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# El Editor

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## Court to Decide if Texas Republicans Trying to Suppress the Minority Vote?

From the looks of it, it seems like a poor investment of a lot of Texas taxpayer dollars to fix a problem that doesn't seem to exist.

Less than 4 months out from the November General Election and the question of whether or not otherwise eligible voters will need to present a photo ID card at the polls remains unanswered.

The legal matter has been in limbo for the last few months as the Justice Department declined to give its approval in order for the state to implement the new law which was passed by the Republican led Texas Legislature in 2011. Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) passed by Congress in 1965 states that the US Justice Department must approve any voting change or procedure to make sure that "the change has neither a discriminatory purpose nor will have a discriminatory effect".

And therein is the problem. Republican proponents of the law say that the photo ID requirement is necessary to address voter fraud. While Democratic opponents claim it is just a blatant attempt by Republicans to suppress the minority vote by making it difficult for elderly, Hispanic, and black voters to vote. It is no coincidence that traditionally, Hispanic and black voters vote Democrat and Democrats see it as a Republican attempt to intimidate those two groups from participating in the voting process.

Before passing the law in 2011, Democrats pressed Republican proponents to show proof that



voter fraud existed, something that Republicans were not able to demonstrate.

Most of their "evidence", if one can call it that, amounted to self serving stories and speculation. But with a majority in both chambers, Republicans managed to pass the law and it was signed by Republican Governor Rick Perry.

Now, with the November election getting closer and closer and so much at stake in the presidential race, Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott unleashed his lawyers in the US District Court for the District of Columbia trying to get the court to force the Justice Department to reverse its stance and approve the change. Their argument is that section 5 of the VRA is no longer necessary. They also argued that the law does not deter minorities from voting.

The Justice Department countered that there are about 1.5 million voters in Texas who do not have a photo ID and they would be hurt by the law. The Justice Department also alleges the law was passed simply to make it more

difficult for minorities to vote. Justice also says that Texas has not been able to prove that voter fraud exists.

In a March 2012 editorial in the national circulation newspaper USA Today, Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott wrote in an op-ed that "my office has secured 50 voter fraud convictions". And that number includes different violations and not just instances of someone trying to commit voter fraud. In fact, only 2 of the cases were listed as "voter impersonation", which is the main reason the law was passed.

One might ask, so what is the fuss all about; how difficult can it be to get a photo ID card?

While the process itself may not be impossible there are certain obstacles which can make it difficult enough to discourage people from obtaining one.

According to the Brennan Center for Justice, "11% of voting age American citizens, and an even greater percentage of African American, low income and older citizens do not have current and

valid government issued photo IDs".

For example, an elderly person who has no driver's license may not have the resources to get to the DPS to obtain a photo ID card. Or what does someone who has lost their birth certificate and cannot prove their citizenship do? Without their birth certificate, or other acceptable form to prove residency and citizenship it will probably be impossible to obtain a photo ID card.

It is not as simple as walking into a DPS office and asking for one, one must prove who they say they are. And then there is the potential cost. Obtaining a birth certificate in Texas starts with a cost of \$22 dollars plus other fees. Plus in an ironic twist, the Texas Bureau of Vital Statistics website says that a person requesting a copy of a birth certificate must provide a valid Texas ID card along with their application.

It is not known when the court will rule, but one thing is for sure, many Texas voters are probably wondering why their state government, and in particular state Republicans, have gone through so much trouble and expense to address a phantom problem created by a political party hell bent on maintaining their grip on state government.

Perhaps one of the attorneys representing the federal government said it best when he called the law, "a solution looking for a problem".

Email: eleditor@sbglobal.net

## El Editor's Week in Review

### Town Hall Meeting on New Immigration Policy

On June 15, an executive order signed by President Obama potentially changed the life of hundreds of thousands of immigrants who had been in limbo for a decade.

The executive order included a policy change directive announcing that immigration enforcement would stop the deportation of undocumented immigrants who meet certain requirements and fall into certain categories.

It is estimated that over 800,000 individuals may be directly impacted by the change in immigration policy. Many of those impacted were just children when they were brought here by their parents from various other countries.

Here in Lubbock, a town hall meeting will be held on Sunday July 22, 2012 from 1:00 to 5:00 PM at the Koko Palace, 5101 Ave Q to inform individuals who may be impacted by the new policy. According to an advertisement running in El Editor, the meeting will be a "catered event" and will be free of charge. The meeting is being sponsored by the Webster Law Firm out of Houston and is intended to answer questions about the policy change. Reservations are not required and persons interested in finding out more about the requirements of the new policy are encouraged to attend.

### Lubbock Health Department Relocating

The Lubbock City Council recently agreed to allocate funds to lease a building owned by the Lubbock Housing Authority on 18th street in the depot district and turn it into Lubbock's new health department. The health department's future had been uncertain since last August when City Manager Lee Ann Dumbauld tried to defund the department, close it down and outsource some, not all, of the services offered there. It is expected that the building will need to be renovated but should be ready to be moved into by the beginning of this coming fiscal year which begins October 1.

### The Rich get Richer at TXDOT

While most state workers fear layoffs and funding cutbacks which could mean the loss of their jobs, the top executives at the Texas Department of Transportation are laughing all the way to the bank. A report in the Austin American Statesman revealed that "the salaries of top executives at the Texas Department of Transportation have spiked more than 40% in the past year amid deep cutbacks elsewhere in state government".

The report showed that "the agency's top 3 officials make an average of \$250,000".

Phil Wilson, the executive director, alone makes \$292,500 and had been scheduled to get a \$88,500 raise before criticism about the raises became public. As usual, the reason for the increases given by Wilson was the same old self serving lame excuse that the agency has to pay top dollar to attract top talent.

In this case, the kind of talent that is very adept at abusing their position of power and raiding the taxpayer's bank.

### Lubbock Border Patrol Office to Close

The city of Lubbock, along with 8 other US cities will see its border patrol office close within the next 6 months.

The Amarillo Globe News reported in last Friday's edition that "Border Patrol officials ordered nine stations to be shuttered nationwide, six of them in Texas." It was also reported that stations in Dallas, San Angelo, Abilene and San Antonio will also close with all agents repositioned in border areas.

### Andy Griffith; Television Icon Dies at 86

If the names Mayberry, Sheriff Andy Taylor, Aunt Bea, Opie and of course the hilarious "one buller" Barney sound familiar to you, then you probably remember watching the Andy Griffith Show on a black and white TV in the early 1960's.

Sadly, Andy Griffith, who played Sheriff Andy Taylor, passed away on July 3 at his home in North Carolina.

