación del país.”*  
Senador Jeff Steinborn

La nueva ley tiene dos disposiciones. La primera amplía el alcance y los deberes de un grupo de trabajo para consultar a los organismos estatales sobre la eliminación nuclear e investigar sus impactos en Nuevo México.



Kayleigh Warren, miembro de Santa Clara Pueblo y coordinadora de salud y justicia en la organización sin ánimo de lucro Tewa Women United. / Kayleigh Warren is a member of Santa Clara Pueblo and a health and justice coordinator at the nonprofit Tewa Women United. (Photo/Foto: Tewa Women United)

La segunda prohíbe el almacenamiento de residuos nucleares de alto nivel. La prohibición estará en vigor hasta que se cumplan dos condiciones: que el estado acepte abrir una instalación para gestionar los residuos y que el gobierno federal haya adoptado un almacén subterráneo permanente para los residuos nucleares.

Vea [Residuos Nucleares](#), página 21

# NHCC Announces Zach Quintero as Interim Director

## NEW MÉXICO

The National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) is thrilled to welcome Zach Quintero as its new Interim Executive Director. Quintero, a proud New Mexican with deep ties to the state's Hispanic communities, will work closely with NHCC Artistic Director Noël Bella Merriam and Deputy Director Alberto Cuessy in order to continue effectively delivering high-impact programs and services to the public.

"I am truly humbled and motivated to be joining such a historic institution and remarkable team. What happens here at this Center comes from the very soul of our people in New Mexico," Quintero said. "I grew up worshipping this place despite living 230 miles away from it. Together with our staff, I want to make sure this center is deeply rooted in promoting our local communities and culture, continuing strong



Zach Quintero, interim executive director of the National Hispanic Cultural Center, meets with labor activist Dolores Huerta during the Center's César Chávez celebration. (Photo: Courtesy of the NHCC, by J. Santiago Candelaria)

relationships with our state partners, and standing nationally as the place for Hispanic leaders from all disciplines to call home."

Quintero is a lifelong New Mexican whose family is from Mesilla, Doña Ana, and La Mesa within Doña Ana County. He graduated from New Mex-

ico State University's William Conroy Honors College, holding two degrees in economics and one in government specializing in international relations. Quintero is also a graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law where he served on the executive board of the New Mexico Law Review, the Mexican American Law Student Association, and the New Mexico Hispanic Bar Association.

In his professional life, Quintero has served in a variety of local, county, and state government positions, including for the state Medical Advisory Team, the Governor's Office, and the City of Santa Fe's Economic Development Office. Most recently, he worked as the Federal Ombudsman for the State of New Mexico, requiring him to travel statewide to rural and metro areas of the state. Quintero has maintained a strong connection with local and statewide Hispanic communities in Southern, Central, and Northern New Mex-

ico having been actively involved with public policy, the arts, civil rights advocacy, and environment issues.

Quintero's ties to the National Hispanic Cultural Center run deep. His first experience at the National Hispanic Cultural Center was as a performer in the ballet folklorico ceremony that marked the opening of the Center in 2000. Since then, he has been a supporter of and frequent visitor to the NHCC, and has taken multiple classes on the Center's 20-acre campus.

"There is only one National Hispanic Cultural Center within the United States, and to have it based in New Mexico is an honor," Quintero said. "I will never stop working for the people of our state and I will give everything I have to make us proud."

Quintero's appointment was effective Monday, March 13.

For More New México News:  
[ElSemanarioOnline.com](http://ElSemanarioOnline.com)

# ACLU Calls for Transparency in Investigation of Border Patrol's Fatal Shooting

## NEW MÉXICO

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of New Mexico is calling for transparency and an impartial investigation after Border Patrol agents fatally shot a man in the state.

On Sunday, April 2, Border Patrol agents pursued a Nissan Rogue west of Las Cruces on I-10 after it allegedly circumvented a Border Patrol checkpoint, according to a [press release](#) issued by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) on Saturday. Eventually Border Patrol agents used a vehicle immobilization device in an attempt to stop the Nissan. The pursuit continued on foot, with the driver allegedly striking one of the agents with a "wooden club." Three agents then fired 16 rounds at the driver, killing him at the scene.

The release identified the driver killed as a U.S. citizen and did not indicate if he had been suspected of any criminal or immigration-related violations other than circumventing a checkpoint.

According to the release, the fatal shooting is being investigated by CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility and was referred to the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General. The release states that "CBP is committed to expeditious release of the body worn camera footage of this incident as soon as is appropriate to do so without impacting the ongoing law enforcement investigation...."

Rebecca Sheff, Senior Staff Attorney, a Senior Staff Attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union stated:

"It is critical that CBP provide the utmost transparency into the circumstances of this tragic death in New Mexico. That includes following

through on promptly releasing body cam footage to allow the public to see for themselves the events leading up to this shooting. There also needs to

be accountability for any agent misconduct identified over the course of the investigation. It's what the victim of this shooting and his loved ones deserve, and what all New Mexicans expect from law enforcement officers in our state."

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## Nuclear Waste

National Laboratory on water and land in the Española valley and surrounding Pueblos. Looking forward, a key issue is how tribal governments will participate on the task force.

Native Americans are disproportionately vulnerable from [uranium mining](#) on the Navajo Nation or [exposed at higher rates to radiation in water supplies](#).

"I want to see how our voices become part of these conversations moving forward," Warren said.

Danielle Prokop is a reporter with Source New Mexico. This article is republished from Source New Mexico under a Creative Commons license.

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# Lawmakers File Amicus Brief Urging Appeals Court Block Mifepristone Ruling

On Tuesday, 240 members of Congress – led by U.S. Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO), Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), Katherine Clark (D-MA), Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Jerry Nadler (D-NY) and Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Patty Murray (D-WA), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) – submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in the case of *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA*, in support of the Biden administration’s appeal of federal district court judge Matthew J. Kacsmaryk’s Friday ruling that suspends the Food and Drug Administration’s approval of mifepristone – threatening access to the drug that’s used to perform about half of all abortions nationwide, as well as FDA’s congressionally-mandated authority and drug approval process.

In their brief, the lawmakers underscore that the district court ruling has no basis in law, risks denying patients in every part of the country access to mifepristone, a safe and effective medication widely used in abortion care and miscarriage management for years, and jeopardizes patients’ access to a wide array of other medications by threatening FDA’s drug approval process, which

was designed and mandated by Congress. Accordingly, they ask the court to stay the district court’s order.

“The district court appears to have second-guessed FDA’s scientific determinations with cherry-picked anecdotes and studies, and on that basis, imposed a remedy that could significantly upend the status quo,” the lawmakers wrote.

If the district court ruling were left to stand and were to go into effect, the lawmakers stress that not only could patients in every state be denied access to the most common form of abortion care — and a key drug used in miscarriage management — but FDA’s authority to determine the safety and efficacy of other drugs would be put at risk, threatening patients’ access to all manner of other medications.

“[T]he district court’s misguided stay under Section 705 of the Administrative Procedure Act will reduce access to abortion, exacerbating an already significant reproductive health crisis,” the lawmakers wrote, adding: “The consequences of the district court’s remedy could extend far beyond mifepristone, for it undermines the science-based, expert-driven process that Congress designed for determining whether drugs are safe and effective.”

“Its perilous consequences reach far beyond mifepristone. Providers and patients rely on the availability of thousands of FDA-approved drugs to treat or manage a range of medical conditions, including asthma, HIV, infertility, heart disease, diabetes, and more,” the lawmakers stated.

The lawmakers explained that Congress specifically designed FDA’s expert-driven drug approval process to ensure that the medications relied on by Americans every day are safe and effective. FDA followed that careful review process before it approved mifepristone for use in 2000, and its approval has been repeatedly affirmed in the more than 20 years since.

“For the last century, a statutory scheme designed by Congress has assured the safety and effectiveness of the drugs available in the United States. At its core resides the application of scientific standards by agency experts,” the lawmakers wrote. “Here, FDA’s determination that mifepristone is safe and effective is based on a thorough and comprehensive review process prescribed and overseen by the legislative branch. Since mifepristone’s initial approval in 2000, FDA has repeatedly and consistently reaffirmed that the medication is safe and effective for its

approved conditions of use. FDA’s process and conclusions have been validated by both Congress and the Government Accountability Office—and by the lived experience of over 5 million patients who have used the drug in the United States.”

