



Joe Enríquez Henry  
State Director

## Latino leaders share agenda with Senate Democrats, register as lobbyists

Michael Reyes  
Deputy State Director

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G.G. Sierra  
Immediate Past State  
Director

DES MOINES – The Iowa League of United Latin American Citizens along with other representatives of the Latino community met with Iowa Senate Democrats to discuss concerns about issues that ranged from issuance of driver’s licenses to lack of health care for Latinos.

Kirstin Shaw  
State Secretary

“This was a great opportunity for us to share with some of our state legislators the concerns we have as a community and what we need from state government,” said Joe Enriquez Henry, state director of Iowa LULAC. “We’re the community that’s growing; we’re the community that’s going to keep Iowa moving forward.”

Toni Robertson  
State Treasurer

Melissa Walker  
State Director  
for Publicity

Enriquez Henry, along with several other members of LULAC, representatives of the Latino business and medical community, and Sandra Sanchez of the American Friends Service Committee met on Wednesday with Senate Majority Leader Michael Gronstal, and Sens. Jack Hatch, Janet Petersen, Matt McCoy, Joe Bolkcom, Steven Soddors and William Dotzler Jr.

Mary Campos  
Deputy State Director  
for the Elderly

Enriquez Henry said LULAC and others wanted to make sure Iowa legislators realize the difficulties that face the Latino community, especially in regards to high levels of poverty and lack of health care.

Teresa Garcia  
Deputy State Director  
for Women’s Activities

The Latino population in Iowa increased almost 84 percent from the 2000 U.S. Census to more than 158,000 residents, or 5 percent of Iowa’s 3 million residents, according to the State Data Center of Iowa.

Antonio Cedillo  
Deputy State Director  
for Youth Activities

At that same time, 26.6 percent of the Iowa Latino population has no health insurance. The rate for all Iowans is 9.3 percent. And the poverty rate for the Latino community is 27 percent, while it’s 12.6 percent for all Iowans, according to the data center.

“With the rapidly growing rate of the Latino population, LULAC and other advocacy groups want to ensure our state elected officials realize the necessary services our community needs and will continue to need in the future,” Enriquez Henry said.

The Latino group also spoke to senators about the importance of assisting Latino small business owners; providing additional support to students who are learning English; expanding scholarship opportunities for Latino students to pursue postsecondary education; broadening the categories of Iowa immigrants who are eligible for driver’s licenses; and supplementing the healthcare system in order to give Latinos access to low-cost medications, translators, health insurance and specialty providers.

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In addition, two officers of LULAC Council 307 will register as lobbyists today in order to more closely track issues at the Statehouse that affect Latinos and to work more closely with legislators on those issues.

LULAC members on Wednesday also voiced their support in favor of SF 80, a bill that would allow young people, who were brought to this country by their parents and were educated at an Iowa high school or received a high school equivalency diploma in Iowa and want to further their education or start a business in the state, to be considered Iowa residents for the purpose of tuition and fees at Iowa's postsecondary institutions.

“We feel this bill gives young Iowans, who were brought into this country not on their own accord, a chance to make a better life for themselves,” Enriquez Henry said. “They were raised here, and this gives them a chance to live a productive life and become a contributing member of society.

Founded in 1929, the League of United Latin American Citizens is the oldest Latino civil rights organization in the United States. There are more than 880 local LULAC councils, which hold voter registration drives, provide awareness to residents about language and immigration issues, sponsor programs and advocate for Latinos.

For more information, contact Joe Enriquez Henry at 515.208.7312; or Melissa Walker at 515.681.7731 or [media@iowalatinos.org](mailto:media@iowalatinos.org), or visit [www.lulaciowa.org](http://www.lulaciowa.org).

Visit [www.lulaciowa.org](http://www.lulaciowa.org)

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