



# **Major issues among Latino Community Members in an Electoral Year (Survey results)**

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In collaboration with the Waite House**



## **About Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER):**

HACER's mission is to provide the Minnesota Latino community the ability to create and control information about itself in order to affect critical institutional decision-making and public policy. General support for HACER is provided by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs.

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## Executive Summary

This report is a joint effort between Waite House and HACER and consists of a summary of a study on the issues that interest and concern the Latino and Chicano communities in Minnesota. This research provides real data from a survey of 123 respondents regarding Latino health issues, education, drivers' licenses, immigration reform and housing. We present an overview of the results of the interviews, the study process, brief overview of the methodology, and the key findings and conclusions.

## Process

### Methods

The questionnaire was designed to collect information about five main themes to affect the quality of life of the Latino community in Minnesota. The main themes included housing, health, immigration reform, education and driver's licenses. The survey included fourteen questions and was conducted on December 2014 within the building where Waite House offers services to people. The questionnaire is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

HACER staff assisted in the questionnaire development, planning and data recompilation. Waite House staff collected data in face-to-face interactions with people who receive services at its location in Minneapolis. Participants were asked to provide demographic data before answering the following questions related to the issues mentioned above. This information allowed us to identify basic characteristics of participants.

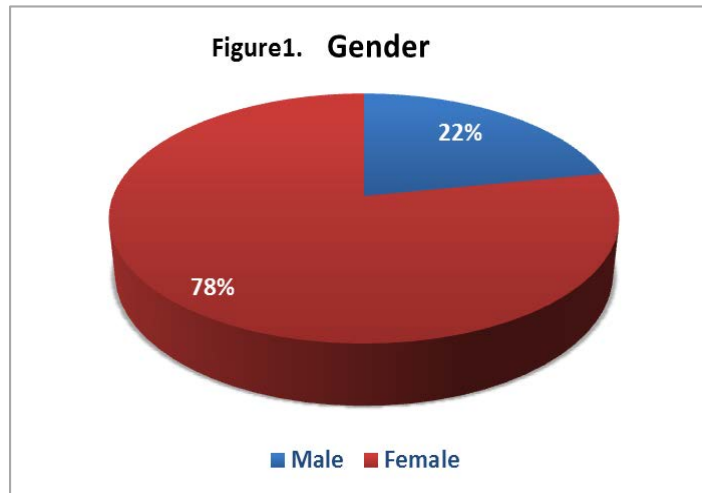
All respondents were onsite at Waite House, and a majority of them said that they live in Minneapolis. Responses to the questionnaires were coded and the information obtained was analyzed, identifying what might be the most important characteristics of those who participated and how their ideas were expressed. Tables and figures provide a summary report of the responses obtained from 123 respondents. Some might have chosen not to answer a question. Questions were made with a multiple choice format.

## Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile

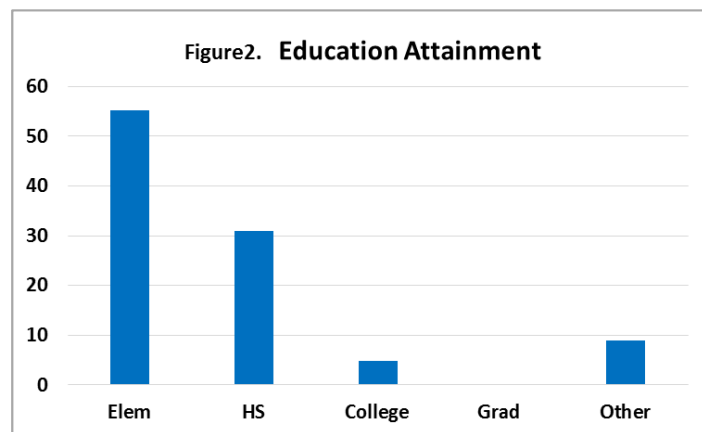
This section provides information on a number of key demographic, social and economic indicators, such as age, gender, income, educational attainment, housing and health insurance, for the purpose of creating a profile of respondents. These characteristics cannot be generalized to the entire Latino community in the area of influence of Waite House and the services they offer to that community. Respondents conform to a specific group of people, who come on regular basis to the Waite house in search for specific services such as food, clothing, etc.

