

# COLORADO LATINOS: PRIORITIES 2012

A statewide survey of issues facing Latinos in Colorado



A collaboration between Colorado Latino Leadership, Research & Advocacy Organization (CLLARO) and Mi Casa Resource Center



*Colorado's premier leadership, development, public policy, and research center dedicated to strengthening Colorado's Latino community*



*Advancing economic success and helping Latino families achieve lasting economic stability*

# **COLORADO LATINOS: PRIORITIES 2012**

## **A Statewide Survey on National Issues**

### **October 1, 2012**

Since the last presidential election the 2010 U.S. Census revealed that over the previous decade, Latinos were the fastest-growing population in Colorado and across the U.S. Colorado's Latino population grew 41% between 2000 and 2010, compared to 17% population growth overall in the state. Colorado is now one of eight states with one million or more Latino residents, along with Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York and Texas.<sup>1</sup> Latinos are also Colorado's largest minority population.<sup>2</sup>

Colorado Latinos play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape for public policy discourse and the outcome of the upcoming presidential election. This survey was created to give voice to the issues that Colorado Latinos care most about. At a time when Colorado is front and center on the national stage it is important to hear from Coloradans about the issues that affect them most and their top policy priorities within each issue area.

The survey results might surprise some people. While the slow economy has disproportionately affected Latinos, jobs and the economy was not the number one issue of concern. Rather, education - specifically, access to high-quality pre-K-12 education for all - was the most important issue identified by survey respondents. Within the area of jobs and the economy, respondents prioritized access to training and education for the unemployed and support for small business owners to help them create jobs. Healthcare was the third most important issue identified, and most respondents favored either keeping or reforming the Affordable Care Act. Many assume immigration is a top issue for Latinos, and while it is important, immigration ranked fourth in survey results. Specifically, respondents want a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and passage of the DREAM Act. On social issues, respondents were overwhelmingly in favor of abortion rights as well as gay marriage or civil unions. Finally, it is interesting to note that social support services like Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families ranked ninth out of ten issue areas.

Based on this survey, it is clear that Colorado's Latinos want what most Americans want: the opportunity to get a good education, find and retain work, and access quality healthcare. They also want the presidential candidates to be specific about how their policies will move forward Latinos' priorities regarding the economy, immigration and education. Latinos also indicated that they are tired of political gridlock. They want a firm commitment from the winner of the election that he will follow through on promises to improve the situation for Latinos.



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<sup>1</sup>2010 US Census data, State Characteristics: Population by Race and Hispanic Origin, <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/state/asrh/2011/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> 2010 US Census data, American FactFinder: United States DP-1, <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

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## METHODOLOGY

A survey was distributed in both English and Spanish utilizing a two-pronged approach. First, the survey was distributed through the networks and constituents of two large community-based organizations, the Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy and Research Organization (CLLARO) and Mi Casa Resource Center (Mi Casa). The process including dissemination of the survey through organizational websites, social media outlets, e-newsletter distribution and individual outreach. Secondly, the survey was linked to key media partners including: Univision Denver, ABC Channel7 News and its partner, Azteca Colorado . The survey was open from Wednesday, September 5, 2012, to Friday, September 21, 2012. Survey respondents self-identified their demographic profile including race, domicile, gender, age, and household income. This survey was not designed as a scientific model but rather as an opportunity to gain a pulse on the priority issues for Latinos across the state.

“Latino” in this survey includes anyone who identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

## OVERVIEW

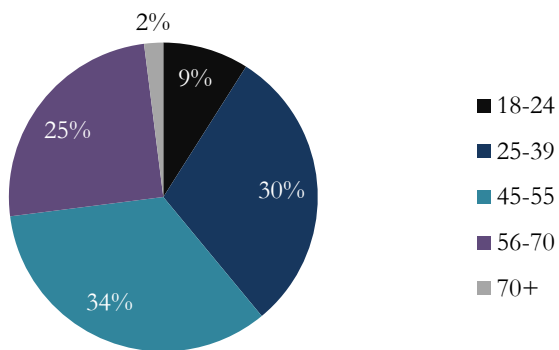
A total of 610 people responded to the survey. Of those, 582 were Latino, lived in Colorado and completed the survey. The overwhelming majority of respondents (91%) were registered voters and 82% voted in the 2008 presidential election.