“

*“The consequences of the district court’s remedy could extend far beyond mifepristone, for it undermines the science-based, expert-driven process that Congress designed for determining whether drugs are safe and effective.”*

The lawmakers concluded by asking the Fifth Circuit to stay the decision, writing: “emergency relief from the order is necessary to mitigate the imminent harm facing members of the public, many of whom rely on the availability of mifepristone for reproductive care—and many more rely on the integrity of FDA’s drug approval process for continued access to life-improving and life-saving drugs. Congress intended to—and did—vest authority in FDA to evaluate and ensure the safety and efficacy of drugs in the United States, and *Amici* call on this Court to give due weight to that intent.”

In addition to DeGette, Jeffries, Clark, Pallone, Nadler and Lee, the brief was signed by Reps. Adams, Allred, Aguilar, Auchincloss, Balint, Barragán, Beatty, Bera, Beyer, Bishop, Blumenauer, Blunt Rochester, Bonamici, Bowman, Boyle, Brown, Brownley, Budzinski, Bush, Caraveo, Carbajal, Cárdenas, Carter, Cartwright, Casar, Case, Casten, Castor, Castro, Cherfilus-McCormick, Chu, Cicilline, Clarke, Cleaver, Clyburn, Cohen,

Connolly, Courtney, Craig, Crockett, Crow, Davids, Davis, Dean, DeLauro, DelBene, Deluzio, DeSaulnier, Dingell, Doggett, Escobar, Eshoo, Espaillat, Evans, Fletcher, Foster, Foushee, Frankel, Frost, Gallego, Garamendi, R. Garcia, C. García, Gluesenkamp Pérez, Goldman, Gomez, Gottheimer, Green, Grijalva, Higgins, Himes, Holmes Norton, Horsford, Houlahan, Hoyer, Hoyle, Huffman, Ivey, Jackson Lee, Jacobs, Jayapal, Johnson, Kamlager-Dove, Kaptur, Kelly, Khanna, Kildee, Kilmer, Kim, Krishnamoorthi, Kuster, Landsman, Larson, Susie Lee, Summer Lee, Leger Fernández, Levin, Lieu, Lofgren, Lynch, Magaziner, Manning, Matsui, McClellan, McCollum, McGovern, Meeks, Menéndez, Meng, Moore, Morrelle, Moskowitz, Mullin, Napolitano, Neal, Neguse, Nickel, Norcross, Ocasio-Cortez, Omar, Panetta, Pappas, Pascrell, Payne, Pelosi, Peltola, Peters, Pettersen, Phillips, Pingree, Pocan, Porter, Pressley, Quigley, Raskin, Ross, Ruiz, Ruppertsberger, Ryan, Sablan, Salinas, Sánchez, Sarbanes, Scanlon, Schakowsky, Schiff, Scholten, Schrier, Bobby Scott, Sewell, Sherman, Sherrill, Slotkin, Smith, Sorensen, Soto, Spanberger, Stansbury, Stanton, Stevens, Strickland, Swalwell, Sykes, Takano, Thompson, Titus, Tlaib, Tokuda, Tonko, Ritchie Torres, Norma Torres, Trahan, Trone, Underwood, Vasquez, Veasey, Velázquez, Wasserman Schultz, Waters, Watson Coleman, Wexton, Wild, Williams, Wilson.

In the Senate, the amicus brief was signed by Sens. Schumer, Murray, Sanders, Durbin, Blumenthal, Baldwin, Bennet, Booker, Brown, Cantwell, Cardin, Carper, Casey Jr., Coons, Cortez Masto, Duckworth, Feinstein, Fetterman, Gillibrand, Hassan, Heinrich, Hickenlooper, Hirono, Kaine, Kelly, King, Klobuchar, Luján, Markey, Menendez, Merkley, Murphy, Ossoff, Padilla, Peters, Reed, Rosen, Schatz, Shaheen, Sinema, Smith, Stabenow, Tester, Van Hollen, Warner, Warlick, Warren, Welch, Whitehouse, Wyden.

The lawmakers’ amicus brief can be read in full [here](#).

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## Students



A student holds up a sign against gun violence during a walkout on April 5 at the Colorado State Capitol. / Un estudiante sostiene una pancarta contra la violencia armada durante una manifestación el 5 de abril en el Capitolio del Estado de Colorado. (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez / El Semanario)

State Capitol. The environmental group of students regrouped on the Capitol steps for a rally and speeches. For many of the students, they felt and understood the importance and significance of youth in attendance at the rally.

“My parents come from El Salvador, they migrated to the U.S. for a better future for their kids. Not only was their government corrupt, they realized the U.S. government was also corrupt. So it’s up to me as their daughter to be their voice because they’re unable to vote. It’s my job to be able to be here [at the State Capitol] and represent people who look like me. I’m here to be a voice for my family, friends, and future and past generations,” said Erika, a student from Empower Community High School in Aurora, Colorado.

“It’s important for me to speak for our generation, for us to actually take initiative instead of sitting back and let-

ting things happen to us. Because like our advisor said, some things may not affect us now, but in 3 or 5 years it will affect us majorly,” added Saison, another student from Empower Community High School.

“This day is to demonstrate to youth that they have a purpose and that their voice does matter,” said Rudionna Garza, a teacher and advisor at the high school. “As an advisor, my job is to holistically help students develop who they are. This opportunity gives them real life experience, to learn how something becomes law and how they as constituents have a lot of power, not only now but in the future. I think this is an investment in our youth and future, as well as an opportunity for healing for our ancestors.”

“I came here today because I want to change the law. I see all the horrible things that have been created and all

the laws favoring the white majority. My parents are from El Salvador and we live in a horrible neighborhood where there’s guns and violence and all that stuff, and we can’t afford to move because the rent is so high. It’s sad how much favoritism is in our laws, when we should be equals,” said Paola, an Empower High School student.

Jachary, an Empower HS student, wanted to leave folks with a quote. “If you don’t sacrifice for what you want, what you want will become the sacrifice.”

(Cover photo features Colorado student Elizabeth Reyes.)

Victoria Acuña is an Independent Reporter for The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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## Life

commitment to organ, eye and tissue donation and celebrates this life saving program.”

The DMV works hand-in-hand with Donate Life Colorado to save lives by registering donors, sharing donation information and resources, as well as taking donations for the Emily Keyes — John W. Buckner Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Fund at DMV offices throughout the state.

While this has been a long-standing tradition with hospitals, the Colorado DMV is one of only a handful of state motor vehicle divisions across the country to host a Donate Life flag-raising event.

“We are honored to join our partners at the Colorado DMV again this year as they help us shine a light on the importance of organ, eye and tissue donation in recognition of Nation-

al Donate Life Month,” said Jennifer Prinz, President and CEO of Donor Alliance, the federally designated non-profit that facilitates organ and tissue donation in Colorado and most of Wyoming. “These flag raising ceremonies have become a symbol of our hope for those awaiting lifesaving and healing transplants and remembrance of those who have made the generous decision to save others through organ, eye and tissue donation. The kindness of 278 organ donors in our communities last year made possible 829 life saving transplants for patients in need.”

In 2022, 66% of Coloradans said yes to joining the Donate Life Colorado Organ and Tissue Donor Registry when getting their driver license or I.D. card. The national average is 51%.

Colorado continues to be one of the most generous states in the U.S.

when it comes to donation and Donor Alliance recorded another remarkable year for organ and tissue donation and transplantation. The organization also worked with 1,911 tissue donors and their families to recover the lifesaving and healing tissue that will provide tissue such as bone and skin grafts to thousands of recipients in need.

Despite the progress that has been made, there are still around 1,500 people in Colorado on the transplant waiting list. Saying Yes when obtaining or renewing a driver license or state ID supports the mission to save the lives of our neighbors through organ, eye and tissue donation. Learn more at [DonateLifeColorado.org](https://DonateLifeColorado.org).

For More Colorado News: [ElSemanaarioOnline.com](https://ElSemanaarioOnline.com)

## Escuelas

Reunir a esos estudiantes también puede generar la preocupación de que los estudiantes se estimulan entre sí para seguir consumiendo y recaer, pero eso es un riesgo con cualquier interacción social, apuntó Levy.

“Entonces, si estás en un ambiente donde la recuperación es algo central y la gente está observando, monitoreando y supervisando, creo que eso es útil para muchos niños”, agregó.

