

The Latino Agenda: Un Plan De, Por y Para el Pueblo Latino #TodosConTom

February 21, 2020

Introduction & Summary

The Latino community is an integral part of our nation's past, present, and future. And like our country, Latinos are culturally, politically and economically diverse — united by the pursuit of the American Dream and the belief that together we all contribute to the growth and prosperity of this country.

Tom understands that Latino priorities are the priorities of all Americans. Tom and his wife, Kat Taylor, have been working alongside Latino communities and families across the nation on issues such as immigrant rights, environmental justice, and political empowerment.

Today, the U.S. Latino GDP is the world's [eighth-largest economy](#). And Latina women are a driving force of our job market growth, with [nearly 5 million Latinas](#) holding degrees of higher education and a [higher rate](#) of Latina women participating in our job force than American women overall. To ensure the prolonged prosperity of this country, and to build sustained economic growth, Tom's [Economic Agenda](#) will ensure access to prosperity for all Latinos.

While Latinos contribute immensely to our economy, serve in our Armed Forces, and add to our rich American culture, they're now facing a historic [rise in hate crimes](#) and discrimination. From the gross neglect of Puerto Rico to the racist demonization of Mexicans and the exploitation of the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela for political gain, the Trump administration has been outwardly hostile toward Latino communities, both in the U.S. and abroad. And as a result of these actions and countless others, there has been a [substantial increase](#) in the number of Latinos who feel less secure and less safe.

One of the best ways to refight back against racism and discrimination in Washington is to ensure that Latinos have equal representation. Tom knows that for our government to be truly reflective of America, it must be diverse in race, ethnicity, and values. As president,

Tom's cabinet will reflect this diversity and will work with Latino leaders to achieve full and fair representation.

Representation matters. Hurricane Maria and the recent earthquakes have also devastated Puerto Rico and left [thousands](#) of Americans dead, damaged the electrical grid, and left people without power for months. Tom fully endorses the Power4PuertoRico proposal and is committed to helping Puerto Rico fully rebuild and recover from the damage, to restore its economy, address its debt crisis, and eliminate poverty. Tom also supports an exception to the Jones Act, and studying ways that tax incentives can spur job creation with improved labor standards, as well as an expansion to both the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit to Puerto Ricans. Tom supports the right to self-determination of the Puerto Rican people, a status solution that comes from Puerto Ricans directly, and will vigorously advocate before Congress for that decision to be respected.

Tom has always stood up to bigotry — and he always will. Despite the fact that the [vast majority](#) of the [60 million](#) Latinos in this country are U.S. citizens, Trump's racist, anti-immigrant propaganda is focused entirely on non-white immigrants, and largely on Central- and South-America — and this has led to increased xenophobia and hate toward all Latinos. Upon hearing of the atrocities committed at our borders by our own government, Tom and Kat joined activists in Texas to offer help in eradicating a system that puts children in cages. There is no question that the current administration's determination to expand the southern border wall — and Trump's consistent attacks against Latinos and people of Latin American countries — are misguided and racist. This will end immediately under a Steyer Administration.

Tom and Kat have worked with Latino leaders to find solutions on how to build wealth and power within Latino and Black communities. Together with local community organizations and coalitions, they have created pathways for Latino-owned businesses to build economic prosperity, and for families to begin building generational wealth, by starting Beneficial State Bank in Oakland. Tom and Kat also understand that often Latinos are at the front-lines of standing up for our environment and taking on corporate polluters. When Tom learned that Big Oil intended to build another power plant in a predominantly Latino community in Oxnard, CA, he reached out to community leaders, activists, and local politicians to join the fight to protect the community's right to clean air and clean water. Together, they won. As president Tom will continue this work to end the corporate stranglehold on Washington by working closely with the communities who are most impacted, and those who are leading the fight for justice on the ground.

Tom also recognizes that in spite of being the [largest ethnic minority group](#), Latinos have been under-represented in our political system. That's why Tom has invested heavily in Latino voter mobilization efforts through his non-profit, NextGen America, and joined forces with organizations like the Latino Victory Fund to recruit and train naturalized immigrants, DREAMers, and newly arrived Puerto Ricans to run for office. As president, Tom will continue to level the playing field and ensure that Latinos are continually supported to lead the fight for environmental and economic justice on the national scale, ensuring that all Americans

have a chance at prosperity, safety, and equal access to success. Tom will return our focus and our policy to strive toward democracy, equality, and prosperity — and he will cultivate a government that is truly of, by, and for the people.

1. A Living Wage & a Pathway to Prosperity

A two-parent Latino household has [half the wealth](#) of a single-parent white family in America, and two-parent white families have [8.5 times more wealth](#) than their Latino counterparts. This wealth disparity is unjust — and the impact on the children of these families is truly indefensible. America is among the richest countries in the world, and yet [40%](#) of Americans have trouble paying for basic needs such as health care, housing, utilities, and food — and in California, which is home to the largest Latino population in the US, [more than half](#) of Latinos struggle to make ends meet. Better housing and transit solutions are needed to ensure Latinos are fully served by the communities in which they live.

Tom's [Economic Agenda](#) relies on his 30 years of experience building a 36 billion dollar business that was successful because it grew shared wealth for all stakeholders. Tom's deep knowledge of economic markets makes him the best-suited candidate to restore economic justice to American capitalism and return the growth in our economy to the American people. Tom will accomplish this by ending the corporate stranglehold on our government because corporate power must never exert undue influence and control over our economy and democracy.

Helping Families Thrive

The ability to accumulate family wealth impacts everything from the quality of food and education to the number of environmental health hazards children are exposed to. While Latinos are projected to account for [25% of American GDP growth](#) in 2020, a disproportionate number of Latinos and their families do not see America's prosperity reflected in their bank accounts. To grow family wealth for Latinos we must reduce living costs and increase spending power.

Even when accounting for factors such as [level of education and marital status](#), the racial wealth gap persists. This is the result of orchestrated and systemic racism, plain and simple — and to eliminate the racial wealth gap in America, we must not only root out and eliminate the policies that have cultivated inequality, but we must actively work to reverse them by instituting new policies that level the playing field, and we must take care of workers as they age.

