El CENTRO attended the #RealTalk Mayoral Candidates’ Forum to urge all candidates to reject the anti-immigrant platform that Mayor Berry adopted during his 2008 candidacy, which criminalized immigrants and included a promise to end “sanctuary” in Albuquerque. The city of Albuquerque will hold elections for mayor and city council in 2017. A general election for both the city council and the mayor will take place on October 3, 2017. A runoff election will be held on November 7, 2017, if no candidate receives at least 50% of the votes in the general election. In 2009, when Mayor Berry attempted to make good on his campaign promise, he expanded federal deportation programs such as Secure Communities— the same program that Trump is now trying to coerce municipal governments into implementing. El CENTRO’s message was clear at the forum: immigrants, low-wage workers, refugees and allies in Albuquerque will not stand by idly and allow a future mayor to force our communities into the shadows. Mayor Berry continues to stand behind his dangerous Trump-like practice of “welcoming Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to check on the immigration status of suspects” at the Prisoner Transport Center. These policies do not reflect the collective values, and El CENTRO will work to ensure that elected officials aren’t complicit in the targeting and deportation of hardworking immigrant families and workers. El CENTRO’s urges candidates to commit to not enter into another agreement with ICE to implement federal deportation programs, to strengthen current sanctuary city provisions, to support economic policies that benefit all low-wage workers and their families such as paid-sick-leave and defense of Albuquerque’s minimum wage, and to commit to passing policies which integrate immigrants into the mainstream.

Mayor Martinez, a member of our Defensores de Familia team, explains the importance of our immigrant communities getting involved in the election process “Immigrants are part of the fabric of our city, issues that impact our immigrant community should be addressed by the candidates seeking to lead our city. If we want our voice to be heard, we need to be involved in the mayoral race.”

Immigrant friendly/sanctuary policies recognize the importance of immigrants’ many contributions to the social, cultural, intellectual and economic fabric of our city. Immigrant friendly policies make Albuquerque a safer place for all. Statistically, through these policies, victims of domestic violence and other forms of violence are more likely to seek assistance; key witnesses of crime are more prone to come forward, and neighborhoods become safer and healthier.

Moreover, immigrant-friendly policies recognize that immigrants are our neighbors, co-workers, classmates, small-business owners down the block, taxpayers, and our family members. Immigrant workers take care of our elderly and children, build and roof our adobe homes, pick the chile that we harvest and make the clothes we wear. Immigrant-friendly policies recognize the importance of immigrants’ many contributions to the social, cultural, intellectual and economic fabric of our city, issues that impact our immigrant community should be addressed by the candidates seeking to lead our city. If we want our voice to be heard, we need to be involved in the mayoral race.”

Mayor Berry is trying to rig the election to keep our voters from making an informed decision on the Healthy Workforce Act. The Healthy Workforce Act is an ordinance that would allow our Albuquerque hard workers to earn paid sick leave. He has ordered the City Attorney to push for a ballot printed with a tiny font size so that voters will not have access to a large font that is legible and fair. Mayor Berry is trying to rig the election to keep our voters from making an informed decision on the Healthy Workforce Act. The Healthy Workforce Act is an ordinance that would allow our Albuquerque hard workers to earn paid sick leave. He has ordered the City Attorney to push for a ballot printed in 6-point font, even though election guidelines say 8.5 font is the smallest acceptable size for a ballot. We, at El CENTRO, are combating Berry’s dirty politics by arguing that the tiny font is not only illegible, but it also forces our voters to try to decipher it on a ballot. Even worse, the City Council and Mayor’s Office have rejected our reasonable solution of placing a copy of the ordinance in every voting booth so that every voter has access to it - in a font that is legible and fair.

In 2016, El CENTRO, OLE and ally organizations worked tirelessly to collect 24,000 voter’s signatures to place the Healthy Workforce Act on the ballot. Yet, once again our democracy and rights are being violated. That is why our City Council has the authority to stop the Mayor, but they need to hear from YOU. Call 1-866-986-9020 to be patched through to the city council and let them know - you want them to stand with voters and let the Mayor know that dirty tricks have no place in our democracy. Let’s create a healthy workforce for Albuquerque! If you would like to get involved or learn more about workers’ rights and the
WHEN: June 9th and 23rd, July 6th and 20th at 5:30 PM
MANO A MANO: WORKERS’ RIGHTS WORKSHOPS
description: Attend these free workshops if you think you’ve been a victim of wage theft and/or discrimination, and want to learn about your rights and options. Call in advance to reserve your spot (505)

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
When: June 20th from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm
WHERE: 714 4th St SW 87102
DESCRIPTION: Come and help us decide the next steps in our fight for workers’ rights and Trump’s hate agenda. Meetings are held in Spanish. Call in advance if you need interpretation.