La escuela en Denver mantiene la inscripción por debajo de su capacidad de manera deliberada, para que adolescentes adicionales puedan inscribirse en cualquier momento del año escolar. Un estudiante no será expulsado si tiene una recaída, pero hay dos requisitos: debe querer estar sobrio y asistir a un programa de recuperación externo.

“El primer paso es hacerles saber desde el principio, sin importar lo que esté pasando, que los amamos”, dijo Brittany Kitchens, entrenadora de recuperación de la escuela. “Estamos aquí para ellos”.

Kitchens les enseña a los estudiantes cómo navegar la recuperación y controlar sus emociones. Se compara a sí misma con un monitor de pasillo, constantemente revisando a los estudiantes y buscando cambios en el comportamiento.

“Tiendo a ser la primera línea a la que acuden los niños cuando experi-

mentan algo que es demasiado grande para procesar”, dijo.

Algunas de estas dificultades surgen de los traumas que los estudiantes han experimentado, incluido el tráfico sexual y de drogas, y el abandono. También lidian con los traumas que han causado, dijo Kitchens, acciones que los llevaron a la cárcel o por las que están bajo libertad condicional.

Kitchens, quien también está en recuperación, comparte mecanismos de afrontamiento con los estudiantes. “Muchas veces simplemente comienza con, ‘Escucha, respira, inhala por la nariz y exhala por la boca’”, explicó.

Alexis ha estado sobria durante casi un año, dijo. Las reuniones matutinas donde ella y sus compañeros hablan sobre salud mental, sobriedad y otros temas son una oportunidad para construir una comunidad de amigos que se apoyan mutuamente, algo que no tenía cuando consumía drogas, contó.

“Es realmente difícil volverse sobrio joven”, dijo.

Stephanie Daniel es editora gerente sénior y reportera, KUNC. Esta historia es parte de una asociación que incluye a KUNC, NPR y Kaiser Health News.

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## #BETHECHANGE

Preschool

The state's new department overseeing the rollout of universal preschool has not been able to provide numbers on how many children so far enrolled for the fall checked the box indicating limited English proficiency. Officials say they are asking each provider to speak to families to verify that parents correctly checked those boxes.

A different way to screen students may be required eventually. It's one of the requirements the law lays out for universal preschool.

When families, including those who indicate their child has limited proficiency in English, apply for universal free preschool, they can search providers and list their top choices. They can also search providers and learn which have bilingual staff or programs. The online application is available in three languages: English, Spanish, and Arabic.

The matching process will prioritize a family's preference, regardless of whether that program has bilingual staff or programs. That means providers who have not previously been expecting to serve this population of children could end up with students enrolled identified as English learners. Depending on what standards are created, they may have further to go to meet the children's needs.

State leaders say preschool providers will not be allowed to deny a child a spot because of language proficiency, but recognize that some won't be prepared right away.

While much of the system is still being created, the infrastructure for English language learner students is furthest behind because research, standards, and practices have previously been limited.

Dawn Odean, the state's universal pre-K director, said the state creating a system from nearly nothing represents opportunity.

"We do have a unique opportunity here to make more significant gains in the multilingual environment," Odean said. She wants the department to help providers, she said, and won't penalize them for not immediately meeting the standards.

"We can make it an act of compliance but that's not what's going to serve students well," Odean said.

Instead, Odean said, the department will focus on helping all providers improve.

**Families face confusion about their eligibility**

Ana Paola Burrola Bustillos has two kids in Jeffco, including a 4-year-old enrolled in preschool at Foster Dual Language PK-8. She said she didn't know the state was rolling out free universal preschool, and thinks it's a good thing even though her daughter, who is moving on to kindergarten this fall, won't benefit.

Burrola Bustillos said she likes Foster for her children because she believes they'll benefit from being bilingual.

"I feel that if they can learn in both languages they'll be better off when they're older, in everything, in communicating with other people, in their jobs, in everyday life," Burrola Bustillos said.

Patricia Lepiani, president of The Idea Marketing, said her group was contracted in January to market universal preschool, just days before the application opened.

Lepiani said that 25% of the \$527,000 marketing budget is dedicated to reaching non-English speaking families — a larger percent than most projects would allocate, she said. In Colorado, Lepiani estimates, 21% of the state population speaks Spanish, though not all are monolingual.

The fastest thing to set up, she said, were social media ads, and later some banners that were set up at local dentist offices and shops such as the Carniceria/Mercado Los Dos Toros in Denver, the Panaderia Contreras in Denver, and Ay Wey Snack in Aurora.

The large banners say "Medio día de preescolar gratis para todos los niños de Colorado" — "Free half-day preschool for all Colorado kids" — and include a QR code and a link to the state's preschool homepage. A smaller Spanish-language poster notes that kids who start kindergarten unprepared tend to stay behind and urges parents to "make sure your kids are ready."

The budget wasn't enough to cover any radio or television ads, Lepiani said.

The larger campaign Idea Marketing has planned includes having community navigators and ambassadors trained to help get the word out and help families fill out the application. That part of the work launched mid-March. Among the organizations they're partnering with are Latinos Unidos of Greeley, The Rocky Mountain Welcome Center, and Padres Adelante Family Services.

The focus is also on educating families on the importance of preschool.

"We have been doing everything we can as fast as we can, in the smallest amount of time," Lepiani said. "The deployment of boots on the ground across the state takes a bit more time."

Part of the work needs to be reaching out to community leaders to get the message to families about why preschool is important and about how their children can be supported, Díaz Lara said.

In California, many of the families Díaz Lara works with mistakenly think that putting their children into bilingual programs might confuse them and lead to developmental delays. But home language support can benefit students, she said, and preschool staff just need to know how to support that development.

At Early Excellence, where a staff member helps walk families through the application, some families think they won't qualify because they think they make too much money or are already bilingual and don't consider their children to have limited English profi-

ciency. Some who are undocumented or have mixed immigration status are unsure if they are allowed to apply.

"It's already scary to get on a website and give so much information," Rodríguez-Luke said. "We just don't want them to get lost in the system."

So now, Rodríguez-Luke is working on also translating the school website into Spanish, hoping to put out more information, and offering an open invitation to help walk families through the application for free preschool.

**Researchers say teacher preparation will be key**

More studies are necessary to identify the best strategies to teach multilingual preschool students, researchers say, but some things are clear.

"Being bilingual is not enough," said Cristina Gillanders, associate professor in early childhood education at the University of Colorado Denver. "You have to have the preparation to teach these children. You have to understand bilingualism and how bilingual children learn languages."

Some preschool providers that serve children who don't speak English do focus primarily on having bilingual staff to help.

Joe Ziegler, education director at The Family Center/La Familia in Fort Collins, which serves a primarily Spanish-speaking population, said his program for children from six weeks old up to age 5, isn't officially bilingual based on his curriculum, but he's focused on hiring diverse and bilingual staff. About 50% to 70% of the young students start off only understanding Spanish.

When the program first started, he said, the school often had to rely on older siblings to help staff communicate with families. They've since been able to move away from that by hiring more bilingual staff, and now the focus is on making sure all staff understand inclusive best practices.

"We're more intentional now," Ziegler said. "There's more of an emphasis now on understanding what a family and a child's experience is."

In Aurora Public Schools, preschools have long been using a test to identify how students progress in their acquisition of the English language. The district says 54% of the district's 2,100 preschool students are English language learners.

Researchers say traditional tests used with older students are difficult to administer to 3- and 4-year-olds who may not be able to sit still long enough, use a computer, or hold a pencil.

Cynthia Cobb, the early childhood education director for the Aurora district, said the test teachers use in Aurora preschools aren't sit-down tests. Teachers observe students in the classroom to track progress in many areas, including language skills.

"Young children are usually terrible test-takers. Their development is fluctuating all the time," said researcher Gillanders. "In order to have a much more complete picture of the child's

development, you have to be with them for a longer period of time."

That's why teacher training to understand what they're seeing in children is key.

Cobb said the Aurora district strongly believes that being able to identify and support students is a benefit. And, she said, students are more likely to eventually be proficient in English when they begin education in preschool.

While there may be changes preschool providers need to make, Cobb said it should all be for the best.

"It's a learning process," she said.

Ziegler knows the standards the state is likely to create for educating students like his will probably include additional training for staff, which he knows can be a good thing, but he said that accessing additional training for his staff has been a challenge.