### REGISTERED TO VOTE/VOTED IN LAST ELECTION

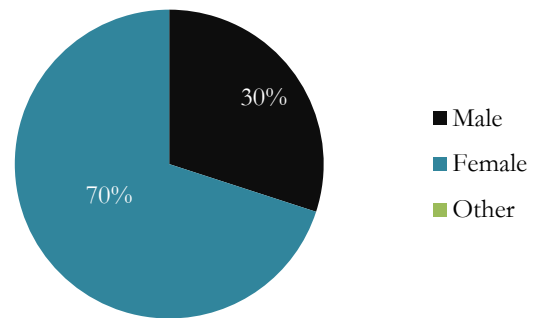
	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Spanish</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Total Latino respondents in CO</b>	582	100%	538	92%	44	8%
<b>Latino respondents in CO, registered to vote</b>	527	91%	505	87%	22	4%
<b>Latino respondents in CO, voted in 2008 election</b>	480	82%	462	79%	18	3%

Of the total number of respondents, the majority were women (70%) and most were third generation American or more (51%). Of the respondents, 71% were Democrats, 5% were Republicans, and 21% were either Independents or Unaffiliated. The following graphs provide a visual breakdown of Latino respondents from Colorado:

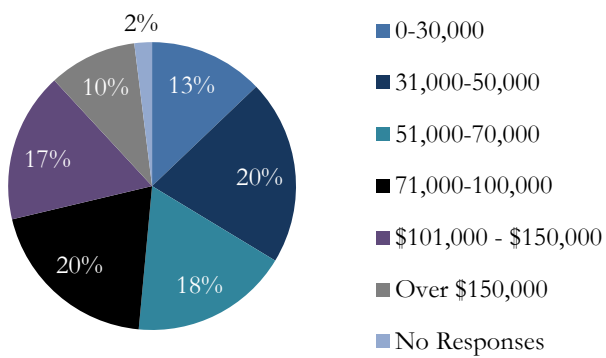
RESPONDENTS BY AGE



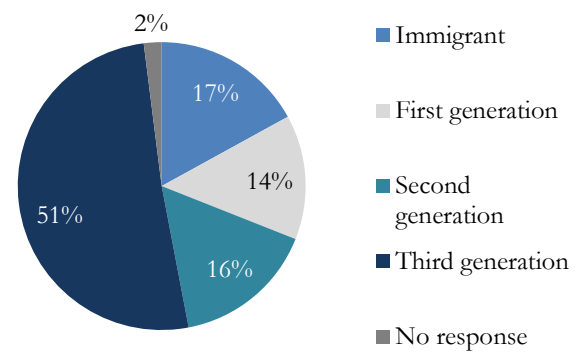
RESPONDENTS BY GENDER



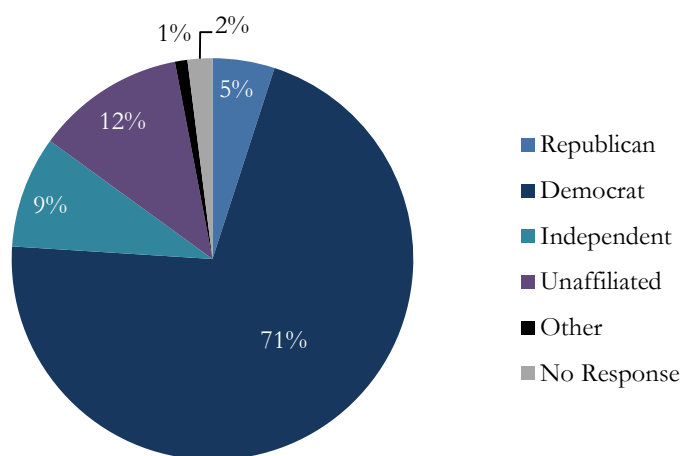
RESPONDENTS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME



