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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Dinner For A Better, Cleaner Environment For All New Mexicans**

*Latin(a/o/x) Immigrant Families Discuss Environmental Concerns With Elected Officials From the 87121 Zip Code Area - Albuquerque's Westgate*

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.— Today, immigrant Latino/a/x families and leaders from Juntos: Our Air, Our Water will have an opportunity to dine and converse with elected officials – from the 87121 zip code area of Albuquerque, **including Representative Patricia Roybal-Caballero, Senator Linda Lopez, and Representative Georgene Louis among others** – to reaffirm the officials' commitment to stand with the Latino/a/x community to hold Gov. Susana Martínez and the Environment Dept. accountable to transition to clean, renewable energy that will create a healthier today and tomorrow for Latino communities in NM.

On Nov. 21st, immigrant Latin(o/a/x) community members and leaders turned in over 2,400 signed petitions to Gov. Susana Martínez and the Environmental Department in Santa Fe, NM demanding our state transition to clean, renewable energy that will create a healthier today and tomorrow for Latino communities in NM.

The petition gathering started early September of this year after Juntos had conducted a survey, from October 2015 through February 2016, which demonstrated that 89 percent of the surveyed families – mostly from the Latin(o/a/x) immigrant community – expressed that their number one concern was the air quality and air pollution levels found in their communities.

The survey findings were then corroborated by the [American Lung Association study](#) which gave Bernalillo County a grade "F" for air quality.

[According to the Solar Jobs Census](#), nearly 40% of solar workers in the state of New Mexico are Hispanic/Latino. The same census shows [that solar industry employment has grown by 123% in the past six years](#), resulting in nearly 115,000 domestic living-wage jobs.

***The following are statements by leaders from Juntos: Our Air Our Water on today's petition turn-in at the State Capitol Building:***

**Martha Favela, Leader of Juntos' "Mother Promotoras" program said,** "When we elect public officials, we trust them to make sure our public resources work for us by protecting our interests now and for our future - and Latino families are coming together to remind our leaders to put New Mexicans first."

**Abril Gurrola, Leader for Juntos' Youth Leaders programs expressed,** "Our families deserve to be treated with dignity and that includes ensuring the clean air, clean water and clean energy we need. We have gathered thousands of signatures from our communities to ensure that New Mexican families are heard and we can build a better future for our families,"

**Christopher Ramirez, Program Director of Juntos: Our Air Our Water also added,** "Our state has an opportunity to stimulate its economy if the Martínez administration decides to invest in clean, renewable energy that will bring about "green jobs" in our communities.

"Nuclear energy, including the extraction of uranium from places like northwest and western New Mexico are dangerous for the environment and the people in those communities, let alone the disposal of products once they're used for production of energy," **he said.**

Latino/a/x immigrant families will have an opportunity to express their concerns by sharing their stories and possible solutions to combat Martínez's administration continuous favoring of big corporations at the expense of their families' health – in order to improve access to clean air, water and clean, renewable energy in our state and the city of Albuquerque, specifically in the Westgate area.

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*Juntos is an environmental justice program of the non-profit Conservation Voters New Mexico Education Fund in partnership with Chispa, a program of the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, that strengthens Latina/o/x voices in New Mexico to protect the air we breathe and the water we drink -- for the health of our families and our future through the development of Latin(a/o/x) leaders who are committed to organize and mobilize for healthy and strong communities. To learn more about Juntos' work you can visit our website [www.cvnmef.org/juntos/](http://www.cvnmef.org/juntos/) or on Facebook [@Juntos NM](https://www.facebook.com/JuntosNM).*