Without Social Security, nearly [50% of elderly Latinos would live in poverty](#). When Americans have come to retirement age they should be able to focus on their families, not on working late shifts to pay the bills. A retirement security plan that builds wealth and financial security is key to thriving families and seniors. Every American should have an individual, voluntary,

and supplemental savings account, with a clearinghouse at the national level that will manage and oversee the funds. To make sure that Latino families have a chance to thrive and to build generational wealth, Tom will:

- **Provide a 10% tax cut to 95% of American families** and offer additional immediate tax relief by expanding existing tax credits. This will raise the incomes of [46 million American households](#) and lift [7 million people out of poverty](#). Tom will also expand the [Earned Income Tax Credit](#) and the [Child Tax Credit](#) to help [millions](#) of families pay for the basic necessities, including families in Puerto Rico, by reducing the amount of taxes they owe.
- **Make health care more affordable and accessible** to provide families access to an affordable, quality option like Medicare. A Steyer Administration will also increase and expand the [tax subsidies](#) under the Affordable Care Act.
- **Increase access to affordable housing** for low- and middle-income families with a quarterly tax credit that can be used for rental payment assistance or to save for a down payment on a home mortgage. This will ensure that Latino families who rent are paying less to put a roof over their heads and can put more money away to buy a home and unlock one of the pathways to building family wealth.
- **Pass a federal \$15/hr minimum wage**, because nobody should be forced to work more than one full-time job just to survive, and no one should see their raise eaten up by the rising cost of living.
- **Reverse the damage done by the Trump Administration** to ensure access to SNAP benefits and automatic access to free or reduced school lunch programs, because no child should go hungry.
- **Protect retirement and pensions with federal loans** to help troubled plans and make sure current benefits are provided. Tom will explore options to keep the Social Security Trust Fund solvent, as well as increasing benefits and cost of living adjustments for those who rely on the system.

Fostering Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

There are currently [4.65 million](#) Latino-owned companies, which make up 14% of the 33 million total businesses in the U.S. and contribute more than [\\$700 billion](#) to the U.S. economy. [Latino entrepreneurs](#) played a key role in the U.S. recovery from the last economic downturn by opening [581,000](#) new businesses between 2000 and 2010. Latinos make up [16% of the US adult population but only 6% of business owners](#), and see only 1% of revenues. This shows that while Latinos contribute immensely to our economy, not enough of America's economic growth is flowing into Latino-owned businesses. If we are to have a strong and just economy, we must ensure that capital is going to the communities that have been historically shut out of the system.

- **Build community prosperity** and ensure economic diversification by adopting wealth-building strategies for diverse businesses nationally. This includes implementing strong targets for procurement from local, women-, and minority-owned businesses; rewarding companies that adhere to fair labor practices and employ a union workforce; advancing community-led economic development strategies by supporting projects that include local hire, targeted hiring, and first-source hiring requirements; and building community benefit agreements, responsible contractor policies and best value contracting in to federal projects.
- **Prioritize local economies and American businesses** through the creation of Community Green Banks, Green New Deal Investment Zones, Community Benefit Agreements, and developing banking, investment, and insurance requirements that will shift funding from fossil fuels toward what actually matters — clean air, healthy families, and rapid commutes.

Stronger Unions

Labor unions represent a powerful check on corporations and Tom supports workers' rights to organize for protections, a living wage and expanded retirement benefits. As president, Tom will continue to stand alongside working families. He will aggressively enforce our labor laws, protect the right to organize, and defend worker pensions, social security, and disability benefits and enforce workplace safety rules. He will also regulate corporations and limit the ability to reclassify full-time workers as part-time employees or independent contractors, create portable structures for healthcare, retirement, and other benefits; and write trade policy with workers in mind.

Tom believes public sector jobs should remain in the public sector: the privatization of these jobs is just another way for corporations to gut the middle class and control more of our economy and society. He will set a strong example with strong labor standards embedded within Federal contracts and hiring. To ensure that America's unions are able to thrive, Tom will:

- **Support opportunities for workers to organize and join a union** and collectively bargain free of intimidation, harassment, or coercion from employers.
- **Appoint a pro-union Secretary of Labor** who will work with Congress to pass labor reforms that will level the playing field for workers who want representation at work and dignity in retirement.
- **Enforce labor laws around equal pay and wage theft**, enforce workplace safety rules, and defend workers' pensions, social security, and disability benefits.
- **Regulate corporations and limit the ability to reclassify full-time workers** as part-time employees or independent contractors, create portable structures for healthcare, retirement, and other benefits; and write trade policy with workers in mind.

Job Creation & Job Security

Tom's [Economic Agenda](#) and Climate Justice plan will create 4.6 million long-term jobs as we update our electricity grid and build a carbon-neutral economy. Tom will ensure access to good jobs and careers by providing workers with the skills they need to thrive in a 21st-century economy and create more workforce training opportunities including apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. As America makes the transition to a clean energy future, we must honor and support those who have devoted their lives to keeping our lights on and our vehicles moving. Tom will invest \$50 billion to ensure former fossil-fuel workers and their communities have the healthcare, wages, and benefits necessary to thrive in a clean economy. He will work with local communities to transition to a new economy by ensuring robust remediation processes for old mines, preventing companies from shedding pension obligations, and providing workforce retraining opportunities. He will:

- **Create 4.6 million jobs annually for 10 years** to power our country's transition to a green economy. These jobs will be in planning and building infrastructure, clean energy construction, clean energy operation and maintenance, and the Civilian Climate Corps.
- **Invest \$155 billion in worker resources, training, pre-apprenticeships, and continuing education** to expand local, good job opportunities in the energy, construction, transportation, agriculture, water, and information technology sectors, amongst others.
- **Establish the U.S. as the top global exporter of clean energy technology** by implementing federal and state incentives, spurring innovation, and mobilizing trillions in private capital to transition the economy away from fossil fuels and toward clean energy.

Growing Shared Prosperity

America may have a record high GDP and low unemployment rates, but the gains in our economy have gone to corporations and the wealthy, and left nearly half of Americans [unable to cover an unexpected \\$400 expense](#) — and for Latinos, that number is significantly higher. While CEO pay has skyrocketed [1000% in the past 40 years](#), the spending power of the American worker hasn't changed — and Latina women make [53 cents for every dollar](#) a white man makes. If she has the same level of education, the same years of experience, and lives in the same neighborhood, she'll make [66 cents](#) on the dollar. Not only is this unjust, it limits her potential to build wealth and prosperity.

Latino families are also [two-times more likely](#) to live in poverty when compared to white families, and [over 60%](#) don't have enough savings to withstand a medical emergency or job loss. Disparities at this level do not happen in a vacuum, and no child should have to worry about where their next meal will come from or where they will sleep at night. Tom's [Economic Agenda](#) puts people over profits to grow shared prosperity, including lifting families out of poverty. Tom will:

- **Break the corporate stranglehold in Washington** that allows corporations to write rules that result in deregulation and give them free reign to further wealth inequality, stamp out small businesses, and poison people and the planet for money.
- **Balance the scales of economic justice with a wealth tax** so that there is more money going back into the economy and less sitting stagnant in the bank accounts of rich people and corporations.
- **Harness innovation and promote competition** by declaring a national climate emergency on day one and jumpstarting our transition to a green economy. This will mobilize trillions of dollars in private investment and return America to a position of global leadership.
- **Fund communities disproportionately impacted by poverty**, especially where 20% of the population has been below the poverty line for more than 30 years, building on [Congressman Clyburn's \(D-SC\) 10-20-30 Plan](#).

