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Hispanic News

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The Latino "war" against Ken Burns/PBS "THE WAR IS NOT OVER" Why the Latino Community Can't Let This Matter Rest

The Latino "war" against Ken Burns' upcoming documentary, "World War II," to be aired on PBS is not over. Despite recent press statements, key Latino organizations and leaders across the country today publicly announced that the issue is far from resolved and that they will continue pressing for a respectful resolution.

Latino organizations and leaders called on Ken Burns and Florentine Pictures to meet with a representative cross-section of the national Latino leadership to explain in detail the changes they have made to the film, how they plan to include the Latino experience in their future projects and how they plan to include Latinos on the Florentine team. They also call on PBS President and CEO Paula Kerger, as well as WETA-TV's CEO and President, Sharon Percy Rockefeller, to explain the measures that will be taken to assure how they will supplement The War with other programming and activities to include the Latino experience, in particular with the educational programming.

At the urging of a corporate sponsor, Burns met with two Latino groups in early May and reiterated that he would include interviews with some Latino veterans in the 14.5 hour documentary, without offering many details.

Rachel Clark was appointed San Bernardino City Clerk in 1990 to fill the unexpired term of City Clerk Shauna Clark, who had been appointed city administrator. She later ran for city clerk and won, and has since been unopposed, holding that position for 17 years. This November, 2007, elections, Clark faces an opponent, anti-illegal immigrant activist Joseph Turner, who initiated a city vote to require city agencies to fight through sanctions on employers who hire illegal immigrants and landlords who rent to them. A judge ruled that the petition lacked signatures to quality. Therefore, she ran for the San Bernardino Board of Education and came in next to last of the candidates.

Clark is the daughter of Lalo and Angie Mendoza, a well-known and established family, raised and educated in San Bernardino, and has an extensive city government career. She began her career in the mayor's office in 1966 as executive secretary to Mayors Ballard and Bob Holcomb. In 1981, she resigned her position to resume her education, receiving an A.A. from San Bernardino Valley College and a B.A. in Business Administration from Cal-State, San Bernardino. Later, she worked for the late Congressman George Brown as a congressional assistant. In 1999, Holcomb was re-elected mayor and appointed Clark as executive assistant. During her tenure as city clerk, Clark has established a distinguished career, organizing a group of 99 young people of San Bernardino, has a goal to become proficient with the guitar and acquainted with the romantic Latin ballads that has been popular throughout Latin countries for many decades. "I love our beautiful Latin music," she said during a telephone interview.

Celeita Gomez has had this idea for many years. "I love our beautiful romantic Latin ballads and want to revive them by teaching our young adults 18 years and older, and form a group of 100 guitarists, including myself, to play Latin music for the enjoyment of our community," she said during a telephone interview.

Peter R. Aguilar, appointed unanimously to the Redlands City Council in April, 2006, to complete the term of a vacating councilmember, announced his candidacy for the mayor's office today. Aguilar, the youngest councilmember in the 120 year history of Redlands, previously served as chair of the Redlands Housing Commission.

Aguilar is currently the vice president and director of Governmental Relations for Arrowhead Credit Union. His role include working with federal, state, and local elected officials and their staff, familiarizing them with the priorities of Arrowhead Credit Union and its 150,000 members in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. He is responsible for planning, development, and implementation of an effective legislative advocacy program that promotes and encourages the advancement of credit unions.

In the fall of 2004, Arrowhead Credit Union loaned Aguilar to the San Bernardino County Taxpayers for Traffic Relief campaign ("Yes on Measure F"). He served as campaign manager and senior advisor to the successful measure that passed with over 80% of the countywide vote receiving 394,000 votes and raising more than $1.4 million in campaign contributions. The measure will generate over $6.2 billion toward improving the transportation system of San Bernardino County.

Prior to his current tenure with Arrowhead Credit Union, Aguilar, in June, 2001, was appointed by the Inland Empire's only Hispanic-owned English language newspaper
PAROLE ISSUE A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Letter to the Editor

To effectively address San Bernardino's parolee issue intelligent fact-finding is required, followed by collaborative problem solving. With federal judges poised to take receivership of California's grossly overcrowded and degraded prison system, we have a unique opportunity to turn the pending changes to our advantage and create a safer city.