The Andy Griffith Show ran from 1960 to 1968. Griffith also gained fame for his role as defense attorney Ben Matlock in the television series "Matlock". Griffith was buried in Roanoke Island, North Carolina.

### Texas Ranks Last in Health Care Quality

According to the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality, the state of Texas ranks worst in the nation in health care services and delivery. According to some reports, more than 25% of Texans, over 6 million people, are uninsured, which may only serve to worsen the problem. The agency rated different categories like home health, preventive care and chronic care delivery. Researchers then compared state health services to other states to determine the rankings.

The state ranked most poorly in the area of home health care. The agency found that the state provided little support to the homebound elderly and disabled residents.

The report also stated that Texas rated "weak" or "very weak" in 9 out of the 12 categories which were looked at.

Five clinical areas of care were looked at also, including diabetes, cancer, heart disease, maternal and child health, and respiratory diseases. Out of those 5 areas, maternal and child health rated strong, cancer rated average, diabetes rated very weak, and heart and respiratory diseases rated weak.

The report did not break down information by cities, only states.

### Obama Calls for Tax Cut Extension

President Obama is calling on Congress to extend the tax cuts passed by Congress during the Bush administration, just not for the rich. Obama called for extending tax cuts for families earning less than \$250,000 a year. Otherwise, the President said, some taxpayers could be hit with an additional \$2,000 dollar tax bill if the cuts are allowed to expire.

Republicans though will be hard pressed to vote for the cuts which would not apply for wealthier taxpayers and result in higher taxes for their rich friends.

Email: eleditor@sbglobal.net

## Governor Perry Sticks it to Uninsured Texans

According to some reports, more than 25% of Texas residents do not have any type of health insurance. And to top that off, a recent report by a federal health agency rated Texas as the worst state in the nation when it comes to providing health care.

But none of that seemed to matter to Governor Rick Perry as he heartlessly informed the Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sibelius that the state would not agree to expand its Medicaid services to insure more Texans who cannot afford health coverage. His letter also said that the state would not set up insurance exchanges as called for in the Affordable Care Act.

While Perry's announcement comes as no surprise, this affront to the millions of Texans comes on the heels of \$6 to \$7 billion dollars



of funding cuts in state Medicaid services during the last legislative session.

Perry's action means that Texas will leave billions of federal tax dollars on the table, since beginning in 2014, the federal government would either pay for the additional Medicaid recipients or provide

financial assistance in subsequent years.

As for the insurance exchanges which the Supreme Court ruled as constitutional just two weeks ago, that looks like a futile attempt by Perry to sabotage the law since the law says that if a state refuses to set up the insurance exchanges, then

the federal government can step in and set them up for the state.

Insurance exchanges are expected to provide different options for health insurance coverage and help bring down the high costs of premiums.

The exact number of Texans who will not have health insurance due to Perry's actions may never be known. But some reports say that if Perry had agreed to participate in the expansion, 1,798,314 more Texas residents would have been eligible for coverage.

Unfortunately, thousands of Lubbock residents would also have become eligible.

Now they have to sit back and be used as pawns in what appears to be Perry's personal vendetta against President Obama and the federal government.

Email: eleditor@sbglobal.net

## Rechazan la reforma de salud de Obama

La Cámara de Representantes, de mayoría republicana, aprobó hoy una medida que anula la reforma sanitaria de 2010, en una iniciativa que no será respaldada, no obstante, por el Senado.

Tras más de cinco horas de debate en el pleno de la Cámara Baja, los legisladores aprobaron la medida republicana con 244 votos a favor y 185 en contra.

Se trata de la segunda vez en la sesión 112 del Legislativo -y 33 veces desde enero de 2011- que los republicanos de la Cámara Baja aprobaron una medida que anula la reforma sanitaria.

Aunque esta iniciativa no tiene votos de prosperar en el Senado, sí abonda las divisiones entre la oposición y la Cámara Blanca.

La Casa Blanca ha dejado en claro que el presidente Barack Obama vetará la medida de anulación si el supuesto de que el Congreso (Cámara Baja y Senado) la envíe a su despacho.

Antes del voto definitivo, los legisladores derrotaron una moción democrática para emendar la medida de anulación de la reforma sanitaria, por 180 votos contra 248.

La reforma, que busca ampliar la cobertura médica universal y reducir los costos de salud, se considera el mayor logro legislativo en política interna de Obama, pero es respaldada o se opone frontalmente a ella.

Durante el debate, los republicanos, al unísono, insistieron en que la reforma sanitaria de 2010 es una

costosa intrusión del gobierno federal que está agravando la situación económica del país.

El presidente de la Cámara Baja, el republicano John Boehner, afirmó que la reforma sanitaria no solo no ha reducido los costos sanitarios, sino que "está emperrando nuestra economía, elevando los costos y dificultando las contrataciones de los pequeños negocios".

La objeción principal de los republicanos es que la reforma exige que la mayoría de los estadounidenses adquiera un seguro médico si no paga el pago de una multa, que la oposición equipara a un "impuesto".

En ese sentido, el líder de la mayoría republicana en la Cámara Baja, Eric Cantor, dijo que Obama promueve que no levantara los impuestos

pero que precisamente esta reforma los incluye.

"Es una situación precaria para millones de estadounidenses. Estamos tratando de poner fin a la era de promesas incumplidas, al cuidado de salud controlado por Washington", afirmó Cantor.

Sin embargo, los demócratas, entre ellos el legislador tejano Al Green, aseguran que los republicanos sólo atacan, pero no presentan una alternativa para corregir los males del sistema de salud pública en EE.UU.

La reforma sanitaria, contenida en un documento de 2,700 páginas, prevé la ampliación de la cobertura médica a unos 30 de los cerca de 50 millones de personas que no tienen un plan médico.