2. Climate Justice

In communities across the country, the air we breathe is polluted, the water we drink is contaminated, and it is killing us — shortening our lives and significantly increasing the rates of cancer, breathing disorders, and other diseases. None of this happens by accident. It is a consequence of lawmakers valuing money over morality. If climate justice had been a priority — indeed if the health and prosperity of the American people had been a priority — we would have more aggressively combated global warming by regulating the greenhouse gases that created the crisis we now face.

Tom knows we must do more to address our changing climate and the detrimental impacts it has on the health and well-being of our communities. In the coastal city of Oxnard, California, Tom and the local community defeated one of the largest energy corporations in the United States. For decades, polluters targeted Oxnard as an industrial dumping ground, instead of the wealthier, whiter communities of Malibu and Santa Monica. The city's population of primarily Latino, foreign-born, and low-income residents don't have easy access to their beach — three power plants and a Superfund site divide their homes from the sand. As a result, the asthma rates in some neighborhoods are higher than [90%](#) of the rest of the state.

A group of Oxnard residents, including many young activists, wanted to change their community so a coalition of residents, environmental activists, and local elected officials protested NRG's proposal for a new, gas-fired facility -- the Puente Power Plant. Tom heard about their efforts and asked how he could help. He attended state hearings with them, testified against the power plant, wrote articles, and rallied supporters around the state. This victory changed the way large, gas-fired power plants are permitted in the state and sent a powerful message to communities across America: when people come together, they can win.

With only 10 years left to stave off the worst effects of the climate crisis, we must organize and unite all Americans around this common purpose. Climate change threatens humanity and the world. Our lives and communities are in peril. If this isn't the top priority for our next president, it won't get done.

Restoring Clean Air And Clean Water

Climate change is disproportionately affecting Latino and African American communities, especially in low-income neighborhoods. For big businesses and the politicians who depend on their donations, driving profits ever higher matters more than keeping Americans alive and healthy. This tragedy threatens the health and livelihoods of people all over America, and especially Latinos. And the only reason we're facing this unimaginable suffering is that we live in a society where corporations are allowed to poison our air for the sake of their profits. To ensure that every Latino in America has access to clean air and clean water, Tom will:

- **Mobilize over \$200B towards providing safe and clean drinking water** to every American, improving water management and irrigation practices, and investing in upstream watersheds to ensure that water supplies are protected for generations.
- **Eliminate asthma-causing and toxic air pollution** from diesel engines, power plants, and other sources disproportionately sited in Indigenous and Latino communities.

Community-led Planning and Development

There isn't a single solution to climate change or environmental racism that will work for every region, town, or neighborhood — the people closest to the problems know the solutions that will work best in their communities, often better than Washington politicians do. To ensure that the people most impacted by climate change take a leadership role in the planning, development, and restoration of their own communities, Tom will:

- **Create 1 million Civilian Climate Corps jobs** for local workers from communities impacted by climate change to help plan, build, and update infrastructure and diversify state and local economies currently dependent on fossil fuel revenues.
- **Support the development of community-led remediation plans** for every state and US territory, beginning with those burdened most by both pollution and poverty — because community leaders know better than Washington what solutions will work best.
- **Protect residents' rights to self-determination** as investments are made in their communities to protect against unjust gentrification, and to ensure that those who are displaced by climate-related disasters can return to their communities.

Access & Protections For Public Lands

Just over thirty percent of Latinos can [walk to a park](#), while half of all whites have access to green space near their homes — and recent immigrants, low-income families, and communities of color have dismally [low access to parks](#). While [94%](#) of Latinos recognize that public lands and national parks are an “essential part” of our economy, [83%](#) of people working in our National Park Service are white. Tom will ensure that Latinos have access to public parks and national lands, and he will fight to prevent their destruction. He will also rapidly end any fossil fuel production in national parks and monuments and restore protected areas to their pre-Trump dimensions.

- **End Trump-Era rollbacks of protections for National Parks**, including the gutting of the National Environmental Policy Act and the offering up of public lands to extraction industries such as oil and gas, and permanently ban drilling in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge.
- **Make national park admission free for all Americans** and restore and expand our national parks and monuments and protect public lands, waters, and coastal areas for valuable resources and outdoor recreation, so every American has a park or natural area within a half-mile of their home.

Developing New, Green Infrastructure

Every decision our government makes about infrastructure, purchasing, contracting, and investing taxpayer dollars must be aligned with achieving our climate targets, protecting workers’ right to unionize, growing good jobs, and helping Americans build inclusive and prosperous communities. We have one chance to invest in the infrastructure that will serve our country in a warmer world, help us limit the effects of climate change, and showcase American leadership. To ensure the security, safety, and prosperity of our future, and to build an infrastructure equipped for the 21st century, Tom will:

- **Invest \$2 trillion in America’s green infrastructure** and help cities, towns, and regions establish climate-smart infrastructure plans.
- **Ensure access and affordability of energy, transportation, food, and clean water** by rapidly scaling up energy-efficiency standards, deploying smart financing for clean technology, and providing bill and income assistance for lower-income Americans.
- **Triple federal funding for climate science**, including research, development, and deployment of advanced clean technology and advanced research and warning systems for extreme weather.

3. Affordable Housing

Where you live determines where your kids go to school and the quality of the air you breathe. That's why Tom's plan makes major investments to build millions of new units to help working families purchase homes they can afford and reduce our national homeless crisis. A decade ago, the economic downturn turned many parts of our cities, states, and counties into ground zero for a housing crisis that has since displaced thousands of families from their homes. Over just a few years, neighborhoods with once-promising housing construction projects became riddled with abandoned lots. Since then, the nation's economy has undergone an impressive recovery, but many still lack access to affordable housing options. There's currently a shortage of about [7 million affordable rental housing units](#) in America. As America's population grows, so does its housing needs.

In many parts of the country, Latinos who earn minimum wage would have to work [127 hours per week](#) just to pay rent on a two-bedroom home. Latinos and African Americans, who spend a larger share of their incomes on rental costs than white Americans, have been [disproportionately hurt](#) by these housing trends. In addition to the construction of more affordable housing units, Tom proposes an expansion of the Housing Choice Voucher Program and quarterly tax credits for qualified low-income renters, so that everyone can keep a roof over their head and provide for their families. Tom's [affordable housing plan](#) calls for an investment of more than \$625 billion over 10 years in existing housing programs, which will spur the construction and renovation of 3.5 million units of affordable housing nationwide. To build these homes, Tom's plan will spur millions of new jobs in the construction industry.

Tom and his wife, Kat, have tackled housing issues in California and understand that affordable housing is crucial for a better quality of life for Latinos across the country. In 2007, they founded Beneficial State Bank, a community bank which has supported the construction and renovation of over 6,600 affordable homes. They have also helped to pass several ballot measures in California which helped to raise more than a billion dollars to fund the construction of affordable housing units, including supportive housing for the chronically homeless.

Accelerating Affordable Housing Construction

For too long justice has been absent in our nation's housing policies. Tom will increase accountability and stringently enforce civil rights provisions for vulnerable communities. We must ensure that a significant proportion of the supply remains affordable.

