



**SOMOS UN
PUEBLO
UNIDO**

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Contact:

Marcela Diaz (505) 424-7832 (Somos)

Norma Moreno (505) 424-7832(Somos)

Reena Szczepanski (505) 699-0798 (DPA)

**Community Groups Rally at Capitol for Bills that Support Justice for
Workers and Families**

Groups highlight need for a racial profiling ban, anti wage theft protections, and treatment instead of incarceration for New Mexico's families.

SANTA FE - Today, community groups from around the state gathered in front of the Capitol to support a slate of bills that would protect minorities and working families in New Mexico. The "Family Justice Campaign," spearheaded by civil rights and faith organizations including the NAACP, the Drug Policy Alliance, Somos Un Pueblo Unido and the New Mexico Conference of Churches are supporting proposals that would ban racial profiling and other forms of bias based policing and that would provide treatment, instead of incarceration, for people with drug possession arrests.

Representative Nathan Cote (Dist. 53-Las Cruces), who is sponsoring the bias based policing ban, said "Racial profiling erodes trust between the public and law enforcement agencies and undermines community policing efforts. House Bill 428 would ensure that police departments implement policies, procedures and training to prohibit and prevent racial profiling and would help build a stronger partnership between the police and the communities they serve."

"New Mexico is a multicultural state, and we've come together as multi cultural groups to protect everyone's civil and human rights," stated Doris Fields, a representative from the New Mexico NAACP. "This is the 100th anniversary of the NAACP, the oldest civil rights organization in the nation. We understand how critical it is to identify and work together to exercise what we know is our interdependence as human beings on earth, not just in the United States. Thus, we are working together for the good of our statewide community."

Members of Somos un Pueblo Unido from Taos, Roswell, Santa Fe, Albuquerque and Clovis organized and participated in "Immigrant Lobby Day" to support the Family Justice Campaign as well as rally for two bills that would help prevent wage theft. House Bill 489, sponsored by Representative Miguel García (Dist. 14 -Bernalillo) and House Bill 493 would provide stronger protections in state law against retaliation

and that would make stiffer penalties for unscrupulous employers who steal wages from their employees.

"Too many employers are getting away with not paying their workers because New Mexico's wage and hour laws are too weak," said Gabriela Macias, a member of Somos Un Pueblo Unido. "Wage theft not only hurts workers, it hurts honest businesses and the local economy. We need stronger protections now."

Somos Un Pueblo Unido members also showed support for a joint memorial backed by the Anti Defamation League and sponsored by Senator Jerry Ortiz y Pino (Dist. 12-Bernalill) denouncing anti immigrant xenophobia and anti-Hispanic/Latino bias in immigration matters and calling on the federal government to enact a fair and humane immigration reform.

Senator Ortiz y Pino, who introduced the memorial today said in a statement, "Spanish speaking immigrants have built the houses, grown the crops and cared for the children of the United States for many generations. They are the people we depend on, the people we share community with, the people we are one with; so we celebrate their contribution and we commit to protecting their rights. !Somos un Pueblo!"

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