RESPONDENTS BY GENERATION



RESPONDENTS BY POLITICAL AFFILIATION



## GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENTS

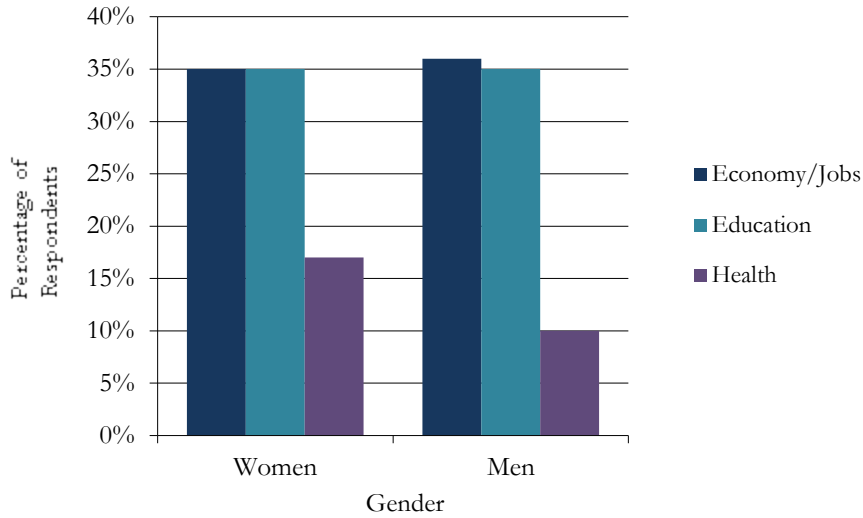
City	Total Respondents
Alamosa	6
Arvada	10
Aurora	24
Bennet	2
Boulder	10
Brighton	19
Canon City	1
Castle Pines	2
Castle Rock	2
Centennial	4
Center	2
Colorado Springs	6
Commerce City	11
Denver	293
Dupont	1
Englewood	8
Erie	1
Evans	1
Frederick	7
Ft. Collins	1
Ft. Lupton	1
Glendale	3
Greeley	10
Greenwood Village	2
Henderson	1
Highlands Ranch	5
Johnstown	1
Lafayette	6
Lakewood	31
Lamar	1
Littleton	8
Longmont	6
Louisville	7
Loveland	1
Manassa	1
Morrison	2
Northglenn	12
Parker	5
Platteville	1
Pueblo	14
San Luis	1
Sheridan	2
Thornton	20
Westminster	26
Windsor	1

## POLICY ISSUE PRIORITIES

Across all categories, the top three issues identified were education, jobs and the economy and healthcare. Immigration and social issues such as same-sex unions and a woman's right to choose were fourth and fifth, ranking higher than issues such as housing, energy and the environment, social support programs (Social Security, TANF/WIC) and national security and defense concerns.

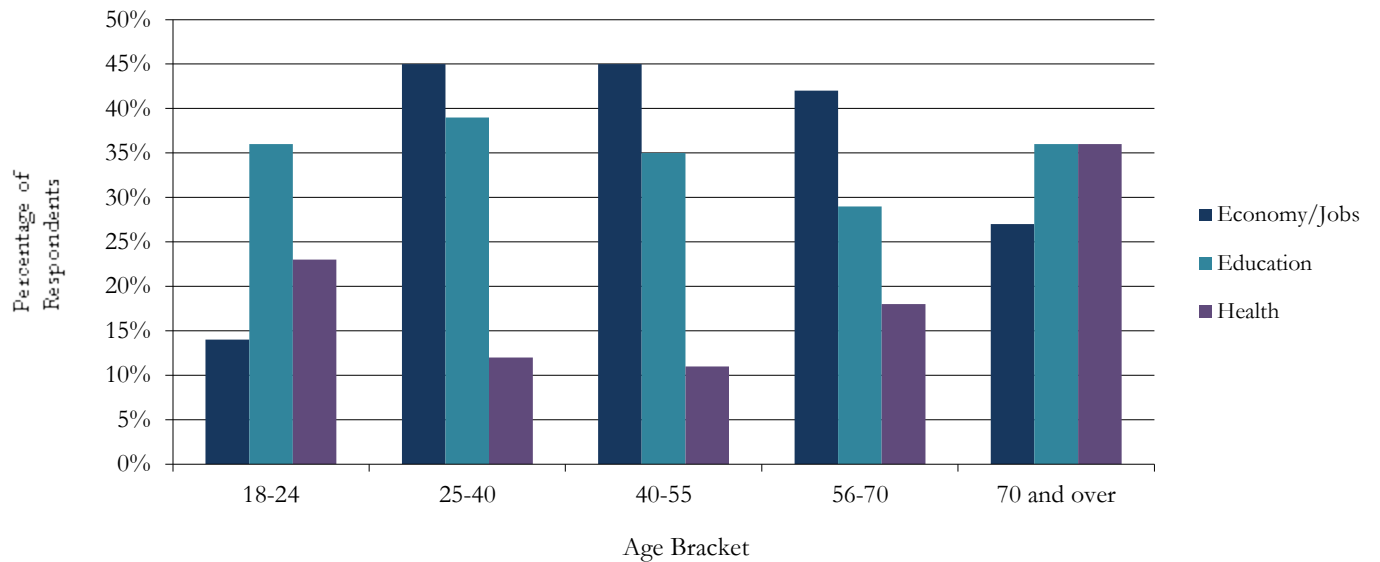
OVERALL RANKING OF POLICY ISSUE PRIORITIES
1. Education
2. Jobs and the Economy
3. Healthcare
4. Immigration
5. Social Issues
6. Housing
7. Other
8. Energy & Environment
9. Social Support
10. Security & National Defense

