

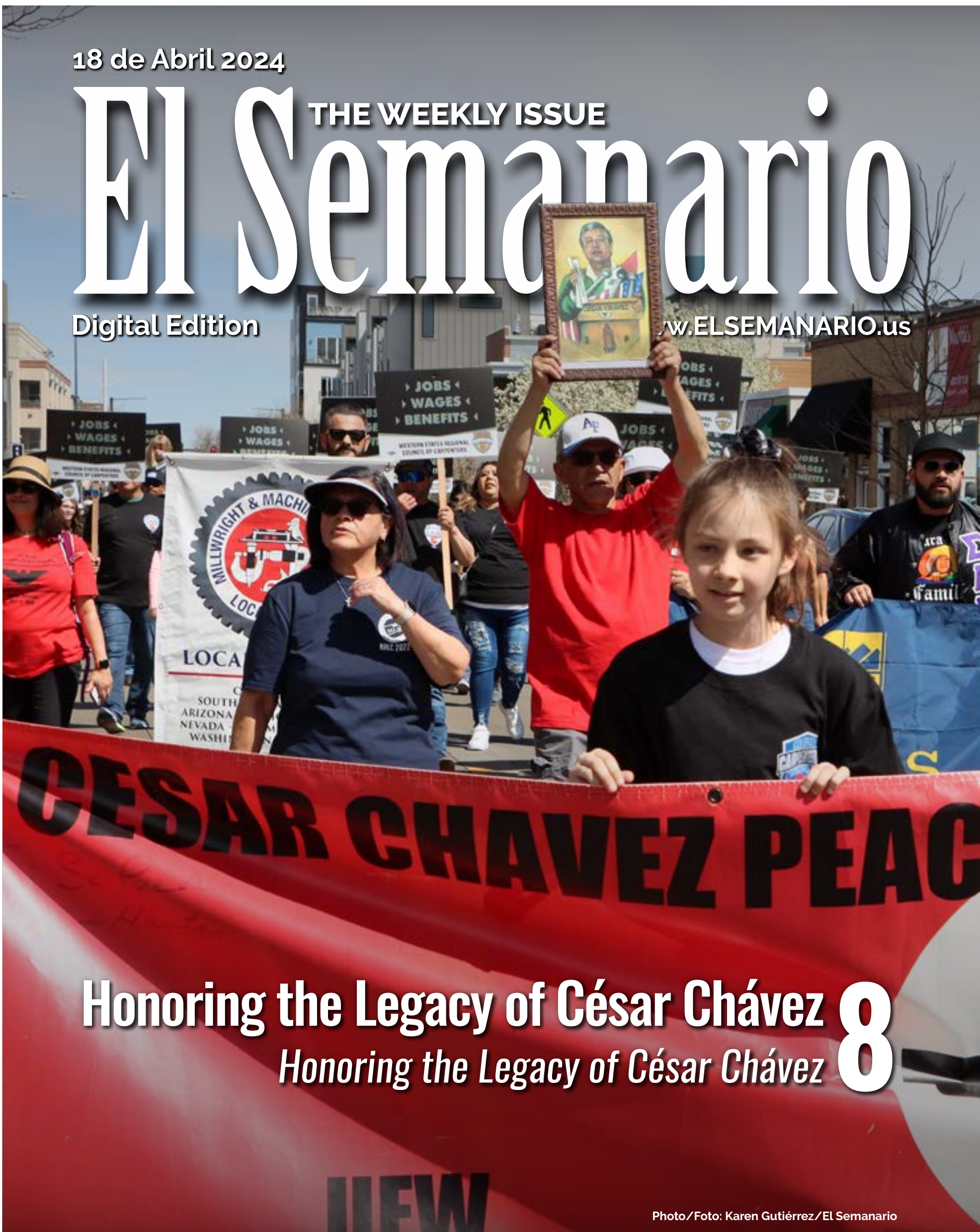
18 de Abril 2024

THE WEEKLY ISSUE

El Semanario

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Honoring the Legacy of César Chávez 8
Honoring the Legacy of César Chávez

18 de Abril 2024
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Welcoming Migrant Students is More Than a Generational Challenge. It's a Moral Obligation.

Alex Marrero

There's no denying the challenges that the influx of newcomer students presents. There are testing requirements, transportation needs, and requisite Spanish-language academic and mental health supports, to name a few. As a child of immigrant parents and the leader of Colorado's largest school district, I am confident that Denver Public Schools is meeting the moment.

Denver has the highest intake of new-to-country students per capita among all large U.S. cities not situated along the southern border. Since July 2023, Denver Public Schools has welcomed more than 3,500 migrant students.

“

These efforts underscore the importance of unity and shared responsibility in addressing the educational needs of our newest community members.

In the past few months, I've walked the halls of more than 100 Denver schools and met with many of our new-to-country students, their fam-



ilies, and the educators dedicated to serving them. I've seen fear and sadness in these students' eyes transform into sparkle and joy. I've watched thousands of teachers and school employees level up supports and services — hosting winter clothing drives and information sessions about the American school system. In the process, our leaders have grown, and our district has been enriched.

My own upbringing, as the child of a Cuban refugee and a Dominican immigrant, offered profound lessons in how public schools can help newcomer families thrive. Decades on, I'm proud to lead Denver Public Schools' work to support our new-to-country scholars.

Amid teacher shortages in the area, Denver Public Schools created an International Educator Institute to recruit highly qualified international candidates who can fill critical vacancies, including for multilingual educa-

tors. To date, we've successfully hired 98% of budgeted teaching positions, with a focus on diverse candidates to meet our students' varied needs.

The district's six community hubs have been key to supporting the newcomer families as they build their lives in Denver. Launched in 2022, these hubs offer help with everything from food assistance to medical services to workforce training. While they are costly to maintain, they help ensure our students have what they need to thrive. The district is also committed to providing reliable transportation, nutritious meals, mental health support, and access to technology.

Recognizing this as a statewide and nationwide challenge, we are grateful for all of the school districts and leaders advocating for state and federal funding support. These efforts underscore the importance of unity and shared responsibility in addressing the educational needs of our newest community members. It is more than a responsibility; it is our moral obligation as educators.

I want to assure Denver's new-to-country families that despite the circumstances that brought them here, every child who walks through our doors will have access to the highest-quality education. While accom-

modating an influx of newcomer students has presented challenges in staffing, services, and a budget impact that now totals in the tens of millions of dollars, it has also proved our resolve to uphold our mission of educational equity and inclusivity for all learners.

As long as I am Superintendent, Denver Public Schools will continue to champion this cause and uplift every child. We are committed to honoring the legacy of those who have paved the way for equity and justice, positioning our schools as drivers of opportunity and advancement for all.

Dr. Alex Marrero is the Superintendent of Denver Public Schools.

Read More Commentary:
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Acoger a los Estudiantes Inmigrantes, Más Que Un Desafío Generacional, Es Una Obligación Moral

Alex Marrero

No se puede negar el desafío que presenta la afluencia de estudiantes recién llegados. Existen requisitos de pruebas, necesidades de transporte y apoyos académicos y de salud mental en español, por nombrar algunos. Como hijo de padres inmigrantes y líder del distrito escolar más grande de Colorado, estoy seguro de que las Escuelas Públicas de Denver han asumido el compromiso de responder a las nuevas necesidades.

Denver cuenta con el mayor ingreso de estudiantes recién llegados al país per cápita entre todas las grandes ciudades de Estados Unidos que no están situadas a lo largo de la frontera sur. Desde julio de 2023, las Escuelas Públicas de Denver han dado la bienvenida a más de 3,500 estudiantes inmigrantes.

En los últimos meses, he caminado por los pasillos de más de cien escuelas de Denver y me he reunido con muchos de nuestros estudiantes recién llegados al país, con sus familias y con los educadores dedicados a servirlos. He visto cómo el miedo y la tristeza en los ojos de estos estudiantes se transformaba en brillo y alegría. He visto el incremento de apoyos y servicios por parte de miles de maestros y empleados escolares al organizar colectas de ropa de invierno y sesiones informativas sobre el sistema escolar estadounidense. A lo largo de este proceso, nuestros líderes han evolucionado y nuestro Distrito se ha enriquecido.

Mi propia formación, como hijo de un refugiado cubano y una inmigrante dominicana, me dejó profundas lecciones sobre cómo las escuelas públicas pueden contribuir a que las familias recién llegadas prosperen.

Décadas más tarde, me siento orgulloso de liderar la labor de las Escuelas Públicas de Denver para apoyar a nuestros estudiantes recién llegados al país.

Ante la escasez de maestros en el área, las Escuelas Públicas de Denver crearon un Instituto Internacional de Educadores para reclutar a candidatos internacionales altamente calificados a fin de cubrir vacantes cruciales, incluyendo a educadores multilingües. Hasta la fecha, hemos contratado con éxito el 98 % de los cargos docentes presupuestados, con un enfoque en candidatos diversos para satisfacer las distintas necesidades de nuestros estudiantes.

“

Estos esfuerzos subrayan la importancia de la unidad y la responsabilidad compartida para abordar las necesidades educativas de los integrantes más nuevos de nuestra comunidad.

Los seis centros comunitarios del Distrito han sido clave para apoyar a las familias recién llegadas a medida que rehacen sus vidas en Denver. Desde su inauguración en 2022, estos centros ofrecen ayuda con todo: desde asistencia alimentaria hasta servicios médicos y capacitación laboral. Aunque su mantenimiento es costoso, ayudan a garantizar que nuestros estudiantes dispongan de lo necesario para prosperar. El Distrito también ha asumido el compromiso de brindar transporte confiable, comidas nutriti-

vas, apoyo para la salud mental y acceso a la tecnología.

Siendo conscientes del desafío que esto supone a nivel estatal y nacional, agradecemos a todos los distritos escolares y líderes que abogan por un apoyo financiero estatal y federal. Estos esfuerzos subrayan la importancia de la unidad y la responsabilidad compartida para abordar las necesidades educativas de los integrantes más nuevos de nuestra comunidad. Es más que una responsabilidad; es nuestra obligación moral como educadores.

Deseo asegurar a las familias recién llegadas al país instaladas en Denver que, a pesar de las circunstancias que los han traído hasta aquí, todos los niños que entren por nuestras puertas tendrán acceso a una educación de la más alta calidad. Aunque acoger esta gran afluencia de estudiantes recién llegados ha presentado desafíos en materia de personal y servicios, y ha tenido un impacto presupuestario que ahora asciende a decenas de millones de dólares, también ha demostrado nuestra determinación de defender nuestra misión de equidad e inclusión educativa para todos los estudiantes.

Mientras yo sea superintendente, las Escuelas Públicas de Denver seguirán defendiendo esta causa y alentando a todos los niños. Tenemos el compromiso de honrar el legado de quienes han allanado el camino de la equidad y la justicia, y hemos posicionado a nuestras escuelas como el motor que impulsa las oportunidades y el avance para todos.

El Dr. Alex Marrero es el superintendente de las Escuelas Públicas de Denver.

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Election Subversion Efforts in 2020 Were Bad. Now They're Worse.

Quentin Young



Defenders of democracy in the aftermath of the 2020 election triumphed against lie-fueled efforts to subvert the will of voters.

But the forces behind those attacks on democracy never went away. The election deniers of four years ago are back at work planning election subversion in 2024. Their hostility to democracy has deepened, their methods have matured, their conspiracies have metastasized, and their ill intent has hardened.

Heading into November, free and fair elections are at even greater risk. So-called election integrity groups plan to disrupt election processes, and the Republican Party for years has nurtured the falsehood that elections can't be trusted.

Colorado is a blue state that would never vote for the "big lie" originator, former President Donald Trump, who is the presumptive GOP presidential nominee. But it is the site of widespread election subversion activity, and several homegrown election deniers have strong ties to individuals and organizations that could compromise elections in Colorado and elsewhere.