Here are a few hard facts about our county, city and parolees:

1—We are the toughest! San Bernardino County has the highest per capita state prison incarceration rate of any county in California. Therefore, we have the highest per capita rate of returning parolees.

2—They all come home! 95% of those sent off to prison come home. State law requires that they be returned to the county from which they came. The law does not permit parole to specify where parolees will live within the county—the vast majority return to communities where their families live.

3—We have problems! The City of San Bernardino is home to 15% of the known gangs in the county and 28% of documented gang members. 24% of all juveniles arrested in the county and placed in Juvenile Hall are from our city. It should not surprise us then that 20% of the county's parolees are found in our city. Our police and courts arrest and send more of San Bernardino's residents to prison than other cities in the county. Our city has the county's highest number of residents in poverty and receiving welfare, the highest number of child abuse referrals, the highest number of drug exposed infants, and we have the oldest and "most affordable" housing in the county.

4—We are the county seat! The state criminal courts are located in San Bernardino. The central jail, county detention center and regional parole office are located here. Most of the county services needed by parolees are located here—drug and alcohol treatment, mental health services, literacy programs, and job-training programs.

Our police department does an excellent job of taking criminals off the streets, but the story doesn't end there.

After serving their prison terms, the state releases parolees and they returned to their initial residence. Because little, if any, rehabilitation takes place in our prisons, these returning parolees are poorly prepared to reenter society. Parolees are given $200. at the prison gate and a bus ride to the county from which they came.

Just how unprepared are they? They are unemployed (70-90%) and homeless (10-30%). They are ineligible for most housing and employment opportunities because of their criminal background, social abnormalities, addiction (85%), and literacy (more than half read below the 6th grade level). Their level of desperation fuels our level of vulnerability because they do reoffend. 70% will be returned to prison for parole violations.

The challenge is to create a state-local partnership to and implement reentry initiatives (for those parolees with ties to San Bernardino) that are supportive and secure, providing housing, drug treatment, education and employment training programs—away from our residential areas. To be effective, the supervision of parolees must be structured, intensive, and maintain firm accountability for program participation. The data shows that supportive housing, day reporting centers, education, work, and community service substantially reduce parolee recidivism and increase community safety.

The Mayor and police department remain on the cutting edge of public safety by partnering with, rather than alienating, other law enforcement agencies. They have collaborated with the Sheriff, CHP, FBI, DEA, ATF and State Parole. State Parole has proven to be a responsive partner, providing a fugitive recovery team and allowing San Bernardino to be the first city in the state to utilize GPS tracking devices to monitor violent parolees. The SBPD is the only department in the region devoting five full-time police officers working with State Parole to address the impact of parolees in the city. Their impact clearly improves the safety of our neighborhoods.

In addition, our police, State Parole, the District Attorney's Office, parole treatment and employment programs participate in a weekly orientation for new parolees that are considered by many experts to be the best in the state. While it gives officers early insight into who is returning to our community, it also improves options and coordinates services for those parolees who choose to succeed.

The Mayor's office has been successful in securing a state grant to help our city formulate a plan for returning parolees. Assisted by a broad panel of law enforcement experts and service providers we are working to design a model for supportive and secure housing, treatment, and employment training.

It's time to stop playing politics and reminiscing about the past. We must move toward a safer future by engaging in collaborative planning to help parolees reintegrate into the community. The good news is that the state is offering to team-up and give substantial financial assistance to cities willing to address this issue. There's nothing new about cities struggling to address parolees. What is new is that the state is trying to help.

We need to be on the team!

—Kurt Wilson is the Director of Community Safety and Violence Prevention in San Bernardino. He was recently appointed by the Governor to be the Chief of External Affairs for the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

ELVIRA ARRELIANO ARRESTED BY ICE

By Rosalio Munoz

Elvira Arrellano was arrested this afternoon just outside of La Placita Church in Los Angeles, and the Sanctuary Church movement mobilizes in a candlelight vigil in her support in front of the Los Angeles downtown Federal Building where she is being held, and followed by nationwide vigil.

The Bush administration is banking on a tough on immigrants stand as a top priority in its remaining agenda and as a divisive issue in next years elections, they fear. Elvira and others like her can recenter the immigrants' right movement as a strong political movement.

The Sanctuary movement is calling for vigil in cities where the movement is organized. Community groups will hold a march/demonstration in Los Angeles.

