

2017 FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

FLORIDA LATINA ADVOCACY NETWORK (FL LAN)



NATIONAL LATINA
INSTITUTE FOR
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Florida LAN

Salud | Dignidad | Justicia





National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH) is the only national reproductive justice organization dedicated to advancing social justice and human rights for the 28 million Latinas, their families, and communities in the United States. NLIRH builds Latina power to guarantee the fundamental human right to reproductive health, dignity and justice. We elevate Latina leaders, mobilize our families and communities, transform the cultural narrative and catalyze policy change. Our vision is to create a society in which Latinas have the economic means, social capital, and political power to make and exercise decisions about their own health, family, and future



The **Florida Latina Advocacy Network (FL LAN)** operates as an extension of NLIRH, serving as the voice and advocacy presence in Florida. The FL LAN works with activists throughout Miami-Dade County to organize our communities around issue-based campaigns that impact our families and our lives. Established after a Latinas Organizing for Leadership and Advocacy (LOLA) training in Miami in 2007, the FL LAN seeks to increase Latinx visibility in the reproductive justice movement, cultivate well informed leaders and build networks of activists in Miami-Dade County that will inform and support our state and national policy agenda and strengthen state and national reproductive justice activism. Implementing various civic engagement and community organizing strategies, the FL LAN is building a large base of Latinxs who are trained on how to use a reproductive justice lens to organize their communities for change and develop spokespeople to lift up the voices of Latinxs in Florida on a local, state, and national level.



WHAT IS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE?

NLIRH was founded in 1994, the same year the Reproductive Justice (RJ) movement was founded by a group of visionary Black women. The RJ framework is a transformational and culturally grounded movement for human rights and social change. Latinas across the country joined with our Black, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Indigenous hermanxs to reframe our organizing and advocacy to work across issues and identities while building the movement for dignity, justice, and self-determination for ourselves, our families, and our communities.

RJ will be attained when all people have the economic, social, and political power and means to make decisions about their bodies, sexuality, health, and family, with dignity and self-determination. RJ organizing and advocacy centers the needs, voices, and leadership of those who have been marginalized, including women of color, low-income people, LGBTQ people, young parents, and immigrants.



Why Reproductive Justice is Important to Latinx Communities

Latinx folks—like all people—do not live single issue lives. Reproductive justice requires full recognition of the human and civil rights of our communities, among these: the human right to health care, including comprehensive reproductive care; the ability to decide when and if to have children, build our families, and parent our children with dignity; and freedom from immigration policies that disregard our humanity and our contributions.

Latinxs across the country are facing detention and deportation, restrictions on access to abortion and other critical reproductive health services, violence, discrimination, economic injustice, lack of health coverage, environmental racism, abusive working conditions, and the denial of our civil and human rights. Despite this daily struggle, our communities continue to resist, teach, build, and create in the face of oppression, and to fight for reproductive justice.

How We Fight For Justice

The FL LAN builds Latinx power to advance reproductive justice, organizing in all community spaces, from parks, living rooms, and laundromats to working in solidarity with allies throughout the state. Our work will continue until reproductive justice is attained for all Latinx folks, our families, and communities, and we will advance policy advocacy in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C., to ensure our voices are heard.



2017 Florida Legislative Report

Bringing our lived experiences, presence and policy advocacy to Tallahassee is key to ensuring our mission of elevating Latinx and immigrant leaders and catalyzing policy change. This report highlights the collective efforts of FL LAN Poderosxs and our allies in the struggle for Salud, Dignidad y Justicia.

Access to reproductive healthcare in Florida is dangerously inadequate and legislative attacks to roll back what access and protections do exist are consistently brought forth every year.



Our presence during the legislative session and the activists who shared their lived experiences with lawmakers, helped ensure that those most likely to be impacted are leading the initiatives for the changes we seek to make in our communities. Our legislative efforts, and those of our allies, are focused on empowering our communities and looking to those most impacted to determine our policy advocacy efforts. FL LAN continues to play a leading role in uplifting the voices of Latinx and immigrant communities. Centering a reproductive justice lens is necessary now more than ever, given the increased attack against women, immigrants, and LGBTQ folks in Florida.

Statewide Advocacy

During the 2017 Florida legislative session, hundreds of FL LAN activists and allies raised their voices for health, dignity, and justice to advance three critical and interconnected areas: **abortion access and affordability; immigrant women's health and rights; and sexual and reproductive health equity, including LGBTQ liberation.**

In coalition with partners from across the state, including Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC), FL C3 Civic Engagement Table, Power U, Emgage USA of FL, Black Lives Matter Alliance of Broward, Students Working for Equal Rights (SWER), Equality FL, Planned Parenthood, and SEIU, we kicked off session with a mass mobilization for International Women's Day led by and centered on women and our priorities that engaged over 200 people at the state capitol.