Mike Lindell, the pillow salesman and staunch Trump ally, who is among the most influential election deniers in the country, in late 2021 launched "election integrity" organization Cause of America after observing the work of a similar Colorado-based group, U.S. Election Integrity Plan. Colorado resident Shawn Smith, who participated in the Jan. 6 insurrection, was named president of the organization.

Founded on the baseless premise that elections can't be trusted, Cause of America has since become one of the primary hubs for grassroots "election integrity" organizing and activity. A group representative took part in an April 4 virtual meeting of election conspiracists that, notably, featured an appearance by Republican National Committee's Christina Norton, election integrity director, demonstrating an alarming alignment of the national party, its presidential nominee and extremists who once were relegated to the fringe.

The civic decay that results from the mainstreaming of election misinformation is already appearing throughout the state, including threats of violence against election officials.

Few public officials have had to endure — or more courageously withstood — physical intimidation like Jena Griswold, the Colorado secretary of state. *The New York Times* this week published audio clips of threatening voice messages sent to Griswold.

“

Every person who wants to preserve democracy has a role to play in protecting it.

"I can't wait to find you and follow you to your house and expose your address," one person said. Another told her, "I hope you die, painfully." The Times also reported that Griswold has received hundreds of threatening messages, emails and social media posts, including death threats.

As Newsline's Sara Wilson has reported, almost half of Coloradans this year will vote in a county that has a different chief local election official than the one who oversaw the previous presidential election. An increasingly stressful work environment and harassment toward election workers was a major reason for this unusual turnover.

An increasing number of Republican county canvass board members are refusing to sign off on local vote counts, *The Denver Post* reported this last week. The board members say, without justification, that they distrust the election process.

"It's concerning any time people want to play political games or score cheap political points with our elections," Matt Crane, a Republican who is executive director of the Colorado County Clerks Association, told the outlet.

Such malign local activism exemplifies the tactics developed by a growing number of national election subversion initiatives, which seek to

mobilize thousands of on-the-ground volunteers in every state.

"In recent weeks, these groups have held training sessions about how to organize on a hyperlocal level to monitor polling places and drop boxes, challenge voter registrations en masse, and intimidate and harass voters and election officials," *Wired* reported this last week.

Democracy Docket, the progressive election-news site, reports that such groups are planning widespread voter challenges.

"New Republican election vigilante groups are cropping up around the country to lodge mass challenges against unsuspecting voters — seeking to deprive them of the right to vote," *the Docket* reported this month.

Among the most noxious of national election subversion groups are *True the Vote*, *United Sovereign Americans* and *Election Integrity Network*, in addition to *Cause of America*.

The threat to democracy that election subversion efforts poses goes beyond elections themselves. These groups hope to secure for Trump another term in the White House. But democracy is loathsome to Trump, who attempted a violent coup to stay in power and who would rule as an autocrat if he regained the presidency.

Every person who wants to preserve democracy has a role to play in protecting it. Many democracy experts advise people to consider what they can do every day in their own lives and among family and friends to promote democratic values and push back against misinformation. The Brennan Center for Justice has published a paper about "*How States Can Prevent Election Subversion in 2024 and Beyond*." County election offices invite community members to help administer elections and ensure the integrity of vote tallies.

Democracy's enemies might be organizing and planning, but its defenders can organize, too. At stake in the contest between the two sides is the preservation of free and fair elections in America.

Quentin Young is the editor of Colorado Newsline. This commentary is republished from Colorado Newsline under a Creative Commons license.

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Denver, Colorado - April 13, 2024



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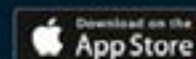


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Colorado is Latest State to Try Turning Off the Electrical Grid to Prevent Wildfires

Kyri Baker

The U.S. power grid is the largest and most complex machine ever built. It's also aging and under increasing stress from climate-driven disasters such as wildfires, hurricanes and heat waves.

Over the past decade, power grids have played roles in wildfires in multiple states, including California, Hawaii, Oregon and Minnesota. When wind speeds are high and humidity is

low, electrical infrastructure such as aboveground power lines can blow into vegetation or spark against other components, starting a fire that high winds then spread.

Under extreme conditions, utilities may opt to shut off power to parts of the grid in their service areas to reduce wildfire risk. These outages, known as public safety power shutoffs, have occurred mainly in California, where wildfires have become larger and more destructive in recent decades.

On April 5-6, 2024, Colorado util-

ity Xcel Energy carried out that state's first public safety power shutoff, cutting power to thousands of customers ahead of an intense windstorm. Public officials and Xcel customers complained that they had not received enough warning or explanation. Gov. Jared Polis has directed state regulators to investigate the incident and propose better procedures for the future.

I am an electrical and computer engineer, and study efficient operation of power grids. I also live in Boulder County, where a wind-driven wildfire destroyed more than 1,000 homes in 2021. These shutoffs are likely to become more common in more places as climate-driven weather extremes stress aging grid components. This makes it important to understand and evaluate utilities' public safety shutoff plans.

An intricate system

Shutting off power and turning it back on – in utility-speak, de-energizing and re-energizing – requires more than flipping a switch. The power grid is a complex system that maintains a balance in real time between electricity flowing in from generating plants and out to customers.

Power lines don't have the capacity to store electricity for use later – it has to be used immediately. This makes the grid different from other critical infrastructure. Water networks can

hold water in their pipes, and roadways can support cars at a standstill if traffic can't flow.

Because the grid can't store electricity, de-energizing and re-energizing have to happen in stages to ensure that changes in the demand side of the power grid are not too rapid for the supply side to adapt to. Power plants can't turn on instantaneously: Some can start up within minutes, while others take hours, depending on their age, design and the type of fuel they use. And they generally can't raise their output from 10% of their generating capacity to 90% with the flick of a switch.

When a utility restores power after an outage, it produces a large, instantaneous spike in power use as devices in many homes turn back on. The grid also needs time to adapt to that surge in demand. And utilities may visually inspect power lines to check for damage before restoring power.

The complexities of local grids can make it seem as though these outages are being implemented unevenly or arbitrarily. The distribution transformer serving power to your home may be completely electrically disconnected from the one serving your neighbor across the street, putting your block in the dark while the next block's lights stay on.

And a utility may cut power because of a risk somewhere in its network that



customers can't see. It's not always possible for utilities to fine-tune areas where power shutoffs happen.

Creating shutdown plans

California has been a test bed of sorts for public safety power shutoffs. The state's public utility commission approved them in 2012 as a way to mitigate the potential impacts of utility equipment-induced wildfires, and it has issued regulations guiding when utilities can de-energize power lines. The regulations require power companies to notify customers in advance and submit detailed reports within 10 days after each planned blackout.

Millions of Californians have experienced these shutdowns over the past decade. A 2023 review by PSE Healthy Energy, an independent research institute, found that the most-affected counties, mainly in Southern California, average four to five public safety outages yearly, which on average last 48 hours.

Oregon has followed suit, adopting public safety shutdown rules in 2022, but many other jurisdictions do not yet have formal protocols in place. Instead,

See Baker on page 22

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Last Year, You Spent More Than a Month's Rent on Pentagon Contractors

Lindsay Koshgarian

Ever wonder where your taxes go? Each year, the Institute for Policy Studies releases a tax receipt so you can find out.

One item always stands out: the Pentagon — and the contractors who profit off it.

In 2023, the average taxpayer spent \$2,974 on the Pentagon. Of that, just \$705 went to salaries for the troops, who often have to rely on programs like food stamps. A much larger sum — \$1,748 — went to corporate Pentagon contractors. That's more than the average American's monthly rent, \$1,372.

From Lockheed Martin (the top federal contractor and longtime weapons maker) to SpaceX (which Elon Musk runs when he's not spewing racist and anti-semitic tropes), these corporations don't need your support. And they aren't operating with your well-being in mind.

Enriching them comes at the cost of better health care, education, clean air

and water, disaster management, and more. Here are just five examples from the average tax bill.

1. Pentagon contractors (\$1,759) vs. the Child Tax Credit (\$110).

In 2024, the Pentagon budget is set to increase by \$27 billion, bringing the department's budget to about \$825 billion. About half of that will go to for-profit contractors.

Meanwhile, an expansion of the Child Tax Credit during the pandemic succeeded in cutting the child poverty rate almost in half — progress that was almost immediately reversed when the expansion expired in late 2021.



Spread the word: every taxpayer deserves better.

Lifting kids out of poverty can have lifelong effects on their health, education, and employment. Isn't that worth



more than a tiny fraction of our spending on military contracts?

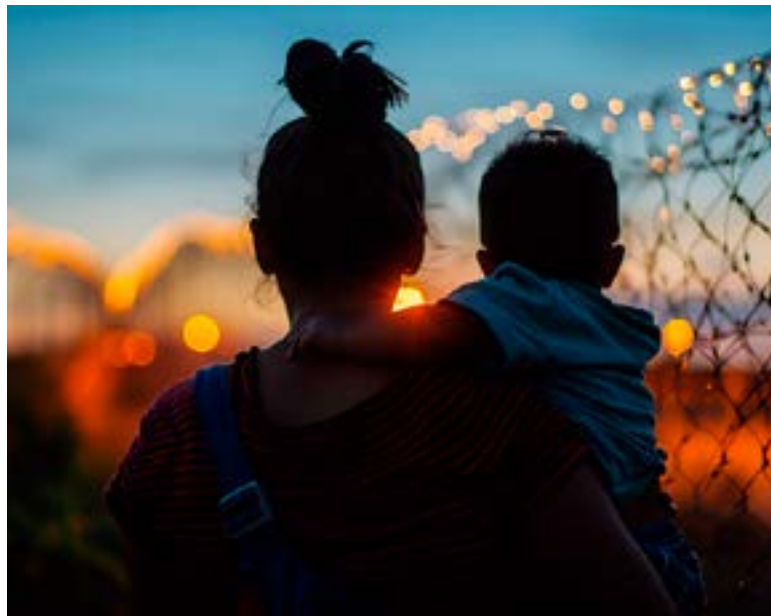
2. Lockheed Martin (\$249) vs. renewable energy (\$11).

Lockheed Martin is perhaps best-known as the maker of the always over-budget, never-quite-ready F-35 jet fighter, which has spontaneously caught fire three separate times. Despite claims that programs like this are job creators, Lockheed recently made moves to cut jobs.

Meanwhile, despite the necessity of addressing climate change and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, the

See Koshgarian on page 22

Who is going to take care of the children?



(Photo: Adobe Stock)

Dr. Ramón Del Castillo

Editor's Note: Dr. Ramón Del Castillo read the following poem during at the César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver's Mass at St. John Francis Regis Chapel, Regis University on April 13, 2024.

Who is going to shovel
ashes of Ukrainian children
bodies burnt to a crisp
from the sweltering chemicals
invading their bodies,
and place them
into body bags,
ready to
mix them
with an ideological mortar
called human genocide.
Will vestiges
of human flesh
be spread
like *mantequilla*
across urban streets
of nations in turmoil,
casualties of death
caused by the elites
fatalities of technological warfare
of ruthless nations
hiding behind
modern day weaponry
fascists unable to discern
right from wrong
planning for the next attack?

Who is going to
pick up the ashes
of Palestinian and Israeli children
victims of religious zeal
armed and ready to kill.
Who is going to summon
withered spirits
roaming in country sides
floating in an abyss
of loneliness
as lifeless bodies
lie on cement streets
victims of a war torn nation
without an explanation
except to rationalize extermination
as unintended consequences
the price of war
leaving another a big scar?

Who is going to feed
farmworker children
their next meal
as they pick vegetables and fruit
from trees of survival
for wealthy American's children
and their clandestine revival?
Who is going to wipe off
chemicals off a child's face
as she becomes
an extinct race?