# Comentarios - Opiniones

# Our Editorial Voice

## Texas: State of the Disenfranchised

*By Josula de Isla*  
*Hispanic Link News Service*  
 MEXICO CITY—I had a young intern lined up for this summer. She was in need of an international experience as part of her program at a dormitory at Midwestern university. She was an enthusiastic journalism student, had some clips to her credit and had worked while in college. She knew some Spanish and came highly recommended by her mentor. Her mentor formerly did a Houston radio news program. I contributed a weekly commentary. In 1994, I phoned in reports and bulletins from this city on Mexico's election. Back then, word the U.S. was that Mexico was going to have a revolution. People here were still upset after a computer went down during the last election in 1988, suggesting to many the ballot count was rigged by the official ruling party, PRI, which had won by a shut. The U.S. schultbutt in '94 was that violence and mayhem would

break out. John McCain headed the International Republican Democracy Institute and the Jimmy Carter Center came as international observers. The next election, in 2000, saw the opposition party, PAN, win after 71 years of the authoritarian PRI. It was a great day for democracy. Now, at the end of the second official presidential term, the possibility exists the old ruling party could get a plurality of the popular vote and elect a candidate, Enrique Peña Nieto, on July 1. Young people and college students have played a key civic role as a non-partisan, civic society, reform-seeking, and counter-measure to major media interests. They first heckled Enrique Peña Nieto when he showed up in the traditional conservative PAN-leaning Iberoamericana University. EPN was said to have retreated to a restroom. That led to a series of demonstrations. Students from other universities joined in solidarity. They

denounced what they saw as the two top television networks' partisan coverage. They said a major media fix was in to support EPN. The second debate earlier this month drew higher than expected viewership, even though — true be told — it was rather boring. Talk on the street was that the candidates are so rehearsed they have hardly anything new to tell the audience or each other. But the students forced a third debate on educational radio, webcast by Milenio, a commercial media company, and on YouTube. EPN refused to participate. Similarly, as a civic force, the Caravan for Peace With Justice and Dignity, headed by poet and writer Javier Sicilia, brought the four candidates before the families of the murdered, missing, and other victims of the militarized drug war fought here over criminal logistics to supply the U.S.'s craving for dope. I would have liked to have asked my intern how she might frame a story about the hundreds of Politécnic Institute students demonstrating Sunday outside the Televisa facility. Or the Caravan press conference, where she would have seen Nobel-level personalities, as a civic alliance, proposing how they will take their next peace movement to the U.S. I would have enjoyed seeing how a young reporter might frame a complex representation for public understanding. For instance, the leader of a coalition of left-leaning parties, Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the

Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD in Spanish initials), just doesn't seem to be catching up with the front runner. He is the former head of Mexico City's government. The Associated Press has called the city "a progressive island." It perhaps a model of what the rest of the country is struggling to become. The PRD's candidate for mayor, Miguel Ángel Mancera, the city's attorney general, is campaigning on a 12 percent drop in crime from 2010. And a high-level ecological and bicycle transportation has improved dramatically. New construction is everywhere. The city has cultural offerings perhaps among the best in the world. And a high-level ecological and global consciousness. But that story and a young person's perspective won't get written because her university refused to approve my intern's stay. They claimed Mexican crime in the north posed a risk in the south. That's too bad. Disembodied impressions like those, some arising from the 1990s, are not the news. Mexico's safe places are imagined as never ideal enough to see, explore and understand unless my myth and folklore.

Texas Republicans can put lipstick on it and try to pretty it up, but they cannot expect to take the fact that their Voter Photo ID Law is nothing more than a blatant attempt to take the state back to the days of minority voter intimidation and poll taxes.

This past week, Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott and his taxpayer paid legal hounds were up in Washington trying to convince a judge panel that it should allow them to legally suppress the minority vote in Texas.

There is no way to look at it. Perhaps if they get a legal decision to go in their favor they will sleep better at night, knowing that the ridiculous law has been blessed by the courts. But then again, we don't believe that their conscience is bothered for even one minute when they manipulate the legislative process to law otherwise.

It happened during the last redistricting process until the courts stepped in put a stop to their gerrymandering party.

Never mind all this talk about how voter fraud needs to be addressed and their lame arguments that they are doing it to protect the integrity of the voting process. That is a bunch of Texas bull, and we recognize it when we see it.

Writing in a national publication, Texas State Attorney General Greg Abbott actually tries to make the case for the law by stating that his office has prosecuted, get this, all of 50 cases of voter fraud.

Here's what he wrote: "In Texas, evidence of voter fraud abounds. In recent years, my office has secured more than 50 voter fraud convictions. Those include a woman who voted in place of her dead mother, a political operative who cast ballots for two people, and a city councilmember who registered foreign nationals to vote in an election; decided by its votes. Voter fraud is hard to detect, so cases like these are just the tip of the iceberg."

Voter fraud abounds! All of 50 cases in 10 years in a state as big as Texas with close to 13 million registered voters and about 60 million cases of fraud? That is laughable and Abbott should be ashamed of himself for thinking that same and rational Texas actually believe his crap.

## TRIBUNAL SUPREMO DEFIENDE EL DERECHO DE UN LATINO DE MENTIR SOBRE SU HEROISMO MILITAR

*Por Brian de Los Santos*  
*Hispanic Link News Service*

Es posible que sea un pecado menor, pero resulta que no es ilegal. La Primera Enmienda "protege el discurso que detestamos tanto como el discurso que acogemos", dijo Magistrate Anthony Kennedy al entregar el veredicto sobre un caso reciente ante el Tribunal Supremo.

El 28 de junio, el tribunal superior citó la Primera Enmienda cuando Xavier Alvarez, de Pomona, California, sostuvo con falsedad el que hubiera recibido el mayor galardón militar de la nación, la Medalla de Honor. Los magistrados, quienes determinaron el fallo del caso con un voto de 6 contra 3, concluyeron que existe un derecho de libertad de expresión fundamentado en la Constitución, el cual protege la falsedad de Alvarez.

"El fallo del Tribunal Supremo le quita valor al verdadero honor de lo realizado por los soldados en el combate, al igual que a otros roles que han ocupado durante épocas de guerra," le dijo a Hispanic Link Weekly Report Francisco Ibarra, ex comandante nacional del GI Forum de los Estados Unidos.

Presidente de la Cámara de Comercio EE.UU.-México, Al Zapanta, veterano de la guerra en Vietnam, galardonado con 30 medallas y premios por su servicio militar, dijo que respetaría el fallo del Tribunal Supremo, pero sí "un tipo miente, y lo pillan, debería sufrir las consecuencias".

Alvarez, quien fuera funcionario electo de una junta local de agua en Los Angeles, profirió la mentira en una reunión pública en el 2007. Una grabación de su declaración llegó a manos del FBI y, después de una investigación, la Fiscalía Federal abrió un caso contra Alvarez por infringir la ley del honor Robado (Stolen Valor Act).

La ley, promulgada en el 2006, rinde ilegal que un individuo mienta, de forma escrita o hablada, sobre el haber recibido "galardón de decoración o medalla autorizada por el Congreso para las Fuerzas Armadas de los Estados Unidos".

Jonathan Libby, quien sirvió de defensor público de Alvarez, dijo que su cliente lamenta haber lo que hizo y que guarda el más alto respeto por las fuerzas militares. "Creo que tanto así el servicio militar que de alguna manera desaba haber servido, entonces se inventó estos honros.",

No obstante, Ibarra, del GI Forum, galardonado con un Corazón Plúmrpa por su servicio en Vietnam, comentó que, "Para nosotros la importancia radica en que refleja a uno de los nuestros, un representante de nuestra comunidad... Simplemente resulta negativo".

