



How the Romney–Ryan Ticket Hurts Latinos

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It is probably safe to assume that not many Latinos had heard of or knew much about Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI) before GOP presidential nominee and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney announced that he was choosing Rep. Ryan as his running mate. Yet now that he is the Republican vice presidential nominee, his budget proposal—along with Gov. Romney’s—will be scrutinized by the Latino community.

When Latinos look closely, they will find that the policies that both candidates embrace are in direct contradiction to the policies that most Latinos support. As a 2011 LatinoDecision/Impremedia poll shows,¹ 55 percent of Latinos believe that the government should make investments to stimulate the economy, 72 percent oppose cutting Medicare, and 60 percent believe that government should ensure that everyone has access to health care, among other findings.

Below we provide the facts on where Gov. Romney and Rep. Ryan stand on the key issues Latinos care about.

Health care

- Under the Affordable Care Act, an estimated 5.4 million Latinos will gain health care coverage.²
- 736,000 Latino young adults between ages 19 and 25 now have coverage under their parent’s employer-sponsored or individually purchased health plan, thanks to the Affordable Care Act.³
- Both Gov. Romney and Rep. Ryan have committed to repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act.⁴

Pell Grants

- According to a Student Aid Policy Analysis report, from 2007 to 2008 Latino students were 13.7 percent of Pell Grant recipients.⁵ The federal Pell Grant program provides need-based grants to low-income undergraduate and certain postbaccalaureate students to promote access to postsecondary education.
- Rep. Ryan's budget would cut the Pell Grant program by \$200 billion, which could “ultimately knock more than one million students off” the program over the next 10 years.⁶
- Gov. Romney plans to “simplify” (i.e., cut) federal higher education spending,⁷ which will make it much more difficult for students to receive financial support for school. He also plans to “refocus” education spending,⁸ which would result in increasing the requirements of receiving a Pell Grant.

Head Start

- In 2010, 34 percent of children in Head Start were of Hispanic origin.⁹ Head Start is a federal program that promotes the school readiness of children from birth to 5 years old from low-income families.
- The Ryan budget would cut \$430.3 million from Head Start programs nationally,¹⁰ eliminating 61,612 slots for children and 22,640 jobs in fiscal year 2013 alone.
- Gov. Romney, as governor of Massachusetts, cut money from Head Start;¹¹ in 2005 he cut Head Start by \$1.3 million, and in 2006 he cut \$1 million from the program.

Housing

- Latinos have a foreclosure rate about double that of whites—9.8 percent, compared to 5 percent for whites.¹²
- Gov. Romney advocates a hands-off approach to the housing crisis, letting it run its course and hit rock bottom.¹³
- Gov. Romney supports the elimination of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau,¹⁴ which was established to enforce federal fair-lending laws that protect consumers from discriminatory lending practices. According to the Center for Responsible Lending, Latino borrowers were 30 percent more likely to get a subprime loan than were whites.¹⁵

Jobs and job training

- Hispanics comprise a large part of the low-skilled labor market,¹⁶ making up more than 20 percent of workers in the construction and food industry.¹⁷
- Under the Ryan budget plan, investments to improve and repair the nation's interstate highway system, public transportation, and railroads will be cut,¹⁸ which would eliminate jobs for Latinos.
- If the Ryan budget were adopted into law, funding for federal job-training programs would be virtually eliminated.¹⁹ According to the Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce,²⁰ the Ryan budget would reduce the budget line that funds job-training programs by more than \$16 billion, or 22 percent.
- The Ryan budget would cut programs such as YouthBuild and JobCorps, which serve a substantial number of Latinos.
- As governor of Massachusetts, Romney vetoed \$11 million in job-training funds.²¹ As a presidential candidate, he has proposed big job-training cuts, as well.²²

Taxes

- Gov. Romney plans to increase taxes for millions of families and children of color by cutting the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit, which reduces families' income taxes for all dependent children and supplements the wages of low-income families, respectively.
- 3.7 million Hispanic families with 8 million Hispanic children would receive a tax increase from the loss of tax credits from the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit.²³

Immigration

- Gov. Romney supports a policy of "self-deportation," which aims to make the lives of the undocumented so difficult that they would choose to leave the country voluntarily.
- Gov. Romney also supports Arizona's "papers please" law,²⁴ which requires that law enforcement officers demand proof of legal status from anyone they suspect is undocumented.
- Rep. Ryan voted for the infamous Sensenbrenner bill (H.R. 4437) back in 2005, which made it a felony to be in the country without immigration status.²⁵
- Gov. Romney has promised to veto the DREAM Act, which would provide kids who lack immigration status and came to the United States as children the opportunity to earn citizenship by going to college or serving the country through military service.²⁶
- Rep. Ryan voted against the DREAM Act in 2010.²⁷

Poverty

- The Hispanic poverty rate increased from 25.3 percent in 2009 to 26.6 percent in 2010. Thirteen million Latinos were considered poor in 2010, representing an increase of 893,000 since 2009.²⁸
- More Latino children are living in poverty—6.1 million in 2010—than children of any other racial or ethnic group.²⁹
- Rep. Ryan gets 62 percent of his budget cuts from programs for lower-income Americans.³⁰ His budget would kick millions off of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and would gut the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program.³¹ Nineteen percent of nutrition assistance participants are Hispanic,³² and Hispanics represent the largest racial or ethnic group in the Women, Infants, and Children program.³³
- Gov. Romney’s budget plans could kick 13 million people off of food stamps.³⁴

Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program

- In 2009, 27 percent of Hispanic Americans—13 million people, including 9 million children—were covered by Medicaid.³⁵
- According to the National Council of La Raza,³⁶ Latinos are about two times more likely than whites to have coverage through Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program; nearly half (49.3 percent) of Latino children have Medicaid or are covered by the Children’s Health Insurance Program.
- Rep. Ryan proposed ending the Medicaid entitlement,³⁷ instead providing fixed-dollar-amount funding to states through block grants that would reduce funding for the program, thus jeopardizing the coverage and protections currently guaranteed for children and other vulnerable populations.
- The Ryan budget would dramatically reduce funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program by cutting nearly \$29 billion in two years alone.³⁸

Reproductive rights

- Latina women experience unintended pregnancies at double the rate of white women.³⁹ In addition, the abortion rate among Latina women is double the rate among white women.⁴⁰
- Gov. Romney has pledged to “get rid of” Planned Parenthood and to end funding for our nation’s family planning program. Rep. Ryan has voted to deny federal funding for both.⁴¹ They also have also supported legislation that would allow employers to take away no-cost contraceptive coverage from employees.
- Both Gov. Romney and Rep. Ryan have supported “personhood” amendments that would ban abortion in all circumstances with no exceptions whatsoever and would criminalize certain forms of birth control and fertility treatments.⁴²

- Eliminating the Title X Family Planning Program, which serves more than 5 million people with family planning services each year,⁴³ would disproportionately hurt Latina women. In 2011, 29 percent of Title X clients were identified as Latina—many of whom have no other health care access.

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Endnotes

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