Who is going to
cuddle the *quetzales*
and *los pericos*,
whose destinies
of becoming bilingual *pajaritos*
to salvage the next generation
of *raza* suffering
from cultural extinction
now locked in cages
ripped apart from families
on both sides
of a fictitious border
covered with american drapes
so they won't escape
while politicians
flicker a smile
as the border wall
stretches another mile.

Who is going to
salvage the broken hearts
of broken families
whose absconded children
perished in U-Haul trucks
skin melted
then pelted
by the sun's rays,
children without names
sin *sobrenombres*
unfit to be sold
as modern day slaves?

See Del Castillo on page 17

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A Tribute in Song and Verse to Civil Rights Icon César Chávez

By Hilary Olivares

In honor of late labor leader, César E. Chávez, the César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver (CCPJ-C) celebrated the 23rd annual Marcha and community celebration on April 13.

The annual event began with a traditional mass at St. John Francis Regis Chapel at Regis University in northwest Denver, followed by a Marcha through the neighborhood to César E. Chávez Park, along with a program acknowledging the impact of Chávez and his legacy of the Chicano Movement.

The event presents awards to community members and organizations who embody the ideals of Chávez and the United Farm Workers. This year [Carlota Espinoza](#), noted artist and muralist, was honored with the Anciana Leadership Award; [Dr. Nicki Gonzales](#), professor of History and Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion at Regis University, was presented with the Adult Female Leadership Award; [Milo Marquez](#), Director of Community Engagement at the Latino Research & Policy Center at CU Denver, received the Adult Male Leadership Award; Ales-

sandra Chavira [Alessandra Chavira](#), Program Assistant with Project Voyce, received the Youth Female Leadership Award; and the Community Organization Award was presented to [Homies Unidos Denver](#).

The event was live streamed by The Weekly Issue/El Semanario, watch the video [here](#).

Ramón Del Castillo, PhD, one of the co-founders of [CCPJ-C](#) of Denver has given some insight on why this event is so important, and how it came to be. “We’ve got a template that we follow and we’re getting more and more support, and more and more kinds of resources that we’re able to do different things like the podcast with El Semanario and having newspapers call us and having a partnership with Regis University. All these are things that add value to what it is that we’re trying to do together,” said Del Castillo. He explained his life-long interest in the union (UFW) and found his passion. “In 1972, I was going to the University of Northern Colorado and it was at that time that I was introduced to the [lettuce boycott](#) that César Chávez had called...he had called the consumers to boycott head lettuce. I had already



Dr. Ramón Del Castillo, cofounder of César E. Chávez, the César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver presented renowned artist Carlota Espinoza, with the Anciana Leadership Award on April 13, 2024 at César Chávez Park. / El Dr. Ramón Del Castillo, cofundador de César E. Chávez, el Comité de Paz y Justicia César Chávez de Denver entregó a la renombrada artista Carlota Espinoza, el Premio Anciana al Liderazgo el 13 de abril de 2024 en el Parque César Chávez. (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)

been in school, then I got drafted and then when I came back, I moved from Wichita, Kansas to Colorado and got involved with that. So, I was one of the chairs in the lettuce boycott, and that sparked my interest. Realizing the importance of it and what it meant watching my mother be a union worker in a packing house, and the many struggles

she had and that kind of stuck. So, I kept that conscious, I built a consciousness and kept that.”

In honor of César Chávez and his commitment to community and those who support the structure of non-violence and healing, [Grupo Tlaloc Danza Azteca](#), a Mexica/Azteca cultural icon group in the city of Denver for 35 years, offers blessings and performs annually at the Denver celebration.

[Grupo Tlaloc Danza Azteca](#), a Mexica/Azteca cultural icon group in the city of Denver for 35 years, which has allowed for families and students of Chicano/Mexicano descent to participate. The *danzantes* marched alongside others before including a blessing and performing *La Danza* (the dance). This group is one of the oldest groups of its kind in Denver to thrive and spread knowledge of their ancestors through dance and ceremony.

Many attendees reflected on their participation in the annual celebration.

“My overall perspective was very inspirational,” said Danny Stange, community activist and *danzante*. “We had some great speakers and as usual the people marching were representatives of labor unions and social justice movements. The women involved were always outnumbering the men as it always was. [Dolores Huerta](#) is still very iconic and her spirit of grace and administration were evident in the planning and preparation.

“I was exceptionally proud to see members of SPMDTU [[Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos](#)] there and I finally got my membership with them. They are the oldest Hispanic advocacy organization. I especially feel inspired to attend this annual event because of César’s commitment to service learning and non-violence. I believe the world is in too much turmoil and we need more focus on the type of movement that César Chávez represents.”

Nicki Gonzales and Adriana Espinoza, faculty members of Regis University also participated in the event. “I think the March was very powerful because we are still kind of following the footsteps of the legacy that César Chávez fought for but in a new context, and there’s something really powerful about a group of mainly people of color, marching through the gentrified streets of the Tennyson area and how we were just chanting,” explained Espinoza. “Again, like really living the legacy of what César Chávez and Dolores Huerta went through and also accomplished. So, I think looking at it through its new context of today was really powerful, but also just the paradox of us marching through a very newly highly developed area was really cool.”

Gonzales expressed her content and pride regarding the celebration. “Overall, I really appreciated the event as both recognizing the work that is being done in our community as well as building community around telling our stories. I thought the keynote speaker Dr. Falcón told us a really important Colorado Chicano movement story that has not been told enough and that is the story of Lupe Briseño. I was telling my own kids that events like that are so important because they do allow us the space to tell stories and pass them down to younger generations,” explained Gonzales. “It was also a good opportunity to see people in the community that I hadn’t seen in a long time, very grateful to the committee who did so much organizing and treated everybody so wonderfully. It really was a wonderful day.”

Del Castillo shared the challenges and achievements of the CCPJC of Denver over the past two decades. “One of the things we did was to get the name of the park changed [César Chávez Park]. So, I went to the city

See [Chávez](#) on page 19

THE WEEKLY ISSUE

El Semanario

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Homenaje en Verso y Canción a César Chávez, Icono de los Derechos Civiles

Por Hilary Olivares

En honor al difunto líder sindical César E. Chávez, el Comité de Paz y Justicia César Chávez de Denver (CCPJC) celebró la 23ª Marcha anual y una celebración comunitaria el 13 de abril.

El evento anual comenzó con una misa tradicional en la Capilla St. John Francis Regis de la Universidad Regis en el noroeste de Denver, seguida de una Marcha por el barrio hasta el Parque César E. Chávez, junto con un programa de reconocimiento del impacto de Chávez y su legado del Movimiento Chicano.

El evento entrega premios a miembros de la comunidad y organizaciones que encarnan los ideales de Chávez y la Unión de Campesinos. Este año, Carlota Espinoza, destacada artista y muralista, fue galardonada con el Premio al Liderazgo Anciano; la Dra. Nicki Gonzales, profesora de Historia, recibió el Premio al Liderazgo Anciano. Dr. Nicki Gonzales, profesora de Historia y Vicerrectora de Diversidad e Inclusión de la Regis University, recibió el Premio al Liderazgo Femenino Adulto; Milo Marquez, Director de Participación Comunitaria del Latino Research & Policy Center de CU Denver, recibió el Premio al Liderazgo Masculino Adulto; Allestrandra Chavira, Asistente de Programas del Proyecto Voyce, recibió el Premio al Liderazgo Femenino Juvenil; y el Premio a la Organización Comunitaria fue otorgado a Homies Unidos Denver.

El evento fue transmitido en vivo por *The Weekly Issue/El Semanario*, mira el video [aquí](#).

Ramón Del Castillo, PhD, uno de los cofundadores de CCPJC de Denver ha dado algunas ideas sobre por qué este evento es tan importante, y cómo llegó a ser. “Tenemos una plantilla que seguimos y estamos recibiendo más y más apoyo, y más y más tipos de recursos que nos permiten hacer cosas diferentes como el podcast con El Semanario y que los periódicos nos llamen y tener una asociación con Regis University. Todas estas son cosas que añaden valor a lo que estamos tratando de hacer juntos”, dijo Del Castillo. Explicó su interés de toda la vida en el sindicato (UFW) y encontró su pasión. “En 1972, iba a la Universidad del Norte de Colorado y fue entonces cuando conocí el

boicot a la lechuga que había convocado César Chávez... había llamado a los consumidores a boicotear la lechuga arropollada. Yo ya había estado en la escuela, luego me llamaron a filas y cuando volví, me mudé de Wichita, Kansas, a Colorado y me involucré en eso. Fui

uno de los presidentes del boicot a la lechuga y eso despertó mi interés. Me di cuenta de su importancia y de lo que significaba ver a mi madre como trabajadora sindicalizada en una planta de empaquetado, y de las muchas luchas que tuvo, y eso se me quedó grabado. Así que mantuve esa conciencia, construí una conciencia y la mantuve”.

En honor a César Chávez y su compromiso con la comunidad y con aquellos que apoyan la estructura de la no violencia y la sanación, el Grupo Tlaloc Danza Azteca, un grupo icono cultural Mexica/Azteca en la ciudad de Denver desde hace 35 años, ofrece bendiciones y actúa anualmente en la celebración de Denver.

Grupo Tlaloc Danza Azteca, grupo icono de la cultura mexicana/azteca en la ciudad de Denver desde hace 35 años, que ha permitido la participación de familias y estudiantes de ascendencia chicana/mexicana. Los danzantes desfilaron junto a otros antes de incluir una bendición e interpretar La Danza. Este grupo es uno de los más antiguos de su tipo en Denver que prospera y difunde el conocimiento de sus antepasados a través de la danza y la ceremonia.

Muchos asistentes reflexionaron sobre su participación en la celebración anual.

“Mi perspectiva general fue muy inspiradora”, dijo Danny Stange, activista comunitario y danzante. “Tuvimos grandes oradores y, como de costumbre, las personas que desfilaron eran representantes de sindicatos y movimientos por la justicia social. Como siempre, las mujeres participantes superaban en número a los hombres. Dolores Huerta sigue siendo muy emblemática y su espíritu de gracia y administración fueron evidentes en la planificación y preparación.

“Me sentí excepcionalmente orgulloso de ver allí a miembros de la SPMDTU [Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos], a la que por fin me afilié. Son la organización de defensa de los derechos de los hispanos más antigua. Me siento especialmente inspirado para asistir a este acto anual por el compromiso de César con el aprendizaje por servicio y la no violencia. Creo que el mundo está demasiado convulsionado y necesitamos centrarnos más en el tipo de movimiento que representa César Chávez.”

Nicki Gonzales y Adriana Espinoza, miembros de la facultad de Regis University también participaron en el evento. “Creo que la Marcha fue muy poderosa porque todavía estamos siguiendo los pasos del legado por el que César Chávez luchó, pero en un nuevo contexto, y hay algo realmente



César E. Chávez, se entregaron los premios César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver 2024 a Homies Unidos, la Dra. Nicki Gonzales, Allestrandra Chavira y Milo Marquez. / César E. Chávez, the César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver 2024 awardees were presented to Homies Unidos, Dr. Nicki Gonzales, Allestrandra Chavira, and Milo Marquez. (Foto/Photo: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)

poderoso en un grupo de personas, principalmente de color, marchando por las calles aburguesadas de la zona de Tennyson y cómo estábamos cantando”, explicó Espinoza. “De nuevo, como si realmente viviéramos el legado de lo que César Chávez y Dolores Huerta vivieron y también lograron. Por lo tanto, creo que verlo en el nuevo contexto de hoy fue muy poderoso,

pero también la paradoja de marchar a través de una nueva zona altamente desarrollada fue realmente genial”.

Gonzales expresó su satisfacción y orgullo por la celebración. “En general, realmente apreció el evento como un reconocimiento a la labor que se está realizando en nuestra comunidad, así como la construcción de la comunidad en torno a contar nuestras historias.