Building on the momentum of the start of session and committed to building strong

coalitions, FL LAN was engaged in over 20 different partner lobby days and press conferences, including Muslim Day at the Capitol, healthcare advocacy with #Save-OurCare, and demanding economic justice with Awake the State. Our presence and framework was critical to highlighting the intersectionality of the issues that affect our communities and lives.

The FL LAN also held its first ever LatinX Lobby Days where 15 activists from across South Florida drove to Tallahassee to lobby on abortion access and care, as well as the safety of immigrant women and communities. Over the course of 2 days, activists had 25 legislative visits with State Representatives and Senators. In our commitment to building relationships with our Electeds, we established FL LAN as a resources for supporters and champions both within the State House and State Senate around reproductive health and abortion access, immigration, and LGBTQ issues.



Abortion access and affordability

Expand Access to safe, legal, affordable, and accessible abortion for all Latinxs, regardless of income, places of residence, age, or immigration status.

Latinxs, and other people of color, experience disproportionately high unintended pregnancy rates, are more likely to live in poverty, and less likely to be able to afford abortion care (or other healthcare) out-of-pocket. Additional barriers targeting Latinxs like legislation for 24-hour delay, restrictions on reproductive health provider including Planned Parenthood health centers, bans on abortion coverage, and others, make access to abortion an abstract concept with little bearing on their reality. Latinx voters in Florida say access for women who make this decision should be affordable, respectful, and not difficult in terms of travel and logistics. A person has the right to make their own personal decisions about abortion without political interference or undue burden.

Under the guise of health and safety, Florida legislators keep introducing legislation with the intent of reducing access to abortion care by attacking providers and clinics, and continuing to shame or misguide people seeking safe and legal abortion care. These bills are unpopular with constituents and endanger the lives of people while further limiting their ability to make decisions about their health, family and future.

During the 2017 Florida legislative session, FL LAN worked with partners at Planned Parenthood, Florida NOW, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and Equality Florida to mobilize our communities and advocate against legislators working to turn lies into laws.

Although all legislation that restricted abortion care or shamed individuals from seeking or accessing care was defeated, a



seemingly “non-threatening” bill that was signed into law by the Governor may have unforeseen consequences that could set a path for fetal personhood. With the passing of the “Grieving Families Act”, Florida people may now request a type of birth/death certificate for miscarriages under 20 weeks of gestation. FL LAN will monitor this new statute as it progresses.

BILLS FL LAN OPPOSES

Abortion access and affordability

PREGNANCY SUPPORT SERVICES

This bill would have established “Pregnancy Support Services” also referred to as Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs) as legitimate wellness centers and appropriates state funding to support and promote child birth. CPCs provide medically inaccurate and religious based information that coerces and shames people into carrying unintended pregnancies to term, when they have already made the decision. No one should face any kind of harassment when making a private decision.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 1130 by Sen. Bean	Passed 1 of 3 committees votes. No floor vote.	Died in committee.
House Bill 969 by Rep. Toledo	Passed 3 of 3 committees and floor vote.	Passed the Florida House of Representatives.

LIABILITY FOR TERMINATION OF PREGNANCIES

This bill exclusively targets doctors who offer abortion care and is a clear attack that creates undue burdens on providers to discourage them from practicing. This bill would make a physician who performs abortions liable for damages, physical injuries or emotional distress as a result of the procedure. It would’ve also provided a statute of limitations for cause of action for up to 10 years. This bill was unsubstantiated in its claim of emotional distress and singled out women’s health centers and doctors who provide abortion services, placing unnecessary requirements on them to deter them from providing their services. People that seek abortion care have already made the decision to receive care and this law would have provided an undue burden on medical providers.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 1140 by Sen. Stargel	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 19 by Rep. Grall	Passed 2 of 3 committees votes. No floor vote.	Died in committee.

¹ Based on the survey commissioned by NLIIRH and conducted in Spanish and English by the nonpartisan research firm PerryUndem Research/Communication, of a representative sample of 505 Latino/a Florida registered voters. Titled “Latino/a Voters’ Views and Values on Abortion: Findings from a Florida Statewide Survey” from October 2016.

² CPCs, purposely disguised as support centers, lure pregnant women into their facilities pretending to provide abortion referrals, but subject them to lies and blame to try to shame them out of abortion care.