Participants in the survey presented the following characteristics:

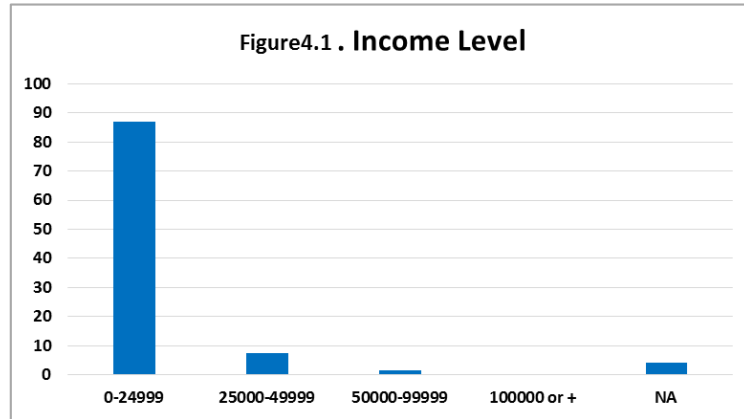
Most of the people who answered the questionnaire were women; 78% of respondents, with just 22% men. Ages varied significantly between 19 and 81 years, with most of them being younger than 30 years. (Figure1) In contrast, potential Latino voters in Minnesota at the time were more evenly distributed in gender (55.6% male, 44.4% female), but also being young, with most of them (67.1%) with ages between 18 and 44 years.



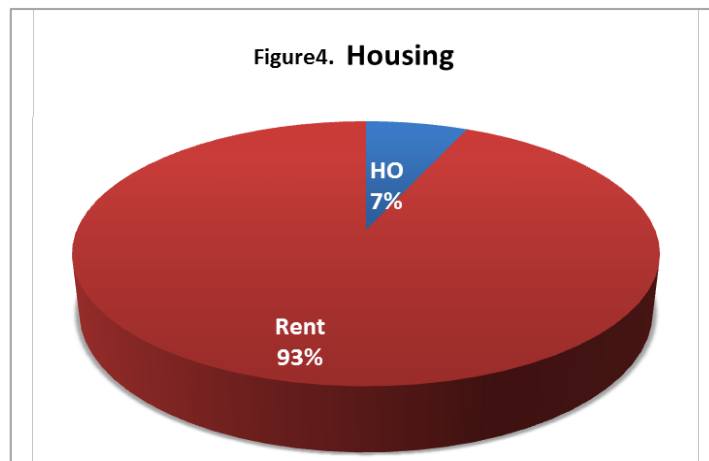
Regarding the educational attainment, 55% of respondents have elementary education, 31% high school education and 5% college education. (Figure2). This distribution in educational attainment is not representative of the entire Latino population eligible to vote in the city, where 21% have less than high school studies, 24.5% are high school graduates, and 29% have a bachelor's degree or higher.



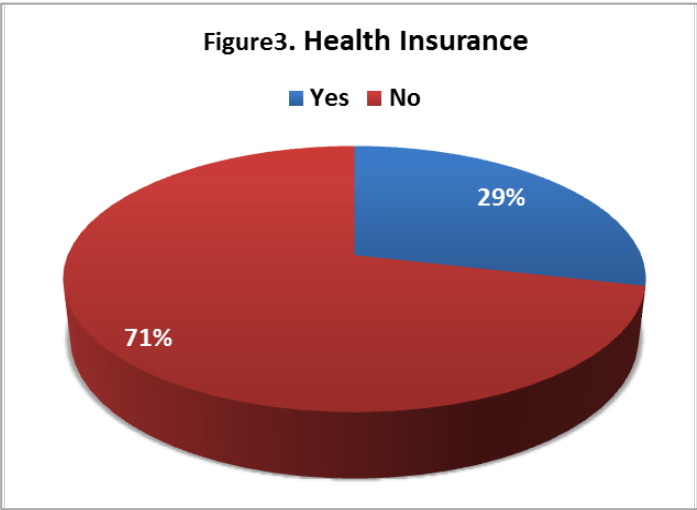
In relation to economic status, based on income level, 87% of the population reported a yearly income lower than \$25,000 in their household. Only 7% of the respondents declared an income over \$25,000 dollars per year. Compared to the characteristics of those who were eligible to vote, less than 20% of the people report income levels below the benchmark used for this study. This fact is important to characterize the respondents who receive services provided by the Waite House, primarily focused on low income clients.



When asked about their condition related to housing, 93% of the respondents said they are currently paying rent at the places they live in, while only 7% of adults report owning a house. (Figure4) This contrasts with the fact that the home ownership rate among Latinos in Minnesota and Minneapolis is around 59%, according to the census data and estimations made for the American Community Survey and Pew Research.



Another question in the set of demographic characteristics was related to availability of health insurance among respondents. Again, in contrast with the data for the state, 71% of those who answered the questions said they did not have health insurance, with only 29% reporting having it. (Figure3) The statistics for 2012, and based on the American Community Survey, show that 31.4% of Latinos do not have health insurance, which still shows a significant gap in coverage, compared with just 7.5% of whites in the same economic situation. It is important to underline that this question had the purpose of further exploring the importance of having access to health services provided in the area, and how participants manage to have it covered.