**Universal Preschool Information**

- [Universal preschool website](#)
- [FAQ for families](#)
- [List of preschool coordinating groups](#): These groups, officially called local coordinating organizations or LCOs, will help administer the universal preschool program at the local level. They can answer questions from parents and preschool providers.

He has partnered with the local school district to do some professional development for his teachers around supporting students who might not yet understand English. But when teachers seek out additional classes themselves, many are only offered in Denver, about a 90-minute drive away.

Other staff, who primarily speak Spanish, struggle to find classes offered in Spanish. Ziegler said his center is working with a community college to try to develop some classes for staff that can be offered in Spanish.

"In our community, I don't really see those resources," Ziegler said, who believes a universal pre-K program will eventually be beneficial. "But right now, it's very stressful. We're building the plane as we go."

*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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## Preescolar

Jennifer Rodríguez-Luke, líder de Early Excellence, dice que las familias con las que trabaja no saben bien cómo llenar la solicitud o si califican. Ella ha asignado a un miembro del personal para ayudarles en el proceso, pero no ha tenido mucho éxito para conseguir solicitantes nuevos.

Hasta ahora, los únicos preescolares que parecen calificar para a su programa son los que ya ayudaron a pasar por la aplicación y están inscritos.

“Para un nivel 5 en el corazón de Denver, esperábamos tener por lo menos 10 estudiantes nuevos”, dijo Rodríguez-Luke.

Le preocupa que esto signifique que las familias vulnerables de Colorado no están solicitando el preescolar universal y se pierdan un aprendizaje que ha demostrado encaminar a los niños hacia el éxito en la escuela.

Según las leyes de Colorado, los niños de 4 años identificados como estudiantes de inglés son elegibles para recibir horas adicionales de preescolar. Las horas adicionales — 30 en lugar de 15 — dependerán de la financiación estatal. El estado tiene que primero asegurar que puede cubrir el costo de una parte de la educación preescolar de todos los niños de 4 años que la soliciten. Los estudiantes multilingües de tres años pueden calificar para 10 horas semanales de preescolar gratuito.

Los niños que están aprendiendo inglés se encuentran entre los que más podrían beneficiarse del preescolar, una de las razones por las que estos estudiantes son elegibles para recibir más horas de preescolar.

Pero en el año escolar actual, solamente 29 estudiantes de preescolar de todo el estado han sido identificados como estudiantes de inglés, según los datos proporcionados por el Departamento de Educación de Colorado.

Aunque no está claro cómo será el sistema nuevo este otoño, crear un proceso para identificar a los estudiantes multilingües y establecer estándares sobre cómo se les enseñará será beneficioso para los estudiantes, aunque todavía esté en proceso, dicen los investigadores.

“Se está intentando crear un sistema que ni siquiera sé si existe”, dijo Guadalupe Díaz Lara, profesora adjunta del Departamento de Estudios sobre la Infancia y la Adolescencia de la California State University. “Si estamos pensando en estas inversiones, ¿por qué no lo hacemos de una manera que sea de mayor calidad para los niños?”

### Aún no está claro cuántas familias con estudiantes multilingües están solicitando el preescolar

Los líderes de Colorado se han apresurado a establecer un programa nuevo de Prekinder universal, que sustituirá un programa preescolar más pequeño financiado por el estado para niños de familias con bajos ingresos o que tienen otros factores de riesgo.

Pero, aunque las solicitudes se abrieron en enero, las partes críticas del programa todavía no se han establecido.

La ley que creó el preescolar universal también ordena que el departamento de estado nuevo establezca estándares de calidad que los proveedores de preescolar participantes deberán cumplir. Entre esos estándares habrá normas para identificar, evaluar y atender a los estudiantes que están aprendiendo dos idiomas. Pero esos estándares todavía no se han creado.

### Información Sobre el Preescolar Universal

- [Sitio web del programa de preescolar universal](#)
- [Preguntas frecuentes para las familias](#)
- [Lista de los grupos de coordinación preescolar](#): Estos grupos, oficialmente conocidos como organizaciones de coordinación local (LCO por su nombre en inglés), ayudarán a administrar el programa de preescolar universal a nivel local. Ellos pueden contestar las preguntas de padres y proveedores de preescolar.

En varios programas estatales y federales anteriores para niños en edad preescolar, los proveedores cumplían reglas diferentes para educar a los estudiantes más pequeños que estaban aprendiendo inglés. El preescolar, a diferencia de la educación K-12, no ha tenido requisitos consistentes para identificar a los niños que necesitan apoyo para aprender un idioma y tampoco estándares sobre cómo sería la enseñanza.

El departamento de estado nuevo que está supervisando el despliegue del preescolar universal no ha podido proporcionar cifras sobre cuántos de los niños que hasta ahora se han inscrito para el otoño marcaron la casilla que indica que no dominan bien el inglés. Los funcionarios dicen que le están pidiendo a cada proveedor que hable con las familias para verificar si los padres marcaron esas casillas correctamente.

Es posible que con el tiempo se necesite otra manera de seleccionar a los estudiantes. Este es uno de los requisitos de la ley de preescolar universal.

Cuando las familias soliciten el preescolar universal gratuito (incluso las que indiquen que su hijo o hija tiene un dominio limitado del inglés), podrán buscar proveedores y hacer una lista de sus preferidos. Además, también pueden buscar proveedores y averiguar cuáles tienen personal o programas bilingües. La solicitud en línea está disponible en tres idiomas: inglés, español, y árabe.

El proceso de asignación le dará prioridad a la preferencia de la familia, no importa si ese programa tiene personal o programas bilingües. Eso significa que los proveedores que antes no anticipaban atender a esta población de niños podrían acabar con estudiantes inscritos identificados como niños que están aprendiendo inglés. Dependiendo de los estándares que se establezcan,

es posible que tengan que hacer más para satisfacer las necesidades de los niños.

Los líderes estatales dicen que los proveedores de preescolar no podrán negarle una plaza a un estudiante por no dominar el idioma, pero reconocen que algunos no estarán preparados inmediatamente.

Aunque gran parte del sistema aún está siendo creada, la infraestructura para los estudiantes que están aprendiendo inglés es la más atrasada porque la investigación, los estándares y las prácticas fueron limitadas previamente.

Dawn Odean, directora de preescolar universal del estado, dijo que la creación por parte del estado de un sistema desde cero representa una oportunidad.

“Tenemos una oportunidad única de lograr avances más significativos en el entorno multilingüe”, dijo Odean. Ella quiere que el departamento ayude a los proveedores, dijo, y no les penalizará por no cumplir los estándares inmediatamente.

“Podemos convertirlo en un acto de cumplimiento, pero eso no va a ayudar a los estudiantes”, dijo Odean.

En cambio, dijo Odean, el departamento se enfocará en ayudar a todos los proveedores a mejorar.

### Las familias enfrentan confusión en cuanto a su elegibilidad

Ana Paola Burrola Bustillos tiene dos hijos en Jeffco, entre ellos uno de 4 años inscrito en el preescolar de Foster Dual Language PK-8. Ella dice que no sabía que el estado estaba por abrir un programa de preescolar universal gratuito, y opina que es algo positivo aunque su hija, que pasará a Kinder este otoño, no podrá aprovecharlo.

Burrola Bustillos dijo que le gusta Foster para sus hijos porque cree que ser bilingües les beneficiará.

“Siento que si ellos aprenden en los dos idiomas van a estar mejor más adelante, en todo, para comunicarse con las personas, en los trabajos, pues en su vida diaria”, dijo Burrola Bustillos.

Patricia Lepiani, presidenta de The Idea Marketing, dijo que su grupo fue contratado en enero para darle publicidad al preescolar universal, pocos días antes de que se abriera el plazo de solicitud.

Lepiani explicó que un 25% de los \$527,000 del presupuesto de mercadotecnia está dedicado a llegar a las familias que no hablan inglés, un porcentaje más alto que el que la mayoría de los proyectos asigna, dijo. Lepiani calcula que en Colorado un 21% de la población del estado habla español, aunque no todos son monolingües.

Lo que más rápido se hizo, nos dijo, fueron los anuncios en las redes sociales, y más tarde se colocaron letreros en consultorios dentales locales y tiendas como la Carnicería/Mercado Los Dos Toros en Denver, la Panadería Contreras en Denver, y Ay Wey Snack en Aurora.