CIVIL RIGHTS WORKSHOPS
When: Contact us to schedule and sign up for workshops
DESCRIPTION: Learn about your civil rights with ICE/police, how to do a family emergency plan and join the movement to fight back! Contact Fabiola or Marian Mendez at 505-246-1627 or sign up on line at www.elcentronm.org

CONSULTATIONS WITH THE NM IMMIGRANT LAW CENTER
When: Every Wednesday, 1 to 5 pm
WHERE: 714 4th St SW 87102
DESCRIPTION: Do you need help applying for DACA, citizenship or obtaining a background check? Come on in on Wednesdays to sign up for a free consultation with immigration attorneys.

NM IMMIGRANT LAW CENTER PHONE CONSULTATIONS
When: Every Friday, 11 am to 1 pm
DESCRIPTION: Free legal consults! Call 505-247-1023

NM IMMIGRANT LAW CENTER
Phone Consultations
Attorneys are available to provide quick consultations on a variety of immigration and citizenship issues.

El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos
714 4th St SW
87102
Phone: 505-246-1627
Website: www.elcentronm.org

El CENTRO is recruiting new members for their workers’ rights committee. Contact Marco Nuñez at mmendez_elcentro@yahoo.com, Claudia Garcia cigarcia_elcentro@yahoo.com or call 505-246-1627.

Congratulations Working Families! District Court Rules against Kelly’s Brewpub in Wage Theft Case
Congratulations ABQ hard workers! We are happy to announce that on May 31st District Court Judge Alan Malott ruled against the motion to dismiss the wage theft case filed by employees of Kelly’s Brewpub against the former owner of the restaurant. To defend themselves against employees’ claims that Kelly’s stole tens of thousands of dollars from them, former owner Dennis Bonafonte and his partners asked the court to dismiss the case by arguing that the Albuquerque minimum wage is invalid since it was increased in 2012 with our voter initiative that put a summary of the wage increase on the ballot rather than a copy of the entire ordinance. El CENTRO and allied organizations recognize that Bonafonte’s argument violates not only the rights of our voters but also of our working families. After our hard organizing efforts, Judge Malott rejected this argument, writing that any challenge to how the 2012 election should have been made at the time of the election.

Judge Malott’s ruling is also significant for our Albuquerque workforce and our campaign to defend minimum wage because it suggests how the court may rule in a similar case, filed last month by a group of business organizations, such as the Association of Commerce and Industry, also asking the courts to invalidate the Albuquerque Minimum Wage Ordinance for the same reasons. The District Court has yet to make a final ruling on the wage theft case against Kelly’s Brewpub.

Follow us on Facebook and our website http://www.elcentronm.org/ for more information and updates.

Highlighting our Members: Edgar Salinas from El CENTRO’s Workers’ Justice Committee
Edgar also makes a call to protect New Mexican working families, “Immigrants subsidize the US economy. Workers in New Mexico are under attack. Governor Susana Martinez has just vetoed a bill to raise the minimum wage. In 2012, we in Albuquerque approved increasing the minimum wage, including the minimum tipped wage. In 2016, we affirmed a request for paid sick days to be placed on the 2017 ballot. Now greedy groups want to revoke the minimum wage increase and eliminate the option to vote for sick pay days on the ballot. We, at El CENTRO, stand up for all those who are the target of oppression. For many of us who work 40 hours for minimum wage, we still live in poverty, many of us have families. We cannot allow our rights to be threatened, enough is enough!”

If you would like to get involved or learn more about workers’ rights and the Healthy Workforce ABQ initiative, El CENTRO is recruiting new members for their workers’ rights committee. Contact Marco Nuñez at mmendez_elcentro@yahoo.com, Claudia Garcia cigarcia_elcentro@yahoo.com or call 505-246-1627. Also, stay tuned to our website www.elcentronm.org and like us on Facebook.

If you would like to make a donation to El CENTRO, send a check to El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos: 714 4th St SW Albuquerque, NM 87102. Or donate through PayPal:

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