

# THE LATINO Presidential QUESTIONNAIRE

LATINO  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
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## Cory Booker

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*1. By 2030, California will need [1.65 million](#) more college degrees to stay economically competitive. When fifty-four percent of the state's K-12 public school students are Latino, and in the higher education space, Latinos make up more than one million students, what are your plans to ensure that more Latinos in California attain a college degree?*

I support a number of approaches to ensure that the decision to pursue higher education does not entail a lifetime of crippling debt, including free community college for all students, and debt-free four-year college--including tuition and fees--to help students who otherwise would not be able to afford it. I would also reform and expand public service loan forgiveness programs that cancel student debt after a period of work in public service like teaching, working as a social worker, or serving in the military.

*2. There remains [2.9 million](#) uninsured people in California and nearly three out of five of these uninsured are Latino. The uninsured is expected to rise to [4.4 million](#) in the next five years, with Latinos and undocumented residents driving that growth. As president, what policies will you pursue to ensure that Latinos can obtain high-quality, affordable health care?*

Our health care system is broken. We pay more for health care than any other wealthy country, yet we still have inadequate care, and many uninsured--especially among

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communities of color and undocumented residents. I support Medicare for All and will put us on a path to get there, acting with urgency every single day to expand access for all. Other countries with government guaranteed health care have allowed citizens to purchase private insurance, and I believe we can achieve universal coverage while retaining choice and private insurance options.

I believe that we must not allow the perfect to be the enemy of the good when lives depend on us making progress - and as I push forward towards a single-payer system, I will not let the ideal stand in the way of ideas that will help lower costs and expand access to care. That begins with strengthening the Affordable Care Act, reducing drug prices, lowering the Medicare eligibility age to 50, and providing a public option to ensure guaranteed, affordable health care for all.

*3. [Sixty-one](#) percent of Latinos in California face high-rental costs and only 42 percent of Latinos own homes (compared to 64 percent of whites). How will you address the rising costs of rental housing and expand homeownership opportunities for Latinos?*

I have put forward a comprehensive plan to ensure every American has access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing. My plan would cap rental costs at 30 percent of income, up to the neighborhood market rate, increase the supply of affordable units by requiring localities to eliminate overly restrictive zoning rules in order to qualify for billions of dollars of federal transportation and housing funding, fully fund the Housing Trust Fund with \$40 billion each year to build, rehabilitate, and operate rental housing for low-income individuals, and put us on a path to end homelessness in America.

I would also give every child in America a fair shot at homeownership by implementing my "Baby Bonds" proposal. "Baby Bonds" is a new American birthright that would erase the racial wealth gap and give every kid in America a savings account of up to \$50,000 to use for things like higher education, purchasing a home, or starting a business.

*4. California is home to approximately [2.9 million](#) undocumented immigrants. What steps will you take to protect immigrants in California and what is your timeline for action?*

Our immigration system should reflect our values. Separating children from their families, abusive and indefinite detention of immigrants, and shutting the door to desperate refugees does not reflect who we are as Americans. As mayor, I made Newark a national leader among cities in protecting the safety and well-being of all of its residents. In the Senate, I am a co-sponsor of the Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act to reform immigration enforcement address the root causes of the current migration crisis.

As president, I will make sure that our immigration system treats immigrants with dignity because when people cross borders, they bring their human rights with them. I will fight for a system that recognizes that immigrants make our country stronger and that we need each other to move our country forward. I will fight for the passage of legislation in Congress that reforms our immigration system and provides earned citizenship for the millions of undocumented immigrants living and working with us as our colleagues, neighbors, and friends.

But we can't wait for Congress to act, which is why, [as president, I will start on Day One](#) to end the abuses of the Trump administration and use my executive authority to reform our immigration system by:

- Treating immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers with dignity
- Putting forward a new vision for modernizing immigration
- Addressing the root causes of the migration and refugee crisis
- Reaffirming our values by expanding protections for immigrants and rolling back the Trump administration's anti-immigrant policies

*5. Latinos are overrepresented in blue-collar occupations like agriculture and construction. Latinos also have the highest poverty rate in the state and possess a median household income that is more than [\\$20k](#) less than non-Latinos. What would your administration do to close the income inequality gap among Latinos and other racial/ethnic groups?*

We have lost sight of who our economy is supposed to be working for. I will fight for an economy where everyone has a stake in its success; where workers actually benefit from the profits that they help create; where small businesses can compete and grow without being swallowed up and spit out by monopolistic giants; and where every community--not just a few cities on the coasts--is empowered and thriving. That starts with raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour and ensuring that workers have the right to join a union and negotiate for better pay and meaningful benefits.