## ISSUES IDENTIFIED AS TOP PRIORITY BY GENDER



In the gender breakdown, outside of these three policy issues, there was no other policy issue that received double digit percentages. The next closest priority issue for both genders was immigration (male – 8%, female - 4%).

## ISSUES IDENTIFIED AS TOP PRIORITY BY AGE

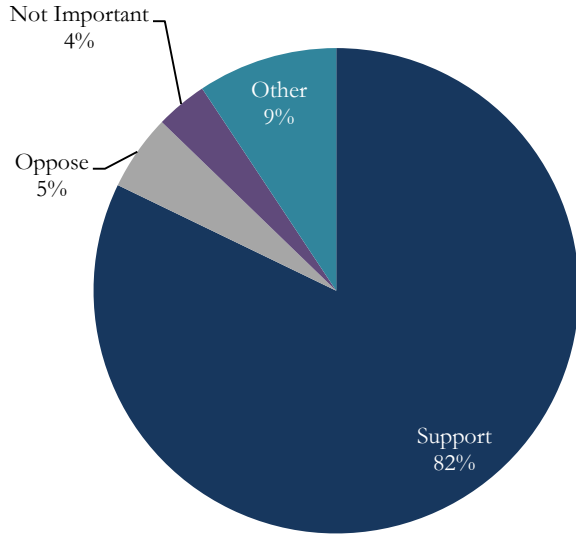


Across the age distribution, immigration was identified as the fourth priority area for the age groups 18-24 at 11% and 25-40 at 11%. The age group 40 -55 identified the fourth priority area as “Social Issues” at 3%; the 56-70 age group identified “Social Support Programs” at 3% and 70+ did not have a fourth priority issue area with all other issues identified at 0%.

