

THE LATINO Presidential QUESTIONNAIRE

LATINO
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
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Pete Buttigieg

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?*

My [Higher Education and Workforce Development plan](#) will invest not only in college affordability, but also in college completion – because when 40% of students aren't supported to make it to graduation, they lose out on valuable education, and America suffers. We will make college free for students from families with incomes below \$100,000 and provide sliding-scale subsidies for students from families with incomes below \$150,000. This will mean that 90% of families in the United States will receive either free or subsidized tuition. We will also infuse \$120 billion in the Pell Grant program, so that low-income students receive aid not only for tuition, but also for basic living expenses like housing and food.

My goal is to enable 10 million more students to graduate with high-quality college degrees and credentials over the next decade. I will raise expectations for public colleges to reinvest up to a quarter of the free-tuition aid from the federal government in proven college completion programs, create a \$10 billion community college fund, invest in a \$2 billion pilot program to provide food vouchers to students in community colleges, and improve the Work-Study program.

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Finally, I will invest \$50 billion in HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs over the next decade, with \$20 billion of that additional funding through mandatory spending under Titles III and V to guarantee continued support to these colleges. More funding for these invaluable institutions will ensure that HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs continue to serve as launching pads for millions of students of color.

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?

My [Medicare for All Who Want It](#) plan provides an affordable public option on the health insurance marketplace, which will incentivize corporate insurers to compete on price and provide universal access to health care for all. This new public plan will be especially beneficial to Latino communities who are uninsured at higher rates than other communities. I will also increase financial assistance for lower-income people and extend subsidy eligibility to more middle-income people who are purchasing plans on the insurance exchanges. In addition, I will make a \$300 billion investment in combating mental illness and addiction through my [Mental Health plan](#) and make prescription drugs more affordable through my [Drug Pricing plan](#).

In addition, my [Health Equity plan](#) will make achieving health equity for all communities, including Latinos and other communities of color, a strategic priority. I will launch a National Health Equity Strategy Task Force in my first 100 days, train our health care workforce to combat racism and discrimination when treating patients, invest in Health Equity Zones to empower communities to address health disparities, and adopt a “Health in All Policies” approach to policy-making by creating Offices of Health Equity and Justice in all relevant federal agencies. My plan targets disparities that disproportionately affects Latinos, such as diabetes and HIV/AIDS.

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?

The affordability crisis is a problem of both supply and income. In addition to passing a \$15 minimum wage, investing in job growth and skills training opportunities, and expanding access to higher education, I will invest \$430 billion in affordable housing, unlocking access to affordable housing for more than 7 million households. This will include supporting the construction of new affordable housing through the Housing Trust Fund, Capital Magnet Fund, and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit; repairing existing public housing; and enabling over 1 million low-income households to become homeowners. I will also make housing choice

vouchers available for all families with children and make targeted investments to address the homelessness crisis, particularly in large coastal cities.

In addition, I propose a 21st Century Community Homestead Act that constitutes a transfer of vacant land and blighted property to low-income residents of formerly redlined neighborhoods and directly attacks the racial wealth gap by fostering asset ownership. This proposal also includes support for fixing up those properties and a suite of programs to bring job growth and revitalize surrounding cities.

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?

We must create a pathway to citizenship for the approximately 11 million undocumented people living in the United States, including Dreamers, TPS and DED holders. This is something the vast majority of Americans agree should happen, but because politicians in Washington have focused more on fighting with each other than fighting to make the lives of millions of people better, it has not gotten done. That is why my first priority is to fix our democracy. After that, we can pass legislation that reflects the will of the American people by creating a path to citizenship.

There are also actions I will take through executive action to protect immigrants in America. I will reinstate a humane enforcement policy at the border. I will end family separation, expedite reunification of those families who remain separated, and end for-profit detention. I'm also proposing that, upon first arrival at the border, asylum seekers and other migrants will be sent to Health and Human Services (HHS)-run facilities rather than CBP processing centers. These facilities will be maintained by personnel trained in health, trauma-informed care, and emergency aid; be equipped for overnight accommodations; and prioritize safety of the migrants.

