



## Latino Engagement Task Force Neighborhood and Community Relations City of Minneapolis

### Policy Recommendations

#### ***The Task Force:***

The Latino Engagement Task Force (LETF) was established to support the City's Goal: Many People, One Minneapolis: *Inclusiveness is a treasured asset; everyone's potential is tapped.* Under the principles of Community Engagement the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department brought together a core group of influential Latino leaders to help shape the City and the department's efforts to engage with community.

By the end of the year the LETF will:

- Create a framework for a sustained and comprehensive tool (s) to engage with the Latino community in Minneapolis; and
- Develop policy recommendations and a roadmap to achieve key strategic goals and objectives.

In the first six months the Latino Engagement Task Force has already demonstrated the incredible value to City and Community, some of the outcomes include:

- Recommendation to support President Obama's deferred action,
- Establishment of the first ever "Latino Heritage Month" in Minneapolis,
- Community event with more than 400 people to celebrate the economic and cultural contributions of Latinos in Minneapolis.

The Latino community is a valued and important part of Minneapolis. The community contributes so much to the city's economy and culture and is the fastest growing segment of our population. The Latino communities' experiences, talent and wisdom are not only welcome but needed to ensure a prosperous city and community. Our recommendations to the City of Minneapolis are the following:

## ***State Recommendations:***

### ***Higher Education***

Increasingly, given Minnesota's racial and ethnic demographic shifts, the college graduates essential to sustain and grow Minnesota's prosperity will need to be developed from the state's population of students of color and immigrant students.

Given that Latino, immigrant students' rapid-growth in number in Minneapolis's K-12 schools, these academic trends point towards serious economic implications. When combined with their current low high school graduation rates and lower higher education attainment rates for this group, an opportunity exists for accelerating academic success rates with these students to secure Minneapolis's economic progress.

Recommendations:

- In State Tuition, allow all students graduating from Minnesota's high schools to qualify for in state tuition rates in MN's public colleges and universities.
- De-Link State Student Financial Aid from Federal system; allow all students from Minnesota's high schools students to qualify for State Financial Aid.
- Authorize the use of private funds to create scholarships for undocumented students in public Colleges and Universities in Minnesota.

### ***Public Safety***

Currently undocumented drivers are not able to obtain MN's Driver Licenses. Allowing people to get Driver Licenses in Minnesota would ensure that drivers can operate a vehicle safely. This would protect public safety and strengthen the work of law enforcement.

We can learn from other States, in New Mexico the percentage of uninsured drivers dropped from 33 percent in 2002, before immigrants could receive driver's licenses, to 10.6 percent in 2007. In Utah the percentage of uninsured drivers also decreased after passing the law that allowed people to receive driver's licenses regardless of immigration status.

Recommendation:

- MN Driver Licenses, allow all Minnesota's residents to obtain driver licenses, regardless of their immigration status.