Creo que el orador principal, el Dr. Falcón, nos contó una historia realmente importante del movimiento chicano de Colorado que no se ha contado lo suficiente y que es la historia de Lupe Briseño. Les decía a mis propios hijos que eventos como éste son muy importantes porque nos permiten contar

Vea [Chávez/Esp](#), página 22

2ND ANNUAL

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Doctors Take On Dental Duties to Reach Low-Income and Uninsured Patients

COLORADO

By Kate Ruder

Pediatrician Patricia Braun and her team saw roughly 100 children at a community health clinic on a recent Monday. They gave flu shots and treatments for illnesses like ear infections. But Braun also did something most primary care doctors don't. She peered inside mouths searching for cavities or she brushed fluoride varnish on their teeth.

"We're seeing more oral disease than the general population. There is a bigger need," Braun said of the patients she treats at Bernard F. Gipson Eastside Family Health Center, which is part of Denver Health, the largest safety-net hospital in Colorado, serving low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents.

Braun is part of a trend across the United States to integrate oral health into medical checkups for children, pregnant women, and others who cannot afford or do not have easy access to dentists. With federal and private funding, these programs have expanded in the past 10 years, but they face socioeconomic barriers, workforce shortages, and the challenge of dealing with the needs of new immigrants.

With a five-year, \$6 million federal grant, Braun and her colleagues have helped train 250 primary care providers in oral health in Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, and Arizona. Similar projects are wrapping up in Illinois, Michi-



Pediatrician Patricia Braun (left) and registered dental hygienist Valerie Cuzella, who works with Braun and other Denver Health pediatricians, sit in Cuzella's office. / La pediatra Patricia Braun (izq.) y la higienista dental Valerie Cuzella, que trabajan en Denver Health, en el consultorio de Cuzella. (Photo/Foto: Kate Ruder for KFF Health News)

gan, Virginia, and New York, funded by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Beyond assessment, education, and preventive care, primary care providers refer patients to on- or off-site dentists, or work with embedded dental hygienists as part of their practice.

"Federally qualified health centers have a long history of co-locating dental services within their systems," Braun said. "We're taking that next step where care is not just co-located, meaning, say, we're upstairs and dental is downstairs, but we're integrated so that it becomes part of the same visit for the patient."

Having doctors, nurses, and physician assistants who assess oral health,

make referrals, and apply fluoride at community health centers is critical for the many children who lack access to dental care, said Tara Callaghan, director of operations for the Montana Primary Care Association, which represents 14 federally qualified health centers and five Urban Indian organizations.

"Providing these services during medical visits increases the frequency of fluoride application," Callaghan said, and "improves parents' knowledge of caring for their child's teeth." But obstacles remain.

Because of Montana's large geographic area and small population, recruiting dental professionals is difficult, Callaghan said. Fifty of the



STRIDE Community Health Center in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, also caters to pediatric patients. / El Centro de Salud Comunitario STRIDE en Wheat Ridge, Colorado, también atiende a pacientes pediátricos. (Photo/Foto: Kate Ruder for KFF Health News)

state's 56 counties are designated dental shortage areas and some counties don't have a single dentist who takes Medicaid, she added. Montana ranks near the bottom for residents having access to fluoridated water, which can prevent cavities and strengthen teeth.

Pediatric dental specialists, in particular, are scarce in rural areas, with families sometimes driving hours to neighboring counties for care, she said.

Embedding dental hygienists with medical doctors is one way to reach patients in a single medical visit.

Valerie Cuzella, a registered dental hygienist, works closely with Braun and others at Denver Health, which serves nearly half of the city's children and has embedded hygienists in five of its clinics that see children.

State regulations vary on which services hygienists can provide without supervision from a dentist. In Colorado, Cuzella can, among other things, independently perform X-rays and apply silver diamine fluoride, a tool to harden teeth and slow decay. She does all this in a cozy corner office.

Braun and Cuzella work so closely that they often finish each other's sentences. Throughout the day they text each other, taking advantage of brief lulls when Cuzella can pop into an exam room to check for gum disease or demonstrate good brushing habits. Braun herself takes similar opportunities to assess oral health during her exams, and both focus on educating parents.

Medical and dental care have traditionally been siloed. "Schools are getting better at interprofessional collaboration and education, but by and large we train separately, we practice separately," said Katy Battani, a registered dental hygienist and assistant professor at Georgetown University.

Battani is trying to bridge the divide by helping community health centers in nine states — including California, Texas, and Maryland — integrate dental care into prenatal visits for pregnant women. Pregnancy creates opportunities to improve oral health because some women gain dental coverage with

See **Uninsured** on page 21

A theatrical mixtape about growing up Latine

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Médicos de Atención Primaria Asumen Tareas de Dentista para Ayudar a Pacientes Vulnerables



Dentist Sung Cho oversees the dental program at STRIDE Community Health Center. / La dentista Sung Cho supervisa el programa dental en el Centro de Salud Comunitario STRIDE. (Foto/Photo: Kate Ruder for KFF Health News)

COLORADO

By Kate Ruder

Un lunes reciente, la pediatra Patricia Braun y su equipo atendieron a unos 100 niños en una clínica comunitaria. Administraron vacunas contra la gripe y trataron infecciones de oído. Pero Braun también hizo algo que la mayoría de los médicos de atención primaria no hacen. Revisó las bocas de los pacientes en busca de caries o cepilló sus dientes con barniz de flúor.

“Estamos viendo más enfermedades bucodentales que en el resto de la población. La necesidad es mayor”, dijo Braun sobre los pacientes que trata en el Centro de Salud Familiar Bernard F. Gipson Eastside, que forma parte de Denver Health, el mayor hospital de la red social de Colorado, que atiende a residentes con bajos ingresos, sin seguro de salud o con seguro insuficiente.

Braun forma parte de una tendencia en todo el país que consiste en integrar la salud dental en los chequeos médicos de niños, embarazadas y otras personas que no pueden permitirse o no tienen fácil acceso a los dentistas.

Con financiación federal y privada, estos programas se han ampliado en los últimos 10 años, pero se enfrentan a barreras socioeconómicas, escasez de personal calificado y el reto de atender las necesidades de los nuevos inmigrantes.

Con una subvención federal de cinco años y \$6 millones, Braun y sus colegas han ayudado a formar a 250 proveedores de atención primaria en salud bucodental en Colorado, Montana, Wyoming y Arizona.

En Illinois, Michigan, Virginia y Nueva York se están ultimando proyectos similares, financiados por la Oficina de Salud Maternoinfantil (MCHB) de

la Administración de Recursos y Servicios de Salud (HRSA).

Además de la evaluación, la educación y la atención preventiva, los proveedores de atención primaria envían a los pacientes a dentistas internos o externos, o trabajan con higienistas dentales integrados en sus consultas.

“Los centros de salud federales tienen un largo historial de servicios dentales integrados en sus sistemas”, afirmó Braun. “Nosotros estamos dando el siguiente paso, en el que la atención no sólo es compartida, es decir, nosotros estamos en el piso de arriba y los dentistas en el de abajo, sino que está integrada en la misma visita del paciente”.

Contar con médicos, enfermeras y auxiliares que evalúen la salud bucodental, hagan derivaciones y apliquen flúor en los centros de salud comunitarios es fundamental para muchos niños que no tienen acceso a la atención dental, dijo Tara Callaghan, directora de operaciones de la Asociación de Atención Primaria de Montana, que representa a 14 centros de salud calificados a nivel federal y a cinco organizaciones Urban Indian.

“Ofrecer estos servicios durante las visitas médicas aumenta la frecuencia de aplicación del flúor”, señaló Callaghan, y “mejora el conocimiento de los padres sobre el cuidado de los dientes de sus hijos”. Pero sigue habiendo obstáculos.

Según Callaghan, debido a la gran extensión geográfica y a la escasa población de Montana, la contratación de profesionales dentales es difícil. Cincuenta de los 56 condados del estado están designados como zonas de escasez dental y algunos no tienen ni un solo dentista que acepte Medicaid, añadió. Montana ocupa uno de los últimos

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Colorado Pioneers the Nation's First Benefit Recovery Fund for Undocumented Workers

COLORADO

AidKit and Impact Charitable recently announced the launch of the **Benefit Recovery Fund**, that provides unemployment benefits to eligible workers who receive a W-2 and have taxes withheld from their paychecks but lack work authorization and lose their jobs through no fault of their own. Colorado employers contribute to the fund on behalf of all

“*It didn't make sense that undocumented immigrant workers who power so many of the industries in our state were cruelly left out.*”
Kathy White, Colorado Fiscal Institute

their employees should they lose employment.

Colorado's Office of New Americans oversees the program, a first-of-its-kind in the United States, supporting the immigrant workforce who play a major role in the state's economy.

Through a competitive process, Colorado's Office of New Americans selected AidKit as the designated administrator of the Benefit Recovery

See [Fund](#) on page 20



Colorado's Office of New Americans oversees a new program supporting the immigrant workforce who play a major role in the state's economy. / La Oficina de Nuevos Estadounidenses (Office of New Americans) de Colorado supervisa una nueva programa que apoya a la fuerza laboral inmigrante que cumple un papel fundamental en la economía del estado. (Photo/Foto: Adobe Stock)

Colorado es el Primer Estado en Crear un Fondo de Recuperación de Beneficios para Trabajadores Indocumentados

COLORADO

AidKit e Impact Charitable anuncian el lanzamiento del **Fondo de Recuperación de Beneficios**. El Fondo de Recuperación de Beneficios proporciona beneficios de desempleo a los trabajadores elegibles que reciben un formulario W-2 y a quienes les son retenidos impuestos en sus cheques de pago, pero no tienen permiso de trabajo y pierden su empleo por causas ajenas a su responsabilidad. Los empleadores de Colorado contribuyen al fondo en nombre de todos sus empleados en caso de que pierdan su trabajo.

La Oficina de Nuevos Estadounidenses (Office of New Americans) de Colorado supervisa el programa, el único de este tipo en Estados Unidos, que apoya a la fuerza laboral inmigrante que cumple un papel fundamental en la economía del estado.

La Oficina de Nuevos Estadounidenses de Colorado seleccionó, mediante un proceso competitivo, a AidKit como administrador designado del Fondo de Recuperación de Beneficios. Desde el inicio de la pandemia, AidKit ha proporcionado una plataforma técnica global para programas de pago de beneficios en todo Colorado. AidKit protege la información de los partici-

ipantes y verifica la elegibilidad de los aplicantes sin divulgar información protegida a terceros, entidades gubernamentales o empleadores.

“Hemos construido un sistema de beneficios que prioriza la privacidad de los aplicantes”, dijo Mark Newhouse, cofundador y director de estrategia de AidKit. “En colaboración con nuestros socios, estamos comprometidos a crear una infraestructura accesible y eficaz para administrar la asistencia por medio de dinero en efectivo de manera eficiente a gran escala. No es solo un sistema; proporcionamos acceso a un programa que anteriormente excluía a una parte fundamental de nuestra fuerza laboral”.

Impact Charitable está trabajando con socios comunitarios en todo el estado para garantizar que los coloradenses elegibles conozcan el programa y envíen su aplicación.

de movilidad económica y transferencias directas de efectivo de Impact Charitable. “Apuntamos a garantizar que estos fondos de beneficios lleguen a aquellos que ayudan a mantener nuestras industrias y comunidades”.

Los trabajadores indocumentados son fundamentales para el funcionamiento de muchas industrias prósperas de Colorado, como el turismo, la construcción y la educación; y pagan más de **\$400 millones** en impuestos. Hasta ahora, estos coloradenses han contribuido válidamente al fondo fiduciario del seguro de desempleo por medio de las primas de sus empleadores sin beneficiarse nunca de dichas contribuciones. El Fondo de Recuperación de Beneficios corrige esa desigualdad, llevando tranquilidad a las familias y los individuos mientras atraviesan períodos injustificados de desempleo.

