

EPA Hearing Testimony  
February 6  
Fernando Cázares

Buenas noches! La comunidad Latina quiere que aire limpio y un medio ambiente seguro y sano para las generaciones futuras. Good evening! I am here today as a member of the diverse Latino community in the United States, to support EPA in regulating carbon pollution from new power plants with the strongest possible rules. Carbon pollution has disproportionate negative impacts on our Latino communities, and as the fastest-growing population in this country, Latino voices on this issue must be heard. My name is Fernando Cázares and I represent with Voces Verdes, a national coalition of 35 Latino leaders from business, labor, public health, and community sectors who are advocating action on climate change and the development of clean energy. Since 2009, Voces has developed a diverse network of environmental justice, medical, youth and the elderly, and economic development organizations who are working to make their areas more environmentally sustainable. We work to empower our leaders to tell their own story of fighting against climate change and helping families and businesses reap the benefits of clean energy while cutting their carbon footprint. That is why we are grateful to have Edwin Luevanos, one of our leaders, presenting today.

What I want to share with you tonight is that the Latino community overwhelmingly supports your actions to finally put limits to the amount of carbon pollution that power plants throw into the air we breathe! This past December, Voces Verdes and the Natural Resources Defense Council commissioned a national survey of 805 Latinos by Latino Decisions, a leading pollster company. Allow me to point out a couple of results:

- Nationally, nine in 10 Latinos want the government to take action against the dangers of global warming and climate change.
  - Of those, 68 percent of Republican Latinos say that it is important—including 46 percent of Republicans who say it's very or extremely important—for our government to tackle global warming and climate change.
- Nationally, 86 percent of Latinos support setting limits on carbon pollution that power plants discharge into the air to fight climate change.
  - Of those, 71 percent of Democrats, 44 percent of Republicans and 63 percent of Independents strongly support setting limits on carbon pollution from power plants. Broken out by income, 91 percent of those making less than \$20,000 a year say that it is important for our government to tackle global warming and climate change, and 86 percent of those with incomes over \$80,000 hold this view.

Hispanics are the largest minority ethnic group in our country; there are 53 million Hispanics (17% of population). In the next 50 years, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that our nation will have 129 Americans of Hispanic descent, which will represent roughly 31% of the total population. The outcome of the policy and regulatory debates to control carbon pollution and other efforts to fight climate change will have direct effects on our children and grandchildren and the future generations of our country. We have a proud history of fighting against dirty power plants in Chicago's predominantly

Latino neighborhoods and organizing against landfills and other toxic land uses in Los Angeles to name some examples. But we also clearly understand that the fight against dirty energy sources must be fought in the legislative and regulatory arenas, which is why we are here. But Latinos understand that the effects of climate change go beyond our immediate communities. We are strongly concerned about the impacts of Superstorm Sandy along the New York and New Jersey coasts, the wildfires that hit California and the Southwest, and the stronger hurricanes and tropical storms that are predicted for the Atlantic coast as well as Central America and the Caribbean.

Finally, I'd like to close with an important message from our survey results. For Latinos, the most credible messengers in the climate change conversation are scientists, doctors, environmental organizations, and you, the EPA. We trust our state and federal government agencies to exercise their authority and duty to protect us from the effects of pollution from fossil fuels and the climate change that it drives, on our health and the resources that our country's future generations need to achieve their dreams. I am here to let you know that a strong and growing national coalition of Latino leaders stands behind you and ready to support the final standards for new power plants and we ask you to move decisively to establish limits for existing power plants.