Elvira has put herself on the line for peoples' rights, it is right to stand up for her.

Elvira was in sanctuary in her church in Chicago defying a deportation order because she did not want herself or other undocumented parents to be separated from their children.

On her first anniversary in sanctuary August 15, she announced she would be going to Washington, D.C. on September 12 to push for legalizations measures for the 12 million undocumented workers here.

She came to Los Angeles August 18 to meet with others in sanctuary churches and to call for public support for legalizations measures in Congress.

FONATNA DEMOCRATIC CLUB

Fontana democratic Club meets every fourth Saturday of the month at the Big Apple Restaurant (on the corner of Locust & Arrow) at 9:00 a.m. Visitors are welcomed. For information call Jess Sandoval at (909) 829-4388 or (909) 953-0897

S.B. DEMOCRATIC LUNCHEON CLUB

San Bernardino democratic luncheon Club of San Bernardino meets at noon on Fridays at democratic headquarters, 136 carmel Mall (near the central glass elevator-lower level).

Questions regarding the democratic club call Nancy White at (909) 793-6229.

Visitors welcomed.

Following is a schedule of speakers:

August 17-TBA August 24-TBA

Congressman Joe Baca September 7 TBA

September 14 TBA

September 21 Norma Torres, Mayor, City of Pomona View www.sbdems.com for information.
CORDOBA CORPORATION SELECTED TO LAUNCH
SAN BERNARDINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

San Bernardino - Inland Valley Development Agency (IVDA) voted in July, 2007, to approve a contract award to Cordoba Corporation for the performance of design and contract administration services for roadway, parking, and airport gateway monuments at the San Bernardino International Airport (SBIA). Cordoba will also be the lead construction management services for these infrastructure improvements.

The IVDA is a regional joint powers authority dedicated to the reuse of the Norton Air Force Base for the economic benefit of the surrounding area.

Cordoba Corporation is a civil engineering and construction management firm specializing in transportation, schools, and water infrastructure. This project is critical to the surrounding area because it will provide the first impressions for the future commercial airport.

"The entryway and infrastructure circulation improvements will be developed in the context of creating an airport passenger experience that leaves a positive impression and sense of place, reflecting an image that stirs pride in the broader community served," according to Alex Estrada, Director of Redevelopment & Property Management at the San Bernardino International Airport Authority. The project's goal will be well-planned and appropriately designed roadway and parking facilities that enhance the image, aesthetics, function, and economic value of the airport and the surrounding community providing opportunity for additional growth and investment around the airport, he said.

The roadway improvements consist of approximately two miles of roadways providing access to the airport, and include widening and reconstruction. Those improvements will include drainage, traffic, utility adjustments or relocations, streetscape landscaping, signage and street lighting, sidewalks and ADA curb ramps as necessary.

The parking facility improvements will include two surface parking lots, totaling approximately 1,500 parking stalls and provision for future parking structures. Urban design will be a major factor in the design of the roadways, parking facility, and airport gateway monuments, as these elements will support a commercial airport.

The San Bernardino Airport project is the latest addition to Cordoba Corporation's growing presence in the Inland Empire. The engineering firm has offices in Los Angeles, Long Beach, Oakland and Orange County, and has critically reviewed the growth opportunities that the local region provides.

"The Inland Empire is a natural fit for us," says George L. Pla, President and CEO of the company, "Based on the infrastructure needs created by a rapidly expanding population. These new residents will need more schools for their kids, increased transit options, and reliable supplies of water."

Cordoba Corporation is currently involved in the construction of water tunnels underneath the San Bernardino Mountains for the Metropolitan Water District's Inland Feeder Project, a 44 mile long water conveyance system that connects the State Water Project to Diamond Valley Lake and the Colorado River Aqueduct, and is being built to improve water quality and reliability for all of Southern California.

The Corporation has also recently become a sponsor of the Inland Empire Chapter of Advancing Women in Transportation. When asked whether Cordoba sees a long term strategy in the region, Pla responded, "Definitely. It's not a question of if the Inland Empire will become another population center, but how large will this economic engine grow." He is optimistic about the future of the Inland Empire and Cordoba, saying that "as the region grows, we want to grow together."

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Now is the Time to Conserve Water

An important message from your regional and local water agencies who are working together to invest in the future.