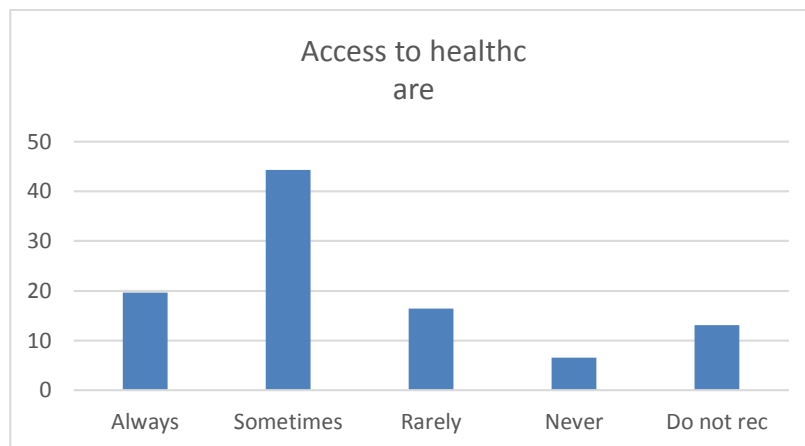


## Key Findings

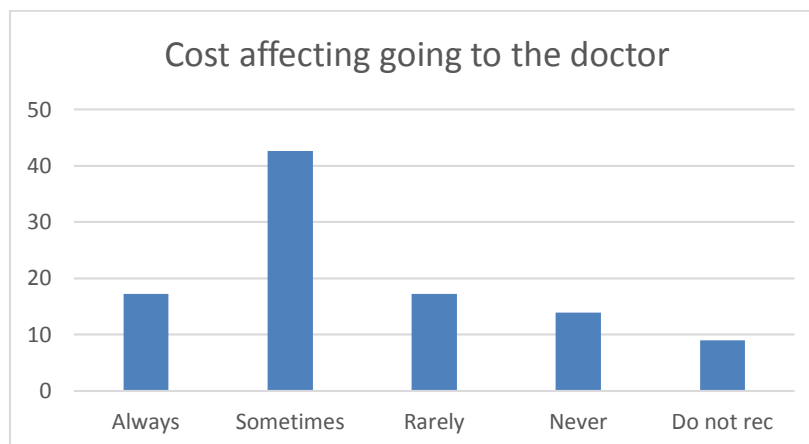
### Health

Access to health care appears as an important issue for most of the respondents. Among the topics mentioned, having access to health care services was considered the most important issue in health matters.

When participants were asked if the cost for health care services and medication were accessible to them, 65% expressed that always or sometimes are able to pay for the services or medication they need. Only 22% of respondents recognized that the costs are deterring them from looking for health care services in any form.

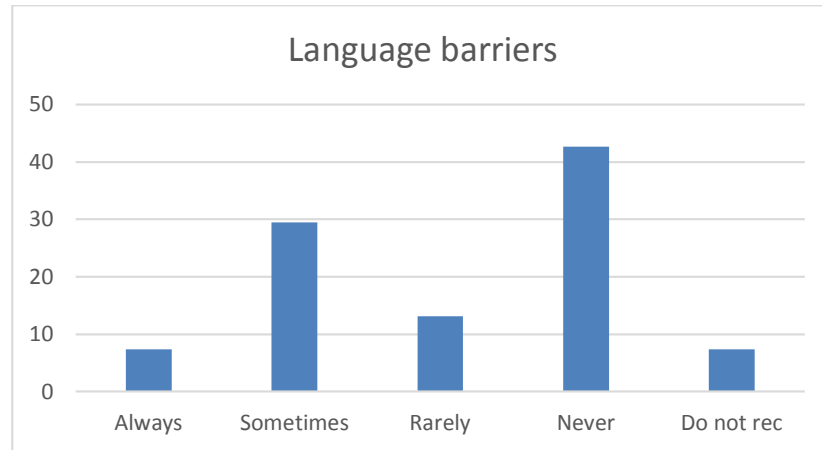


However, when participants were asked if the lack of money has been a factor making them stop attending medical appointments or not following medical treatments, 59% of answered that not having money had always or sometimes acted against their decision of going to the doctor. Over 31% of the participants say they never or rarely have had problems going to the doctor because they did not have enough money to pay for the services.