CERTIFICATES OF NONVIALE BIRTH

This bill created the “Grieving Families Act” which establishes a “Nonviable birth” and requires filing its registration. A nonviable birth is defined as an unintentional, spontaneous fetal termination or miscarriage before a period of 20 weeks. This bill paves the way for establishing personhood of a fetus by allowing the filing of a “death certificate” of sorts, referring to a fetus under 20 weeks as a “baby”, arbitrarily assigning a gender to said fetus even when indistinguishable, and submitting into public record a certificate of nonviability for fetus.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 672 by Sen. Bean	Passed 3 of 3 committees. No floor vote.	Passed the Florida Senate.
House Bill 101 by Rep. Cortes, B.	Passed 3 of 3 committees and floor vote.	Passed the Florida House of Representatives.
SIGNED INTO LAW BY THE GOVERNOR.		

20 WEEK ABORTION BAN

This bill would have established the “Florida Pain- Capable Unborn Child Protection Act”, prohibiting an abortion of a fetus 20 weeks or more, unless there is a serious health risk to the mother. It would have provided reporting regulations as well as criminal and civil penalties for physicians. Bans on later abortions are unpopular, dangerous, and keep people from accessing life saving care. Often times most people do not discover they are pregnant until just after 20 weeks. This ban would force people to seek care outside of legal abortion clinics and would create a dangerous and undue burden on those seeking abortion care.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 348 by Sen. Steube	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 203 by Rep. Gruters & Rep. Hahnfeldt	No action.	Died in committee.

HUMANITY OF THE UNBORN CHILD ACT

This bill would have required the Department of Health to provide materials via radio, TV, internet, and print media communicating that elective abortion kills a living human being and provide outreach, consultation, training, and referrals offering alternatives to abortions. This law would have misled the public around the humanity of a fetus and set the stage to publicly shame people into carrying unintended pregnancies by misleading the public in regards to the humanity of an unborn fetus.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 1006 by Sen. Bean	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 841 by Rep. Toledo	Passed 2 of 3 committees votes. No floor vote.	Died in committee.

BILLS FL LAN SUPPORTS

Abortion access and affordability

ACCESS TO CLINICS

This bill would have created the “Protection of the Exercise of Constitutional Rights” prohibiting a person from committing certain acts against reproductive health services clients, providers, or assistants; providing criminal penalties and fines. This bill would have provided legal protections for providers and clinics against violence and harassment. Our legislators should introduce bills such as this one to ensure that clinics in our communities are safer and people are protected from harassment when accessing safe, legal care.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 1740 by Sen. Stewart	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 1339 by Rep. Mercado	No action.	Died in committee.

Immigrant women's health and rights

Protect and advance human and civil rights of immigrant Latinxs and families, including the right to quality, affordable health care regardless of immigration status.

Raids, anti-immigrant policies, and barriers to care target individuals and the communities to which they belong negatively impacting access to safe, quality health care. Undocumented individuals in the U.S. frequently report forgoing or delaying care because they fear that they will be reported to immigration officials. As a result, conditions that are easily addressed through prevention or early treatment are more likely to progress into serious health issues. This adverse impact on health care access is likely to exacerbate the already significant barriers to care that immigrants face; especially women who represent 51 percent of the overall foreign-born population .

Targeting immigrant and refugee communities, Florida legislators introduced legislation seeking to criminalize immigrants, legalize racial profiling, and continue to harass and terrorize our communities. This kind of legislation is immoral, unjust, hypocritical (immigrant workers are the backbone of Florida's economy), and push the false narrative that immigrants and refugees are criminals.

In coalition through the "We Are Florida" campaign led by Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC) and working with partners including Emgage USA of FL and ACLU, we were able to defeat all nine anti-immigrant and anti-refugee pieces of legislation introduced during the 2017 legislative session.



BILLS FL LAN OPPOSES

Immigrant women's health and rights

FEDERAL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

This bill would have created the “Rule of law Adherence Act” prohibiting sanctuary policies and forcing local governments and officials to cooperate with federal immigration authority. Enforced through racial profiling, this law would have required local governments to turn on their residents and coordinate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainer orders at a level that is not required by law and has been challenged several times in courts.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 786 by Sen. Bean	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 697 by Rep. Metz	Passed 3 of 3 committees and floor vote.	Passed the Florida House of Representatives.

