

Latino Decisions/ Somos Un Pueblo Unido Immigration Poll Provides Insights to Inform Key Policies to be Considered in Legislative Session

A new survey commissioned by Somos Un Pueblo Unido and conducted by Latino Decisions provides valuable insights into the attitudes of registered voters in New Mexico regarding the REAL ID issue, access to driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants, and immigrants more broadly. This data is important and timely given that these issues have dominated the political landscape of New Mexico for the past several years and will undoubtedly be central to this legislative session, and Congress currently needing to decide how to address refugees fleeing violence from their nations seeking asylum here in the United States.

REAL ID / Driver's Licenses for Undocumented Immigrants

- A majority (56%) of registered voters in New Mexico support the bipartisan compromise bill passed in the Senate during the last legislative session that would give eligible residents of New Mexico a choice to go through the additional federally mandated procedures to get a REAL ID compliant license and that would allow people who either do not want one, or who are ineligible for one, to keep their current driver's license that when renewed would state "not valid for federal identification purposes". Among those who support this approach, 25% strongly support the bill compared to 39% who oppose the bill, and 4% who have not formulated an opinion.
- A majority (69%) of registered voters in New Mexico prefer to allow undocumented immigrants to have driver's licenses that under the REAL ID Act would not be valid for federal identification purposes and if applicants are subject to greater penalties for fraud compared to only 27% who do not think undocumented immigrants should be allowed to get a license. The remaining 4% have not formulated an opinion on this issue. These numbers are almost identical to support levels from a poll of Hispanic registered voters in New Mexico in 2012, and are consistent with the compromise bill discussed above that would allow undocumented immigrants to keep their current driver's license. This data reveals that New Mexicans, regardless of ethnicity, overwhelming support allowing undocumented immigrants to continue having access to driver's licenses and that these attitudes are stable over time and across policy issue.

Federal Deportation of Mothers and Children From Latin America

- 68% of registered voters in New Mexico believe that children and mothers fleeing violence and persecution in their Latin American countries should be able to stay here in the US compared to 27% who believe that they should be deported to enforce the nation's laws. The remaining 5% have yet to formulate an opinion on this issue.
- 60% of registered voters in New Mexico oppose banning all Muslims and Syrian refugees from entering the United States compared to 36% who support this proposal and 4% who do not have a formulated opinion. When taken together these numbers regarding federal immigration policy reveal that New Mexicans have a humane ideology regarding immigration policy.

Methodology Statement: Latino Decisions randomly interviewed 500 registered voters in New Mexico, drawn from a representative statewide file of all registered voters. Respondents were contacted by cell phone, landline or online and completed a 7 minute survey. The survey was available in English or Spanish and carries a +/- 4.4% margin of error. Upon completion, the data were weighted to match the 2014 U.S. Census ACS for New Mexico.