I will also invest \$1.5 billion into the State Small Business Credit Initiative to expand access to capital for Latinx entrepreneurs and in communities of color. I will implement my Rise Credit, which would give every working American a cost-of-living refund of up to \$4,000 each year, and enact "Baby Bonds," a new American birthright to close the wealth gap and give every American a shot at economic opportunity.

*6. The recent Kincaid Fire in California demonstrated that climate change is a real threat to Latino and immigrant communities across the state. In the first 100 days, what actions are you prepared to take to address the urgent issue of climate change?*

Climate change is not some distant threat, we're witnessing many of its effects today. Low-income communities, indigenous communities, rural communities, and communities of color are not only on the front lines of the impacts of climate change, they also bear the burden of decades of environmental neglect, pollution, and exploitation. As president, I will send sweeping legislation to Congress to enact [my plan for climate action](#), but I won't wait for Congress to act. Beginning on Day One, I will take executive action to combat climate change, including:

- Drastically increasing EPA enforcement actions against polluting companies.
- Reinstating and strengthening CAFE standards that the Trump administration is rolling back.
- Establishing a regulatory requirement that all new passenger vehicles after 2030 be zero emission.
- Signing an executive order to bar all new onshore and offshore fossil fuel leases.
- Implementing a requirement for fossil fuel companies to stop methane leaks from both new and existing sources.
- Rescinding Trump's executive orders to shrink national monuments and beginning to designate additional lands and waters for protection.
- Revoking Trump executive orders to approve the Keystone Pipeline and the Dakota Access Pipeline, and that streamline approvals of other fossil fuel Projects.
- Rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement and bring the international community together around more ambitious emission reduction commitments.
- Beginning to negotiate new trade agreements that include progressive environmental and labor standards.
- Ending the granting of waivers to big oil companies from their blending obligations under the Renewable Fuel Standard.

*7. Latinas in California make [43 cents](#) on the dollar for every man in the state. As Latinas make up half the Latino population in the state, this hurts our ability to grow our economy. How will you use the presidential pulpit to close the gender pay gap for Latinas in California?*

In America, wealth equals opportunity. But decades of discriminatory policy and an upside-down tax code has left a massive gap between the haves and have-nots. The wealth gap and pay gap is especially striking along racial lines. Latinas earn \$0.54 on every \$1 of the average white, non-Hispanic man. According to a [Unidos report](#), if the wage gap were eliminated, on average, a Latina working full time, year-round would have enough money to afford more than two additional years of rent.

We must close the wage gap to ensure that women are paid the same amount as men for the same work. I have released an Opportunity and Justice for Workers plan, which lays out a bold vision for an economy that works for all, including provisions for closing the gender pay gap, ensuring universal paid family leave, and putting high-quality, affordable child care within reach. I will fight to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, and would build on it with new tools to hold companies accountable, including by using the presidential bully pulpit to increase transparency of corporate pay practices and progress over time.

*8. The recent mass shootings in Gilroy, CA and El Paso, TX have left the Latino community fearful. What are your plans to curb gun violence in our country that have left too many Latino families grieving?*

Gun violence is a public health issue that takes the lives of more than 100 Americans each day, disproportionately those who live in lower-income Black and Brown communities like the one I call home. To make justice a reality for all, we have to end the epidemic of gun violence and invest in communities that have been shattered by the trauma left in its wake. When I am president, we won't wait for more thoughts and prayers—we are going to take action.

That's why I have put forward [the most sweeping plan](#) to combat gun violence of any candidate for president—perhaps ever. It starts with a federal gun licensing system, because if you need a license to drive a car, you should need a license to own a gun. I would also work to ban assault weapons, implement universal background checks, and finally bring accountability to the gun industry. And when I'm president, we will bring a fight to the NRA like it has never seen before.