When the recession hit, the United States lost more than [2 million construction jobs](#). In addition to the money allocated to existing programs, Tom proposes an additional \$600 billion to foster climate-smart cities and affordable housing programs which would rejuvenate the construction industry, modernize our infrastructure, and put people back to work. To accelerate the construction of needed safe, healthy and affordable housing stock, Tom will:

- **Invest more than \$625 billion over ten years in existing housing programs** to spur the construction and renovation of 3.5 million units of affordable housing. This includes \$47 billion per year in construction and renovation for low-income housing and \$156 billion in climate-smart investments in affordable housing, urban greening, clean public transportation, clean energy, and economic development into previously red-lined neighborhoods.
- **Increase the Low Income Housing Tax Credit by 50%** over the next five years and enact reforms to create more than 500,000 additional affordable rental units — prioritizing projects that incorporate climate-resilience into their plan.
- **Dedicate \$10 billion per year to solve the housing crisis** through the creation of a grant competition designed to support innovative new solutions in streamlining, financing, technology, and construction to end America’s housing crisis.
- **Support local governments and community projects** such as equitable local economic development, affordable housing, transit-oriented development, disaster resilience, and infrastructure.

Building Home Ownership

Home ownership remains one of the most powerful tools for American families to build wealth, and too many have been cut out for too long. America’s history of racist housing policies has willfully kept communities of color — Latinos and African Americans in particular — from accessing the wealth-generating opportunities of home ownership. These racist policies have permeated everything from school quality to intergenerational stability. As we mobilize our workforce to address the housing shortage, we must also make homeownership accessible again. Tom refuses to let corporate greed keep hard-working Latino families from obtaining affordable housing. His plan will ensure that homeownership will once again offer wealth-building opportunities so that all Americans can thrive. His administration will strengthen the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to protect borrowers, as well as reform federal lending initiatives to bring home ownership into the reach of more American families. To help Latinos buy homes, Tom will:

- **Increase housing supply by encouraging densification**, including incentives for accessory units, 2-4 unit construction, co-living houses and cooperatives, land trust ownership models, and other creative densification solutions.
- **Establish a down payment assistance loan program for public servants** — including first responders, doctors and nurses, and teachers — to help them build equity in the communities they strengthen every day through their work.
- **Extend access to less expensive mortgages** through financial products that will help keep housing stock in individual and family hands, instead of as a source of passive income for the already wealthy.

- **Hold big banks, corporations, and landlords accountable** by restoring the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's (CFPB) ability to enforce Fair Housing laws. This will protect against discrimination when buying, leasing, and taking out loans for a home.

Renter Protections

Low income families feel the rise of housing costs earlier, longer and more acutely than any other group. We must protect the affordability of housing for low-income and working family renters who have seen wages stagnate and rents skyrocket.

We must increase accountability and enforce civil rights provisions and renter protections, particularly in disadvantaged communities, to ensure that every American, no matter their background, has access to safe and affordable rentals.

- **Protect tenants & enforce affordable housing standards** with a renters emergency fund that helps low-income families facing eviction, and by assuring that everyone has a right to legal representation in eviction proceedings.
- **Protect vulnerable communities from housing discrimination** by strengthening the Fair Housing Act to provide protections against discrimination for people of color, people with disabilities, and other protected classes.

Addressing Homelessness

Homelessness is a persistent problem that is exacerbated by poor policy. The skyrocketing cost of housing puts many working-class Americans on the brink of losing their homes. Far too often, rent increases result in eviction and homelessness. Homelessness is intricately related to the variable needs an individual must meet at any given moment: shelter, food, clothing, physical and mental health care and more.

A Steyer Administration is ready to partner with municipalities and states to address this crisis and provide relief. Solving homelessness requires us to do all we can to keep people in their homes and provide holistic case management to stabilize individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

As president, Tom will also expand access to and increase funding for veterans programs that provide housing assistance in high-cost areas and increase job training opportunities for veterans returning home.

- **Prevent 2.2 million people from falling into homelessness** by expanding access to the Housing Choice Voucher Program to increase the number of families that qualify — and by increasing the number of resource coordinators to make access easier.
- **Invest \$8 billion in Homeless Assistance Grants** and expand holistic case management services. It will also increase funding for federal programs that

rehabilitate properties and build new units so that we can provide more housing for those who are at risk of becoming homeless.

- **End veteran homelessness** by expanding access and increasing funding to programs that help veterans who are homeless obtain housing and increase job training opportunities for veterans returning home.

4. Education

Education is at the heart of America's promise of opportunity for all. But decades of underinvestment in our K-12 schools and our teachers, along with unequal distribution of public resources, have eroded the promise of public education. [Latino children](#) are more likely to attend under-resourced schools than their white counterparts, and English language learners often don't receive the additional support they need. As a result, there is an achievement gap between Latinos and whites that [begins early](#) and manifests in [lower high school graduation](#) and [college completion rates](#). Tom's education plan, [A World-Class Education for Every Child](#), recognizes that in America today, a child's zip-code and skin color determine too much about their life — and to ensure opportunity for all, a Steyer administration will provide a quality, free public education that gives every child the qualifications and skills to realize their potential and succeed in a 21st-century economy.

Closing the School Readiness Gap

[Latino children, especially English language learners](#), are more likely to start kindergarten at a learning disadvantage compared to their white peers. This gap in cognitive skills can be seen [as early as age two](#). To improve school preparedness, Tom will:

- **Expand Early Head Start program for children under 3** to provide vital services to low-income pregnant women and families to ensure healthy child development. Tom will increase funding to expand eligibility to 150% of the poverty line.
- **Guarantee free, universal access to high-quality preschool** to ensure all families can enroll their 3- and 4-year-olds in a program staffed with teachers with similar qualifications and compensation to their K-12 counterparts.

A World-Class K-12 Education for Every Child

The current education system is not designed to help many Latino students — especially those from low-income families and those who are English language learners — overcome the challenges they face and succeed academically. Schools that educate significant numbers of English language learners and students from low-income families often have fewer resources to meet greater student needs because funding formulas rely heavily on local property taxes. Many Latino children get left behind in our current education system. [One in five Latino students](#) — and [one in three English language learners](#) — do not graduate from high school on time. Tom will double federal investment in K-12 in order to

close the achievement gap and chart a course to cutting the graduation drop-out rate in half by the end of his first term. Tom will:

- **Triple Title I funding to equalize access** to educational resources, rigorous curriculum and well-trained teachers for under-served students.
- **Fund locally-led desegregation efforts** and allow states and districts to use federal funding for busing if that is part of their plan. In addition, Tom will expand the number of “magnet schools” — public schools with a specialized curriculum that attracts diverse students from surrounding areas. Under a Steyer Administration, the Department of Justice and the Department of Education will work together to monitor and enforce students’ civil rights, and any changes to school district boundaries will require federal pre-clearance to evaluate the racial and socio-economic impact.
- **Support English language learners** by upholding their legal right to quality education with challenging coursework and filling the shortage in bilingual teachers.
- **Provide a tutor for every struggling student** performing below grade level through Tom’s National Service Plan.
- **Deliver coordinated social services through 25,000 Community Schools** to meet the full needs of students and their families. As part of their extended services, Community Schools will offer free afterschool and summer enrichment programs that are typically out of reach for low-income students.