“Durante la pandemia, pudimos ver la importancia de tener un seguro

“

No tenía sentido que los trabajadores inmigrantes indocumentados que impulsan tantas de las industrias en nuestro estado fueran cruelmente dejados de lado”.

Kathy White, Instituto Fiscal de Colorado

“Todos comprendemos las incertidumbres que trae aparejadas el empleo, y nadie debería enfrentarlas sin ayuda debido a su estatus de inmigración”, dijo Jourdan McGinn, directora sénior

Vea [Fondo](#), página 21



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City Of Boulder Seeking Community Input on Budget Goals

COLORADO

The City of Boulder is launching a questionnaire to gather community input on priority areas for the upcoming 2025 budget. The questionnaire is available online on [the city website](#). Anyone who resides, visits or works in Boulder is invited to share their input. The questionnaire,

available in all languages, should take less than five minutes to complete. The opportunity to provide feedback will remain open until May 12, 2024.

The city is in the final year of a three-year plan to implement an enhanced budgeting approach using outcomes and performance measures to guide budget development, called Budgeting for Resilience and

Equity. The city is using the [Sustainability, Equity and Resilience \(SER\) Framework](#) as a key planning and budgeting tool to provide consistent, shared goals that help the city achieve Boulder's vision of building a more resilient and equitable community. As part of this new budgeting approach, Budgeting for Resilience and Equity identifies and incorporates

performance measures to program outcomes, heightens strategic and data-informed decision-making, and increases the transparency of the development of the annual budget and investments as they align with community goals.

"Understanding our community's priorities and reflecting those in our budget development is an essential step towards equity and transparency," said City Manager, Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde. "We look forward to collaborating with our community to define our key areas of focus for the coming year."

The SER Framework has seven key goal areas: Safe, Livable, Accessible & Connected, Environmentally Sustainable, Responsibly Governed and Economically Vital. The questionnaire asks community members to rank these goal areas in order of highest priority based on current needs.

To view the City of Boulder's budgeting and transparency portal, approved budgets by SER goal area and learn more about the city budget process, visit the [city's website](#).

For More Colorado News:
[ElSemanarioOnline.com](#)

La Ciudad de Boulder Busca la Opinión de la Comunidad Sobre los Objetivos Presupuestarios

COLORADO

La ciudad de Boulder está lanzando un cuestionario para recopilar opiniones de la comunidad sobre áreas prioritarias para el próximo presupuesto de 2025. El cuestionario está disponible en línea en [el sitio web de la ciudad](#). Cualquier persona que resida, visite o trabaje en Boulder está invitada a compartir sus opiniones. Se debería tardar menos de cinco minutos en contestar el cuestionario,

disponible en todos los idiomas. La oportunidad de enviar comentarios permanecerá abierta hasta el 12 de mayo de 2024.

La ciudad se encuentra en el último año de un plan de tres años para implementar un enfoque presupuestario mejorado utilizando resultados y medidas de desempeño para guiar el desarrollo presupuestario, llamado Presupuesto para la Resiliencia y la Equidad. La ciudad está utilizando el [Marco de Sostenibilidad, Equidad](#)

y [Resiliencia \(SER\)](#) como herramienta clave de planificación y presupuestación para proporcionar objetivos consistentes y compartidos que ayuden a la ciudad a lograr la visión de Boulder de construir una comunidad más resiliente y equitativa. Como parte de este nuevo enfoque presupuestario, Presupuestos para la resiliencia y la equidad identifica e incorpora medidas de desempeño a los resultados del programa, intensifica la toma de decisiones estratégicas y basadas en datos

y aumenta la transparencia del desarrollo del presupuesto anual y las inversiones a medida que se alinean con los objetivos comunitarios.

"Comprender las prioridades de nuestra comunidad y reflejarlas en el desarrollo de nuestro presupuesto es un paso esencial hacia la equidad y la transparencia", dijo la administradora municipal, Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde. "Esperamos colaborar con nuestra comunidad para definir nuestras áreas clave de enfoque para el próximo año".

El Marco SER tiene siete áreas de objetivos clave: seguro, habitable, accesible y conectado, ambientalmente sostenible, gobernado responsablemente y económicamente vital. El cuestionario pide a los miembros de la comunidad que clasifiquen estas áreas de objetivos en orden de mayor prioridad según las necesidades actuales.

A ver el portal de transparencia y presupuesto de la ciudad de Boulder, presupuestos aprobados por área de objetivos de SER y obtenga más información sobre el proceso presupuestario de la ciudad, visite el [sitio web de la ciudad](#).

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Asylum Seekers Testify to Inhumane Conditions at Torrance County Detention Facility

NEW MÉXICO

By Austin Fisher

As the expiration date nears on a local contract allowing the federal government to incarcerate asylum seekers in central New México, the county commission in charge of that negotiation heard testimonies about abysmal conditions inside the facility and allegations of abuse by guards.

The five-year contract, set to expire May 14, between Torrance County and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) governs operations at the Torrance County Detention Facility in Estancia.

On Wednesday, community members, advocates, and families who make up the Dignity Not Detention New Mexico Coalition urged Torrance county commissioners to not renew the ICE contract at the facility.

To make the detained asylum seekers' voices heard, they shared testimonies during public comment from 12 asylum seekers held inside the Tor-

rance County Detention Facility, or who were previously held there.

The written statements from asylum seekers described unfair asylum proceedings, allegations of abuse by guards, unfair wages for labor done inside, bug-infested and rotting food, dirty drinking water, unkempt clothing, a lack of sunlight and fresh air, and inadequate medical care.

“

They have a universal human right to seek asylum.”
 Kelly McCloskey-Romero,
 VIDA

Afterwards, the group who spoke on the asylum seekers' behalf held a loud car rally outside the Torrance County Detention Facility, in view of cell windows, and a “Freedom Picnic” with a drum circle, red and green chile burritos and speeches.

Reached for comment about the testimonies and contract on April 11, a spokesperson for ICE said they would

look into it but would not be able to respond by the end of the day.

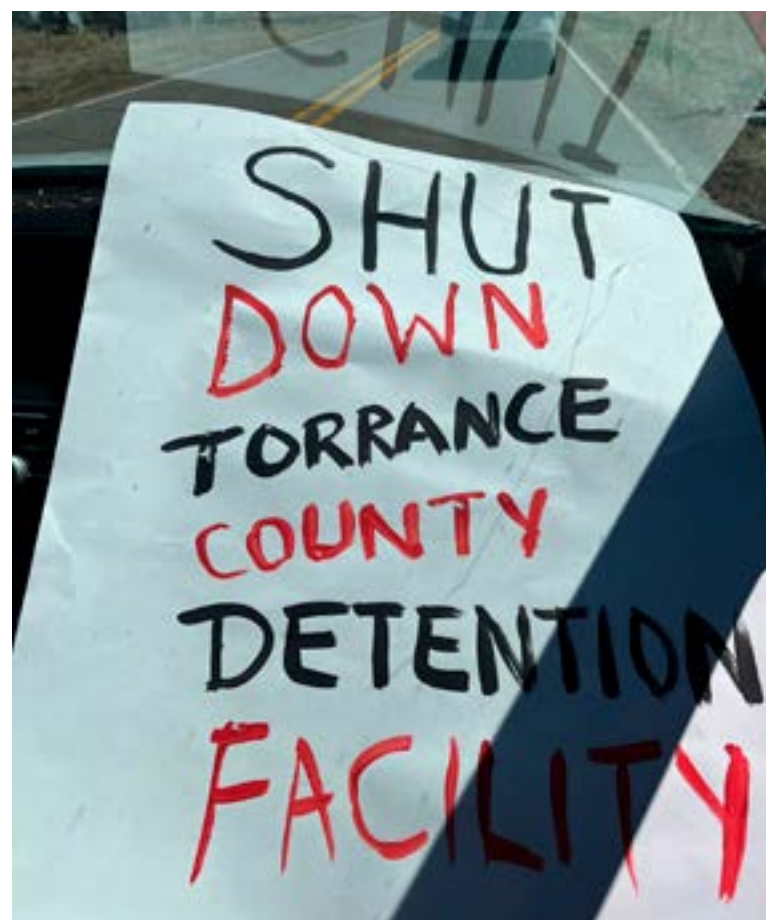
In a phone interview on April 11, Torrance County Commission chair Ryan Schwebach said he is “pretty sure” the commission must hold a vote on the contract. He did not know when the vote would be held.

“We’re still in negotiations,” Schwebach said. “It’s not a done deal yet.”

The commissioners' next regular meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. on April 24. Schwebach has yet to release an agenda for that meeting.

A group of immigrants sued ICE in November 2023 saying the agency certified a sham inspection in 2022 that allowed the federal agency to evade federal law and keep holding immigrants at Torrance, despite known ongoing violations of detention standards. That case was still pending on Thursday, according to court records.

Ricardo Gonzales, a Venezuelan asylum seeker who was held at Torrance for 68 days until he was released March 8, said the prison is “a place devoid of humanity and respect for human rights.”



A sign brought along during a car rally outside the Torrance County Detention Facility on April 10, 2024. / Una pancarta llevada durante una concentración de coches frente al centro de detención del condado de Torrance el 10 de abril de 2024. (Photo/Foto: The New Mexico Dream Team)

“I found myself in an environment that contradicted the very essence of asylum and protection,” Gonzales wrote in a statement read to the county

commission by Andres Esquivel, campaigns manager for The New Mexico

See [Inhumane](#) on page 20



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Solicitantes de Asilo Testifican Sobre las Condiciones Inhumanas del Centro de Detención del Condado de Torrance

NEW MÉXICO

Por Austin Fisher

América que se acerca la fecha de vencimiento de un contrato local que permite al gobierno federal encarcelar a solicitantes de asilo en el centro de Nuevo México, la comisión del condado a cargo de esa negociación escuchó testimonios sobre las pésimas condiciones dentro de las instalaciones y denuncias de abusos por parte de los guardias.

El contrato de cinco años, que expira el 14 de mayo, entre el condado de Torrance y el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas de Estados Unidos (ICE) rige las operaciones en el centro de detención del condado de Torrance en Estancia.

El miércoles, miembros de la comunidad, defensores y familias que

conforman la Coalición Dignidad, No Detención Nuevo México instaron a los comisionados del condado de Torrance a no renovar el contrato de ICE en el centro.

“

"Tienen el derecho humano universal a solicitar asilo".
 Kelly McCloskey-Romero,
 VIDA

Para hacer oír las voces de los solicitantes de asilo detenidos, compartieron testimonios durante los comentarios públicos de 12 solicitantes de asilo detenidos dentro del Centro de Detención del Condado de Torrance, o que estuvieron detenidos allí anteriormente.

Ve [Inhumanas](#), página 18



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puestos en cuanto al acceso de los residentes al agua fluorada, que puede prevenir las caries y fortalecer los dientes.

Callaghan indicó que, concretamente, los especialistas en odontología pediátrica escasean en las zonas rurales, y las familias a veces tienen que conducir horas hasta los condados vecinos para recibir atención.

Tener higienistas dentales con los médicos es una forma de llegar a los pacientes en una sola visita.

La higienista dental Valerie Cuzella colabora estrechamente con Braun y otros profesionales de Denver Health, que atiende a casi la mitad de los niños de la ciudad y ha incorporado higienistas en cinco de sus clínicas infantiles.

Las normativas estatales varían en cuanto a los servicios que los higienistas pueden prestar sin la supervisión de un dentista. En Colorado, Cuzella puede, entre otras cosas, realizar radiografías de forma independiente y

aplicar fluoruro de plata y diamina, una herramienta para endurecer los dientes y frenar la caries. Todo esto lo hace en un acogedor despacho situado en una esquina.

Braun y Cuzella trabajan tan estrechamente que a menudo una termina la frase de la otra. A lo largo del día se envían mensajes de texto, aprovechando las breves pausas en las que Cuzella puede asomarse a una sala de chequeos para detectar enfermedades de las

encías o enseñar buenos hábitos de cepillado. También Braun aprovecha oportunidades similares para evaluar la salud bucodental durante sus exámenes, y ambas se centran en educar a los padres.

