

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

News from *The Cosecha Movement*

July 31, 2019

Media Contact: Vera Parra, veraeparra@gmail.com, 917-519-7656

Immigration Activists Disrupt Democratic Debate to Demand #DignityNotDeportation

Immigrant rights leaders are calling on all Democratic candidates to commit to stopping all deportations on day one in office.

DETROIT — Immigrant rights activists disrupted Joe Biden during the Democratic debate in Detroit, unfurling a banner that read “Stop all deportations on day one.” They chanted “3 million deportations” referencing the growing calls for Biden to apologize for the 3 million deportations under the Obama administration. The disruption follows a civil disobedience blocks from the Fox Theater earlier today, in which protesters blocked traffic at the Windsor Tunnel, an international crossing between Detroit and Canada. Immigrants and allies are demanding 2020 hopefuls recognize the daily crisis of family separation and deportation that communities in Detroit and across the country are facing. They are calling on Democratic candidates to commit to ending all deportations on their first day in office.

“I did this because the immigrant community in Michigan is facing a crisis and we need our voices and our demand to be heard: any candidate who claims to be against Trump’s raids and family separations needs to make a real commitment to protect all 11 million undocumented immigrants from detention and deportation. That means using executive authority to stop all deportations on day one in office. We won’t accept empty promises of immigration reform. Obama promised immigration reform and then separated 3 million families. We cannot allow history to repeat itself,” said **Ofelia, the immigrant rights activist that disrupted today’s Democratic debate**. Ofelia is a leader with the Cosecha Movement in Detroit. She is not using her full name due to immigration related concerns.

Movimiento Cosecha is a national movement to win permanent protection, dignity and respect for all 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States, with organizing hubs in Detroit, Michigan and across the country.

“I live in Detroit, which is less than a mile from the national border with Canada,” said **Cindy Gamboa, a Cosecha spokesperson from Detroit**. “Living in a border city means increased ICE and CBP patrols in our community. Immigrants live in constant fear of being stopped by agents

because of the color of their skin and once they notice you are driving without a driver license it very often it leads to detention and deportation.”

Earlier this month the Cosecha Movement launched the [Dignity2020 Campaign](#), laying out an immigration platform for the Democratic Party and 2020 hopefuls that recognizes dignity for immigrant workers and families. The platforms calls for:

- An end to all detention and deportation on Day 1 in Office
- Reunification of families separated by deportation under previous administrations
- Immediate legalization of all 11 million undocumented immigrants

This action follows a wave of escalated actions demanding primary candidates adopt the demands of the Dignity Platform. In early July, immigrant families [shut down Joe Biden’s headquarters in Philadelphia](#), demanding an apology for the families separated under the Obama administration, and for Biden to commit to the demands of the Dignity Platform. That same week, an immigrant rights activist whose brother was deported under the Obama administration [confronted Biden in New Hampshire](#) asking him to apologize and commit to ending all detention and deportation. Since then, several candidates and groups have called on [Biden to apologize for his record](#). The Cosecha Movement will continue pressuring primary hopefuls to adopt the dignity platform as a new standard for any future leader of the party.

“Nearly every candidate has spoken out against the abuses immigrants are facing under the Trump Administration, but simply undoing the policies enacted by Trump is not enough. For decades, many in the Democratic Party have been complicit in attacks on the immigrant community. While Republicans fanned the flames of white supremacy with their anti-immigrant rhetoric, President Barack Obama campaigned on the promise of immigration reform but ended up deporting almost 3 million people — a record in our country’s history,” **said Brenda Valladares, a spokesperson for the Cosecha Movement.**

###