Investing in Excellent and Diverse Educators

Great teachers can change the course of a child’s life. [Research](#) shows that teachers influence student learning outcomes more than any other factor within a school setting. But [well-qualified, experienced teachers](#) who are best able to boost student learning are not spread evenly across schools. They are concentrated in more affluent, white districts. Meanwhile, high-poverty school districts serving a greater share of students of color face [a shortage](#) of well-qualified teachers and higher rates of teacher turnover. There is also a shortage of Latino educators and bilingual educators. Latino students represent over [a quarter of children](#) in America’s public schools but [less than 10%](#) of public school teachers are Latino. To attract and retain effective and diverse educators, Tom will improve learning conditions and he will:

- **Expand supportive, high-retention teacher preparation programs** demonstrated to improve teacher effectiveness and diversity. Grow-Your-Own teacher preparation programs provide a pathway for members of the community to become well-paid educators in their own neighborhoods.
- **Compensate educators as highly-skilled professionals** by matching every dollar spent by states and districts to raise pay at a 2-to-1 ratio.

Improving College Access and Affordability

Almost all new jobs require some postsecondary education or training. While Latinos are attending college in increasing numbers, they are less likely to complete college than other groups, in large part due to cost. But college drop-outs are still saddled with debt that is harder to pay off without a college degree, increasing chances of default. To increase access to and affordability of higher education, Tom will:

- **Improve college readiness** by increasing access to rigorous college-prep coursework. His administration also will support students with the college application process by providing low- and middle-income students with access to free or low-cost SAT and ACT prep courses, assistance filling out financial aid forms, and career counselors who can advise on school selection and the application process.
- **Make college affordable** by providing two years of free community college and expanding federal financial aid, such as Pell Grants. Tom will also extend Pell Grants and federal student loans to DACA recipients.
- **Reduce student loan debt burden.** A Steyer administration would allow borrowers to refinance through the government at lower rates. Tom also supports debt forgiveness for public servants who have served for 10 years while making loan payments.
- **Implement a “Student Borrower Bill of Rights”** that would crack down on predatory student loan servicers and guarantee basic protections for all student loan borrowers.
- **Crackdown on for-profit colleges** that are pushing students into debt for worthless degrees. Tom will reinstate the Gainful Employment and Borrower Defense rules and call for stricter standards that ensure student financial aid from the federal government is primarily going toward instruction and student services.

Preparing for a 21st Century Economy

Not all good-paying jobs will require a four-year degree, but they often do require career and technical training. In order to improve employability and open the door to better wages, Tom will:

- **Expand Apprenticeship and Workforce Credentialing Programs** at high schools.
- **Provide Free Career and Technical Training** through a community college, authorized trade school or Job Training Center.

5. Health care

Latinos are among the [longest-living](#) ethnic groups in the United States, yet they are the [least likely](#) group in America to make regular visits to the doctor and are more than [two times more likely](#) than whites to get their medical care at community clinics, government clinics, and community hospitals. Latinos also suffer from the [burden of many chronic diseases](#), from diabetes to asthma to HIV/AIDS to heart conditions and obesity. This is an out-of-control health care system that values its own profits over the people it serves. Tom's [Right to Health](#) plan will lower the cost of insurance and prescription drugs, such as insulin. Tom will sign a law that would allow people in the United States to buy federally-approved medicine from other countries. By doing so, pharmaceutical companies in the United States will have to lower their costs in order to compete with prices in other countries.

Tom knows that when there is competition and people have the right to choose, prices are better for consumers. Tom also supports the creation of a public health insurance option. This will have a dramatic impact on increasing access to insurance for Latinos, who are among the [most underinsured](#) groups in the U.S. The public option would be administered by the government to reduce the cost of coverage, and would not charge exorbitant prices in monthly premiums to pay millions of dollars to investors and shareholders.

But above all, Tom believes that only we can know what's best for our health. Under his plan, everyone will have the right to choose whether to go with the government plan, purchase coverage from the private sector, or keep the insurance offered by their employer or union. And to serve the specific health care needs of Latinos, Tom will address racial bias in the health care system and eliminate barriers to access.

Reducing Costs And Increasing Access

Americans are stuck in an inequitable health care system that leaves nearly [28 million](#) people unable to afford insurance and tens of millions more for whom health care costs eat up much of their paychecks. This must change. To ensure that Latinos have access to quality and affordable health care, Tom will:

- **Introduce an affordable, quality public option** to control the costs of premiums and deductibles — enabling the government to keep costs down by negotiating directly with medical groups and providers. Tom will also save Americans from health care related bankruptcy by eliminating surprise medical bills and controlling prescription drug costs so no American has to choose between paying for medication or paying for food.
- **Protect the key provisions of the Affordable Care Act.** This will ensure continued protections for those with preexisting conditions, expand coverage for the most vulnerable Americans, guarantee that every child has access to health care, enable young people to remain on their parents' plan through age 26, and increase affordability for the Middle Class — all by keeping the insurance marketplace open and competitive.

Increasing Coverage and Cultural Competency

[60% of Latinos](#) experience difficulty communicating with health care professionals due to language or cultural barriers — and Latinos are woefully [underrepresented](#) in the health care field, especially as doctors. This lack of representation and access has a significant cost: Latino children die from asthma at [double the rate](#) of white children, even though the percentage of children who have asthma is [roughly equivalent](#) among both groups. A Steyer administration will build access and fight racial bias in the health care industry by investing in medical education, building cultural competency into the system, and by ending the corporate stranglehold the drug and insurance companies have on our health care system. And to serve the [approximately 65%](#) of undocumented immigrants in America who are Latino, Tom will extend access to the public option to all people who call America home. To stop racial bias in the health care system and ensure that Latinos have equal access, Tom will:

- **Address long-standing racial inequities in the health care system** as a core part of all health plans. Tom's administration will hold health care providers accountable to all patients.
- **Eliminate the 5-year waiting period under the ACA in all states** so that all residents of the US, including immigrants, have access to affordable health care.
- **Champion regional and state-level medical outreach programs**, including those that help providers establish Language Access Plans, to ensure that Latino populations have adequate access to information about insurance and health care.