En un artículo de Los Angeles reportado por Hispanic Link News Service en Washington, D.C. Comuníquese con él a: [deossantos@e@gmail.com](mailto:deossantos@e@gmail.com). Con contribución de Mirian Fuentes.

Para ver esta columna en inglés y mucho más, visite [www.HispanicLink.org](http://www.HispanicLink.org). ©2012

## La Obra 'Ghetto Klown' De John Leguizamo Es Un Recorrido De Frustración

*Por Luis Carlos López*  
*Hispanic Link News Service*

El documental, titulado "Tales of a Ghetto Clown" ("Cuentos de un payaso de los ghettos") es un perfil del actor/comediante John Leguizamo en su esfuerzo, con frecuencia frustrante, por montar su más reciente obra teatral exitosa de un solo hombre por Broadway.

La obra, de 49 minutos de largo ha recibido varios galardones y forma parte del festival de las artes y el veneno de PBS (el canal público de televisión), el cual destaca la diversidad de toda la nación y por todo el mundo. El documental se presenta el 13 de agosto a las 9:00 p.m., hora costa este estadounidense.

En lo que Leguizamo, de 47 años, intenta reservar un local y probar a los mandamases del teatro por Broadway que su quinta obra de un solo hombre en dos décadas es digna de las carteleras de Nueva York, va de desahucios a las dificultades que enfrentan los actores latinos

al querer validar sus múltiples talentos y logros sobre las tablas y en la pantalla. En el corazón de su obra, el hijo de madre colombiana y padre puertorriqueño, criado en Nueva York, habla de su identidad multicultural y de su esfuerzo por lograr reconocimiento como un estrella versátil por Broadway y en las películas de Hollywood.

"La película describe del esfuerzo por llevar la obra con un solo actor de John a las tablas de Broadway", le explica a Hispanic Link News Service el director de la obra, Ben De Jesús: "Lo que me gusta de la película es que muestra la lucha por la que tiene que pasar. No existen garantías al éxito, seas quien seas."

Es mensaje es el que mantiene a flote el documental. La narrativa biográfica de Leguizamo, su astuto sentido de humor, su comedia física y anécdotas personales conforman una perspectiva única. Como un serio dramaturgo

## Supreme Court Defends Latino's Right To Lie About Military Heroism

*By Brian De Los Santos*  
*Hispanic Link News Service*

Lying may be wrong, but it's not illegal. The First Amendment "protects the speech we detest as well as the speech we embrace," Justice Anthony Kennedy said when delivering the verdict in a recent Supreme Court case.

On June 28, the high court cited the First Amendment when Xavier Alvarez, of Pomona, Calif., claimed that he had been awarded the nation's highest military accolade, the Medal of Honor. The justices, in a 6 to 3 decision, concluded the constitutional right of free speech protected Alvarez's false statement.

"The Supreme Court's decision devalues the true value of what soldiers have done in combat, as well as other roles they played in war," Francisco Ibarra, former national commander of the GI Forum of the United States, told Weekly Report. "The U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Commerce chairman Al Zapanta, a Vietnam veteran who earned 30 medals and awards for his military service, said he respects the decision of the court but if "a guy lies and it caught up to it, he should suffer the consequences."

Alvarez, who was an elected official of a local water board in Los Angeles, made the claim at a public meeting in 2007. A recording of the statement made its way into the hands of the FBI and, after an investigation, the U.S. Attorney's Office filed charges for violating the Stolen Valor Act.

The act, which was signed in 2006, makes it a crime for an individual to lie about being "awarded any decoration or medal authorized by Congress for the Armed Forces of the United States," in written or oral form.

Jonathan Libby, who served as his public defender, said Alvarez is apologetic for his actions and has the utmost respect for military personnel. "I think he loved the military so much that he kind of wished he had (served), and so he made up these stories."

However, the GI Forum's Ibarra, who earned a Purple Heart during his service in Vietnam, commented, "It is ever so important for us because it's a reflection of one of our own that represents our community... It's just negative."

Brian De Los Santos is a reporter with Hispanic Link News Services. Contact him at [deossantos@e@gmail.com](mailto:deossantos@e@gmail.com). Additional reporting by Mirian Fuentes.

bicultural. Leguizamo eleva las apuestas al transportar su obra de excentricidades en inglés desde Nueva York hasta Bogotá, a 2,500 millas de distancia, donde presenta su soliloquio de dos horas de largo en español. Para ampliar su ímpetu casero, Leguizamo pasó seis meses con un tutor para perfeccionar su dicción, con el fin de compaginar con un público menor y más sofisticado sudamericano.

"No me he dedicado tanto a una obra en décadas," dice el actor durante el documental. Leguizamo expone su alma sobre las tablas, narrando los vaivenes de su carrera, poniéndole carne a los huesos del documental. Las anécdotas que cuenta de su padre, su madre y su abuelo le agregan definición y humor a la temática cultural. "When I was young we didn't had television. We hadda window! Cuando era joven, no teniamos television. Teniamos una ventana! Leguizamo imita a su abuelo, con un inglés mal pronunciado. "We didn't had news. We just open the window! No teniamos noticias. Simplemente abrimos la ventana." En vez de permitir que se desahucian naturalmente los elementos culturales, documentalista De Jesús interpone las voces

de Fisher Stevens, el director de la obra teatral por Broadway, y del productor ejecutivo, Arnold Engelman, quienes profieren un análisis innecesario del diálogo que vale por sí mismo. No se necesita una interpretación. Crítica de teatro para New York Times. Charles Isherwood, comentó que "Es bonito que por último el señor Leguizamo logra superar sus problemas con la intimidad y establecer una familia, pero 'Ghetto' es, entre otros, perdiendo altura durante gran parte del segundo acto, lo que empezamos a sentir que sencillamente estamos escuchando a una presentación de diapositivas narrada sobre sus momentos profesionales destacados y sus porrazos personales", opina Isherwood en su crítica de la obra.

La obra de Leguizamo ha sido galardonado, con el premio del 2011, Drama Desk Awards, que honra el teatro de la ciudad de Nueva York, y otro del Outer Critics Circle, entre otros. Si bien yo no vi la obra teatral, sentí que el documental le sobra fuerza para mantener la atención de los visitantes. El talento natural para la comedia que tiene Leguizamo lo hace triunfar. [Luis Carlos López es correspondiente con Hispanic Link News Service. gmail.com]. ©2012

## Letters to the EDITOR

Dear El Editor  
 People say there are some things in life that are certain. But here in Luback and Gilbert Flores there is another kind of sure thing — when it is election time, Gilbert Flores will come out of hibernation and show up at Our Lady of Grace Church. Every 4 years, like a hibernating bear that comes out of his cave and signals the coming of spring, Gilbert Flores comes out of his cave and signals election time. Here at our church, we see or hear nothing from him until election time then after the election, whether he wins or loses, we hear nothing from him again until the next election. Gilbert Flores the hibernating Commissioner attended Mass last Sunday — everyone can be certain that it's election time.