- We live in a semi-arid region, which has experienced below average rainfall for the past two years.
- The region depends on imported water from the State Water Project to fill in the gap between local supply and demand.
- All of our local water resources are efficiently used, but our region is experiencing continual growth.
- The State Water Project is experiencing interruptions due to the Delta Smelt, a small native fish, and other environmental issues in the Sacramento Delta.
- We want to work together to conserve water.

Water Conservation Links:
- www.waterconservation.info
- www.wateruseitwisely.com
- www.h2ouse.org
- www.water-ed.org
- www.water.ca.gov
- www.bewaterwise.com

How You Can Help Save Water

1. Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants. Saves 750 to 1,500 gallons a month
2. Use a pool cover to cut down on evaporation. Saves 1,000 gallons a month
3. Water early in the morning. Saves 300 gallons each watering
4. Don't water the lawn on a windy day. Can waste up to 300 gallons in one watering
5. Don't water when it rains or on overcast days. Can save up to 300 gallons each time
6. Set lawn mower blades one notch higher. Saves 500 to 1,500 gallons each month

This message is brought to you as a public service by San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District in cooperation with:

Bear Valley Mutual Water Company
City of Colton
City of Loma Linda
City of Redlands
City of Rialto
City of San Bernardino

Crafton Water Company
East Valley Water District
Fontana Water Company
West Valley Water District
Yucaipa Valley Water District
SBCCD TRUSTEES APPOINT NEW PRESIDENT AT VALLEY COLLEGE

Dr. Debra Daniels, district vice president of academics and student affairs at Polk Community College in Winter Haven, FL, was appointed the 13th president of San Bernardino Valley College (SBVC) at the San Bernardino Community College District Board of Trustees meeting.

Dr. Daniels was one of four finalists who participated in public forums at SBVC last Wednesday. Her three-year contract begins September 10, 2007 at an annual salary of $148,248.

"I am excited and honored to serve as the next president of San Bernardino Valley College," said Daniels. "I would like to thank the Chancellor, Board, and college community for their confidence and support. I look forward to getting started and working together to fulfill the education needs of our students and our community."

Some of Daniels’ major accomplishments while serving at Polk Community College are:

- Reorganized student services into a "One-Stop" concept of services delivery for improved service to students. Resulted in reduced complaints and increased efficiency.
- Developed Honors Program to provide high-achieving students with a challenging learning environment. Resulted in greater enrollment and increased enthusiasm of faculty members.
- Established Educators Preparation Institute – a collaborative venture with county school district to provide a route of alternative certification for K-12 teachers. Resulted in increased numbers of certified teachers for the county schools.
- Designed and implemented faculty and staff development programs that include orientation of new full-time and adjunct faculty members.
- Expanded Corporate College, which provides just-in-time employee training for area businesses, from just under $900,000 revenue in 2003 to $1,430,000 in 2006 which is a 63% increase.
- Spearheaded capital projects-including the major remodel of the student services area, $28 million new building construction, and renovation of a historical building for use as a center.
- Procured over $3 million in state and federal grant monies for the institution and participated in raising another $1 million through foundation fundraising activities.

Prior to her higher administrative experience she served over sixteen years as program director of dental assisting and faculty member at Illinois Central College in Peoria, Illinois and three years as a faculty member at Delta College in Bay City, Michigan.

As a community college graduate, Daniels holds an associate of applied science degree in dental assisting from Delta College in Michigan, a bachelor’s of science degree in allied health teacher education from Ferris State University in Michigan, a master of education degree and a doctorate of education degree specializing in community college leadership from the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign.

The San Bernardino Community College District has an 80-year history of providing quality and affordable vocational, occupational and workforce training programs through San Bernardino Valley College, Crafton Hills College in Yucaipa, the Professional Development Center and KVCR-FM/TV. www.sbcccd.org

LATINO LEADERSHIP PAC INVITES THE PUBLIC TO HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

Latino Leadership PAC (LLP) is inviting the public to join in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month on September 28, 2007, at Siruti’s Restaurant, 1395 E. Washington Street, Colton, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Co-hosting the event are Hispanic elected officials and leading Hispanic attorneys in the Inland Empire.

Candidates for offices are invited to attend and network.

Keynote speaker is the State Latino Caucus Chair Assemblyman Joe Cota, D-23 Assembly District.