Tradicionalmente, la atención médica y la odontológica han estado separadas. “Las facultades están mejorando la colaboración y la formación interprofesional, pero en general nos formamos, y ejercemos, por separado”, afirmó Katy Battani, higienista dental y profesora de la Universidad Georgetown.

Battani trata de zanjar esta brecha ayudando a centros de salud comunitarios en nueve estados —entre ellos California, Texas y Maryland— a integrar la atención dental en las visitas prenatales. El embarazo crea oportunidades para mejorar la salud bucodental porque algunas mujeres obtienen cobertura dental con Medicaid y ven a los proveedores al menos una vez al mes, explicó Battani.

En Denver, la inestabilidad de la vivienda, las barreras del idioma, la falta de transporte y el “costo astronómico” de la odontología sin seguro hacen que la atención dental sea inaccesible para muchos niños, la comunidad inmigrante y las personas mayores, explicó Sung Cho, dentista que supervisa el programa dental del Centro de Salud Comunitario STRIDE, en el área metropolitana de Denver.

STRIDE intenta superar estas barreras ofreciendo servicios de interpretación y una escala móvil de pagos para quienes no tienen seguro.

Esto incluye a personas como Cielinda Ochoa, de 35 años y residente en Wheat Ridge, que fue a STRIDE para que le hicieran una limpieza dental a su hijo Alexander, de 15 años. Alexander fue seleccionado para el cuidado dental durante un chequeo médico y ahora él y sus tres hermanos ven regularmente a un dentista e higienista en el centro.

Uno de los hijos de Ochoa tiene cobertura dental de Medicaid, pero los otros tres no tienen seguro, y nunca podrían permitirse la atención dental, dijo Ochoa. STRIDE ofrece un examen, radiografías y limpieza por \$60 para los que no tienen seguro.

En el último año, Cho ha sido testigo del aumento de inmigrantes y refugiados que nunca habían visto a un dentista antes y necesitan una atención exhaustiva. Los exámenes médicos para los refugiados en STRIDE aumentaron de 1,300 en 2022 a 1,700 en 2023, dijo Ryn Moravec, director de desarrollo de STRIDE. Calcula que el programa ha atendido entre 800 y 1,000 nuevos inmigrantes en 2024.

Incluso con las crecientes necesidades, Cho señaló que el proceso de Medicaid en curso —que reexamina la elegibilidad post-pandemia para el programa gubernamental que proporciona cobertura de salud a las personas con bajos ingresos y discapacidades— ha creado incertidumbre económica. Dijo que le preocupa hacer frente a los costos iniciales de nuevo personal y de sustitución de equipos dentales obsoletos.

En la clínica de STRIDE en Wheat Ridge, dos higienistas trabajan entre odontología y pediatría como parte de la integración médico-dental. Sin embargo, Cho aseguró que necesita más higienistas en otros centros para satisfacer la demanda.

La pandemia creó cuellos de botella que sólo ahora se están resolviendo lentamente, sobre todo porque pocos dentistas aceptan Medicaid. Y, si lo aceptan, a menudo limitan el número de pacientes del programa, dijo Moravec. Idealmente, STRIDE podría contratar a dos higienistas y tres asistentes dentales, añadió.

En 2022, Colorado promulgó una ley para aliviar la escasez de personal que permite incorporar terapeutas dentales: proveedores de nivel medio que proporcionan atención preventiva y restauradora. Pero Colorado no tiene ninguna escuela para formarlos o acreditarlos.

Antes de los 3 años, los niños deben ir al pediatra para 12 visitas de control, una métrica que aprovecha la integración médica y dental, sobre todo para los niños en situación de riesgo. Como parte del programa de Braun en la región de las Montañas Rocosas, se han aplicado más de 17,000 barnices de flúor y ha aumentado el porcentaje de niños de 3 años o menos que recibieron atención bucodental preventiva al 78%, del 33% en los primeros 2 años y medio.

Callaghan, de la Asociación de Atención Primaria de Montana, es testigo de ello en los mismos centros de salud comunitarios del estado. “Se trata de aprovechar el hecho de que los niños ven a su proveedor médico para una visita rutinaria mucho más a menudo, antes de ver a su proveedor dental, si es que lo tienen”.

Kate Ruder, Escritora. Esta historia fue producida por KFF Health News, una redacción nacional que produce periodismo en profundidad sobre temas de salud y es uno de los principales programas operativos de KFF, la fuente independiente de investigación de políticas de salud, encuestas y periodismo.

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Del Castillo

Who is supposed to protect
third graders
innocent children
trembling under desks
in a classroom
while a half crazed
mental patient
suffers
from alienation
carrying assault weapons
during a crazy episodic event,
children whose caretakers
couldn't muster up
enough courage
to save innocent lives
now etched in
a *barrio's* memory
insanity at its best!
Who is going to
create termination rituals
for those young souls
who departed prematurely?

Who will do
una limpia
create harmony
restore balance
as spirits
march solemnly
into the 5th world
el Quinto sol
where wise healers
curanderas
shamanes
voodoo priests
spiritual leaders
have gathered
for a *despedida*,
a ceremony
to honor the dead?
Whose going
to tell them
a bedtime story
in their language
about a nation
losing its glory
as the power structure
takes advantage
watching spirits vanish?

What do we do
with the emaciated bodies
of Native Americans
uncovered beneath mother earth
dying in Native American prisons
euphemistically called
American Indian Boarding Schools,
children whose braids
were chopped off
names changed,
identities stolen,

culturally raped?
What words of wisdom
will Grandfather Creator
include in his sermon
during a spiritual reincarnation?
Will he summon
ancient flute players
invite the rhythms of drums
to play soft music
during their departure?
When will
he smoke
from the sacred pipe
full of peyote and sage
so we can heal from the rage?

When will the ghost dancer
Appear during a silent night
pray for healing
and take spirits
to *nepantla*
a sacred space
in between
two worlds
encircled with the sweet smell
of sacrosanct medicine
now left with
only a dark cloud
of sacred smoke
smoldering from
a revered pipe
a Medicine Man
praying for
a safe sojourn
during a second
trail of tears,
as human droplets
of memories
are sprinkled
onto *la tierra sagrada*.

La Curandera
under the light
of the moon
will perform
holy rites and rituals
blessing young lost souls
wading in
las lagrimas
de la gente.

Who is going to write
an epitaph
in the next history book?
To remind us
of a broken social contract
torn in half
by bewildered youth
Will it be you?

Dr. Ramón Del Castillo © April 12, 2024



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Inhumanas

Las declaraciones escritas de los solicitantes de asilo describían procedimientos de asilo injustos, acusaciones de abusos por parte de los guardias, salarios injustos por el trabajo realizado en el interior, comida infestada de bichos y en descomposición, agua potable sucia, ropa descuidada, falta de luz solar y aire fresco, y atención médica inadecuada.

Después, el grupo que habló en nombre de los solicitantes de asilo celebró una ruidosa concentración de coches frente al centro de detención del condado de Torrance, a la vista de las ventanas de las celdas, y un "picnic de la libertad" con un círculo de tambores, burritos de chile rojo y verde y discursos.

Cuando el 11 de abril se le pidió que comentara los testimonios y el contrato, un portavoz del ICE dijo que lo investigarían pero que no podrían responder al final del día.

En una entrevista telefónica el 11 de abril, el presidente de la Comisión del Condado de Torrance, Ryan Schwebach, dijo que está "bastante seguro" de que la comisión debe celebrar una votación sobre el contrato. No sabía cuándo se celebraría la votación.

"Todavía estamos en negociaciones", dijo Schwebach. "Todavía no es un acuerdo cerrado".

La próxima reunión ordinaria de los comisionados está prevista para las 9 de la mañana del 24 de abril. Schwebach aún no ha publicado el orden del día de esa reunión.

Un grupo de inmigrantes demandó a ICE en noviembre de 2023 diciendo que la agencia certificó una inspección falsa en 2022 que permitió a la agencia federal evadir la ley federal y seguir reteniendo a los inmigrantes en Torrance, a pesar de las violaciones conocidas en curso de las normas de detención. Ese caso seguía pendiente el 11 de abril, según los registros judiciales.

Ricardo Gonzales, un solicitante de asilo venezolano que estuvo detenido en Torrance durante 68 días hasta que fue liberado el 8 de marzo, dijo que la prisión es "un lugar carente de humanidad y respeto por los derechos humanos."

"Me encontré en un entorno que contradecía la esencia misma del asilo y la protección", escribió Gonzales en una declaración leída ante la comisión del condado por Andrés Esquivel, director de campañas de The New Mexico Dream Team. "La instalación, en lugar de ofrecer refugio, me sometió a mí y a otros a condiciones inhumanas y deplorables que me siento obligado a exponer".

Bella Bjornstad, estudiante de derecho en el Centro de Derecho para Inmigrantes de Nuevo México, leyó una declaración de dos solicitantes de asilo que están retenidos en Torrance desde el 20 de marzo. Las autoridades de inmigración les dijeron que se respetarían sus derechos humanos. "La realidad es cualquier cosa menos eso", dijeron.

"Nadie debería estar encerrado aquí en Torrance, nos tratan muy mal", dijeron. "Nos tratan como si no fuéramos humanos y nos castigan por ser migrantes. Esperamos que los políticos nos oigan y escuchen nuestra experiencia".

Jackie Neel, miembro de Voluntarios por los Inmigrantes Detenidos (VIDA) Albuquerque, leyó una declaración de un solicitante de asilo guatemalteco llamado Kelvin, detenido en Torrance, quien dijo que la prisión es peligrosa y que no cree que los inmigrantes deban estar detenidos allí.

"Los guardias nos ignoran; los que hablan español fingen que no lo hablan", dijo Kelvin. "Aquí no hay derechos".

Kelly McCloskey-Romero, coordinadora de voluntarios de VIDA, dijo que su grupo se ha reunido con cientos de personas en Torrance cada mes desde octubre de 2022.

En cada visita, dijo McCloskey-Romero, sin falta, los hombres comparten historias trágicas sobre las razones desesperadas por las que buscaron asilo y sus esperanzas para el futuro.

"Tienen el derecho humano universal a solicitar asilo", afirmó McCloskey-Romero.

Los hombres recluidos en Torrance "viven en condiciones pésimas, día tras día, tras día", dijo McCloskey-Romero.

"No se trata sólo de una o dos personas que están teniendo malas experien-

cias", dijo McCloskey-Romero. "Estas condiciones son inhumanas e injustas, y se puede hacer algo al respecto".

Al menos cuatro personas han muerto en Torrance desde que se estableció la prisión, según informes de los medios de comunicación y demandas por homicidio culposos.

Funcionarios del condado restan importancia a los problemas de la prisión

El comisario Samuel Schropp respondió a los comentarios del público restando importancia a los problemas de la prisión y defendiendo a las autoridades federales y a CoreCivic, la empresa privada que la gestiona.

Dijo que tiene acceso a la prisión y realiza "inspecciones aleatorias". No dijo durante la reunión si anunciaba sus inspecciones a CoreCivic con antelación, pero aclaró en una entrevista que realiza inspecciones sin previo aviso mediante un acuerdo con el alcaide de la prisión, un empleado de CoreCivic.

"Las condiciones físicas del centro cumplen las normas establecidas por el DHS y el ICE", dijo Schropp. "La instalación está limpia, ordenada y es razonablemente segura".

Schwebach dijo que estaba de acuerdo con la evaluación de Schropp sobre las condiciones de la prisión, basándose en sus propias visitas sin previo aviso a la prisión y conversaciones con los guardias, médicos y custodios que trabajan allí.

"Lo que he visto de primera mano, en múltiples ocasiones, es similar a lo que ve el Comisario Schropp", dijo Schwebach. "Es un centro limpio. Tiene buena comida. Está por encima y más allá en lo que a centros de detención se refiere".