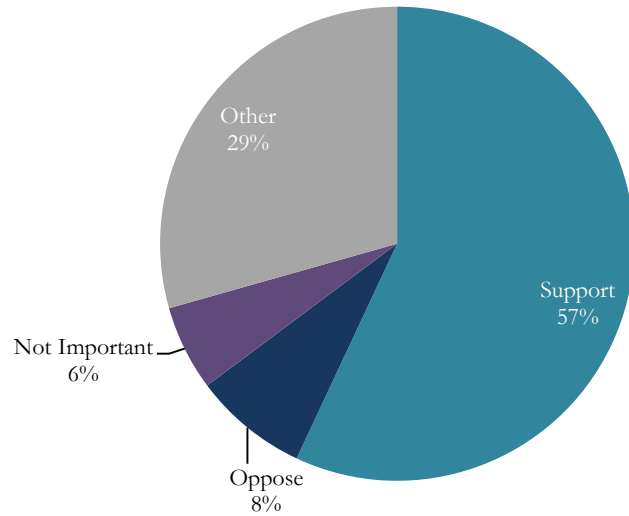
## SOCIAL ISSUES

### WOMEN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

English-Speaking Respondents

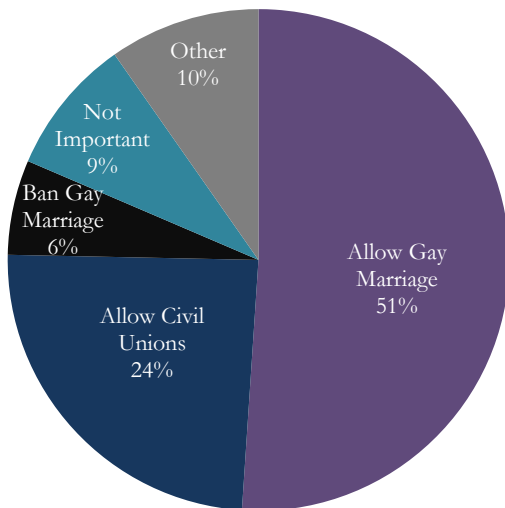


Spanish-Speaking Respondents

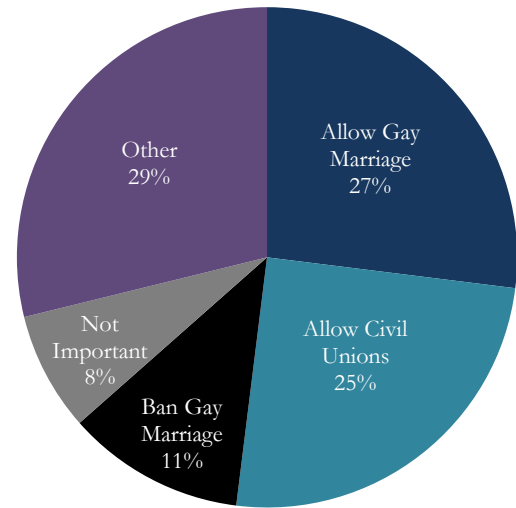


### POSITION ON GAY MARRIAGE

English-Speaking Respondents



Spanish-Speaking Respondents





## ANALYSIS OF TOP PRIORITIES

For the most part, respondents to the survey agreed on top priorities within each issue area with only slight differences based on gender, age and generation American. As mentioned above, education, jobs and the economy and health were top concerns followed by immigration and social issues. Within those categories, these were the top priorities:

Category	Top Priority
Education	Universal access to high quality pre-K - 12 education
Jobs & the Economy	Providing more training and assistance to the unemployed
Health	Preserving the Affordable Healthcare Act
Immigration	Creating pathways to citizenship
Social Issues	Support for the right for a woman to choose Support for gay marriage

### Education

Across all categories (age, gender, and generation American), education was the number one priority issue. The priority issue for respondents in **English** was universal access to high-quality pre-K-12 education (57.8%). Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** had two top priority areas: 1) universal access to high-quality pre-K-12 education (33.3%), and 2) ensuring funding for low-interest student loans and Pell grants for college (27.4%).

### Jobs and the Economy

Jobs and the economy ranked second among all respondents in every category. Within this area, there were two priority issues for respondents in **English**: 1) providing more training and assistance to the unemployed (31.8%) and 2) increasing assistance (e.g., loans) to small business owners so they can create more jobs (28.3%). Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** also identified those same policy issues equally as top priorities at 23.5%.

### Health

Healthcare was the third most important category for Latinos living in Colorado. Within the area of Health the priority issue for respondents in **English** was preserving the Affordable Healthcare Act at 64.9%. Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** also shared the same top priority area but at a lower rate of 48.8%. The second choice among all categories was to reform the Affordable Healthcare Act.

### Immigration

Within the area of Immigration there were two priority issues for respondents in **English**: creating a pathway to citizenships (40.5%) and passing the DREAM Act (33.9%). Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** also identified creating a pathway to citizenship as a top priority at 35.2%. These were the same priorities across age, gender and generation American.

### Energy and the Environment

Within the area of Energy and the Environment the priority issue for respondents in **English** was funding to increase renewable energy use (e.g., solar and wind) at 57.5%. Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** also shared the same top priority area at 39.2%. Renewable energy was the top priority across age, gender and generation American categories.