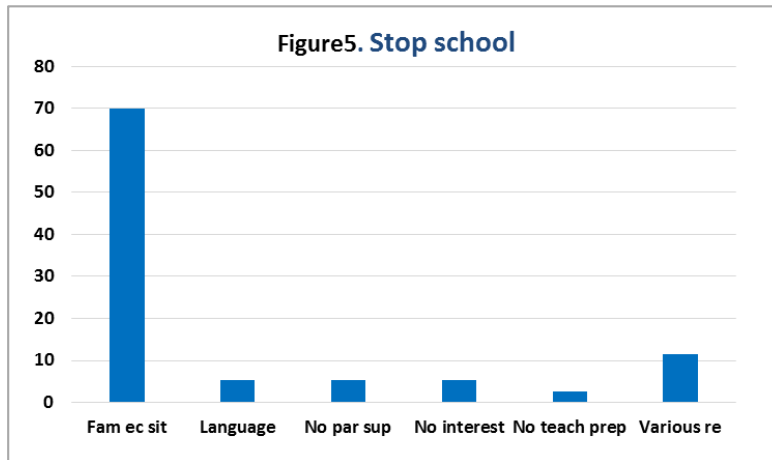


Another interesting piece of information came from the answers related to the role that language has played generating a problem in receiving medical service. From the total number of responses, 43% of the participants said they never have had problems with language while 30% responded that they sometimes have gone through difficulties in receiving medical service due to language barriers. Most of the people who participated in the survey are native Spanish speakers and find difficulties when they request medical services or ask for medications at pharmacies.



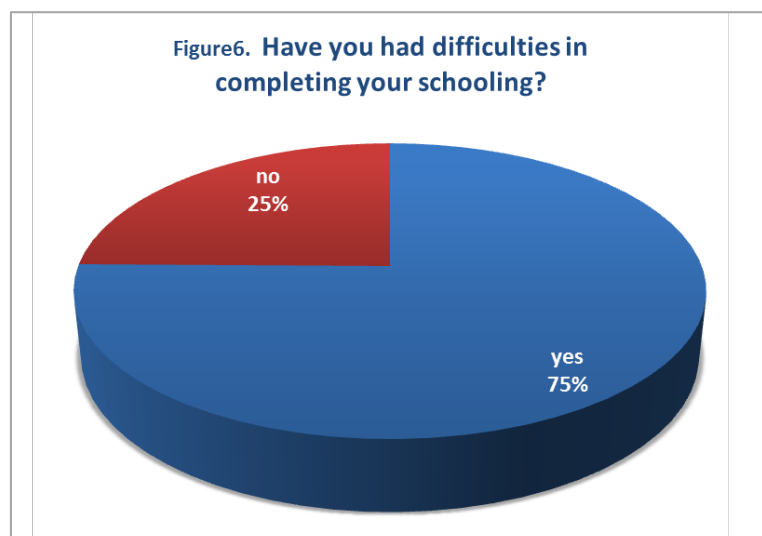
## Education

As one of the priorities that the legislature will embrace this year, education is an important statewide issue as well as a very relevant topic for Latinos. Participants answered several questions in order to measure their perception of what might be the most relevant issues, and how they affect the outcomes in education among young people. The first question asked about the reasons people regard as causing high dropout rates among Latino students.



A surprising 70% of the responses pointed at the family economic situation as the main reason for students to stop going to school. Almost 12% of the responses pointed to a combination of reasons to stop going to school. While most of the participants in the survey were young, it is very possible that they have stopped going to school. It is necessary now to explore on how well informed the population is with regards of financial support opportunities in the state.

Another question sought to explore over those who have started school and did not complete it. A large 75% of the participants recognized they have had difficulties in completing schooling, while only 25% said that they have not (Figure6). At this point, it is important to remember that most of the people who participated in this survey declared low income levels, and



