

NHLA's Priorities for Latina Rights are included within each section of the 2020–2024 Public Policy Agenda

LATINA RIGHTS AND WELL-BEING

While the NHLA policy agenda seeks to address issues that impact all individuals in our communities, we also recognize that Latinas often encounter additional systemic barriers to advancement. To reduce these barriers, NHLA has committed to also bring a gendered lens to the impact of policies and to highlight a range of policies aimed at improving the conditions of Latinas through increased access to opportunities and improved access to safety and well-being.

PRINCIPAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

ECONOMIC SECURITY AND EMPOWERMENT

In the United States, the gender pay gap disproportionately impacts Latina women when compared to all other demographic groups. NHLA calls on lawmakers to close the Latina gender pay gap and increase Latina economic security by enacting legislation that promotes equal pay, increases the minimum wage, prohibits sex-based discrimination, and guarantees paid sick and family leave. Also, to better protect Latinas from workplace sexual assault and harassment, lawmakers must enact legislation that provides survivors of assault and harassment with protections against retaliation and improves access to services and safety.

EDUCATION

Latinas are a growing demographic in public and private education and deserve access to educational opportunities that enable them to thrive. To further this goal, lawmakers must support measures that protect students from sex-based discrimination and promote increased Latina enrollment and faculty hiring and retention in higher education. Lawmakers must also oppose administrative changes of Title IX that undermine student safety and students' rights in schools and on college campuses.

IMMIGRATION

To ensure that migrants, especially women and children, are treated humanely, lawmakers must enact legislation that prohibits family detention and separation. Lawmakers must also codify agreements that protect children, families and other vulnerable groups from unlimited detention and support measures to prevent violence against all detainees. Additionally, lawmakers must demand the timely

adjudication of relief for immigrant victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking through the VAWA self-petition, U and T visas, and access to asylum. Additionally, any legislation that provides temporary work visas, a pathway to temporary immigration status or lawful permanent residency should take into account the distinct needs of spouses to obtain work authorization and access to immigration relief.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Despite the nation's increasing Latino/a population, Latinas are still severely underrepresented in government employment, which is why lawmakers must increase Latina state and presidential political appointments. Additionally, lawmakers must take steps to increase federal contracting opportunities for

Latina-owned small businesses and develop a pipeline program for Latina candidates into senior-level government positions, while also enforcing strong accountability mechanisms that encourage agencies and hiring managers to meet hiring targets.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Latinas are on track to become one of the most powerful voting blocs in the United States, yet they still face rampant discrimination. To ensure that Latinas can influence policy development, lawmakers must enact legislation that provides meaningful and long-term protections for the Latino electorate, eliminates the school-to-prison pipeline, and enhances protections

for survivors of violence, sexual assault, and harassment. To better serve Latinas and their families, lawmakers must also prioritize alternatives to detention, especially for pregnant women and primary caretakers, and enact legislation that increases funding for affordable housing and prohibits felon disenfranchisement.

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

To ensure that Latinas and their families are better able to adapt to environmental changes, lawmakers must support measures that foster the creation of resilient communities and enact legislation that holds polluters accountable and protects every person's right to clean air, water, and public lands. To combat environmental

degradation, which disproportionately affects communities of color, lawmakers must also strengthen and support the enforcement of existing public health, civil rights, and environmental laws and enact legislation, policies, and regulations that move the U.S. toward 100 percent renewable energy.

HEALTH

Lack of access to affordable healthcare makes it difficult for Latinas to make healthcare decisions for themselves and their families. To improve access to quality healthcare, lawmakers must support access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare, restore the integrity of the Title X program, increase funding for teen pregnancy prevention programs, and remove all language in annual appropriations legislation that

restricts coverage for abortion care in public health insurance programs. Policymakers must also enact legislation that eliminates health disparities for communities of color by tackling discriminatory practices and other systemic barriers that produce health inequities in vulnerable populations and support access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare for women of color.