### Housing

Within the area of Housing there were two priority issues for respondents in **English**: 1) access to home loans (37.6%) and 2) avoiding foreclosure (29.8%). Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** also identified access to home loans as the top priority (40.2%). For younger respondents (18-24), affordable rent was the number one priority at 38%.

### Security and National Defense

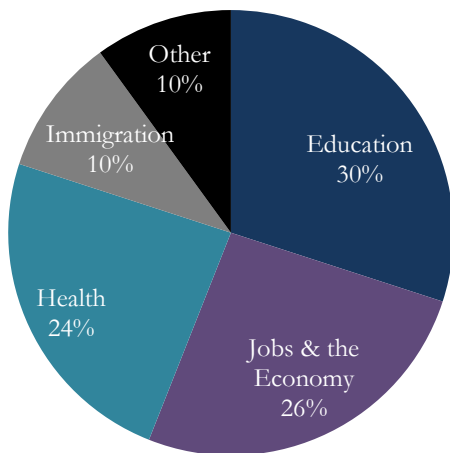
Within the area of Security and National Defense respondents in **English** overwhelmingly identified one top priority: caring for service members and their families (49.1%). Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** had two top priority areas: caring for service members and their families (25.4%) and readiness and training for our service members (17.6%). These priorities held true across age, gender and generations. However, younger respondents (18-24) tended to not feel this issue area was important to them (26%).

### Social Support

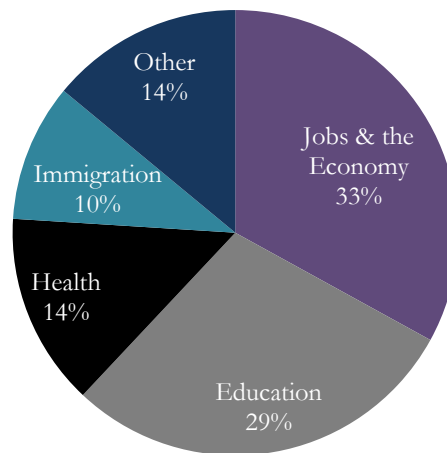
Within the area of Social Support the two priority issues for respondents in **English** were funding for Social Security (28.0%) and Medicare (22.5%). Respondents taking the survey in **Spanish** identified Funding for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) as most important at 21.5%. Younger respondents believed that Social Security was of utmost concern (34%) followed by TANF and WIC (29%). Older adults (56-70) indicated that Medicare and Social Security were equally at the top of their list (27%).

## ANALYSIS BY POLITICAL AFFILIATION

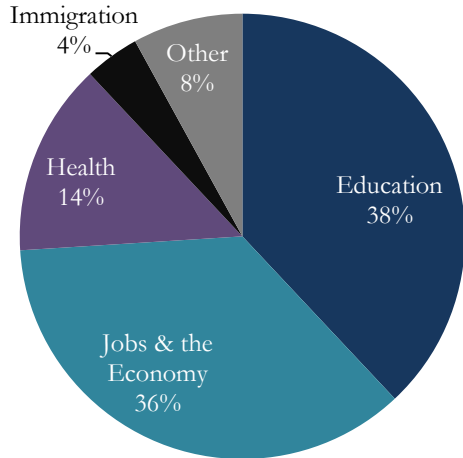
TOP PRIORITIES OF INDEPENDENT RESPONDENTS



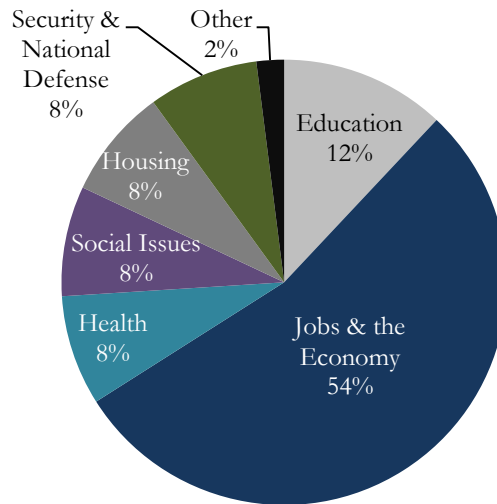
TOP PRIORITIES OF UNAFFILIATED RESPONDENTS



## TOP PRIORITIES OF DEMOCRATIC RESPONDENTS



## TOP PRIORITIES OF REPUBLICAN RESPONDENTS



Among independent and unaffiliated voters in the survey, priority issues were similar to the issues prized by registered Democrats and Republicans. It is interesting to note that Jobs and the Economy and Education were the top two issue areas for all respondents to the survey, regardless of party affiliation or independent or unaffiliated voter status. Under the two top issue areas of Education and Jobs and the Economy, respondents – regardless of party affiliation, independent or unaffiliated status – had similar feelings about priority strategies.