Schwebach dijo que no cree que las declaraciones escritas de los solicitantes de asilo sean del todo ciertas.

"Estoy seguro de que no hay tantos abusos como los que se presentaron, y los abusos que se presentaron son exagerados", dijo Schwebach. "La cantidad de gente que habló ayer en nuestra reunión de la comisión no representa lo que realmente ocurre allí".

Schwebach reconoció que hay "incidentes" en la prisión, pero dijo que los que conoce y por los que ha preguntado "se han tratado de manera profesional."

En su última visita allí, Schropp dijo que habló con solicitantes de asilo que estaban desnutridos y agotados por el viaje a Estados Unidos, frustrados y confusos por estar detenidos en lugar de liberados, y que no tenían ninguna expectativa razonable de cómo se atenderán sus peticiones de asilo.

"Se trata de la inhumanidad del proceso, no de las condiciones físicas de la prisión", dijo Schropp. "DHS, ICE y CoreCivic están siguiendo la ley y las políticas ordenadas por el Congreso".

Schropp dijo que la inhumanidad de los solicitantes de asilo retenidos contra su voluntad, sin cargos ni condena, "es un problema de política federal, no problemas con CoreCivic o su personal en el Centro de Detención del Condado de Torrance."

"Uno mi voz a la suya en protesta, no contra CoreCivic ni contra las condiciones físicas del centro, sino más bien contra quien tiene la culpa de los fallos y las desigualdades: el Congreso de los Estados Unidos", dijo Schropp.

Dijo a las personas que hicieron comentarios públicos el miércoles que instaran al Congreso a aprobar la H.R.815. Grupos de derechos humanos han afirmado que las disposiciones sobre inmigración y asilo del proyecto de ley pondrían en peligro la vida de los solicitantes de asilo, pisotearían el derecho internacional de los refugiados, provocarían desórdenes y darían lugar a abusos contra los derechos humanos.

"Detener a algunos solicitantes de asilo para someterlos a investigación es -en mi opinión, basada en mis conocimientos de primera mano- necesario para la seguridad nacional", declaró Schropp. "Financiar plenamente y dotar de personal al sistema de inmigración es la forma humana de actuar, para que los solicitantes de asilo puedan tener una audiencia rápida y justa de sus solicitudes y sepan dónde está su futuro".

Jovanny Sebastián Hernández, gerente del sur de Nuevo México para The New Mexico Dream Team, dijo que lo que Schropp está proponiendo es seguir financiando lo que él considera una agencia racista.

"Está hablando desde una posición de gran privilegio en su condado, y lo que CoreCivic le mostrará durante sus inspecciones", dijo Sebastián Hernández. "Todas las cosas que está diciendo son inexactas en el mejor de los casos y deshonestas en el peor".

Quitarle la culpa a CoreCivic y a sus guardias es una excusa manida que tanto conservadores como demócratas liberales intentan utilizar para distraer la atención de las condiciones materiales de la detención de inmigrantes, dijo Sebastián Hernández.

Sophia Genovese, abogada gerente del Centro Legal para Inmigrantes de Nuevo México, dijo que los hombres detenidos en Torrance en diferentes momentos informan repetidamente de las mismas condiciones.

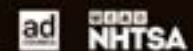
"Ya no estamos en un punto en el que podamos discrepar razonablemente sobre lo que está sucediendo en Torrance", dijo Genovese.

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

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

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Chávez



Priscilla Falcón, Professor (Emerita), Chicana/o and Latinx Studies at the University of Northern Colorado spoke at the 23rd Annual César Chávez celebration in Denver, Colorado. / Priscilla Falcón, profesora emérita de estudios chicanos y latinos de la Universidad del Norte de Colorado, intervino en la 23ª celebración anual de César Chávez en Denver, Colorado. (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)



Members of Grupo Tlaloc performed a blessing at the 23rd Annual César Chávez celebration in Denver, Colorado on April 13, 2024. / Miembros del Grupo Tlaloc realizaron una bendición en la 23ª celebración anual de César Chávez en Denver, Colorado, el 13 de abril de 2024. (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)



Right: Xochitl Martínez, youth member of the César E. Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver welcomes attendees at the 23rd Annual César Chávez celebration in Denver, Colorado. Watch the El Semanario Livestream video here. (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)

government, and I looked up all the rules. We sat down and we developed a plan and then we did all the work to get the name of the park changed. The point I'm making is that, at any given time, that community has been gentrified. But when we were there in 2002, that community was nothing like it is now. At any given time, that community, if they chose to, could get another petition, follow all the rules that we followed, and take it to parks and rec that they want the name changed again and therefore we lose our legacy, our identity and our struggle."

oppressed and take action on what the community can do better to sustain this event and keep César E. Chávez Park alive for years to come. This event generally takes place on or the week of Chavez's birthday, March 31. To keep up and learn more about this event in the future, you can learn more at [César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee Of Denver on Facebook](#).

Hillary Olivares is an Independent Reporter for The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.

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The Carpenters Union Local 1607, marched in the 23rd Annual César Chávez celebration in Denver, Colorado, and are a prominent supporter of the Annual celebration. (Photo/Foto: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)

Protect DACA Recipients. #HomeIsHere. edjustice. www.edjustice.org

Inhumane

Dream Team. “The facility, rather than offering refuge, subjected me and others to inhumane and deplorable conditions that I feel compelled to expose.”

Bella Bjornstad, a law student at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center, read a statement from two asylum seekers who have been held at Torrance since March 20. Immigration authorities told them their human rights would be respected. “The reality is anything but that,” they said.

“No one should be locked up here at Torrance, we are treated so poorly,” they said. “We are treated like we’re not humans and punished for being migrants. We hope that the politicians hear us and listen to our experience.”

Jackie Neel, a member of Volunteers for Immigrants in Detention (VIDA) Albuquerque, read a statement from a Guatemalan asylum seeker named Kelvin held at Torrance who said the prison is dangerous and he doesn’t think immigrants should be held there.

“The guards ignore us; the ones who speak Spanish pretend they don’t,” Kelvin said. “There are no rights here.”

Kelly McCloskey-Romero, volunteer coordinator at VIDA, said her group has met hundreds of people at Torrance every month since October 2022.

On every visit, McCloskey-Romero said, without fail, men share tragic stories about desperate reasons they sought asylum and their hopes for the future.

“They have a universal human right to seek asylum,” McCloskey-Romero said.

The men held at Torrance “are living under abysmal conditions, day after day, after day,” McCloskey-Romero said.

“It’s not just a matter of one or two people that are having bad experienc-

es,” McCloskey-Romero said. “These conditions are inhumane and unjust, and you can do something about them.”

At least four people have died at Torrance since the prison was established, according to media reports and wrongful death lawsuits.

County officials downplay prison’s problems

Commissioner Samuel Schropp responded to the public comments by downplaying the problems at the prison and defending federal authorities and CoreCivic, the private company operating it.

He said he has access to the prison and does “random walkthrough inspections.” He did not say during the meeting whether he announced his inspections to CoreCivic ahead of time, but clarified in an interview he does conduct unannounced inspections through an agreement with the prison’s warden, a CoreCivic employee.

“The physical conditions in the facility meet the standards set out by DHS and ICE,” Schropp said. “The facility is clean, orderly, and reasonably safe.”

Schwebach said he agreed with Schropp’s assessment of the prison’s conditions, based on his own unannounced visits to the prison and conversations with the guards, doctors and custodians who work there.

“What I’ve seen first hand, multiple times, is similar to what Commissioner Schropp is seeing,” Schwebach said. “It’s a clean facility. It has good food. It is above and beyond as far as detention facilities go.”

Schwebach said he does not believe the asylum seekers’ written statements are entirely true.

“I’m confident that there is not as many abuses as what was presented,

and the abuses that were presented are over-exaggerated,” Schwebach said. “The amount of people that spoke at our commission meeting yesterday does not represent what’s really happening there.”

Schwebach acknowledged there are “incidents” at the prison, but said those he knows about and has asked about have “been dealt with in a professional manner.”

On Schropp’s last visit there, he said he spoke with asylum seekers who were malnourished and exhausted from the journey to the United States, frustrated and confused by being held rather than released, and who had no reasonable expectation of how their asylum claims will be heard.

“This is the inhumanity of the process — not the physical conditions in the prison,” Schropp said. “DHS, ICE and CoreCivic are following the law and the policies mandated by Congress.”

Schropp said the inhumanity of asylum seekers being held against their will, without charge or conviction, “is a problem of federal policy, not problems with CoreCivic or its staff at the Torrance County Detention Facility.”

“I add my voice to yours in protest — not against CoreCivic or the physical conditions at the facility, but rather where the blame for the faults and inequities belong: the Congress of the United States,” Schropp said.

He told the people who made public comment on Wednesday to urge Congress to pass H.R.815. Human rights groups have said the immigration and asylum provisions in the bill would endanger asylum seekers’ lives, trample on international refugee law, inflict disorder, and lead to human rights abuses.

“Detaining some asylum seekers for further vetting is — in my opin-

ion, based on my firsthand knowledge — necessary to national security,” Schropp said. “Fully funding and staffing the immigration system is the humane course of action, so that asylum seekers can have a speedy and fair hearing of their claims and will know where their future lies.”

Jovanny Sebastián Hernández, southern New México manager for The New Mexico Dream Team, said what Schropp is proposing is to keep funding what he views as a racist agency.

“He’s speaking from a position of great privilege in his county, and what CoreCivic will show him during his inspections,” Sebastián Hernandez said. “All of the things he’s saying are inaccurate at best and dishonest at worst.”

Taking the blame away from CoreCivic and its guards is a tired

excuse conservatives and liberal Democrats alike try to use to distract from the material conditions of immigration detention, Sebastian Hernández said.

Sophia Genovese, managing attorney at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center, said men held at Torrance at different times repeatedly report the same conditions.

“We’re no longer at a point where we can reasonably disagree about what’s happening at Torrance,” Genovese said.

Austin Fisher is a Reporter with Source New Mexico. This article is republished from Source New Mexico under a Creative Commons license.

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Fund

Fund. Since the onset of the pandemic, AidKit has provided an end-to-end technical platform for benefits disbursement programs throughout Colorado. AidKit protects participant information and verifies applicant eligibility without disclosing protected information to third parties, government entities, or employers.

“We have built a benefit system that puts applicant privacy first,” said Mark Newhouse, co-founder and chief strategy officer of AidKit. “In collaboration with our partners, we’re committed to creating an accessible and efficient infrastructure to manage cash assistance at scale effectively. It’s more than just a system; we provide access to a program previously closed to a vital part of our workforce.”

Impact Charitable is working with community partners across the state to ensure eligible Coloradans are aware of the program and are applying.

“We all understand the uncertainties surrounding employment, and no one should be left to face them alone due to their immigration status,” said Jourdan McGinn, senior director of economic mobility & direct cash transfers at Impact Charitable. “We aim to ensure that these benefit dollars reach those who help sustain our industries and communities.”

Undocumented workers are crucial to several thriving Colorado industries, including tourism, construction, and education, and pay more than \$400 million in taxes. Until now, these Coloradans have effectively contributed to the unemployment insurance trust fund through their employers’ premiums without ever benefiting from those contributions. The

Benefit Recovery Fund rectifies that disparity, granting families and individuals peace of mind as they navigate unwarranted unemployment periods.

“We saw during the pandemic how important unemployment insurance was to workers, families, and our economy. It didn’t make sense that undocumented immigrant workers who power so many of the industries in our state were cruelly left out. Thanks to the hard work of community partners, AidKit, and so many others, they are no longer left out. We’re so excited to see the launch of the Benefit Recovery Fund. We know it’s good for these Coloradans, but more importantly, it’s essential for a thriving economy,” Kathy White, Executive Director, Colorado Fiscal Institute.