Leonardo Mojica

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# Savages, de Oliver Stone, queda a deber

Savages es más extraña que salvaje, aunque no le faltan escenas de considerable y sangrienta violencia.

Adaptación de la novela de Don Winslow, supone una pieza más que coherente en la filmografía de Oliver Stone, dada su peculiar aproximación a un tema tan candoroso y polémico como el narcotráfico.

No obstante, el Stone de Savages tiene más que ver con el de Any Given Sunday o The People vs. Larry Flynt -ambos excelentes largometrajes- que con el más visceral de Natural Born Killers o U-Turn.

Y a la cinta le hubiera ido muy bien una dosis de Stone más... salvaje, que no el más tradicional y calmado.

El filme está narrado desde la perspectiva de O (Blake Lively), una joven que comparte su vida y corazón con Chon (Taylor Kitsch) y Ben (Aaron Johnson), un par de traficantes de marihuana del sur de California cuyo negocio florece bajo la atenta mirada del agente de un agente federal (John Travolta) que ignora sus actividades a cambio de un pago regular.

Ben y Chon dirigen su organización con precisión y casi nunca sin requerir de situaciones violentas (si estas son necesarias,

el segundo es el que lidia con ellas). Pero su éxito no tarda en llegar a oídos de Elena (Salma Hayek),



la líder de un cartel mexicano que ordena a su mano derecha, Alex (Demian Bichir), que convence a aquellos para asociarse con ella. Ben y Chon rechazan la oferta, lo que desencadena una guerra entre ambos grupos, que da inicio cuando Elena ordena el secuestro de O.

El tono de Savages es confuso: una música que si está ante un drama realista acerca del narcotráfico, donde los protagonistas de habla inglesa, a pesar de sus lazos con el mundo de las drogas, son los buenos de la función, mientras

que los de origen latino -con la excepción de Magda (Sandra Echevarría), la hija de Elena, y Esteban (Diego Cataño), un

empleado de esta que está a cargo de O-, son los villanos (con Benicio del Toro, como el sicario más terrorífico, a la cabeza), o ante un cuento de hadas que, de repente, se ha desviado hacia el camino equivocado.

Es ambivalencia quizás tenga su motivo y forme parte del periplo que analiza que Stone lleva a cabo del material original. Pero significa que, a lo largo del metraje, exista una distancia emocional y moral con lo que se está contando.

Prueba de ese curioso balance

está en los actores: tanto una excelente Salma Hayek (en la que quizás sea la mejor actuación de su carrera) como John Travolta (disfrutando del histrionismo que le permite su personaje) parecen estar en una película desconocida, audaz e hilarante. Pero Demian Bichir (demostrando una elegancia y sutileza simplemente extraordinarias -¿cuándo le ofrecerán el papel de villano en una entrega de James Bond?-) y el trío de intérpretes principales, se toman lo que

naman muy en serio, a pesar de encontrarse en situaciones ciertamente inusuales (especialmente el actor mexicano). No obstante, Oliver Stone es un cineasta solvente -algo que, a estas alturas, y tras su fascinante carrera, es una obviedad- y sabe cómo sorprender, entretener, irritar e incordiar a través de su cámara.

Es una lástima que, en esta ocasión, lo perturbador deje paso al convencional.

Quizá si el punto de vista de la historia hubiera estado en manos de Elena Hayek en lugar de O Lively, Savages, que se estrenó hoy y ha sido clasificada R- hubiera terminado convirtiéndose en el Natural Born Killers de la nueva generación. Desafortunadamente, no lo es.

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Interested individuals can request the guidelines and an online application at [www.fiestadellano.org](http://www.fiestadellano.org) or emailing or calling the Pageant Director.

Participants will be required to submit their completed applications and a \$200 entry fee by July 27, 2012. Applicants will be contacted to confirm entry and information regarding the mandatory contestant orientation, to be held shortly after deadline.

For more information, please call Zenaida Agüero-Reyes, Pageant Chair/ Director, at (806) 252-2828 or email at [rey24@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rey24@sbcglobal.net)

# From Calle 13 to Los Auténticos Decadentes and Mala Rodríguez, L.A.M.C. Rocks NYC with an Exquisite Selection of Latin Artists

It's summer and music is hot as the 13th Annual Latin Alternative Music Conference LAMC headed to New York City on Wednesday, July 11th, making tons of noise clear through Saturday the 14th. A celebration of Latin alternative music, LAMC is the only place to be if you're a musician, singer, talent/ent promoter or a music industry decision maker.

A world of opportunities for up-and-coming Latin recording artists that not only will change your playlist but may just become famous along the way. This four-day music conference is one of the biggest events in the world for cutting-edge bilingual Latin music of various genres from Latin America, Spain and the United States.

"We once again have a large list of exciting new musicians who are going to be given a big outlet for their music. We also have some major free shows in some of the premier concert venues in New York - Central Park and Prospect Park. We are going to have multiple nights in those venues with some big

names," said Tomas Cookman, founder of LAMC, entertainment company Cookman International and indie music label National Records.

Among fresh new artists, established acts like Calle 13, Los Auténticos Decadentes, Ana Tijoux, Mala Rodríguez, Ximena Sariñana, Kinky and No Te Va Gustar will be performing around the city.

"The purpose of the conference is to bring attention to some amazing bands and equally as important, to allow for a forum for artists, labels, publishers, agents, promoters, etc. etc. to have a place to get together and network - and learn," said Cookman.

Q and A with multi-Grammy-winners Calle 13 and The Latin Recording Academy's Gabriel Abarca (Latin Grammy's) "How to Make a Hit" or "How Did Don Omar Get More Than 200 Million Hits on Youtube" as well as "Why is 3Ball MTY Number One?" are just part of the musical cornucopia that will lift your spirits and inspire you. "Finding Your Audience in the Ever-Changing Radio Landscape", "Digital Streaming,

Branding & the Art of Getting Paid" will be covered plus the opportunity for high powered networking among industry insiders and artists alike.

"I noticed that there were panels at other conferences dealing with the subjects I wanted to see being talked about and when they had those panels, they were always packed that is what helped me decide to do the first LAMC. I felt that there was enough of an audience to justify it - and grow it," said Cookman, a New Yorker with Puerto Rican roots.

