



**Monday April 16th, 2018, Press Release**

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### **Albuquerque City Council Voted on Immigrant Friendly Resolution**

*Immigrant Communities, Educators, Civil Liberties Organizations, Faith-Leaders, and Small Business Leaders Honor the Contributions of Immigrant and Refugee Communities*

ALBUQUERQUE- On a 6:3 vote (Councillors Benton, Borrego, Davis, Gibson, Peña, Sanchez voting in favor and Harris, Jones and Winter voting against) today the Albuquerque City Council approved Resolution 18-7, strengthening Albuquerque's status as an immigrant-friendly City. Hundreds of Albuquerque residents turned out in support. The resolution was co-sponsored by Albuquerque City Councilors Klarissa Peña and Pat Davis. Albuquerque passed its first immigrant-friendly resolution in 2000. Over 75 immigrant and faith-based organizations, educators, civil liberties and legal advocacy, domestic violence and sexual assault service providers, and business leaders endorsed the resolution highlighting the vital role immigrant and refugee families play in all sectors of Albuquerque. El CENTRO and allies will be working with community leaders and elected officials to ensure that the City implements the changes and protections of this resolution.

In light of President Trump's orders to increase deportations across the nation, an uptick of ICE activity in Albuquerque, and the Administration's attempts to strong-arm local governments into aiding in the enforcement of federal deportation programs, the sponsors introduced the resolution in order to strengthen current policies which protect Albuquerque's immigrant communities. "Councilor Peña and I are co-sponsoring this anti-discrimination, public safety resolution to ensure that the City isn't complicit in the targeting, persecution, and deportation of Albuquerque' families by the Trump administration. It is an important step to further integrate immigrant communities into Albuquerque's public, economic, and cultural life," explained Councilor Pat Davis.

Kristin Greer Love, ACLU of New Mexico Staff Attorney, explained that R-18-7 is in line, not in defiance of federal laws, "Albuquerque must stand firmly against the Trump administration's efforts to bully local governments into enforcing federal immigration law. The Trump administration's tactics are not only racist, they are also unconstitutional. Resolution 18-7 reaffirms and strengthens Albuquerque's status as an immigrant-friendly city and promotes public safety while safeguarding the civil rights, dignity, and safety of all."

Amongst other provisions, the resolution will ensure that the City is not using any resources to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, safeguard personal and identifying information, limit ICE's access to nonpublic City facilities if they don't have a judicial warrant, and ensure that the City will not enforce any federal program requiring the registration of individuals on the basis of religious affiliation or ethnic or national origin.

After years of decline, the number of arrests made by U.S. [Immigration and Customs Enforcement \(ICE\) climbed to a three-year high in fiscal 2017](#).\* In Albuquerque, in the past weeks, ICE has began targeting locally-owned businesses in Albuquerque, through I-9 audits and other enforcement activity. This, combined with ICE targeting immigrant workers and parents at their homes, at court and probation, and at worksites has caused widespread uncertainty, fear, and confusion.

“Our vision is to make Albuquerque a welcoming city where our hardworking families can thrive regardless of their status, skin color or religious background said Marian Mendez-Cera community organizer at El CENTRO.” By voting “YES” on R-18-7, the Council recognized our communities’ contributions and demonstrated that the City is willing to do it’s part to protect Albuquerque families, workers, businesses, and our economy.”

Dozens of faith leaders including, Archbishop Wester, have endorsed and spoken in favor of the resolution, “The Jewish congregation Nahalat Shalom, the Islamic Center of New Mexico, and Muslims & Jews United support passage of Albuquerque’s Council Bill R-18-7,” expressed Abbas Akhil, president of the Islamic Center of New Mexico. “We believe it is important for every person in Albuquerque, regardless of race, religion, gender, disability, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, or citizenship or immigration status to fully access all city services and the justice system without fear of arrest or detention by ICE agents while they are in these premises.”

Immigrants played a vital role in New Mexico’s workforce and comprised 12.34 percent of the state’s workforce in 2016\*\*. From 2006 to 2010, there were 11,440 new immigrant business owners in New Mexico, and they had a total net business income of \$389 million, which makes up 8.9% of all net business income in the state.\*\*\*

Andrea Plaza, Executive Director from Encuentro explains why it does not make good economic sense to target the very workers and businesses that are a cornerstone of New Mexico’s economy, “immigrant workers and immigrant business owners play a vital role in the economic solvency of our City. The attacks on our immigrant and refugee communities coming from Washington are not only immoral and racist; they are not good economic policy. Immigrant businesses have created jobs, generated millions of dollars in local tax revenue and revitalized many of our cities business corridors.”

Carmen Manriquez, a grandmother, local business owner of Carniceria Especial, an immigrant worker and a member of El CENTRO stressed the contributions immigrant business owners and immigrant workers provide to Albuquerque, “as a local business owner, I am aware of the benefits local immigrant-owned businesses provide to the city. Beyond creating jobs, we contribute to the state revenue by paying our taxes, and we are active in our communities, churches, and schools. Resolution 18-7 will make Albuquerque a city safer not only for our immigrant and refugee communities but all Albuquerque.”

Local domestic violence organization such as the New Mexico Asian Family Center, Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC, Inc.), NM Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc, Tewa Women United, Enlace Comunitario, Albuquerque SANE Collaborative, and Casa Fortaleza supported the resolution because it is conducive to public safety, “To live free of violence is a basic human right. Immigrant survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault need to be able to seek supportive services and justice without fear of deportation” stated Marta Pereira, Associate Director of Programs with Enlace Comunitario.

\*<https://www.ice.gov/removal-statistics/2017>

\*\* *American Immigration Council, Immigrants in New Mexico, October 2017.*

\*\*\* *Robert W. Fairlie, Open for Business: How Immigrants are Driving Small Business Creation in the United States (New York, NY: Partnership for a New American Economy, 2012), p. 32.*

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*\*El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos is a grassroots, immigrants' rights and workers' justice organization based in Albuquerque, NM that works with Latino immigrant communities and allies to defend, strengthen, and advance the rights of our community. **Connect with the El CENTRO on Twitter: @ELCENTRO\_NM and on Facebook: @ElCentrodeIgualdadDerechos***