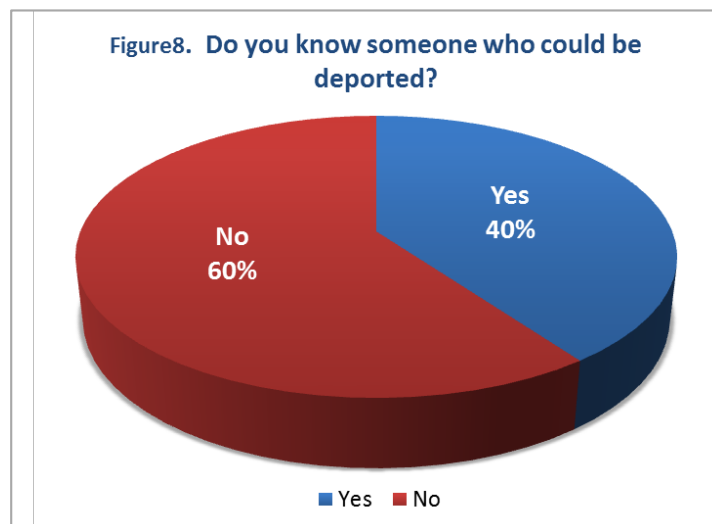
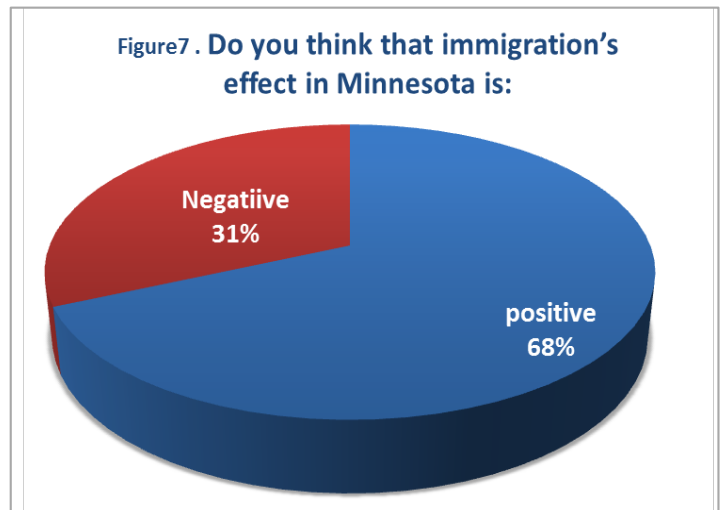
that might suppose a tight correlation between economic situation and the possibility of continuing and completing school programs. According to data for the state, 58.3% of Latino students in 2013 graduated from high school, which could offer a comparative perspective to consider different influences respondents might have that pushed them away from school.

## Immigration

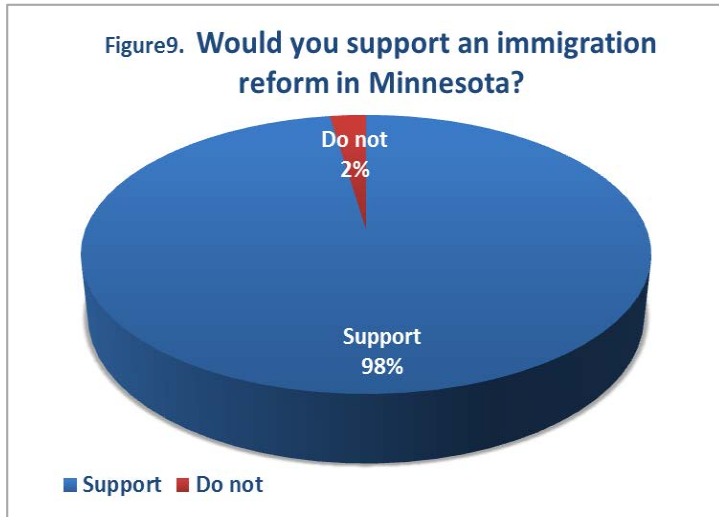
According to Pew Research estimates, in 2012 about 95,000 undocumented immigrants lived in Minnesota, or about 1.8 percent of the state's population. In contrast, the national average of undocumented population is 3.5 percent. States as Nevada, California, Texas and New Jersey, registered percentages over 5%, with eleven other states having between 3.5 and 5% of their population under the same condition of undocumented, and the top five states in the country have rates at 6 percent or above. North Dakota, Maine and Montana were listed as the states with the lowest percentage of population being undocumented, with 0.2 or 0.3%.

Respondents answered three questions related to immigration. With regards to what effect immigration might have in the state, 68 % answered that such an effect would be positive for the state (Figure7). It is relevant that over 31% of the respondents expressed that the effect would be rather negative. Further exploration is needed with regards to

where this positive impact for the economy of the state would be more noticeable. The question had the intention of learning about respondents' position towards immigration reform and if this could be considered a relevant issue in the new legislative agenda. Following up, participants were asked if they knew any person who could be, or has been deported for being undocumented in the country. 40% of them said they knew someone (Figure8).