LAMC started thirteen years ago in New York City with the purpose of marketing Latino artists, a place to gather all the amazing diversity that represents the contemporary Latin music world to reach both Latinos and non-Latinos alike from all over. "This summer LAMC moved its location to The New Yorker Hotel. "There is a strong media support and a lot of key players that can make a big difference in your career - whether it is when you are first started or even when you are established."

Based in Los Angeles, Cookman selects new bands every year and releases an album compilation with their best songs. "I pick the artists," affirmed Cookman. "It is a combination of availability (for some of the bigger names) to pure taste and feel for what is either about to make noise or just starting to make noise in some part of Latin America or the US."

It is all about quality, said Cookman, regarding the requirements for artists to be chosen to be part of the conference, "to be good, to write great songs, to be honest about what they do and if it does not matter if you are on a major or indie label - I have both."

Every summer, LAMC selects a Discovery Winner. "Kinky for example, was our first "Discovery" winner," said Cookman, "it's sort of like a battle of the bands, but a little bit more a quest for an artist each year that should be identified and brought to more people's attention. This year's selected artist is Carla Morrison. In the past, in addition to Kinky, we have had artists like Pacha Massive, Los Rakas and others."

# Aplazan juicio de Paulina Rubio

El juicio de la cantante mexicana Paulina Rubio por presunto incumplimiento de contrato al no actuar en un concierto en Colombia en 2010 fue aplazado y posiblemente se celebre la próxima semana, informó hoy a Efe la defensa de los demandantes.

"Tal vez se efectúe la semana entrante. La jueza encargada del caso tiene un juicio de otro caso no relacionado con la demanda", dijo un portavoz de la oficina del abogado Richard C. Wolfe.

Rubio afronta una demanda por casi un millón de dólares interpuesta en un tribunal estatal de Florida en noviembre de 2010 por CMG Entertainment, con sede en Miami, el Fondo Mixto de Cultura de Boyacá y la corporación cultural Viva La Música.

Wolfe esperaba que el juicio comenzara este miércoles si la jueza Abby Cynamon terminaba hoy con el otro proceso judicial, algo que finalmente no sucedió. El letrado dijo que incluso es

posible que el tribunal reasigne el caso para agosto próximo y confirmó que la cantante mexicana deberá estar presente en el juicio.



Según el documento judicial del caso al que Efe tuvo acceso, la llamada "Chica de oro" de la música pop en español firmó contrato con CMG Entertainment, el Fondo Mixto de Cultura de Boyacá y la corporación cultural Viva La Música para cantar en

dos conciertos, uno en Bogotá el 28 de agosto y otro en la vecina ciudad de Tunja (centro) tres días después.

Sin embargo, la artista no acudió al segundo concierto donde estaba "el presidente de Colombia, el gobernador, numerosos funcionarios y los dignatarios de 23 países", de acuerdo con la demanda.

Tras la interposición de la demanda, en 2010, Wolfe explicó entonces a Efe que "alcanzamos un contrato con ella que tenía que cumplir y no apareció. Teníamos a 30,000 personas

esperando que ella apareciera y no lo hizo".

Los demandantes estuvieron de acuerdo en pagar a Rubio \$100,000 por los dos conciertos, además de suministrar el transporte desde Miami a Colombia, los hoteles y el traslado por tierra desde Bogotá a Tunja.

Según la demanda, la cantante exigió trasladarse a Tunja "solo si los demandantes estaban de acuerdo en suministrarle un avión privado".

CMG Entertainment fletó el avión y contrató a un piloto a un costo de \$6,000, pero las autoridades de Medellín le impidieron volar porque era ilegal hacerlo directamente a la hora que tenía previsto por restricciones sobre cierto espacio aéreo.

La artista envió un mensaje de correo electrónico a los demandantes informando que "debido al clima no se le permitió aterrizar en Tunja", según el documento judicial.

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# Astros look for road improvement in 2nd half

Houston manager Brad Mills wasn't being facetious when he talked about his team's major league worst 9-32 road record the first half of the season.

"That became a big roadblock," he said.

Instead, the Astros limp into the second half of the season in the now-familiar position of holding baseball's worst record. Mills' biggest task is to help his young team find a way to win on the road, though they will have to do it without the leadership of veteran Carlos Lee, who was traded to Miami last week.

Houston's chance to improve begins immediately after the break with a 10-game West Coast swing to face the Giants, Padres and Diamondbacks.

The difference in the Astros at home, where they are 24-21, and on the road is so stark that it sometimes doesn't even seem like the same team.

Consider these numbers: The Astros have hit a league-low 27 homers away from Houston, but are 11th with 49 long balls, but are tied for first, while the 195 they've piled up at home rank ninth.

And it's not just the offense that has been inconsistent. Houston's 5.66 road ERA is the highest in the majors. At home, the staff has posted a 3.47 ERA - the 10th best. Teams are hitting a baseball-high .297 against the Astros on the road, but managing just .243 at Minute Maid Park.

Mills has talked with his players and staff endlessly to try and fix this situation. In the end, he decided there's one thing that should help turn things around.

"Just consistent play," he said.

"We see us do it one time and we want to be able to continue it. I... think (inconsistency) comes from having a lot of young players.

"We can learn to get it consistent to where we can do it here at home and then take it on the road then we'll be much better."

The players are aware of the issue. Chris Johnson, who started the season at third base but took over at first when Lee left, believes more attention to detail could be a cure for the road woes.

"We need to play good defense, we need to run the bases well and get good, timely hitting," he said.

"We're the kind of ballclub that we need to do all of those little things to win, and if we don't, we're going to lose."

Houston is also grasping for leaders after the departure of Lee. Though the 36-year-old Lee didn't talk much, Mills believes the Astros will miss simply getting to watch him hit every day and learn from his approach.

"There's no doubt that it does change the complexion of the ballclub," Mills said.

But Mills doesn't need any one to try too hard to fill Lee's

leadership role, he just wants each player to be individually accountable.

"They don't have to put so much emphasis on being a leader on the ballclub," he said. "But if they lead themselves, and just do the things that they need to do ... go out and play the game hard and when you do that, that's being a leader."

Houston has struggled to find an identity in the last few years as star after star has been traded away. First to go were Roy Oswalt and Lance Berkman, and last summer Hunter Pence and Michael Bourn followed. Lee's departure marked the end of an era, and left Houston with no position players who were on the team full-time before 2010.

Houston might not be done shedding its older players with an eye toward building for the future. Veteran left-hander Wandy Rodriguez and closer Brett Myers could be attractive to teams looking for a push into the postseason.

No move would surprise starter Bud Norris, who has been around through all of the aforementioned trades.