The Latino Leadership PAC membership includes a nucleus of elected officials, businesspersons, educators, and activist in the region. LLP invites persons interested in supporting elected officials and candidates running for elective offices. Becoming involved is an investment in the development of organizational empowerment and attainment of political cohesiveness at the local, region and state level.

This is the challenge for our community.

LLP invites sponsorship of “Viva La Raza” - $250, “Movimiento” - $150, and “Amigo” - $100.

To R.S.V.P please call at (909) 820-4736, Latino Leadership PAC, PO Box 676, San Bernardino, CA • ID # 1291269

Wednesday, August 22, 2007

MAJOR LATINO ORGANIZATIONS SPEAK OUT: THE "WAR" AGAINST KEN BURNS/PBS "THE WAR IS NOT OVER"

Why the Latino Community Can't Let This Matter Rest
Continued from page 1

"Ken Burns cannot choose to make a secret deal with only two of the many Latino groups that were involved in this issue and in discussion with him and PBS, and then claim that the matter is resolved," explains Marfa Garcia, co-chair of the New York Chapter of the National Hispanic Media Coalition and one of the founders of Defend the Honor, a Latino grassroots mobilization that first raised the alarm about Latino exclusion from this PBS documentary at the beginning of this year. "He must bring closure to this issue by paying the Latino leadership of this country the respect, respeto, of meeting with us to explain himself and his future relationship to the Latino community."

Some progress had been made on the issue over the past several months in that Burns has added interviews with two Mexican American veterans and one Native American to the 14 hour and 28 minute documentary, said Ivan Roman, executive director of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

In subsequent statements to the press, Burns has been dismissive of the arguments that the inclusion of Latinos is about historical accuracy rather than political correctness.

"It is unfortunate that Ken Burns continues to see this issue as one of politics and rhetoric that he must rise above," said Dr. Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez, the University of Texas journalist professor who co-chairs the Defend the Honor Campaign. "It has nothing to do with politics and everything to do with historical accuracy and inclusion."

Rosa Rosales, national president of LULAC, said that it was crucial for the Latino organizations to publicly challenge statements in the press by Burns and PBS that the issue had been resolved. "As Ken Burns travels across the country as part of the $10 million promotional effort by PBS, he still characterizes this as a terrible misunderstanding," Rosales said. "It’s no misunderstanding. We understand perfectly that he only added the new interviews under pressure and, right now, it looks like he’s not very proud of that new material."

Another sticking point are the discrepancies between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant proposal that provided federal funding for the film, and what he and PBS have said in recent months. For instance, Burns has said repeatedly in news interviews that in the more than 6 years of production, "no Latinos came forward" to be interviewed about their WWII experiences. But he apparently excluded Latinos from the beginning in the NEH grant proposal submitted in 2004, Burns and Florentine Films said that the film "will celebrate American diversity" and that it will be about the "diversity of wartime America . . . African-American, Japanese American and white."

That documentary will shape how Americans view WWII, and if short shrift is given to the Latino contributions, there will be a reinforcement of the widespread ignorance of the Latino contribution to the building of the U.S. "Ken Burns and PBS are playing recklessly with our history, both as Latinos and Americans," observes Gus Chavez, one of the co-chairs of the Defend the Honor. He concludes, "This is something every American should be upset about."

Publisher's note: Sixty seven national Hispanic advocacy organizations, educators, Hispanic veterans groups, elected officials, national Hispanic newspaper and journalist organizations have been signatories to the protest regarding the lack of recognition of Hispanic veterans by Ken Burns and PBS in the documentary, World War II.
WHY HIGH-ACHIEVING HISPANIC STUDENTS GO TO HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS

SHELDS LIGHT ON THEIR CHOICE OF COLLEGES

By ELYSE ASHBURN
mailto:elyse.ashburn@chronicle.com

High-achieving Hispanic students often focus on location, cost, and campus atmosphere, not prestige, in selecting their colleges, according to a recent report. "The level of pragmatism these college students had in making decisions was impressive," said Deborah A. Santiago, the report's author and vice president for policy and research at Excelencia in Education, a nonprofit policy group.

The report, <http://www.edexcelencia.org/pdf/ChoosingHSIsCloserLookFINAL.pdf> "Choosing Hispanic-Serving Institutions: A Closer Look at Latino Students' College Choices," is based on interviews with about 100 students and is not nationally representative. But it provides a window on why Hispanic undergraduates are heavily influenced by the sticker price and often focus on location, cost, and academic reputation and were more likely to focus on financial-aid packages than on the sticker price. Students at mainstream universities also were more willing to take on debt.