Los letreros grandes dicen “Medio día de preescolar gratuito para todos los niños de Colorado” e incluyen

un código QR y un enlace a la página web del preescolar estatal. Un cartel más pequeño en español señala que los niños que empiezan Kinder sin preparación tienden a quedarse rezagados y exhorta a los padres a “asegurar que sus hijos estén listos”.

El presupuesto no fue suficiente para cubrir anuncios de radio o televisión, dijo Lepiani.

La campaña más grande que Idea Marketing ha planificado incluye capacitar a embajadores y personas de la comunidad que corran la voz y ayuden a las familias a llenar la solicitud. Ese proyecto empezó a mediados de marzo. Entre las organizaciones con las que están colaborando se encuentran Latinos Unidos de Greeley, The Rocky Mountain Welcome Center y Padres Adelante Family Services.

También se hace énfasis en educar a las familias sobre la importancia de la educación preescolar.

“Hemos estado haciendo todo lo posible lo más rápido posible, y en el menor tiempo posible”, dijo Lepiani. “El despliegue de personas en todo el estado toma un poco más de tiempo”.

Parte del trabajo es llegar a los líderes de la comunidad para que las familias reciban el mensaje de por qué es importante la educación preescolar y cómo sus hijos pueden obtener apoyo, dijo Díaz Lara.

En California, muchas de las familias con las que trabaja Díaz Lara piensan erróneamente que inscribir a sus hijos en programas bilingües podría confundirlos y causar retrasos en su desarrollo. Pero darles apoyo para el idioma a los estudiantes en la casa puede beneficiarles, dijo, y el personal del preescolar solamente necesita saber cómo apoyar ese desarrollo.

En Early Excellence, donde un miembro del personal ayuda a las familias a llenar la solicitud, algunas familias piensan que no calificarán porque ganan demasiado dinero o porque ya son bilingües y no consideran que sus hijos tengan un dominio limitado del inglés. Algunas personas indocumentadas o con estatus migratorio mixto no están seguras de si tienen permitido solicitar.

“Ya da miedo entrar en un sitio web y dar tanta información”, dijo Rodríguez-Luke. “Simplemente no queremos que se pierdan en el sistema”.

Por eso, Rodríguez-Luke está trabajando en traducir la página web de la escuela a español con la esperanza de publicar más información y extender una invitación abierta para ayudar a las familias a llenar la solicitud de preescolar gratuito.

### Los investigadores dicen que la clave es preparar a los maestros

Según los investigadores, hacen falta más estudios para determinar cuáles son las mejores estrategias para la enseñanza de estudiantes multilingües de preescolar, pero algunas cosas están claras.

“Ser bilingüe no es suficiente”, afirma Cristina Gillanders, profesora asociada de educación en la niñez temprana de la Universidad de Colorado en

Denver. “Hay que tener la preparación necesaria para enseñar a estos niños. Tienes que entender lo que es bilingüismo y cómo los niños bilingües aprenden”.

Algunos proveedores de preescolar que atienden a niños que no hablan inglés se enfocan mayormente en tener personal bilingüe.

Joe Ziegler, director de educación en The Family Center/La Familia en Fort Collins, que atiende una población mayormente hispana, dijo que su programa para niños desde las seis semanas de edad hasta los 5 años no es oficialmente bilingüe según su currículo, pero que él se ha enfocado en contratar personal diverso y bilingüe. Entre un 50% y 70% de los estudiantes más pequeños empiezan entendiendo español solamente.

Cuando el programa empezó por primera vez, nos dijo, la escuela a menudo tenía que depender de los hermanos mayores para ayudar al personal a comunicarse con las familias. Desde entonces han podido dejar atrás esa situación contratando a más personal bilingüe, y ahora el enfoque es asegurar que todo el personal entienda las mejores prácticas de inclusión.

“Ahora lo hacemos todo con mayor intención”, dijo Ziegler. “Ahora nuestro énfasis está en entender cuál es la experiencia de una familia y un niño”.

En las escuelas públicas de Aurora, los preescolares llevan mucho tiempo utilizando una prueba para determinar cómo los estudiantes están progresando en su dominio del inglés. El distrito dice que un 54% de sus 2,100 estudiantes de preescolar está aprendiendo inglés.

Los investigadores dicen que los exámenes tradicionales que se usaban con estudiantes de más edad son difíciles de administrar a niños de 3 y 4 años, que tal vez no sean capaces de permanecer sentados por suficiente tiempo, usar una computadora o sujetar un lápiz.

Cynthia Cobb, la directora de educación en la niñez temprana del distrito de Aurora, dice que los exámenes que los maestros usan en los preescolares de Aurora no son exámenes tradicionales de escritorio. Los maestros observan a los estudiantes en el salón para llevar cuenta de su progreso en muchas áreas, incluso sus destrezas de idioma.

“A los niños pequeños generalmente les va fatal en exámenes tradicionales. Su desarrollo está constantemente fluctuando”, dijo Gillanders. “Para tener una mejor idea del desarrollo de un niño, hay que estar con él o ella más tiempo”.

Por eso es clave capacitar a los maestros para que entiendan lo que están observando en los niños.

Cobb dijo que el distrito de Aurora cree firmemente que poder identificar y apoyar a los estudiantes es un beneficio. Y nos dijo que los estudiantes tienen más probabilidades de dominar el inglés si empiezan a aprenderlo desde el preescolar.

Estudiantes



Estudiantes que participan en la marcha nacional contra la violencia armada sostienen pancartas en el Capitolio del Estado de Colorado el 5 de abril de 2023. / Students participating in national gun violence walkout hold up signs at the Colorado State Capitol on April 5, 2023. (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez / El Semanario)

explicó a los estudiantes lo que significa ser constituyente.

“Hay una diferencia entre ser elector y ser votante. Los electores son mucho más que simples votantes, son cualquiera que viva en el distrito. Y todos vosotros, independientemente de si podéis votar o no, sois jefes”, dijo.

“Queremos enseñar a nuestros familiares y amigos a participar también. Hoy, vosotros estáis haciendo esto [presionar]. Mañana, podréis contar a vuestros cuidadores y amigos lo fácil que fue. Hoy os damos herramientas y recursos para que os los llevéis a casa y hagáis con ellos lo que queráis”, explicó Ferrero.

Tras la sesión de formación, el grupo de estudiantes marchó al Capitolio del Estado de Colorado desde el campus de Auraria. A medida que se acercaban al Capitolio, había otros estudiantes de secundaria en la escalinata oeste del edificio. Estos estudiantes participaban en un paro nacional contra la violencia armada, tras una serie de incidentes de violencia armada en el East High School que llevaron a las escuelas públicas de Denver a reinstaurar agentes de recursos escolares armados en las escuelas.

Ambos grupos se situaron en la escalinata del Capitolio para sostener sus pancartas y unirse en cánticos a favor tanto de la violencia armada como del medio ambiente. Se sintió un cierto nivel de excitación cuando los grupos se unieron. Durante la jornada de formación en la MSU, los estudiantes se mostraron bastante tímidos y reservados. Pero cuando vieron que había

otro grupo de jóvenes en el Capitolio, se produjo un cambio repentino de energía, ya que los grupos se animaron mutuamente.

Después de pasar un rato juntos, la mayoría de los estudiantes de la marcha entraron en el Capitolio. El grupo de estudiantes ecologistas se reagrupó en la escalinata del Capitolio para celebrar una concentración y pronunciar discursos. Muchos de los estudiantes sintieron y comprendieron la importancia y el significado de la asistencia de los jóvenes a la manifestación.

“Mis padres son de El Salvador y emigraron a Estados Unidos en busca de un futuro mejor para sus hijos. No sólo su gobierno era corrupto, sino que se dieron cuenta de que el gobierno estadounidense también lo era. Así que me toca a mí, como su hija, ser su voz porque ellos no pueden votar. Es mi trabajo poder estar aquí [en el Capitolio del Estado] y representar a la gente que se parece a mí. Estoy aquí para ser la voz de mi familia, de mis amigos y de las generaciones futuras y pasadas”, dijo Erika, estudiante de la Empower Community High School de Aurora, Colorado.

“Para mí es importante hablar en nombre de nuestra generación, que tomemos realmente la iniciativa en lugar de sentarnos y dejar que nos pasen cosas. Porque, como dijo nuestro asesor, puede que algunas cosas no nos afecten ahora, pero dentro de 3 o 5 años nos afectarán mucho”, añadió Saison, otro estudiante de Empower Community High School.