OFFENSES BY ALIENS UNLAWFULLY PRESENT IN THE UNITED STATES

This bill would have increased the criminal sentence for an undocumented immigrant charged with a crime solely based on their immigration status. This bill would have allowed for the unlawfully discrimination against undocumented people on the basis of national origin or citizenship by enhancing penalties to a lesser crime simply for being undocumented.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 120 by Sen. Hutson	Passed 2 of 3 committees. No floor vote.	Died in committee.
House Bill 83 by Rep. Eagle & Fischer	Passed 2 of 3 committees. No floor vote.	Died in committee.

³ From Migration Policy Institute report from March 2017 titled “Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States”.

BILLS FL LAN SUPPORTS

Immigrant women's health and rights

DRIVER LICENSES AND IDENTIFICATION CARDS

This bill would authorize certain documents issued by foreign governments to satisfy proof of identity for certain driver license applicants. Among immigrant and low-income families, there is a high number of people who do not have standard identification, resulting in obstacles accessing public and private care and services. Identification cards for everyone promote public safety by reducing fear of interacting with law enforcement. Our legislators should introduce laws that keep our communities safe and allows all residents to contribute fully to our economy and community.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 184 by Sen. Jose Javier Rodriguez	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 1061 by Rep. Mercado & Rep. Jacquet	No action.	Died in committee.



Sexual and reproductive health equity

Expand access to quality, affordable, culturally- and linguistically appropriate sexual and reproductive health coverage, services, and information for low-income, immigrant LGBTQ, rural, pregnant and parenting, and young Latinxs and their families.

Latinxs, including LGBTQ Latinxs, immigrant women, and women of color experience systemic barriers such as cost, lack of available clinics, insufficient culturally and linguistically competent health systems, and discriminatory immigration policies that make it difficult for individuals and communities to access basic healthcare.

Latinxs have historically lacked access to quality reproductive health and preventive services, resulting in major health inequities and poorer Latinx health outcomes. Current leadership in the Florida legislatures and the state governor have been outspoken in their opposition to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicaid expansion. Current political climate and national trends means that the future of the ACA is uncertain.

Reproductive justice is not possible without LGBTQ liberation. During the 2017 legislative session, FL LAN supported the advocacy of Equality Florida and ACLU

in advocating for dignity and respect for everyone and against LGBTQ discrimination. Although Florida legislators in the 2017 session didn't explicitly introduce legislation that directly attacked the rights of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ), no pro-active legislation was passed either. In Florida, discrimination in employment and housing against LGBTQ people continues to be legal, despite unprecedented and bipartisan support and co-sponsorship by both Senate and House officials of the statewide nondiscrimination act, introduced for its seventh session.

BILLS FL LAN OPPOSES

Sexual and reproductive health equity

LOCAL REGULATION PREEMPTION

This bill would prohibit certain local governments from imposing or adopting certain regulations on businesses, professions, and occupations, directly impacting local ordinances and weakening the power of local government. This dangerous bill would threaten many laws passed over the years that protect residents and workers, including local LGBTQ discrimination protections, wage theft ordinances, minimum wage ordinances, and other local policies.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 1158 by Sen. Passidomo	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 17 by Rep. Fine	Passed 1 of 2 committees. No floor vote.	Died in committee.

BILLS FL LAN SUPPORTS

Sexual and reproductive health equity

PROHIBITED DISCRIMINATION

The bill would have created the “Florida Competitive Workforce Act” and adding sexual orientation and gender identity as impermissible grounds for discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations. Our legislators should pass laws that ensure everyone in Florida is treated with dignity and respect, including those who are LGBTQ.

	VOTE HISTORY	FINAL ACTION
Senate Bill 666 by Sen. Clemens	No action.	Died in committee.
House Bill 623 by Rep. Diamond & Rep. Plasencia	No action.	Died in committee.

Moving Forward

We concluded the 2017 Florida Legislative session having defeated over a dozen bills aimed at criminalizing, shaming, or terrorizing women, Latinxs, immigrants and refugees, people of color, LGBTQ or low-income folks. The political climate in our state legislature is hostile towards our communities and there is much more work left to do.

At the Florida capitol, FL LAN plays a leading role in uplifting the voices and experiences of Latinx and immigrant communities, and is recognized for embracing a reproductive justice lens and intersectional approach in its advocacy.

Now more than ever, FL LAN remains committed to advancing the reproductive health and rights of Latinxs through legislative action, public education, and collaboration with coalition partners and community members.

The Florida Latina Advocacy Network of the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health will continue to center the experiences of those most impacted and inspire Latinx leaders to raise their voices, mobilize our communities, and transform the cultural narratives that will resonate for generations to come.





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