However, students said they were not attracted by the Hispanic-serving designation, and few even knew that the distinction existed. An institution is classified as Hispanic-serving, under federal guidelines, if at least 25 percent of its students are Hispanic and 50 percent of those are from low-income families. The students interviewed for the report mostly received A's and B's in high school, and now attend either Hispanic-serving or mainstream universities.

Many are the first in their families to go to college.

In contrast, Hispanic students at mainstream institutions were swayed by academic reputation and were more likely to focus on financial-aid packages than on the sticker price. Students at mainstream universities also were more willing to take on debt.

While many Hispanic-serving institutions are excellent colleges, Ms. Santiago said, higher-education officials must do a better job of making sure Hispanic students consider the full range of options available to them. In particular, prestigious institutions interested in attracting top Hispanic students need to better explain financial-aid policies and improve outreach.

S.B. CITY CLERK

RACHEL CLARK RUNS FOR RE-ELECTION

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record of service to the City of San Bernardino, managing a staff of 16 employees. The office, according to Clark, has conducted seven stand-alone elections, an updated software system that has led to identifying unlicensed business and expedited registration of new businesses and renewals as well. She is designated as a Certified Municipal Clerk.

In 1999, Clark established the Passport Acceptance Facility, an innovative service to city residents traveling abroad, processing over 23,000 passport applicants, to date. PAF is anticipated to generate a revenue stream of $100,000 to the general fund.

Clark is active in her community: Mexicali-Villahermosa Sister Cities, San Bernardino Lighthouse for the Blind, League of Women Voters, Southern California City Clerks Association, San Bernardino Sunset Rotary Club (first woman president), and the Western Regional Little League Headquarters.

Rachel Clark and her husband, Ken, live in San Bernardino.

CELITA GOMEZ SEeks RENAISSANCE

OF LATIN BALLADS

Continued from page 1

years. She envisions reaching out to the very young who have never heard this distinctive music that is known only to the older generation. "Our young generation is losing an important part of our culture and my goal is for them to learn, appreciate and have pride of our beautiful Latin music," she said.

Gomez said that our young people are facing daily difficult problems and there is a need to include positive cultural programs in their lives. "This large group would be a cultural attraction in San Bernardino and other places," she said. The group would be called, "Strings in the Wind."

Gomez realized help was needed to start the music group and facilities for rehearsals. She approached the San Bernardino Parks and Recreation Department. A senior recreation supervisor, Glenda Martin-Robinson, became interested in the idea and indicated this type of program would be an incentive to attract young people into the recreation facilities, according to Gomez.

Rehearsals are scheduled at the Hernandez Community Center, multipurpose room, 222 No. Lugo Street, San Bernardino, from September 5 through October 8, Wednesdays 6 to 8 and Saturdays 10 to noon. For information call at (909) 384-5420. Guitarists must own and able to play the guitar.

"My dream is to become very successful with our young musical group and one day be invited to the White House." Celita Gomez said.
WASHINGTON, D.C. - A new national poll finds voters overwhelmingly support a 75-cent per pack federal cigarette tax increase to provide health care coverage to uninsured children.

Two-thirds (67 percent) favor such an increase, while only 28 percent oppose it. This support is evident among virtually every political and demographic subgroup of voters across the country, with large majorities of Republicans, Democrats and Independents, men and women, urban and rural voters supporting the cigarette tax to fund children's health care.

The 75-cent increase garners virtually the same level of support as a 30-cent increase (70 percent), but the larger increase would result in significantly larger public health benefits. Research shows a clear public health benefit from tobacco taxes. A 75-cent tax increase will prevent 2.3 million kids from ever starting to smoke, result in 1.4 million adults quitting, prevent 1 million smoking-caused deaths, and produce $34 billion in long-term health care savings.

"The cigarette tax is a proven strategy to protect thousands of kids from tobacco addiction," said William V. Corr, Executive Director of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "For Representative Bono and the entire California delegation, this is one of the most effective ways to prevent new smokers every day. In California, where 15.4 percent of high school students smoke and tobacco use kills 37,800 residents annually, the state pays $9.1 billion in health care bills a year.