Rudionna Garza, profesora y asesora

en el instituto, dijo: “Este día es para demostrar a los jóvenes que tienen un propósito y que su voz importa. Como asesora, mi trabajo consiste en ayudar a los estudiantes a desarrollar su personalidad. Esta oportunidad les da una experiencia de la vida real, les enseña cómo algo se convierte en ley y cómo ellos, como electores, tienen mucho poder, no sólo ahora sino en el futuro. Creo que es una inversión en nuestra juventud y nuestro futuro, así como una oportunidad de curación para nuestros antepasados”.

“He venido hoy aquí porque quiero cambiar la ley. Veo todas las cosas horribles que se han creado y todas las leyes que favorecen a la mayoría blanca. Mis padres son de El Salvador y vivimos en un barrio horrible donde hay armas y violencia y todas esas cosas, y no podemos permitirnos mudarnos porque el alquiler es muy alto. Es triste el favoritismo que hay en nuestras leyes, cuando deberíamos ser iguales”, dijo Paola, estudiante de Empower HS.

Jachary, estudiante de Empower HS, quiso dejar a la gente con una cita. “Si no te sacrificas por lo que quieres, lo que quieres se convertirá en el sacrificio”.

(Foto en la portada, Elizabeth Reyes, estudiante en Colorado).

Victoria Acuña es un Reportera Independiente para The Weekly Issue/El Semanario. Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe, The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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Hastings & Torres/Esp

civiles. Y los republicanos ya ni siquiera intentan disimular. ¿Por qué? Porque hay un considerable segmento de la población estadounidense que aún se rige por el anacrónico estándar del privilegio blanco, el cual se traduce, en tiempos electorales, en votos cautivos, con base en la promesa de un Estados Unidos a la antigua usanza, donde el blanco era el color que lo dominaba todo.

Para muestra un botón: los líderes republicanos camaleones argumentaron que no expulsaron a Johnson porque su participación en la protesta no fue tan “activa” como la de Pearson y Jones, aunque la propia Johnson dijo a la prensa que era obvio que la diferencia en el trato se habría debido “al color de nuestras pieles”.

Los mismos líderes republicanos tampoco optaron por sanciones que no fueran la expulsión porque, según ellos, había que enviar un mensaje de que no se aceptaría este tipo de conducta en medio de la sesión.

Es más, algunos tuvieron el atrevimiento de comparar la manifestación pacífica en Tenesí con el asalto de los fanáticos seguidores de Donald Trump al Capitolio federal el 6 de enero de 2021, cuando la violencia de la turba culminó en destrucción y muerte. Pero son dos hechos distintos y distantes, pues mientras en Tenesí se trataba de poner un alto al uso de armas que destruyen vidas como parte de una epidemia de masacres que no tiene fin, en Washington se trataba de un golpe de estado en desarrollo del que todo el mundo fue testigo en tiempo real.

Pero el asunto es más complejo pues evidencia cómo los republicanos utilizan sus mayorías en asambleas estatales y en gubernaturas a través del país para silenciar a sus oponentes, particularmente si son mujeres o de color.

A nivel de gubernaturas, nada más hay que ver el récord de republicanos en estados como Florida, por ejemplo.

Ron DeSantis, quien se perfila como aspirante a la nominación presidencial republicana en 2024, ha emprendido una verdadera cruzada contra los inmigrantes en un estado que curiosamente es hogar de cientos de miles de ellos, y no únicamente indocumentados, sino asilados, residentes permanentes y ciudadanos naturalizados. Todos de algún modo se verían afectados por las explosivas medidas que impulsa DeSantis, como la que cataloga como delito grave transportar, albergar o contratar indocumentados. Es decir, que en una familia de estatus migratorio mixto, ciudadanos o residentes con estatus legal corren el riesgo de ser encarcelados si transportan a un familiar indocumentado. O los grupos religiosos y activistas también corren el riesgo de ir a prisión por hacer su trabajo, que es precisamente asistir a este sector de la población.

El paquete de medidas de DeSantis va más allá. También exige a los hospitales indagar sobre el estatus migratorio de sus pacientes y reportarlo al estado. Instruye además a las autoridades locales y estatales de Florida a asistir al gobierno federal en la aplicación de

leyes de inmigración.

DeSantis, quien ha hecho noticia por fletar aviones y enviar a migrantes indocumentados a estados y ciudades liderados por demócratas, también ha atacado a los Dreamers presentando otra medida que eliminaría la posibilidad de que paguen la misma matrícula que los residentes del estado.

El gobernador de Florida se une a la lista de extremistas del Partido Republicano que, a pesar del fracaso de políticas antiinmigrantes en años previos en estados como Arizona, con la SB1070, y Alabama, con la HB56, insisten en promover medidas para mantener el apoyo del sector republicano más extremista, sin importar las consecuencias, particularmente en la economía del estado.

America’s Voice en Español reportó desde Arizona y estuvo varios meses en Alabama documentando el daño que estas medidas tuvieron no solo sobre ciudadanos estadounidenses, particularmente los hijos ciudadanos de migrantes indocumentados, y sobre la economía, desde la pérdida de consumidores y residentes, hasta la pérdida de cosechas enteras por falta de mano de obra.

No obstante, con el ascenso de Donald Trump y la subsecuente competencia por ver quién es el más antiinmigrante o el más extremista, el Partido Republicano sigue repitiendo los errores del pasado.

Lo hace también inmiscuyéndose en los derechos reproductivos de las mujeres. La semana pasada, un juez de Texas nombrado por Trump falló que la Administración de Drogas y Alimentos se “equivocó” hace más de 20 años al autorizar el uso de la píldora abortiva Mifepristona. Otro juez en el estado de Washington, fallando sobre otro caso, ha impedido que la FDA retire el medicamento del mercado.

Pero son ejemplos de cómo la xenofobia, el racismo y la misoginia de un partido se traducen en medidas no solo federales, sino estatales y locales que impactan nuestros derechos como individuos y tienen un severo efecto en la economía.

Lo cierto es que la siniestra carga fascista que conllevan estas medidas de DeSantis y otros republicanos solo se veían en relatos de épocas que se creían superadas. Pero que eso esté ocurriendo en este siglo XXI en un país como Estados Unidos habla mucho de las anomalías a las que puede llegar una sociedad altamente desarrollada, que tiene todos los satisfactores cubiertos y que debería estar trabajando arduamente para convertirse en un estado solidario.

Sin embargo, su retroceso en esa materia estaría contradiciendo y decepcionando a su propia historia y a quienes aún ven en Estados Unidos un faro de esperanza. ¿Pero hasta cuándo?

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

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## Aldana

George W. Bush on the Merida Initiative to wage a war on drugs in Mexico, build a “21st Century U.S.-Mexican border” and shift immigration enforcement into Mexican territory.

These efforts, supported by massive U.S. funding, continue today.

With this money, Mexico established naval bases on its rivers, security cordons and drone surveillance. It also set up mobile highway checkpoints and biometric screening at migrant detention centers, all with the goal of detecting, detaining and deporting largely Central American migrants attempting to reach the United States.

The intent was to shift U.S. immigration enforcement south of the border. In that respect, the policy has been successful. Figures from the Guatemalan Institute of Migration show that of the 171,882 U.S.-bound migrants deported to the Northern Triangle region of Central America – El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala – in 2022, Mexico sent back 92,718, compared to the U.S.’s 78,433.

### Prevention through deterrence is not working

Mexico’s detentions and deportations have done little to stop the flow of migrants entering the country en route to the U.S.

Researchers at the University of Texas at Austin estimate that from 2018 to 2021, an annual average of 377,000 migrants entered Mexico from the Northern Triangle region. The vast majority were headed to the U.S. to escape violence, drought, natural disasters, corruption and extreme poverty.

Migrants are passing through Mexico in the thousands from multiple other countries as well, fleeing conditions in countries such as Haiti and Venezuela, as well as African nations.

Meanwhile, recent years have seen a toughening of border enforcement policies targeting asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border. This started under the Trump administration but has been continued by President Joe

Biden despite the Democrat’s campaign promises of a more “humane” immigration system.

Since 2019, Washington has adopted a series of policies that have either forced migrants presenting themselves at the U.S. southern border to apply for asylum while remaining in Mexico or expelled them back to their countries of origin.

