We'd like to take a moment to thank all of our members and allies that led the fight for driver's licences for the last 5 years as well as this 2016 Legislative Session. Our luchadores (including many of you!) successfully fought against the most egregious provisions for which Governor Martínez and her anti-immigrant allies had been pushing for the past 6 sessions such as full repeal, canceling all driver's licences from immigrants, creating a driving permit only for undocumented immigrants, and requiring immigrants’ information be shared with ICE.

See below for the most factual and accurate information available on the bill that was passed by the legislature, HB99 amended. At the time this newsletter was published (03/03/16), Governor Martinez had not yet signed HB 99, but indicated that she will. Remember HB 99 is not currently in effect which means that you still are able to apply for and renew your driver’s license under the current law.

HB99 AMENDED: THE REALITY

- Ends Governor Martinez’s five-year effort to take away licenses from immigrants in New Mexico.
- Ensures New Mexico’s undocumented immigrants continue to be licensed to drive.
- Brings the state into compliance with the REAL ID Act without discriminating against immigrant drivers.
- Current New Mexico driver’s licenses remain valid until they expire for everyone, regardless of immigration status.
- Creates two licenses—one that is REAL ID compliant and one that is not REAL ID compliant.
- U.S. citizens and lawfully present immigrants may apply for the REAL ID license by presenting additional federally required documents at MVD.
- All New Mexicans—citizens, documented immigrants, and undocumented immigrants—may apply for the non-REAL ID compliant license, also called a “driving authorization card.”
- Current New Mexico driver’s licenses will be valid for travel on domestic flights until at least 2020.
- Newly issued REAL ID and non-REAL ID licenses will be valid for travel on domestic flights until further notice by the federal agents.

HB99 amended (all information provided by Somos Un Pueblo Unido):

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- All New Mexicans—citizens, documented immigrants, and undocumented immigrants—may apply for the non-REAL ID compliant license, also called a “driving authorization card.”
- Undocumented immigrants who currently have valid driver’s licenses will NOT be required to submit fingerprints when they apply for a “driving authorization card,” unless they let their licenses expire.
- First time “driving authorization card” applicants who are undocumented will have to submit their fingerprints for a background check, but the fingerprints and the results of the background check will not be shared with federal immigration or local law enforcement agencies.
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- Provided the Governor signs HB 99, as amended, the effective date will be May 18th.

For more information on driver’s licences don’t doubt to El CENTRO at (505) 246-1627, visit our website www.elcentronm.org or Somos’ website: www.somosunpueblounido.org/DLNews
MARCH AGAINST HATE, BIGOTRY

Members and staff of El CENTRO were present and participated in the March/Rally Against Hate and Bigotry in Albuquerque, which attracted over 500 people on Sunday, Feb. 21, 2016.

El CENTRO played an integral part of the planning and logistics committee while working with a coalition of different community organizations from around the city. The event was used as a platform to express the discontent and concerns of different vulnerable and marginalized communities represented at the march. Sunday also worked as a way of uniting different community organizations with a single goal to fight to end the hate that has been spreading across the country toward the immigrant community, Muslims, refugees, women and members of the LGBTQ community.

WORKERS DENOUNCE WAGE THEFT

A group of workers– with the support of El CENTRO’s Workers’ Committee and staff–held a peaceful protest outside of Hope Head Start and Nursery to denounce the wage theft they had experienced when they worked at the childcare center.

Cindy Flores, Nirma Armendáriz, Sabina Armendáriz, and María Chávez already filed a case through the NM Department of Workforce Solutions. The department already issued a ruling in favor of the group of workers acknowledging the wages they are owed by Hope Head Start. El CENTRO’S Workers’ Committee has created a support system for the 4 workers. El CENTRO has also provided the workers with different opportunities to learn about their rights as workers so they won’t be victims of wage theft or any other type of abuse from any future employer.

Wage theft occurs when an employer does not pay his employers what he is required to by law. Examples of wage theft include not paying the minimum wage and not paying overtime after working 40 hrs. in a 7 day period, etc.

If you think that you are a victim of wage theft or that your labor rights are being violated, don’t hesitate to contact us through our Facebook page, our website www.elcentronm.org or call us at (505) 246-1627. Also don’t forget to join us for one of our labor rights workshops. You can find out more in the Calendar section of our newsletter.