Improving Maternal Care & Expanding Reproductive Rights

Compared to non-Hispanic white women, Latinas are more likely to have [cervical cancer](#), and over [twice as likely](#) to become pregnant as teenagers. President Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress and in statehouses across the country are actively working to rob women of their access to health care, including the full suite of women's health services consisting of OB/GYN, family planning contraception, maternal care, and abortion services. To ensure that Latinas have access to reproductive rights and women's health, Tom will:

- **Ensure access to women's reproductive health services**, including contraception and family planning, as a core part of all health plans. And to ensure that disadvantaged and rural communities have equal access, Tom will fully fund and enforce Title X.
- **Support legislation that improves health care access to Latina mothers**, and reverses the Trump Administration's attacks on maternal health funding to ensure resources for midwives, OB/GYNs, and rural clinics — particularly those that serve communities who suffer higher maternal mortality rates, [such as Latinas](#).

6. A Fair Immigration Process

America is a nation of immigrants — and [four out of the top five](#) countries of origin for immigrants coming to the U.S. are in Latin America. In the past 20 years, [nearly 40%](#) of our Nobel Prize winners in Chemistry, Medicine, and Physics have all been immigrants — and immigrants [contribute](#) greatly to our economy. For America to flourish, this has to be a place where immigrants can flourish, too. A path to citizenship and safe-haven from persecution are fundamental American values. Throughout our history, we have welcomed immigrants whether they've sought an education at one of our world-class universities or safe harbor from persecution at home. We must not lose compassion in our approach to border security — the Trump Administration is using inhumane treatment of human beings as a racist political tactic. This is un-American and must be stopped. Tom believes the creativity, hard work, leadership, and valuable contributions of the more than 10.5 million undocumented immigrants living in America are going shamefully unrecognized, and his administration will work closely with Congress to establish a fair and inclusive path to citizenship for everyone.

Many American households [and businesses](#) rely on immigrants, a significant number of whom are Latinos. While workers are protected under Federal law regardless of immigration status, undocumented and unofficial workers often find themselves excluded from the worker protections — either because they lack access to information about their rights or fear deportation if they report violations to the authorities.

Tom's in-depth [immigration plan](#) works toward comprehensive immigration reform, including re-establishing America as a safe haven for those fleeing persecution and oppression. Tom has worked to build a strong community of immigrant rights activists. Since October 2017, he has contributed \$3.3 million towards immigrant rights around the country, partnered with 14 different groups on immigrant legal defense both in CA and across the country, including with the University of California to support a national legal services network so undocumented immigrants could access free legal aid. His work has helped 1,600 immigrants and refugees get a lawyer, more than 1,100 DACA applicants process renewal applications, and help recruit 7,100 volunteer lawyers, interpreters, mental health professionals, and organizers to fight for immigrants' rights.

Protecting Vulnerable Immigrant Communities

Immigrant communities in the U.S. have been under attack. To end this era of fear and distrust, we must heal the relationship between the immigration system and our communities. We have seen atrocities committed on the border by our government, in our name. The Trump Administration has, in particular, castigated non-white immigrants. On

Day One, Tom will use executive authority to restore commonsense and humanity to our immigration system. To do this, he will:

- **Use executive action to reinstate DACA, enact DAPA, revitalize TPS, and end the Muslim travel ban.** This will ensure that the millions who rely on those programs can live their lives openly in our communities.
- **Work with Congress to create a pathway to citizenship for undocumented Americans.**
- **Reform ICE, CBP, and USCIS** to reflect our best values and refocus their actions on their core mission of national security and fairly processing immigration claims.
- **End family separation and cruel detention policies** and work to ensure a fair and speedy process for immigrants and refugees arriving at the border.
- **Reform interior enforcement so that communities can live without fear.** A Steyer Administration will process those who cross without inspection under civil, not criminal, law — and forcible deportation will only be used as a tool of last resort, as with those convicted of violent felony crimes.
- **Support immigrants who have served in America's Armed Forces by** expediting the return of eligible deported veterans to the U.S., and working to support expedited pathways to citizenship for those who don the uniform of our Armed Forces.

Reforming the Immigration System

Without a fair and humane immigration system, our nation cannot flourish. We need an immigration system that is lawful, but also efficient. For immigrants from all backgrounds, we need clearer rules, ample counsel, support services, and shorter waits. To ensure our system reflects the best of America, Tom will:

- **Appropriately resource federal agencies that provide administrative immigration services** to more quickly process those seeking legal entrance, such as asylum, to the United States.
- **Reform the immigration courts** to guarantee the right to legal counsel in immigration proceedings to ensure due process for all.
- **Preserve and prioritize family-based immigration** to keep families together — and Tom will cut the visa backlog for immigrant families waiting to reunite.
- **Increase transparency and fairness in the visa adjudication process** to ensure clarity and understanding of the requirements for those who wish to immigrate.
- **Reinvigorate our visa system** by working with universities, research labs and the private sector to recruit and retain talented thinkers and builders from around the world.
- **Protect farm workers** by providing a pathway to citizenship for the undocumented agricultural workers who help feed America.

- **Refocus border enforcement on national security** by upgrading ports of entry, smartly screening containers and freight, and stopping traffickers from moving drugs, guns and people they seek to extort and abuse.

Reimagining the Asylum and Refugee System

The United States must recommit itself as a humane refuge for those seeking freedom and safety. Our asylum and refugee systems must be reformed to act in a fair-minded, swift, and just manner to welcome those fleeing persecution. To do this, Tom will:

- **Extend compassion to those fleeing persecution** and reform our asylum policies to ensure that we are not causing further harm to the most vulnerable who reach the U.S. seeking safety and shelter.
- **Revitalize our refugee program** and work with the international community to defend human rights, honor the rule of law, and prepare for and mitigate global migration.
- **Extend financial aid and technical resources to Central America** and lead the international community to extend resources to Northern Triangle nations for humanitarian relief, economic partnerships, and institutional strengthening.
- **Recognize the devastating impacts of climate change** and the need to prepare for increased global migration to help people recover from disasters within their communities.

Encouraging Civic Engagement

Throughout American history, immigrants have brought their culture, experiences, and expertise to our shores. Once here, they become Americans and help us strengthen our nation. To ensure that all people who call America home have access to the tools and opportunities to secure a better life and contribute to the American economy, Tom will:

- **Invest in civic engagement and a stronger democracy** to help elect leaders who embrace our country's immigrant communities.
- **Ensure that immigrants have the opportunities to help themselves** and their communities thrive, including access to affordable and safe housing and healthcare.
- **Protect all American workers** by creating secure pathways for undocumented workers to report violations to the Department of Labor.
- **Recognize the importance of the borderlands** to our communities and economy and acknowledge that many families live their lives on both sides of the border — and that we must revitalize the economies of our border towns.

- **Partner with state and local governments to support immigrant communities** to build community services to support immigrants, including education for all children in America and opportunities for immigrants to join in national public service programs.

7. Safe Communities

All people living in America deserve to feel safe. And that means they must have a roof over their head, they must be secure that no one will come into their home or their place of work and force them to leave, and they must be able to go to school or to work without the fear of being shot — especially for their ethnicity, religion, or the color of their skin. In 2018, about [half of all Latinos](#) polled said that under the Trump Administration they have become less safe and less secure — and [38%](#) have “experienced discrimination or unfair treatment, been criticized for speaking Spanish in public, been told to go back to their home country, or have been called offensive names.” Tom will work to stamp out all instances of discrimination by addressing the violence and white supremacy that impacts Latinos and other vulnerable populations like the LGBTQ community, and by returning moral leadership to the office of the president.