The final question on immigration asked directly to participants if they would support the

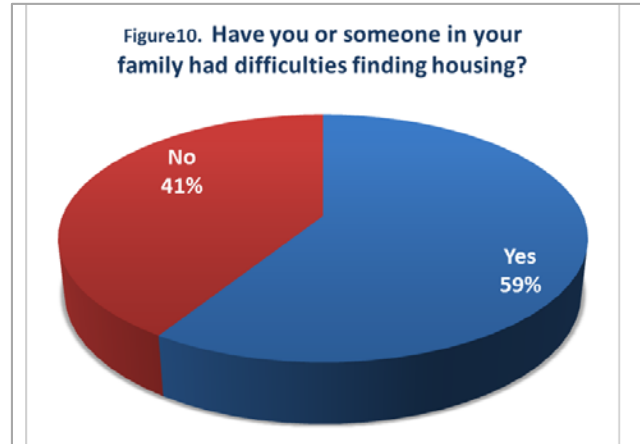


implementation of an immigration reform in the state. To this, 98% of the participants expressed being in favor of an immigration reform in Minnesota. So, while only 2 percent of the participants Posited that they were against were against an immigration reform, in contrast the percentage of those who considered that immigration impacts the state negatively was 32%.

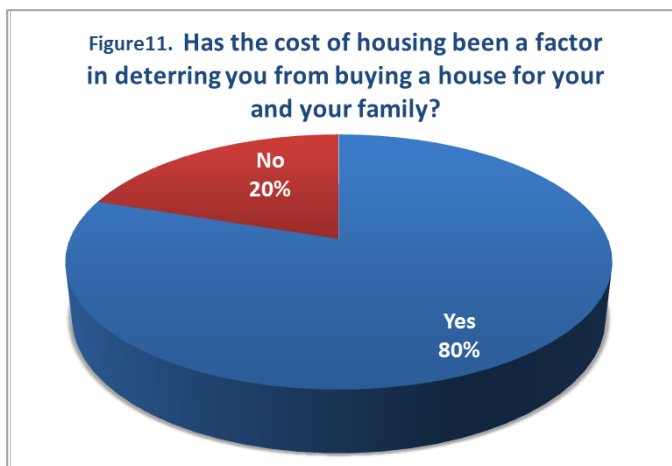
## Housing

Housing access is considered one indicator of disparities that affects communities in several ways. The module of questions on housing were oriented to explore how establishing a household could be for the participants, and if so, how much affects other aspects in their lives. The first question asked if

participants, or their families, have gone through burdens while looking for housing. Most of the respondents expressed that they, or any relative, have experienced problems in this matter (59%) (Figure 10). The relevance of this question aligns with the fact that Minnesota continuously reports higher gaps in housing than the national average. Just in 2013, the gap between the white, non-Hispanic population and people of color in access to housing was of 35.4%. The national average was 24.9% the same year. And, while 77.2% of white people in the state own a house, only 41.9% of Hispanic/Latinos do. From the demographic information we knew most of our respondents do not own a house, according with their demographic profile, and then the results cannot be compared with the ownership rate in the state, but rather helps in illustrating the problem that finding affordable housing represents for the participants.



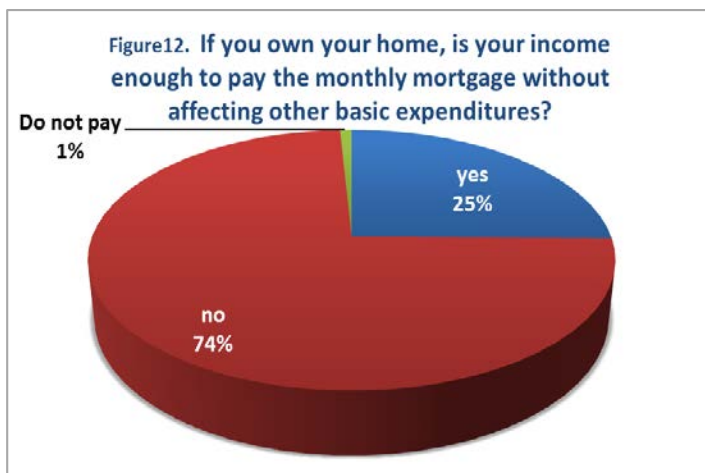
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In a derived question, we asked participants if the cost of housing acts as a factor impeding them buying a house. The response computed 80% of people saying that, in fact, the high costs of houses were acting against them to think on buying (Figure11). In consequence, it is important to remember that this group is not representative of the entire Latino population in Minneapolis, and even less in Minnesota. This does not mean they would not like to own a house, but the correlation between income level and

housing is quite evident.