This has created a bottleneck of hundreds of thousands of migrants at Mexico’s border towns and swelled the numbers entering detention facilities in Mexico.

By 2021, the number of immigration detainees in such centers had reached 307,679, nearly double what it had been in 2019.

As a result, many centers, including the one implicated in the fire, have suffered from overcrowding and deterioration conditions. A 2021 report by the immigration research center Global Detention Project extensively documented how the conditions and

practices of Mexico’s immigration centers had led to widespread protest by detained migrants. Rioting and protests have become more common, with incidents taking place at facilities in Tijuana and the southern city of Tapachula in recent months.

### No end in sight

The tragedy in Ciudad Juárez is unlikely to affect the steady flow of migrants entering Mexico in the hope of making it north of the border. For many, the options to take a different path to safety in the U.S. are simply not there.

Only a few can apply for refugee status in the U.S. from abroad, and the waits are long. Biden’s “humanitarian parole” program – which allows entry to the U.S. for up to 30,000 people a month – is only an option for those living in a handful of nations. It is also being challenged in court. And for the lucky few who manage to file for U.S. asylum, denial rates remain high

– 63% in 2021 – while immigration court backlogs mean that fewer cases are being decided. Only 8,349 asylum seekers were actually granted asylum by U.S. immigration judges in 2021.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration’s incoming “transit ban” will mean anyone seeking asylum at the U.S. southern border from May 11, 2023 without having first applied for asylum en route, will be rapidly deported, many to Mexico.

The likelihood is the policy will only worsen the migrant processing bottleneck in Mexico, and add pressure on the country’s already volatile detention facility system.

*Raquel Aldana, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Diversity and Professor of Law, University of California, Davis. This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license.*

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## Hastings &amp; Torres

that—curiously—is home to hundreds of thousands of them, and not only undocumented immigrants but people seeking asylum, permanent residents, and naturalized citizens.

All will be in some way affected by the explosive measures that DeSantis is pushing, like the one that makes it a felony to transport, house, or employ undocumented people. Basically, a family of mixed migration statuses, whether citizens or residents with legal status, runs the risk of being incarcerated if they transport an undocumented family member. Religious and activist groups also run the risk of going to prison for doing their jobs, which is assisting this sector of the population.

DeSantis’ package of measures goes even further. It requires hospitals to inquire about the migration status of their patients and report it to the state. It also instructs Florida state and local authorities to assist the federal government in applying immigration laws.

DeSantis, who made news by chartering planes and sending undocumented migrants to states and cities led by Democrats, has also attacked the Dreamers, offering a measure that would end in-state tuition for those who live in Florida.

The governor of Florida is joining the list of Republican Party extremists who, despite the failure of anti-immigrant policies in previous years in states like Arizona, with SB 1070, and Alabama, with HB 56, insist on promoting measures to keep support from the most extremist Republican sector, regardless of the consequences, particularly on to the state’s economy.

America’s Voice en Español reported from Arizona, and was in Alabama for several months documenting the damage these measures had on U.S. citizens, especially the citizen children of undocumented migrants, and on the economy, from the loss of consumers

and residents to the loss of entire harvests due to a lack of workers.

However, with the ascension of Donald Trump and the subsequent competition to see who is the most anti-immigrant or the most extreme, the Republican Party continues to repeat the mistakes of the past.

They are also doing this by intruding on the reproductive rights of women. Last week, a Texas judge nominated by Trump decided that the Food and Drug Administration “made a mistake” more than twenty years ago in authorizing the use of the abortion pill Mifepristone. Another judge from the state of Washington, opining in another case, prohibited the FDA from taking the medication off the market.

These are examples of how xenophobia, racism, and misogyny from one party are translated into not only federal measures, but also state and local policies that impact our rights as individuals and have a severe effect on the economy.

Certainly, the sinister fascist cost of these measures from DeSantis and other Republicans were once only seen in times we assumed to be over. But the fact that this is occurring in the 21st century, in a country like the United States, speaks volumes about the anomalies to which a highly developed society can reach, when it has all of its needs covered and should be working arduously to become a state of solidarity.

Its retreat on this matter would contradict and disappoint its own history, and those who still see the United States as a beacon of hope. But for how long?

*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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## Residuos Nucleares

“Necesitamos una solución permanente. Pero Nuevo México no puede ser simplemente la zona de sacrificio conveniente para la contaminación del país”, dijo el senador Jeff Steinborn (D-Las Cruces) en una entrevista.

Los residuos radiactivos de alta actividad son extremadamente tóxicos. Algunos tipos seguirán siendo altamente radiactivos durante miles, si no decenas de miles de años. Las dosis cortas de exposición pueden ser mortales. Si los residuos radiactivos se filtran en las aguas subterráneas o el suelo, pueden pasar a la cadena alimentaria.

La prohibición estatal incluiría la regulación de los planes de Holtec International para una instalación subterránea de combustible nuclear gastado procedente de reactores nucleares y otros residuos radiactivos de alto nivel procedentes de todo el país.

En su punto álgido, Holtec preveía que la instalación podría albergar 176.600 toneladas métricas de residuos en superficie, en más de 1.000 acres entre Hobbs y Carlsbad.

“Este proyecto de ley es otro gran obstáculo que impedirá que este emplazamiento reciba nunca residuos nucleares”, declaró Don Hancock, director del programa de Seguridad de Residuos Nucleares y administrador del Centro de Investigación e Información del Suroeste, organización sin ánimo de lucro.

La región ya alberga el Proyecto Piloto de Aislamiento de Residuos (WIPP en inglés), un emplazamiento subterráneo que almacena ropa, herramientas, trapos y otros artículos contaminados con residuos radiactivos. La nueva ley no afecta al WIPP.

En julio de 2021, la Comisión Reguladora Nuclear, organismo federal que supervisa las operaciones nucleares, dio su visto bueno preliminar a la instalación en una declaración de impacto ambiental, a pesar de las objeciones de los habitantes de la zona, el gobernador y miembros de la delegación del Congreso. Días después de la firma de la ley, la Comisión Reguladora Nuclear dio marcha atrás y emitió su decisión final de autorizar la instalación. En una carta de 20 de marzo a Holtec, la agencia escribió que publicará una evaluación final de seguridad y determinará si se emite una licencia en mayo de 2023.

Steinborn, que patrocinó el proyecto de ley en las dos últimas sesiones legislativas, dijo que el grupo de trabajo ahora también informará cada año al comité interino de Materiales Radiactivos y Peligrosos. El grupo de trabajo está formado por secretarios o personas designadas por siete departamentos estatales, entre los que ahora se incluyen el Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas y la Oficina Estatal de Tierras.

Kayleigh Warren, miembro de Santa Clara Pueblo y coordinadora de salud y justicia en la organización sin

ánimo de lucro Tewa Women United, calificó el proyecto de ley de cuatro páginas como “un primer paso importante”.

“Es una forma en que nuestro estado puede empezar a comunicar al resto de nuestro condado que hemos hecho nuestra parte”, dijo Warren. “Ya no nos interesa ser una zona de sacrificio para los residuos del país”.

Mujeres Tewa Unidas protesta por el impacto de las toxinas del Laboratorio Nacional de Los Álamos en el agua y la tierra del valle de Española y los pueblos de los alrededores. De cara al futuro, una cuestión clave es cómo participarán los gobiernos tribales en el grupo de trabajo.

Los nativos americanos son desproporcionadamente vulnerables a la minería de uranio en la Nación Navajo o están expuestos en mayor medida a la radiación en los suministros de agua.

“Quiero ver cómo nuestras voces forman parte de estas conversaciones en el futuro”, dijo Warren.

*Daniell Prokop es reportera de Source New Mexico. Este artículo ha sido publicado por Source New Mexico bajo una licencia Creative Commons.*

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

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Vida

“Nos sentimos honrados de unirnos a nuestros socios en el DMV de Colorado nuevamente este año, ya que nos ayudan a resaltar la importancia de la donación de órganos, ojos y tejidos en reconocimiento del Mes Nacional de Done Vida”, dijo Jennifer Prinz, presidenta y directora ejecutiva de Donor Alliance, la organización sin fines de lucro designada por el gobierno federal que facilita la donación de órganos y tejidos en Colorado y la mayor parte de Wyoming. “Estas ceremonias de izamiento de la bandera se han convertido en un símbolo de nuestra esperanza para aquellos que esperan trasplantes para salvar vidas y sanar, y el recuerdo de aquellos que han tomado la generosa decisión de salvar a otros a través de la donación de órganos, ojos y tejidos. La amabilidad de 278 donantes de órganos en nuestras comunidades el año pasado hizo posible 829 trasplantes que salvaron vidas para pacientes necesitados”.