The application is available at brf.aidkit.org/apply?ref=press

Additionally, bilingual assistance is available by leaving a voicemail, texting (720) 902-7643, or emailing support@brf.aidkit.org.

A Support Specialist will return the call, text or email Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Response times may vary.

Applying for benefits is free, and no payment should be made to any individual or entity for the application process.

The Benefit Recovery Fund was established in 2022 when the Colorado Legislature approved Senate Bill 22-234, and Governor Jared Polis signed the legislation into law. Numerous community-based organizations and advocates supported its enactment.

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NOTICE OF REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

Procurement No. 2024-02 -Transit Consolidation Study
Proposals Due: May 17, 2024, 2:00 p.m. (MST)

The RMRTD invites qualified individuals and firms to submit proposals to provide a Transit Consolidation Study for the RMRTD service area. Proposals will be accepted until the date and time shown above. Interested parties may receive a complete copy of this solicitation by accessing the following websites:

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Questions or any correspondence that are related to this procurement should be submitted to Phil Pino, Chief Procurement Officer, at rpf@mrcog-nm.gov.



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Uninsured

Medicaid and see providers at least once a month, Battani said.

In Denver, housing instability, language barriers, lack of transportation, and the “astronomical cost” of dentistry without insurance make dental care inaccessible for many children, the migrant community, and seniors, said Sung Cho, a dentist who oversees the dental program at STRIDE Community Health Center, serving the Denver metro area.

STRIDE tries to overcome these barriers by offering interpretation services and a sliding pay scale for those without insurance. That includes people like Celinda Ochoa, 35, of Wheat Ridge, who waited at STRIDE Community Health Center while her 15-year-old son, Alexander, had his teeth cleaned. He was flagged for dental care during a past medical checkup and now he and his three siblings regularly see a dentist and hygienist at STRIDE.

One of Ochoa’s children has Medicaid dental coverage, but her three others are uninsured, and they couldn’t otherwise afford dental care, said Ochoa. STRIDE offers an exam, X-rays, and cleaning for \$60 for the uninsured.

In the past year, Cho has seen an influx of migrants and refugees who have never seen a dentist before and need ex-

tensive care. Medical exams for refugees at STRIDE increased to 1,700 in 2023 from 1,300 in 2022, said Ryn Moravec, STRIDE’s director of development. She estimates the program has seen 800 to 1,000 new immigrants in 2024.

Even with growing needs, Cho said the Medicaid “unwinding” — the process underway to reexamine post-pandemic eligibility for the government program that provides health coverage for people with low incomes and disabilities — has created financial uncertainty. He said he worries about meeting the upfront costs of new staff and of replacing aging dental equipment.

At STRIDE’s Wheat Ridge clinic, two hygienists float between dental and pediatrics as part of the medical-dental integration. Yet Cho said he needs more hygienists at other locations to keep up with demand. The pandemic created bottlenecks of need that are only now being slowly cleared, particularly because few dentists take Medicaid. If they do accept it, they often limit the number of Medicaid patients they’ll take, said Moravec. Ideally, STRIDE could hire two hygienists and three dental assistants, Moravec said.

In 2022, Colorado enacted a law to alleviate workforce shortages by allowing dental therapists — midlevel pro-

viders who do preventive and restorative care — to practice. But Colorado does not have any schools to train or accredit them.

Before age 3, children are scheduled to see a pediatrician for 12 well visits, a metric that medical and dental integration capitalizes on, particularly for at-risk children. As part of Braun’s program in the Rocky Mountain region, providers have applied more than 17,000 fluoride varnishes and increased the percentage of children 3 and younger who received preventive oral health care to 78% from 33% in its first 2½ years.

Callaghan, at the Montana Primary Care Association, witnesses that on the ground at community health centers in Montana. “It’s about leveraging the fact that kids see their medical provider for a well-child visit much more often and before they see their dental provider — if they have one.”

Kate Ruder, Writer. This story was produced by KFF Health News, a national newsroom that produces in-depth journalism on health issues and is one of the principal operating programs of KFF, the independent source for health policy research, polling and journalism.

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Fondo

de desempleo para los trabajadores, sus familias y nuestra economía. No tenía sentido que los trabajadores inmigrantes indocumentados que impulsan tantas de las industrias en nuestro estado fueran cruelmente dejados de lado. Gracias al arduo trabajo de socios comunitarios, de AidKit y de tantos otros, han dejado de ser excluidos. Estamos muy felices de ver el lanzamiento del Fondo de Recuperación de Beneficios. Sabemos que es bueno para estos coloradenses, pero más que nada, es esencial para una economía pujante”, Kathy White, Directora Ejecutiva del Instituto Fiscal de Colorado.

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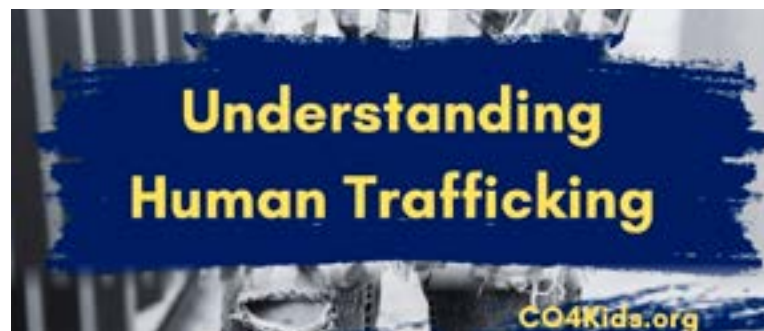
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trónico support@brf.aidkit.org. Un Especialista de Asistencia devolverá la llamada, mensaje de texto o correo electrónico de lunes a viernes entre las 8 a. m. y las 8 p. m. El tiempo de espera para recibir una respuesta puede variar.

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El Fondo de Recuperación de Beneficios fue establecido en 2022 cuando la Legislatura de Colorado aprobó el Proyecto de Ley del Senado 22-234, y el gobernador Jared Polis firmó para convertirlo en ley. Numerosos defensores y organizaciones comunitarias respaldaron su promulgación.

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Chávez/Esp



El Dr. Ramón Del Castillo, cofundador de César E. Chávez, el Comité de Paz y Justicia César Chávez de Denver entonó cánticos junto a miembros de la comunidad en la 23ª celebración anual de César Chávez en Denver, Colorado. / Dr. Ramón Del Castillo, cofounder of César E. Chávez, the César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver chanted along with community members at the 23rd Annual César Chávez celebration in Denver, Colorado. (Foto/Photo: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)

historias y transmitir las a las generaciones más jóvenes”, explicó Gonzales. “También fue una buena oportunidad para ver a gente de la comunidad que no había visto en mucho tiempo, muy agradecido al comité que hizo tanta organización y trató a todo el mundo tan maravillosamente. Realmente fue un día maravilloso”.

Del Castillo compartió los retos y logros del CCPJC de Denver en las últimas dos décadas. “Una de las cosas que hicimos fue cambiar el nombre del parque [César Chávez Park]. Así que fui al ayuntamiento y busqué todas las normas. Nos sentamos, desarrollamos un plan e hicimos todo el trabajo necesario para cambiar el nombre del parque.

Lo que quiero decir es que, en cualquier momento, esa comunidad se ha aburguesado. Pero cuando estuvimos allí en 2002, esa comunidad no se parecía en nada a lo que es ahora. En cualquier momento, esa comunidad, si lo desea, podría conseguir otra petición, seguir todas las reglas que nosotros seguimos, y llevarla a parques y rec que quieren que se cambie el nombre de nuevo y por lo tanto perdemos nuestro legado, nuestra identidad y nuestra lucha”.

La esperanza de Del Castillo es continuar con la responsabilidad y el legado de liberar a los oprimidos y tomar medidas sobre lo que la comunidad puede hacer mejor para sostener este evento y mantener vivo el Parque César E.

Chávez en los años venideros. Este acto suele celebrarse el 31 de marzo, fecha del cumpleaños de Chávez, o la semana en que se celebra. Para mantenerse al día y saber más sobre este evento en el futuro, puede obtener más información en [César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee Of Denver on Facebook](#).

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

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Miembros del Grupo Tlaloc realizaron una bendición en la 23ª celebración anual de César Chávez en Denver, Colorado, el 13 de abril de 2024. /Members of Grupo Tlaloc performed a blessing at the 23rd Annual César Chávez celebration in Denver, Colorado on April 13, 2024. (Foto/Photo: Karen Gutiérrez/El Semanario)

Baker

these critical decisions rest with utilities. Developing sophisticated plans for public safety outages requires extensive knowledge of a utility’s territory and accurate assessments of which zones are high-risk areas.

Utilities, however, don’t always have abundant sensors in low-voltage distribution grids – the portion of the system that brings power into neighborhoods – and may lack extremely granular control over individual components. In fact, unplanned outages often must be manually reported. Many utilities are installing smart meters, some of which can automatically report outages back to the utility.

Power providers are also taking other steps to strengthen their grids against disasters, such as burying power lines. But depending on the location, this strategy can easily cost up to US\$1 million per mile for low-voltage distribution grids and millions of dollars

per mile for high-voltage transmission lines. These projects require intricate cost-benefit calculations, and their costs ultimately will trickle down to electricity consumers.

Preparing for public safety power shutdowns

For some people, losing power is a minor inconvenience. For others, it can mean the difference between life or death if they need electricity to keep essential medicine refrigerated, charge a portable oxygen concentrator or maintain their home temperature within a safe range.

Utilities should keep in contact with customers during every step of a public safety shutoff, starting with alerting them to charge essential devices and take other preparatory steps. They also should move people who have medical conditions or other issues that require access to power out of the blackout zone.

To make that kind of cooperation possible, utilities will need better insight into the state of the distribution grid, more detailed models of their systems, and improved measurement and sensing strategies that can help them develop accurate and granular assessments of wildfire risk.

Finally, utilities will need to make their decisions more transparent. No one likes losing power, so it is essential for ratepayers to understand why and how these outages happen and what their utility is doing to provide power as safely and reliably as possible.

Kyri Baker, Assistant Professor of Building Systems Engineering, University of Colorado Boulder. This commentary is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license.

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Koshgarian

average taxpayer’s contribution to renewable energy programs tops out at just \$11.

3. Boeing (\$87) vs. the Federal Aviation Administration (\$23).

From commercial flights that crashed to others that fell apart in midair, Boeing’s commercial safety record lately has been abysmal. Yet the company is also among the top five Pentagon contractors. Among other military aircraft, it’s the maker of the V-22 Osprey that crashed and killed eight service members in November.

The FAA, of course, is the understaffed, underfunded government regulator responsible for the safety of commercial flights. Maybe we should spend more on regulating companies like Boeing than subsidizing them?

4. Federal prisons (\$32.29) vs. substance use and mental health programs (\$31.69).

With about 2 million people incarcerated nationally, about one in three Americans will have an immediate family member who has been in prison or jail. Your federal income tax dollars support this system, which often treats substance use and mental health challenges as issues best confined to a prison cell.

By contrast, help for substance use

disorder or mental health issues can still be profoundly hard to get, as any affected person or family member will tell you. What if we spent more on treating these health conditions than punishing them?

5. Foreign militaries (\$112) vs. wildfire management (\$14).

From Afghanistan and Iraq to Ukraine and now Gaza, it feels like the U.S. is always either starting a war, fighting a war, or subsidizing a war. These wars are increasingly unpopular – and they’re not making us any safer.

Meanwhile, a growing number of Americans have experienced the direct or indirect effects of wildfire in recent years. These disasters cost upward of \$394 billion each year. Isn’t that threat worth addressing?

Pentagon contractors want us to think we need what they’re selling, but wrong-headed priorities like these mean we’re actually worse off. Spread the word: every taxpayer deserves better.

Lindsay Koshgarian directs the National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies. This op-ed was distributed by OtherWords.org.

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