### Top Three Issue Areas and Primary Concerns Across Party Affiliations

Within Education, universal access to high-quality pre-K-12 education was the top priority for independents (49%), unaffiliated voters (50%), Democrats (63%), and Republicans (43%).

Jobs and the Economy, with the exception of Democratic voters who identified additional training and support for the unemployed as the top priority (35%), the most supported strategy was increasing assistance (e.g., loans) to small business owners so they can create more jobs. Forty-one percent of independents prioritized this strategy, as did 29% of unaffiliated voters, 32% of Republican voters, and 28% of Democratic voters.

Under the issue area of Health, which was identified as the third top priority by independents (24%), the unaffiliated (14%), Democrats (14%), and Republicans\*(8%), independent (59%) and unaffiliated voters (52%), along with Democrats (74%), strongly support preserving the Affordable Care Act. Forty-six percent of Republicans, on the other hand, support reforming the Affordable Care Act; 29% would like to repeal it, and 18% of Republican respondents would like to preserve the healthcare reform legislation. Among independent (31%) and unaffiliated voters (23%) there is also significant support for reforming the Affordable Care Act. Among Democrats, just 17% prioritize the reform of the healthcare reform legislation.

\*Please note that Health tied for third most important issue among Republicans along with Social Issues, Security and National Defense and Housing.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

The survey provided respondents the opportunity to submit one open-ended question to the presidential candidates; 308 respondents submitted a question to the candidates. Seventy-five of those questions were related to the **economy**, which was the highest total per category.

**Immigration reform** was second with 46 questions. The third and fourth highest categories were related to the **gridlock** in politics (45 respondents) and **accountability** for promises made during a campaign (33 respondents). Interestingly, while **education** was the number one concern among all survey respondents, it came in fifth in terms of number of questions (26 respondents). Respondents consistently asked candidates to provide specific examples of their policy agenda. A sampling of the questions is provided below (note that punctuation provided by the respondent was retained—including emphasized words—but spelling errors were corrected):

Category	Question
<b>ECONOMY</b>	How are we going to ensure Latinos don't fall further behind economically and get the education and training to make them strong contributors to the American economy?
	What tools can you provide to help the middle class succeed? How can you ease the burdens of the middle class? The middle class is the back bone of this country!
	How will you work to ensure that rural communities are not only able to survive and thrive? By rural, I am referring to communities of less than 15,000 (typically 500-4000).
	When a candidate states that "they" will create more jobs...explain exactly what that plan is. Too many generalities on both sides. Need specifics.
	Given the recession in Europe and decrease growth in Asia, what are the specifics of your plan that will help generate jobs in the US?
	What is your specific plan to boost the economy? Be SPECIFIC.
	How will you begin to reduce our national debt without causing damage to our priority services, infrastructure up-grades and key safety net programs for the most disenfranchised members of society?
<b>IMMIGRATION REFORM</b>	If you agree with the pathway for citizenship, when during your administration would you push for this issue to become a reality?
	What is your specific plan (not rhetoric) for immigration reform?
	Do you agree with the law that the judge in Arizona passed where any police officer can stop someone just by the way they look and ask them for their legal status?
<b>GRIDLOCK</b>	How do you plan to end the gridlock in Congress which is hampering any efforts toward economic recovery and social legislation?
	Do you think it's possible to change the current polarization of politics and pursue bipartisan policies to achieve results that will benefit the majority? Are you willing to govern to this end, even if at a cost to your political career?
	What will it take to put aside your party politics to help your citizens

	become productive again? It's painful to see the U.S.A. falling farther and farther behind other countries in all major fronts such as Health Care for all, K-12 Education, lack of access to higher education, and the erosion of the middle class.
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	Being that the Latino vote can sway an election, what will your administration do to offer equity AND opportunity and stop the disenfranchisement of Latinos?
	Provide concrete examples of your vision for us being "better off" during the next four years.
	What is your firm commitment to Latino voters if they support your election?
<b>EDUCATION</b>	What measures do you propose to take to ensure that all children in the United States have access to a top quality education and to decrease disparities in High School graduation rates?
	How can single parent families afford to send their children to college? We do not want a handout, just a clear path to provide our children with a good education.
	If Latinos will be the majority in the coming years, how will you increase the education of this population?