En 2022, el 66 % de los habitantes de Colorado dijeron que sí para unirse al Registro de Donantes de Órganos y Tejidos de Donate Life Colorado al obtener su licencia de conducir o tarjeta de identificación. El promedio nacional es del 51%.

Colorado sigue siendo uno de los estados más generosos de los EE. UU. en lo que respecta a la donación y Donor Alliance registró otro año notable para la donación y el trasplante de órganos y tejidos. La organización también trabajó con 1.911 donantes de tejidos y sus familias para recuperar el tejido curativo y salvador que proporcionará tejido, como injertos óseos y de piel, a miles de receptores necesitados.

A pesar del progreso que se ha logrado, todavía hay alrededor de 1,500 personas en Colorado en la lista de espera de trasplante. Decir Sí al obtener o renovar una licencia de conducir o identificación estatal apoya la misión de salvar las vidas de nuestros vecinos a través de la donación de órganos, ojos y tejidos. Obtenga más información en [DonateLifeColorado.org/es/](https://DonateLifeColorado.org/es/).

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**Preescolar 1**

Aunque es posible que los proveedores de preescolar tengan que hacer cambios, Cobb dijo que todo resultará bien.

“Es un proceso de aprendizaje”, dijo Cobb.

Ziegler sabe que los estándares que el estado probablemente creará para educar a estudiantes como los suyos posiblemente incluirán capacitación adicional para el personal, algo que sabe que puede ser positivo, pero agregó que acceder a capacitación adicional para su personal ha sido un reto.

Él se ha asociado con el distrito escolar local para darles capacitación profesional a sus maestros sobre cómo ayudar a los estudiantes que todavía no entienden bien el inglés. Pero cuando los propios maestros buscan clases adicionales, muchas solamente se ofrecen en Denver, a unos 90 minutos en auto.

Otros miembros del personal, que hablan principalmente español, tienen dificultades para encontrar clases en español. Ziegler dijo que su centro está trabajando con una universidad comunitaria a fin de desarrollar algunas clases para el personal que puedan ofrecerse en español.

“En nuestra comunidad, realmente no veo esos recursos”, dijo Ziegler, que cree que un programa universal de preescolar será finalmente beneficioso. “Pero ahora mismo, es bien estresante. Es como si estuviésemos construyendo el avión sobre la pista”.

*Yesenia Robles es una reportera de Chalkbeat Colorado que cubre los distritos escolares K-12 y la educación multilingüe. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Chalkbeat.*

Traducido por Milly Suazo-Martinez

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**NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**Procurement No. 2023-04**

**CONTRACTED BUS SERVICES**  
**PROPOSALS DUE:** April 14, 2023, 12:00 p.m. (MST)

Proposals from individuals and firms to provide contracted bus services for the Rio Metro Regional Transit District (RMRTD) service area will be accepted until the date and time shown above at:

Rio Metro Regional Transit District  
c/o Mid-Region Council of Governments  
809 Copper N.W.  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

The RMRTD invites qualified individuals and firms to submit proposals to provide contracted bus services for the RMRTD service area. This project may be funded in part by federal and state funds. Therefore, this solicitation and resulting contract are subject to any related federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines.

Interested parties may receive a complete copy of this solicitation by accessing the following websites: <http://www.riometro.org>

Questions or any correspondence related to this procurement should be submitted to Phil Pino, Procurement Officer, at [ppino@mrcog-nm.gov](mailto:ppino@mrcog-nm.gov).

**ANUNCIO DE SOLICITUD DE PROPUESTAS**  
**Adquisición No. 2023-04**

**CONTRATACIÓN DE SERVICIOS DE AUTOBÚS**  
**FECHA LÍMITE PARA ENTREGAR PROPUESTAS:** 14 de abril de 2023, 12:00 p.m. (MST)

Se aceptarán propuestas de individuos y empresas para proporcionar servicios de autobús contratados para el área de servicio del Distrito Regional de Tránsito de Río Metro (RMRTD) hasta la fecha y hora indicadas arriba en:

Rio Metro Regional Transit District  
c/o Mid-Region Council of Governments  
809 Copper N.W.  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

RMRTD invita a individuos y empresas calificadas a presentar propuestas para proporcionar servicios de autobús contratados para el área de servicio del RMRTD. Este proyecto puede ser financiado en parte por fondos federales y estatales. Por lo tanto, esta convocatoria y el contrato resultante están sujetos a las leyes, reglamentos y directrices federales y estatales relacionados.

Las partes interesadas pueden recibir una copia completa de esta convocatoria accediendo a los siguientes sitios web: <http://www.riometro.org>

Las preguntas o cualquier correspondencia relacionada con esta contratación deberán enviarse a Phil Pino, Procurement Officer, a la dirección [ppino@mrcog-nm.gov](mailto:ppino@mrcog-nm.gov).



**NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**Procurement No. 2023-05**  
**PROVIDE ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDITS**  
**PROPOSALS DUE:** April 28, 2023, 2:00 p.m. (MDT)

Proposals from individuals and firms to provide annual financial audits for the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG), the Rio Metro Regional Transit District (RMRTD) and New Mexico Workforce Connection (WCCNM) will be accepted until the date and time shown above at:

Mid-Region Council of Governments  
809 Copper N.W.  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

The MRCOG invites qualified individuals and firms to submit proposals to provide annual financial audits for the MRCOG, RMRTD and WCCNM. This requirement may be funded in part by federal and state funds.

Therefore, this solicitation and resulting contract are subject to any related federal and state laws, regulations and guidelines.

Interested parties may receive a complete copy of this solicitation by accessing the following websites:

<https://www.mrcog-nm.gov>  
<https://www.riometro.org>

Questions or any correspondence related to this procurement should be submitted to Phil Pino, Procurement Officer, at [ppino@mrcog-nm.gov](mailto:ppino@mrcog-nm.gov).

**ANUNCIO DE RECEPCIÓN DE PROPUESTAS**  
**Adquisición No. 2023-05**

**PROPORCIONAR AUDITORÍAS FINANCIERAS ANUALES**  
**FECHA LÍMITE PARA LA PRESENTACIÓN DE PROPUESTAS:** 28 de abril de 2023, 2:00 p.m. (MDT)

Se aceptarán propuestas de individuos y empresas para proporcionar auditorías financieras anuales para el Consejo de Gobiernos de la Región Central (MRCOG), el Distrito de Tránsito Regional de Río Metro (RMRTD) y la Conexión de la Fuerza Laboral de Nuevo México (WCCNM) hasta la fecha y hora indicadas anteriormente en:

Consejo de Gobiernos de la Región Central  
809 Copper N.W.  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

El MRCOG invita a individuos y empresas calificadas a presentar propuestas para proporcionar auditorías financieras anuales para el MRCOG, RMRTD y WCCNM. Este requisito puede ser financiado en parte por fondos federales y estatales. Por lo tanto, esta convocatoria y el contrato resultante están sujetos a todas las leyes, reglamentos y directrices federales y estatales relacionados.

Aquellos interesados pueden recibir una copia completa de esta convocatoria accediendo a los siguientes sitios web:

<https://www.mrcog-nm.gov>  
<https://www.riometro.org>

Las preguntas o cualquier correo relacionados con esta contratación deberán enviarse a Phil Pino, Procurement Officer, a la dirección [ppino@mrcog-nm.gov](mailto:ppino@mrcog-nm.gov).



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# SNAP SUPPORTS COLORADANS GET HEALTHY FOOD ON YOUR DINNER TABLE

## WHAT'S SNAP?

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

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

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

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

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

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

## BENEFITS OF SNAP



Supports better health, overall well-being and happiness



Lowers health care costs and improves long-term health



Enhances work productivity



Keeps older adults stable and independent



Supports local farmers, ranchers, producers and business owners



Improves academic achievement



Increases the likelihood of completing high school

## SNAP FUELS HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIVES!

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

**HUNGER FREE COLORADO  
FOOD RESOURCE  
HOTLINE**  
STATEWIDE, TOLL-FREE  
**855-855-4626**



[HungerFreeColorado.org](http://HungerFreeColorado.org)



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

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