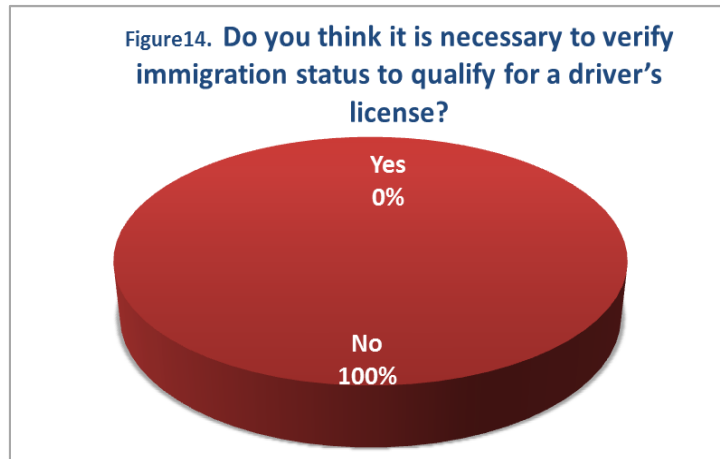
The final question in this set was oriented to those who might own a house, and then the response, computed for all participants, rather give us an idea that if they were able of owing a house, they would consider themselves would not be in good shape, economically speaking, to cover their monthly mortgage; that is why 74% of the all respondents said that if they are homeowners their income is not enough to pay the monthly mortgage without affecting other basic expenditures. They were translating their current economic condition to a possible scenario where they would need to pay for the mortgage instead of rent. This might account for the need of accessing better and more detailed information on affordable housing, but also illustrates that there is a segment of the Latino population struggling in greater levels than the average in finding dignified living conditions. Further analysis must be made in order to identify if we have participants who were recent immigrants and if they are accessing to the information they need.



That last fact came evident, when 53% of the respondents said they knew someone who had lost their house due to foreclosure. Therefore, even though most of them are not homeowners, they have witnessing the deterioration in ownership opportunities derived from the economic recession we went through in recent years.

## Driver's License

One of the most relevant issues to be included in the agenda for the legislature this year is related to granting driver's license for everyone, regardless their immigration status. When participants were asked if they considered if it was necessary to verify immigration status to qualify for driver's license, all participants expressed that it was not necessary. This reflects that all participants consider an important issue that everybody would be able to apply for a driver's license. Currently, it is only possible to apply for a license when you have the current documents, such as a Social Security number.



However, not all expressed support in granting driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants, while 96% maintain their support. Even though the percentage represented by those who responded no is low, it is also a sign that there are some members of the Latino community who do not see the initiative as a positive action. That might be even more relevant given the homogeneity we observed among participants in this survey, which would allow us to expect no discrepancies in this issue.



## Conclusion:

The Latino community has shown that social participation in the city generates many economic benefits, however there is a challenge for the Latino community to have a better quality of life in Minnesota and no different from other communities. This challenge will only be reached when people have the opportunity to access economic, educational and health resources and these differences are completely eliminated. This survey was designed to help highlight the main challenges that the Latino community is still facing.

The limitations derived from the way in which the survey was applied, provided us with an image representing those who receive services offered by the Waite House, and do not represent the Latino community of Minneapolis, nor Minnesota. Further efforts could be done in applying the same survey under different conditions and then generate different outputs. In the meantime, we could hypothesize conclusions on what participants see as the main challenges that the community they are part of, are facing.

Most respondents seemed to be in poverty and this is a condition influencing their access to healthcare services, education and housing. Perhaps their position of economic disadvantage determines their responses to the questionnaire in issues related to immigration and driver's licenses. Those topics seem to be the most relevant while most of the participants expressed being in favor of changes.

Further studies are necessary, with a design that could include more representative group of participants, but we are now clear that those who participated represent a sector of the Latino community who is in great need of support to solve basic needs.

## Appendix 1

### Encuesta para la Comunidad Latina frente al proceso electoral

2014

#### Datos demográficos

<b>1. Ciudad de residencia</b>	
<b>2. Edad</b>	
<b>3. Género</b>	1) Hombre 2) Mujer
<b>4. Nivel educativo</b>	1) Primaria 2) Preparatoria/High school 3) Estudios universitarios 4) Post grado 5) Otro
<b>5. Nivel de ingreso familiar</b>	1) 0-\$24.999 2) \$25,000 - \$49,999 3) \$50,000 -\$99,999 4) \$100,000 – mas
<b>6. Vivienda</b>	1) Propia 2) Alquilada
<b>7. Seguro médico</b>	1) Si tiene seguro 2) No tiene seguro

Encuesta.