Safe communities extend beyond feelings of safety and security — since 1999, nearly [54,000](#) Latinos have been killed as a result of gun violence. And Latinos are imprisoned at [1.4 times](#) the rate of white people in state prisons on average, and as high as [4.3 times](#) more often, depending on the state. Tom will address the issue of gun violence and reform our criminal justice system so that it is fairer and more focused on rehabilitation, and he will make sure that when incarcerated members of our society return to their communities they do so ready to contribute and earn a living. Together with the people and communities most impacted by systemic injustice, Tom will work to achieve this right for Americans.

Ending Gun Violence

On average, [100,000](#) Americans are injured or killed by guns each year — and the number is growing; nearly [3200](#) are Latinos. The 2019 shooting in an El Paso, Texas, Walmart store left Latino families to face the horrors of gun violence within their communities head-on. Having lost their loved ones to shooters who intended to [harm](#) “Mexicans,” [82% of Latinos](#) now look to Trump and his racist rhetoric toward immigrants as fuel for shooters’ xenophobic and violent tendencies. Gun violence, simply put, is a crisis.

Stricter gun laws will be a top priority of the Steyer administration. After the mass shooting in Parkland, Florida, Tom took action. He worked in partnership with students and organizations on [Our Lives. Our Vote](#), a nationwide effort to register young Americans to vote, and bring attention to the gun violence epidemic.

When he is in the White House, Tom will treat gun violence as the public health epidemic that it is, and will fight for comprehensive reform to gun legislation in the US. He also recognizes that there is a significant lack of data on gun violence, including data on Latinos, and will fund research to gain a better understanding of the epidemic. In addition, Tom will:

- **Pass universal background checks** by expanding them to private sales and unlicensed sellers; close the Gun Show, Boyfriend, and Charleston loopholes; establish waiting periods at the federal level for delivery of guns; pass the Making America Safe and Secure Act ([MASS Act](#)) on gun licensing standards and incentives for both buyers and sellers
- **Create a national license and registry** for all gun ownership (like a driver's license and registry for cars)
- **Ban high-risk weapons including assault weapons**, device modifications, high capacity ammunition magazines, and strengthen laws on untraceable firearms, including ghost guns, 3D printed guns, and home manufactured guns
- **Pass and expand the Violence Against Women Act** (VAWA), and the Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act to protect the [one in three](#) Latina women who have faced domestic violence in their lifetimes. Tom will also close gun loopholes and ban firearm purchases from domestic abusers, including partners and stalkers.

Reforming Criminal Justice

[2.3 million people](#) are incarcerated on any given night. If the prison population were to gather in one place, it would form the [5th largest city](#) in America — a city behind bars. With so many lives on the line, it is imperative we improve prison conditions and stop the revolving door of recidivism.

[Nearly 70%](#) of the individuals in prison today are from communities of color. From the harassment in ICE detention centers to overrepresentation in jails and prisons, criminal justice is an issue that affects many Latinos: in federal prisons, Latinos comprise [32%](#) of inmates, but [18%](#) of the population. And yet, the [lack](#) of comprehensive data on Latinos in the criminal justice system is troubling: we simply must have better reporting and Census information if we are going to tackle the issue of mass incarceration.

Tom believes we must fundamentally change our approach in how we treat people in and put people into prison. From policing to sentencing, prejudice is pervasive throughout our criminal justice system and perpetuates mass incarceration. A Steyer administration will work to combat a system full of bias and outdated thinking. Worse still, [poor people](#) and [people of color](#) face higher rates of convictions and more severe sentences.

We must reform our criminal justice system to reflect the rule of law for all, not just those powerless to defend themselves. Tom will work to end the war on drugs including legalizing marijuana, end cash bail, eliminate private prisons, and increase resources for public defenders and community programs. Tom will abolish private prisons, including ICE detention centers, reign in contractors preying on incarcerated individuals, and provide opportunities for rehabilitation for individuals in prison. Together, we can reduce the prison population, stop the school to prison pipeline, and end recidivism.

Reforming Juvenile Justice

Tom knows that when we invest in youth and their communities — education, social services, proper nutrition, clean air and water, housing, and health care — we can change outcomes for at-risk youth. We must invest in these services to give kids a fighting chance. For young people who encounter the criminal justice system, Tom knows we must focus on restoration and rehabilitation. To accomplish this, he will:

- **Realize justice for American kids** by creating a Bureau of Juvenile Justice to tackle the school to prison pipeline head-on and providing \$600 million in funding to the states for diversion, counseling and rehabilitation programs. He will keep the youngest kids out of the system by establishing a minimum age of 12 to be adjudicated in juvenile court and stop jailing kids for skipping school. For kids who enter the juvenile justice system, he will end solitary confinement, stop locking kids up in adult facilities, and ensure that youth in detention have access to the mental health services they need.
- **Work with law enforcement and communities to reform policing** so that every community member feels safe. Tom will combat racial bias through bias prevention training for law enforcement officers; advocate for a federal standard for the use of force that emphasizes de-escalation and verbal warnings; support local efforts to create citizen advisory boards; and invest \$500 million in community policing.

Bringing Fairness to the Courts and Sentencing

The right to due process is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution but we must invest in our courts and legal system to realize equal justice. For too long, communities have been devastated by mandatory minimums, mass incarceration, and severe sentencing laws passed by federal and state elected officials that have encouraged incarceration for low-level drug offenses. Current sentencing guidelines have contributed greatly to mass incarceration rates, and to fight for fairer sentencing policies a Steyer Administration will:

- **Restore the Department of Justice** so that it exemplifies and enforces the highest standards of law enforcement, prosecution, and civil rights in its leadership and grant programs. Tom prioritizes public safety and reductions in mass incarceration — and he will reverse the Trump Administration's efforts to undermine the DOJ's civil rights enforcement efforts.
- **Restore judicial discretion through repealing mandatory minimums** for nonviolent crimes. Tom will also expand and fund specialized courts like drug, mental health, domestic violence, and veterans courts that have the expertise to better address root causes underlying certain crimes.
- **End cash bail** by directing additional federal funding to all 50 states to establish non-discriminatory alternatives.

- **End the War on Drugs**, including ending mandatory minimums and expanding judicial discretion for non-violent drug offenders and descheduling marijuana so that the states can pass their own policies. Instead of incarcerating Americans struggling with addiction, Tom will prioritize diverting individuals with substance abuse disorders to treatment and alternatives to detention.
- **Prioritize rehabilitative programs and humane conditions behind bars** to provide educational opportunities, connectivity to family, and important social, counseling, and health services.