Further, we must reinstate our commitment to human rights globally by tearing down the barriers this administration has created to prevent people from seeking asylum in the United States. Metering, MPP, and the so-called Safe Third Country agreements are all meant to discourage asylum seekers. We should be protecting people who come here seeking refuge, not turning them away.

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?

The Latino workforce is and will continue to be one of the greatest drivers of economic growth for our country -- and Latino entrepreneurs start businesses at much higher rates than other Americans. To build wealth in minority communities, including Latino communities, I plan to triple the number of entrepreneurs from underrepresented backgrounds within 10 years and create 3 million new jobs in minority communities through the Walker Lewis initiative, as described in my [Douglass Plan](#). To achieve that goal, my administration will invest up to \$10 billion in federal capital to establish a fund for underrepresented entrepreneurs. In addition, my administration will aim to award 25% of federal contracting dollars to small business owners from underserved communities, including minority-owned and women-owned firms, which will inject \$100 billion of capital into these communities.

My [Economic Agenda for Working Families](#) will also help raise incomes and address income inequality across America. I will raise the Earned Income Tax Credit to increase incomes by an average of \$1,000 for 35 million families; invest \$50 billion in workforce retraining; and increase salaries for domestic workers, direct care workers, and minimum wage workers with a \$15 minimum wage. My labor plan, A New Rising Tide, will empower minority communities to bargain for better pay and working conditions through policies like multi-employer bargaining, allowing gig economy workers to unionize, and ensuring protections for farm and domestic workers. Through these policies, we will lift incomes for Latino families.

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?

Our country needs immediate and bold action on the climate crisis. My [climate change plan](#) will ensure that we build a clean electricity system with zero emissions by 2035 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050. On Day 1, I will rejoin the Paris Agreement. Within my first 100 days, I will work with Congress to pass a carbon tax on pollution with revenue rebated back to Americans, so low- and middle-class households will receive enough to offset any price increases. I will call for the federal government to quadruple its investments in clean energy research, invest \$550 billion in deploying clean energy technologies, and create a \$200 billion training and transition fund to help displaced fossil fuel workers retrain. I will also set higher standards for clean fuel emissions and clean electricity through the Department of Transportation and the Department of Energy. In addition, I will sign a "Buy Clean" executive order mandating that any new material the federal government uses or pays for to construct buildings, roads, bridges, or other infrastructure, must be under a specified level of carbon emissions.

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?

To close the gender pay gap, I will propose legislation to immediately make public the median pay gap, broken down by racial and ethnic groups, at every large company. I will also require companies to publicly report pay data and number of employees, broken down by race and gender, by quintile, giving visibility into whether women are stuck in low-paying jobs or are fairly promoted to management-level and beyond. Transparency will allow the public to hold companies accountable for treating women fairly and enable women to make decisions about where to work and what salary to negotiate for. I will also reinstate pay data collection by the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, and act aggressively to hold employers accountable for evidence of discrimination.

In addition, I will push to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to ban employers from using salary history to determine wages, ensure that workers have the right to discuss wages without retaliation, and require employers to justify any pay discrepancies.

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?

As I outlined in my gun violence and extremism plan, "[An Action Plan to Combat the National Threat Posed by Hate and the Gun Lobby](#)," I plan to address all forms of gun violence in America: school shootings and mass shootings, domestic violence, suicide, and daily gun violence.

We must combat the domestic extremism and white nationalism that has motivated shooters to target Latinos and other communities of color. I will dedicate \$1 billion to prevent and combat violent extremism and radicalization, empower law enforcement — including the FBI, state and local authorities — with greater resources for preventing domestic terrorist attacks before they occur, and work with social media and other online platforms to identify and limit the spread of hateful ideology.

To prevent guns from getting in the wrong hands, I will make background checks universal and close the loopholes that allow dangerous individuals to acquire and keep guns. These include the "boyfriend loophole" in domestic violence cases, the "Charleston loophole" that allows sales to occur without complete background checks, and the "hate loophole" that still allows individuals convicted of hate crimes to have guns. I will ban assault weapons and high capacity magazines, support red flag laws that disarm domestic abusers or others who are deemed an immediate threat to others/themselves, and create a national gun licensing system.