The national survey of 1,000 registered voters was conducted by the Mellman Group May 29- June 3, 2007 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. Detailed poll results can be found at: http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/index.php?Category=D-11

Nicole Dueffert Communications Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids 1400 J St., Suite 1200 Washington, D.C. 20005 202-296-5469 202-296-5472 (f)
www.tobaccofreekids.org ndueffert@tobaccofreekids.org

PETER R. AGUILAR-REDLANDS CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE

Governor Gray Davis as deputy director and later interim director for the Inland Empire Regional Office.

As interim director for the Inland Empire Office of the Governor, he represented the governor in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and worked closely with the Governor's Cabinet and senior staff to ensure the voice of the Inland Empire was heard throughout the state. With over 3.7 million residents in the area, the Inland Empire Regional Office coordinates and maintains relationships with constituents, state legislators, community groups, and cities. Aguilar earned B.S. Degrees in Government and Business Administration from the University of Redlands in May of 2001. He is currently on the board of directors for the East Valley YMCA, serves as an advisory board member to the Redlands Community Hospital, and served the San Bernardino Affiliate of Habitat for Humanity as co-president of the board of directors.

Pete Aguilar currently resides in Redlands with his wife Alisha and son Palmer.
Largely obscured by the rancorous debate surrounding U.S. immigration policy is the emergence of a trend that should be a cause of concern to all Latino communities: the explosion of the number of Latinos in prison.

There were 55,000 Latinos doing prison time in the United States in 1985. That figure has increased by more than 400 percent in 20 years, a substantially steeper rate of increase than for whites or blacks.

Currently, there are more than 450,000 Latinos in U.S. prisons or jails. With one-in-six Latino males born today expected to spend some time in prison during their lives, the future portends devastating consequences for Latino communities.

This incarceration data stands in stark contrast to a growing body of research suggesting that Latinos, who now make up more than one of every five persons held behind bars, are less likely than other groups to commit crime and that the immigration of the 1990s may have been partially responsible for the historic declines in crime.

Causes for rising Latino incarceration are complex, but an important explanatory factor is the "war on drugs." Despite using drugs at a rate proportionate to their share in the general population, Latinos are twice as likely as whites to be sentenced to a state prison on a drug charge. Nearly one in four Latinos sitting in prison has been convicted of a drug offense.

Differential patterns in law enforcement — where the police choose to pursue the war on drugs — play a greater role in determining who is arrested and sentenced to prison than general trends in drug use.

Add to that the collateral consequences from a felony conviction. These can include barriers to employment, denial of certain licenses, lack of access to education and housing aid, loss of voting rights, and, in some cases, deportation. Such "invisible punishments" create substantial obstacles to a successful re-entry to the community and increase the likelihood of recidivism.

Despite this spate of distressing news, there are efforts that can be undertaken to stem the tide of disproportionate Latino incarceration.

First, lawmakers should heed the growing chorus of public officials, including high-ranking criminal justice practitioners, and revisit the wisdom of our current drug control strategy. This "lock 'em up" approach has resulted in a half-million people behind bars.

It takes a toll on communities of color while doing little to address the underlying causes of drug abuse. Investing in proven prevention and treatment strategies is far more productive than warehousing people. It's a much more effective tool to enhance public safety.

Secondly, state legislatures should expand upon the reforms implemented in 22 states since 2004 and reconsider such punitive sentencing provisions as mandatory minimums that expose individuals to punishments grossly disproportionate to the conduct for which they have been charged.

Restoring discretion to sentencing judges would permit full consideration of the circumstances of the offense. This could prevent the reoccurrence of cases like that of first-time offender Weldon Angelos, who, because of inflexible sentencing enhancements, was sentenced to prison for 55 years. His offense? Three marijuana sales while possessing a weapon he never used.

The criminal justice system does not exist in a vacuum. Crime and its associated costs generally reflect a failure to provide equal access to resources such as education, employment, housing and health care. Inequalities in the criminal justice system extend far beyond policing, courts and corrections.

True reform can be achieved only when we seek to bring a broad range of community stakeholders to the table, and invest not merely in police and prisons but in neighborhoods and people.

King is a policy analyst with The Sentencing Project. E-mail him at rking@sentencingproject.org. Arboleda is associate director, criminal justice policy, with the National Council of La Raza. E-mail her at aarboleda@nclr.org.

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