Supporting Formerly Incarcerated Individuals Returning To Society

Time served is time served, yet individuals face tough odds when released. To break the prison pipeline, we need to ensure returning citizens get a second chance and receive necessary support when they leave prison. Formerly incarcerated individuals often face housing and work discrimination, economic stress, mental health issues, and many have child-care responsibilities. And if someone has served their time, they should be able to exercise their rights as a citizen. To ensure that people don't have to pay for their entire lives for a single misdeed, Tom will:

- **Ensure that formerly incarcerated individuals get second chances** by investing in transitional and reentry programs and grants for training and employment programs — and by instituting washout periods for non-violent offender job applicants.
- **Restore the right to vote to all formerly incarcerated individuals.** Tom will also direct the census to count prisoners at their home address, rather than in the district in which they are incarcerated.

Combating White Supremacy

White supremacist violence and hate crimes have been on the rise: from 2009 through 2018, the white supremacists have been responsible for [73%](#) of domestic extremist-related fatalities. The issue is also perpetuated in how resources are distributed to combat this epidemic, considering that [80%](#) of field agents and analysts devoted to terrorism are working on matters of international terrorism, while only 20% are working on domestic terrorism.

Some politicians have also stoked the flames of white supremacy, with racist and bigoted rhetoric, putting our country's Latino, Black, and religious minority communities at risk. Latino and Black Americans cannot thrive or trust the government to help them thrive in a culture that accepts white supremacy. Without addressing white supremacy within our federal agencies, law enforcement, and educational sectors, this form of discrimination will continue to build momentum and terrorize our most vulnerable communities. And we've seen the deadly results when this hate is armed. To actively fight against white supremacy, Tom will:

- **Classify violent white supremacists as domestic terrorists** to be investigated and pursued by the Department of Justice, establish joint federal-state, and international, investigations of white nationalist activity, and more thorough background checks to root out white supremacists or adjacent behavior within law enforcement and across agencies.
- **Fund DHS programs on domestic terrorism**, including groups designated as white supremacists, and issue an annual public report on domestic terrorism, and fight to pass the **Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act and the Disarm Hate Act**.

LGBTQ+

The Latinx LGBTQ+ population in the US is estimated at [3.1 million people](#), with [6.1%](#) of the Latino population identifying as LGBTQ+. In more than 30 states, individuals can still be denied housing and other basic services, refused bathroom access, or fired from their jobs because of their identity — because there is still no federal law that explicitly prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender or sexual orientation. Policy and moral leadership matter: under Donald Trump, the number of Anti-LGBTQ+ homicides has [increased substantially](#). Excluding the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting in Florida, 2017 was the deadliest year on record for LGBTQ+ people, with an [86% year-over-year increase](#) in Anti-LGBTQ+ homicide. To assure safe communities for all Americans we must elect a president who will embrace and represent the vibrancy and diversity of the whole LGBTQ+ community — including LGBTQ+ youth, queer people of color, transgender folks, and intersex individuals — and defend equal justice under the law for every American. To protect against discrimination, and defend against violence and hate-crimes, Tom will:

- **Fight for civil liberties and protections** to all Americans, such as the Equality Act and the Do No Harm Act, and any state laws, so that the LGBTQ+ cannot be discriminated against for housing, employment, jury service, credit, or public accommodations. Tom will also reform the Religious Freedom Restoration Act because religious liberty should not be used as a tool to deny the civil liberties of the LGBTQ+ community. He will also appoint judges to the court system who will advance equality and protect LGBTQ+ civil rights.
- **Direct law enforcement to investigate and enforce against hate crimes** targeted at the LGBTQ+ community. From the deaths of more than 100 transgender individuals in the past five years — **too often trans women of color — to the mass**

shooting at the Pulse Nightclub to ferocious bullying of LGBTQ+ youth, there is an escalating crisis of violence against the community that must be stopped.

- **Support LGBTQ+ youth in public education from discrimination and bullying**, including banning states from permitting school groups to discriminate against LGBTQ+ students for religious reasons.

8. An Equal Vote and Fair Representation

Every American should play an equal role in the process of our democracy — and for our government to truly be of, by and for the people it must reflect the diversity of our country. Currently, [91% of sitting Senators are White](#). A Steyer Administration will take steps to ensure that historically marginalized voices and communities on the receiving end of failed policies have an equal say and can exercise their full political power.

Increasing Latino Representation In Government

While more Latinos serve in Congress than ever before, it still falls woefully short of fair representation. If Latinos held seats according to their overall share of the population, there would be [more than double](#) the number of Latino Representatives in the House and [more than quadruple](#) the number in the Senate.

Our political system protects the status quo, but the status quo is unjust and must change. Political incumbents who are more likely to be white and older wield a strong electoral advantage. 32% of current Congress members, and 48% of Senators have held their positions for [12 years or more](#). Each of the last five Congressional elections has ushered in a [more diverse](#) group. Our most recent Congress also has [more age-representation and more gender parity](#) than ever before. A truly representative Congress will be more willing to stand up and fight for the needs of the American people on issues like climate change, gun legislation, and a wealth tax. We must accelerate this fight for fair representation and new political leadership — not just on Capitol Hill but at all levels of the federal government. To ensure Latino voices are represented in government, Tom will:

- **Propose a 12 year term limit on the House and Senate** to bring in more diverse leadership that is more focused on policies than on politics.
- **End partisan gerrymandering** by establishing independent, non-partisan redistricting commissions. This will stop the practice of cutting through communities of Latino voters and ensure fair legislative districts.
- **Appoint a diverse and representative Cabinet** to ensure that Latinos have representation in Washington who will fight tirelessly on their behalf.
- **Require implicit bias and cultural competency training** for judges, policymakers, and law enforcement agencies to work toward eliminating racial bias in policies and enforcement.
- **Introduce a National Referendum to increase voter participation**, thwart congressional gridlock, and give the American people more power over their democracy.

Ending Voter Suppression Targeted At Latinos

Latino and Black voters are [more than twice as likely](#) as white voters to experience barriers to voting, such as being told they don't have correct identification, or that they don't appear on voter lists. Most voter suppression — such as ID requirements, cuts to early voting, polling place closures, and the systematic erosion of voting rights through imprisonment, suspension of voter registration, and voting roll purges — are [aimed at Latinos and African Americans](#). And because Latinos represent a [higher percentage of prison populations](#) than they do of the general population, mass incarceration also serves to erode the political power of Latinos in the US. To return political power and full voting rights to Latinos, Tom will:

- **Fight against Voter-ID laws currently in use** that makes it more difficult for Latinos, African Americans, and poor individuals to exercise their right to vote.
- **Support automatic voter registration** and other voting-rights protections for all Americans — and restore voting rights to formerly incarcerated individuals.
- **Initiate a Vote-At-Home system** so that voters who work or have other responsibilities are still able to participate in our democracy.
- **Enforce the language minority rights provisions of the Voting Rights Act** to limit voter confusion due to language barriers and to ensure that Latinos with limited English ability are provided adequate access to voting information.