

Voces de la Frontera: Tonight in Green Bay: Statewide tour kicks off to restore driver licenses for immigrants

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GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN — On Friday, July 5th, Voces de la Frontera will kick off the [Defending Families, Restoring Driver Licenses for Immigrants statewide tour](#), a series of town hall forums in cities and towns across Wisconsin to build support for legislation to restore access to driver licenses for immigrant Wisconsinites. The first town hall of the statewide tour is Friday night in Green Bay at 6pm at Vida Nueva Methodist Church (919 Schwartz St). The tour will also include forums in Wauwatosa (July 13), Racine (July 20), Madison, (July 20), Waukesha (August 2), and Dodgeville (August 3). Forums are also planned in Eau Claire, Kenosha, Walworth County, Burlington, Sheboygan, and Appleton.

At the town hall meetings during the tour, community members will speak out about the need to build support for a bipartisan bill to restore driver licenses for immigrants. Voces will share organizing tools to communicate with Republican legislators to support restoring driver licenses. Although Governor Evers included measures to restore access to driver licenses in his 2019 budget proposal, Republican leadership stripped the provisions from the budget, which was signed into law on Wednesday.

“I support the provisional driver car/license because I believe it will help keep the community of Green Bay and all of Wisconsin safer,” said Green Bay Chief of Police

Andrew J. Smith in a [letter to legislators](#) earlier this year. “People will be tested and know the rules of the road. It will allow us to identify the people currently living in the shadows. I know there are a dozen states issuing licenses like these and by the accounts I have heard, the program is working in those states. I sincerely hope we can do it here in Wisconsin.”

“We have to organize to restore driver licenses to our community,” said Raymundo Martinez-Moreno, a grandfather of 7 from Green Bay who was stopped for driving without a license and handed over to ICE for deportation and separation from his family. “It is unjust that we are not able to have a driver license, as in my case. I want to stay here with my family and grandchildren. I am not the only person this is happening to. That’s why we all need to come together and organize so that people like are not separated from our families. Because it is the children who suffer the most.”

“Wisconsin is a welcoming community,” said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, Executive Director of Voces de la Frontera. “We know there are Republicans who support restoring driver licenses for immigrants. This statewide tour is about building a broad movement that brings together rural and urban communities. This is a critical time when more families are being separated and the rural economy is facing a severe labor shortage in part due to a lack of driver licenses for immigrants. Rural jobs, which we all benefit from, are hard jobs. Immigrants who are part of this workforce are afraid to drive because getting stopped could lead to being detained by ICE and separated from your family.”

“As a religious leader, I know the necessity of restoring driver licenses, said Pastor Torres of Vida Nueva Methodist Church. “There are many people in my congregation who, because they are from other countries, are not able to drive freely to carry out their daily tasks. We know that immigrants contribute greatly to this country and to Wisconsin in particular, and for them to be able to have a license would strengthen Wisconsin. Right now, people are being stopped by police while taking their children to school or trying to go to work. So as a leader in the Methodist church, I invite everyone to be part of this movement with Voces de la Frontera to restore driver licenses.”

Follow Voces de la Frontera on Twitter at [@voces_milwaukee](#) and on [Facebook](#).

Who: Voces de la Frontera, immigrant families, local government and law enforcement allies, religious leaders, small business owners, more.

What: Defending Families, Restoring Driver Licenses for Immigrants Statewide Tour
— first stop in Green Bay

When: Friday, July 5, 6pm CST

Where: Vida Nueva Methodist Church, 919 Schwartz St, Green Bay, WI 51302

Speakers:

Green Bay Mayor Eric Genrich

Commander Kevin Warych of Green Bay Police Department

[Raymundo Martinez-Moreno](#), grandfather of 7 who was stopped for driving without a license and detained by ICE.

Pastor Ricardo Torres of Vida Nueva Methodist Church

Christine Neumann-Ortiz, Executive Director of Voces de la Frontera

[Livestream to be available here](#)