"I came up in '09 and I think we were the second-oldest team in baseball, and now I think we're the second-youngest team," he said. "So I've seen a lot of transition in this clubhouse, which has been interesting. I know we needed a fresh start and we're excited for the future."

A bright spot in Houston's tough first half has been the emergence of second baseman Jose Altuve, who at 5-foot-5 is the shortest player in the majors.

Altuve earned his first trip to the All-Star game by leading all National League second basemen in batting (.303), hits (96) and steals (15).

He has teamed with shortstop Jed Lowrie to make Houston's middle infield one of the strongest in baseball. Lowrie is in his first season with the Astros after an off-season trade with Boston. His 14 home runs are the most by a shortstop in the first half of the season in franchise history and second-most by shortstop in the NL this season.

The bullpen also did a good job through most of the first half before getting a bit off track after key middle reliever Wilton Lopez was injured in early June. Lopez, who has a 2.51 ERA with a 3-0 record in 32 appearances, is set to return after the break and Mills expects that to be a boost to his team.

"I've been kind of lost for the last month," said Schaffer, who was also pulled from a game in July for fielding mistakes. "It hasn't been fun. But hopefully I can take the break and get away and clear my mind out a little bit and come back and get back to how I was the first month of the year."

# Encendida presentación de Chávez jr. y "Maravilla" Martínez

La presentación del esperado combate entre el campeón mundial medio del CMB, Julio César Chávez jr., y el argentino Sergio Martínez fue tensa y de amenazas de palizas y triunfos, lo que ha causado mayor expectativa en una de las peleas más atractivas del año.

El imbatido Chávez Carrasco (46-0-1, 32 nocauts) y "Maravilla" Martínez (49-2-1, 28 KO) se enfrentarán el 15 de septiembre en la arena Thomas and Mack Center de Las Vegas, Nevada.

En Los Angeles, California, los promotores Bob Arum y Fernando Beltrán marcaron el arranque de la intensa gira promocional Chávez-Martínez, que los llevará por tres ciudades en Estados Unidos y a un México, todo en una semana.

Durante la conferencia en Los Angeles, el primero en tomar la palabra fue el retador argentino y ex campeón mundial medio, Sergio Martínez, quien dijo directamente al sinoalense que se va tener una foto ahora, porque el 15 de septiembre su rostro quedará desfigurado por la paliza que lo propinará.

"Una verdadera paliza te dará Chávez jr., soy de los mejores libra por libra y el cinturón me pertenece y el 15 de septiembre volveré a ser mío", aseguró el argentino, quien agregó que Julio César hijo y su equipo estuvieron evitando la pelea por mucho tiempo.

"Se acabaron los argumentos

y con muchas dificultades ahora estamos aquí por fin y el 15 de septiembre le quitaré todas las

afirmó el monarca de 26 años. "Yo los aseguro que el 15 de septiembre voy a ganar bien



plumas a Julio César hijo", dijo Martínez, de 37 años de edad. Chávez Carrasco, al tomar la palabra, le dijo directo a Martínez que es un protegido del CMB.

"A mí nadie me protege y si hay un protegido del CMB eres tú, hasta un programa tuvieron", afirmó el sinoalense y agregó, "nadie quería pelear con Martínez, el único que le estoy dando la oportunidad soy yo". Le recordó el hijo de la leyenda.

Chávez jr. aseguró que como peleador respeta a Sergio Martínez, "es un buen boxeador, uno de los mejores pesos medios, ha tenido unos triunfos brillantes, pero yo soy mejor y así lo demostraré el 15 de septiembre",

claro y le haré tragar cada una de sus palabras que ha hablado y quisiera saber dónde se va a esconder Sergio Martínez después de derrotarlo", preguntó el monarca.

Arum, por su parte, dijo que el combate Chávez jr.-Martínez será uno de los grandes combates en peso medio y que ha causado mucha expectativa, como hasta tiempo no se daba en esa división.

Mientras, el promotor de JC Chávez jr., Fernando Beltrán, recordó que después de tanto "llorar" de parte de Sergio Martínez, tienen su pelea, aún cuando ellos mismos dejaron el título medio vacante.

"Martínez dejó el título, él renunció, que deje de llorar, ya estamos aquí, dejen de quitarme méritos a Julio, ya tienen la oportunidad que querían, pues nos vemos el 15 de septiembre", aseveró el promotor fronterizo.

Y añadió que si de "plumas" habla Sergio Martínez, se debe de referir a plumas de gallo.

"Porque Julio jr. no es ninguna gallina, nunca le ha rehuído a nadie y el 15 de septiembre demostrará a Martínez, quién es Julio César Chávez jr.", enfatizó Beltrán.

A la presentación del esperado duelo asistió también el campeón mexicano Julio César Chávez González, quien afirmó que su hijo será el segundo mexicano en noquear a Sergio Martínez y que confía mucho en las cualidades de su vistazo.

"En fubbo nos han ganado los argentinos, pero en boxeo no pueden y esta vez no será la excepción, recuerden que ya a Margarito te noqueó y mi hijo será el segundo en hacerlo, para que des de hablar tanta basura", dijo.

JC recordó la derrota por nocaut técnico que sufrió Martínez ante el tijuaneño Antonio Margarito el 19 de febrero del 2000 en Las Vegas.

La gira Chávez-Martínez continuará este miércoles en Las Vegas, Nevada, y el jueves en Nueva York y por confirmar el martes próximo en la Ciudad de México.

## Prince Fielder gana el festival de jonrones por segunda vez

Prince Fielder, de los Tigres de Detroit, se convirtió el lunes en el segundo jugador en ganar más de una vez el festival de jonrones previo al Juego de las Estrellas.

Fielder emocionó al público del Estadio Kauffman con ocho cuadrangulares que fueron a dar a la fuente detrás de los jardines izquierdo y derecho y demolió 12-7 al dominicano José Bautista, de los Azulejos de Toronto, en la ronda final del duelo del lunes.

En una noche en que el también dominicano Robinson Cano, de los Yankees de Nueva York, fue abuchado en repetidas ocasiones y que terminó para Cano sin un solo cuadrangular, Fielder mostró el mayor poder al bate entre los toleteros de las mayores.

Fielder, quien ganó la competencia en el Estadio Busch de San Luis hace tres años, conectó el lunes un total de 28 vuelaceras a lo largo de tres rondas para coronar el evento principal de la tarde previo al Juego de Estrellas. El primer bate de los Tigres pegó además el batazo más largo de la noche, uno de 476 pies que fue a dar a las fuentes.

Ken Griffey jr. ganó tres títulos de derby de cuadrangulares, en 1994, 1998 y 1999.