1	¿Costos de servicios médicos o medicamentos son accesibles para usted y su familia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Siempre</li> <li>2) Algunas veces</li> <li>3) Pocas Veces</li> <li>4) Nunca</li> <li>5) No recibo servicios médicos</li> </ul>
2	¿Usted ha dejado de ir a una cita médica o no ha seguido un tratamiento médico por falta de dinero?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Siempre</li> <li>2) Algunas veces</li> <li>3) Pocas Veces</li> <li>4) Nunca</li> <li>5) No recibo servicios médicos</li> </ul>
3	¿Ha tenido problemas para recibir servicios médicos debido al idioma?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Siempre</li> <li>2) Algunas veces</li> <li>3) Pocas Veces</li> <li>4) Nunca</li> <li>5) No recibo servicios médicos</li> </ul>
4	En su opinión, ¿cuáles son los factores más importantes que impiden que los estudiantes latinos finalicen sus estudios?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Situación económica familiar</li> <li>2) La barrera del idioma</li> <li>3) Falta de apoyo de los padres</li> <li>4) Falta de interés por estudiar</li> <li>5) Falta de preparación entre los maestros</li> </ul>
5	¿Ha tenido usted dificultad para finalizar sus estudios?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Si</li> <li>2) No</li> </ul>
6	Usted opina que el efecto de la inmigración en Minnesota es:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Bueno</li> <li>2) Malo</li> </ul>
7	¿Conoce usted a alguna persona que pudiese ser deportada?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Si</li> <li>2) No</li> </ul>
8	¿Apoyaría usted una reforma migratoria en Minnesota?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Si</li> <li>2) No</li> </ul>
9	¿Cree usted necesario verificar estatus migratorio para recibir licencia de conducir?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Si</li> </ul>

		2) No
10	¿Apoyaría usted que se otorgaran licencias de conducir a inmigrantes indocumentados?	1) Si 2) No
11	¿Ha tenido usted o alguien en su familia, dificultad para encontrar vivienda?	1) Si 2) No
12	¿El costo de la vivienda ha sido factor en la decisión de comprar casa para usted o su familia?	1) Si 2) No
13	¿Son sus ingresos suficientes para pagar la hipoteca de su casa sin sacrificar otros gastos básicos?	1) Si 2) No
14	¿Ha perdido usted, o alguien conocido, la vivienda por foreclosure?	1) Si 2) No



**Electoral Process Survey for the Latino Community**

**2014**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>8. City you live in</b>	
<b>9. Age</b>	
<b>10. Gender</b>	1) Male 2) Female
<b>11. Educational Achievement</b>	1) Elementary School 2) High school 3) College 4) Graduate School 5) Other
<b>12. Nivel de ingreso familiar</b>	1) 0-\$24,999 2) \$25,000 - \$49,999 3) \$50,000 - \$99,999 4) \$100,000 – mas
<b>13. Vivienda</b>	1) Homeowner 2) Renter
<b>14. Seguro médico</b>	1) Yes, I have health insurance 2) No, I don't have health insurance

## Survey Questions

1	Are healthcare services or medication costs accessible to you and your family?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Always</li> <li>2) Sometimes</li> <li>3) Rarely</li> <li>4) Never</li> <li>5) I do not receive medical service.</li> </ul>
2	Have you stopped going to medical appointments or not followed medical treatments because you were short of money?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Always</li> <li>2) Sometimes</li> <li>3) rarely</li> <li>4) Never</li> <li>5) I do not receive medical service</li> </ul>
3	Have you had problems receiving medical services because of your preferred language?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Always</li> <li>2) Sometimes</li> <li>3) Rarely</li> <li>4) Never</li> <li>5) I don't receive medical service</li> </ul>
4	In your opinion, what are the most important factors that prevent Latino students from completing their schooling?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Family economic situation</li> <li>2) Language (English)</li> <li>3) Lack of parental support</li> <li>4) Lack of interest for studies</li> <li>5) Lack of teacher preparation</li> </ul>
5	Have you had difficulties in completing your schooling?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Yes</li> <li>2) No</li> </ul>
6	Do you think that immigration's effect in Minnesota is:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Positive</li> <li>2) Negative</li> </ul>
7	Do you know someone who could be deported?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Yes</li> <li>2) No</li> </ul>
8	Would you support an immigration reform in Minnesota?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Yes</li> <li>2) No</li> </ul>
9	Do you think it is necessary to verify immigration status to qualify for a driver's license?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Yes</li> <li>2) No</li> </ul>

10	Would you support granting driver licenses to undocumented immigrants?	1) Yes 2) No
11	Have you or someone in your family had difficulties finding housing?	1) Yes 2) No
12	Has the cost of housing been a factor in deterring you from buying a house for your and your family?	1) Yes 2) No
13	If you own your home, is your income enough to pay the monthly mortgage without affecting other basic expenditures?	1) Yes 2) No 3) I do not pay a mortgage
14	Have you or someone you know lost a house due to foreclosure?	1) Yes 2) No

Survey designed by HACER and the Waite House, October 2014