## APPENDIX: Colorado Latinos: Priorities in 2012 (Original Survey)

### Demographic Information

1. Are you Latino/Hispanic?

- Yes
- No

2. Do you live in Colorado?

- Yes
- No

3. What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-39
- 40-55
- 56-70
- Over 70

4. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

5. Annual household income (include all members contributing to income)

- 0 - \$30,000
- \$31,000 - \$50,000
- \$51,000 - \$70,000
- \$71,000 - \$100,000
- \$101,000 - \$150,000
- Over \$150,000

6. How many people live in your household: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is your zip code? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Are you a registered voter?

- Yes
- No

9. What generation American are you?

- Immigrant (born outside of the United States)

- First generation (born in the United States, parents from outside the United States)
- Second generation (one or more parents were U.S. citizens)
- Third generation or more (parents and grandparents were U.S. citizens)

10. Do you identify yourself as (choose one):

- Republican
- Democrat
- Independent
- Unaffiliated
- Other

Did you vote in the last presidential election in 2008?

- Yes
- No

Rank the following issue areas in order of importance (1=most important)

- Education
- Energy and the Environment
- Health
- Housing
- Immigration
- Jobs and the Economy
- Security and National Defense
- Social Support Programs
- Social Issues, (e.g., abortion rights and same-sex marriage)
- Other:

In the area of Education, what is your top priority? (Choose one)

- Universal access to high quality Pre-K – 12 education
- Ensuring teacher accountability
- Funding voucher programs for private schools
- Ensuring funding for low-interest student loans and Pell grants for college
- This issue isn't important to me
- Other:

In the area of Energy and the Environment, what is your top priority:

- Funding to increase renewable energy use (solar and wind)
- Increasing oil, coal and natural gas production
- Policies that decrease gas emissions
- Policies and practices that encourage urban gardening and sustainable living
- These programs are not important to me
- Other:

In the area of Health, what is your top priority? (Choose one)

- Preserving the Affordable Healthcare Act
- Reforming the Affordable Healthcare Act
- Eliminating the Affordable Healthcare Act
- This issue isn't important to me
- Other:

In the area of Housing, what is your top priority? (Choose one)

- Access to home loans
- Avoiding foreclosure
- Affordable rent
  
- This issue isn't important to me
- Other:

In the area of Immigration, what is your top priority? (Choose one)

- Increasing border security
- Creating pathways to citizenship
- Reforming work visa program
- Passing the DREAM Act
- This issue isn't important to me
- Other:

In the area of Jobs and the Economy, what is your top priority? (Choose one)

- Extending unemployment coverage
- Providing more training and assistance to the unemployed
- Increasing assistance (e.g., loans) to small business owners so they can create more jobs
- Providing tax breaks to large corporations so they can create more jobs
- Providing tax breaks to tax payers so they have more money to spend
- This issue isn't important to me
- Other:

In the area of Security and National Defense, what is your top priority? (Choose one)

- Funding for the global war on terrorism
- Caring for service members and their families
- Readiness and training for our service members
- Research and production of weapons
- These programs are not important to me
- Other:

In the area of Social Support programs, what is your top priority? (Choose one)

- Funding for Medicare
- Funding for Medicaid



- Funding for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC)
- Funding for Food Stamps
- Funding for Social Security
- These programs are not important to me
- Other:

What is your position on a woman's right to choose regarding abortion?

- I support the right to choose
- I oppose the right to choose
- This issue is not important to me
- Other:

What is your position on Same-Sex Unions?

- Ban gay marriage
- Allow civil unions
- Allow gay marriage
- This issue is not important to me
- Other:

If there was one question you could ask the presidential candidates, what would it be?