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# D.C. Passes Bill To Restrict Secure Communities Immigration Enforcement Program

As groups around the country rally this week against the Secure Communities immigration enforcement program, the District of Columbia approved its own measure on Tuesday to fight back.

In a unanimous vote, the D.C. Council approved a bill that will limit the ability of the federal government to enforce immigration laws by restricting the circumstances in which individuals can be held in the custody of local law enforcement at the request of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The nation's capital joined a handful of cities across the country that are taking a stand against the spate of immigration enforcement measures seen in states like Arizona, where local police are now required to ask people who they suspect of being in the country illegally for their documents, during actions as routine as

traffic stops.

"We want to be the anti-Arizona," Sarah Urbe, a D.C.-based organizer for the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, told The Huffington Post. "Our entire campaign to get cities to break ties with federal immigration enforcement is an effort to be the opposite of Arizona."

Opponents of Secure Communities, which is under ICE, say the program has the same effects as SB 1070's most damaging provisions, by potentially scouring undocumented immigrants away from working with police. Under SCOMM, as many call it, fingerprints taken by local police during arrests are given to ICE for screening to determine whether the person detained has entered the country illegally. While the process has been amended slightly so minor traffic offenders won't be in front of ICE, the

program still brings many to ICE attention who haven't first been convicted. Critics say this practice goes directly against SCOMM's stated purpose — to deport dangerous criminals.

The D.C. measure specifically targets one of ICE's tactics called immigration detainers — a practice in which ICE asks local law enforcement to hold an individual for up to 48 hours, so that the agency can investigate their immigration status and assume custody if necessary. The newly-approved law restricts the period in which immigrants will be held from 48 to 24 hours, requires that ICE pay the local costs of incarceration and specifies that those held on detainers must have been convicted of serious crimes.

While ICE spokeswoman Danielle Bennett declined to comment on the D.C. measure or how it

would affect her agency's ability to operate in the area, she wrote in an email that, "ICE remains committed to working with our law enforcement partners to help make our communities safer by focusing our resources on public safety and national security threats, border security, and the integrity of the immigration system."

Opposition to Secure Communities has been growing since 2010, when a number of states and localities tried to leave the program only to find out that, despite previously being told they could opt out, there was no avenue to do so.

Since leaving the program is impossible, D.C. and other areas are attempting to go against it in a different way, with the fight against detainers one of the most recently adopted strategies for fighting the program. Santa Clara,

Calif., and Cook County, Ill., also limited their response to detainer requests earlier this year. Last week, the California state Senate passed a bill called the TRUST Act that resembles the D.C. measure. The bill will prohibit police from keeping any individual in custody longer than they would in normal circumstances, even if there was a detainer request, unless they have been convicted of a "serious or violent felony."

Localities have every right to ignore detainers, said Aarti Kohli, a senior fellow at the University of California Berkeley Law School's Warren Institute who has done extensive research on Secure Communities. When immigration rights groups learned that ICE had no final say in detainer enforcement, they began a campaign to lobby city governments for local restrictions on the federal govern-

ment's reach.

"Today's vote is really a culmination of a three year struggle," Uribe of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network said of the city council action on Tuesday.

Still, ICE agency heads have hinted that cities and states are putting their communities in danger by ignoring their requests to hold undocumented immigrants, an approach critics take issue with.

"States and localities are well within their rights to decide whether they want to honor the detainers," Kohli said.

"When it comes down to it, they are incurring the cost of holding these people," she added. "ICE's response is, 'You're going to let go of the next ax murderer and you're going to have to pay the political cost for that.'"

# First Lady Michelle Obama urges Latinas to use their voice to re-elect President

First Lady Michelle Obama made a forceful case for the re-election of her husband, President Barack Obama during a half-hour chat with prominent Latinas as well as Latina Democrats during a chat streamed live this afternoon on Mamiiverse.com. The First Lady urged Latina women to be actively involved in the Obama campaign, saying for Hispanic women, "it's important to know their voice matters — we all have to be in this fight. It's going to be a close one."

Michelle Obama sat down in Miami with Maria Cardona, a political contributor to Mamiiverse.com and a CNN analyst, as well as a Democratic strategist. Also joining the conversation was Katherine Archuleta, the top-ranking Latina in the Obama re-election campaign and its national political director. Four women who contribute to Mamiiverse.com spoke to the

First Lady of the issues of the most importance to them.

Monica Olivera, founder of Latin Baby and MommyMaestra.com as well as NBC Latino contributor, discussed how her less-than-stellar neighborhood school prompted her to homeschool her children, and the importance of ensuring Latino families have access to preschools or resources to prepare their children for school. Renowned photographer Shirley Miranda-Rodriguez, whose son was diagnosed with autism, said many Hispanic children do not always get diagnosed early, since a lack of verbal skills is explained away by bilingualism or Spanish in the home. Cookbook author and blogger Anna Yvette Marquez-Shrapnack asked how Latinas like her could propagate some of the healthy habits and information in the Let's Move! campaign to combat childhood obesity, which is one of Michelle



Obama's most well-known efforts. Modern Mami blogger Melanie Edwards discussed how to keep Latina girls like her daughter interested in math and science.

The First Lady talked of ways in which families can take even modest steps to improve their children's physical and mental well-being, such as pledging to cook a homemade meal once or

twice a week and sitting down to eat as a family a couple of times a week to talk and observe one's child. Michelle Obama responded to many of the topics raised by the Latina working moms by saying her husband's administration had worked to make these issues better. On health care, the First Lady said the Affordable Care Act had changed many families' lives. "How many

families do you know who have been relying on preventive care through an emergency room, or who were not getting well-child visits in?" she said. "This is one less thing we have to worry about as mothers," Mrs. Obama said.

Katherine Archuleta, Obama for America's national political director, said President Obama had a record which showed "a path of support" for Latino children, from increased funding for preschool to more emphasis on increasing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) to increasing Pell grant availability for Latinos going to college.

The First Lady concluded the conversation by saying there is only one person "who will fight for all of us every single day — and who is speaking truth to power." She also told Latinas "we have to get used to the notion that our voices matter—we are practicing using our voices to

protect our families."

Cardona told Michelle Obama focus groups of Latina women — even those who identified themselves as independents — had felt that President Obama "had their back" because of her.

Betina Cutia Wilkinson, a Latina assistant professor at Wake Forest University, says a "First Lady" would not be the reason why a Latino voter goes to the polls — especially when many voters' main concerns are jobs and the economy, and immigration. She explains, though, that Presidents have found their wives are an important asset.

"The idea that Michelle Obama has a better sense of what Latinas are concerned about, and can whisper in the President's ear on issues important to Hispanic women is a reason why she is important to his campaign," says Cutia Wilkinson.

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