

Noticias: Richardson unknown to most Hispanics

Despite having a mother who is Mexican, being fully bilingual and being raised in Mexico City, most Hispanics don't know who New Mexico Gov. and presidential candidate Bill Richardson is.



Bill Richardson

Six in 10 Hispanics say they have never heard of the governor, according to a June USA Today/Gallup study.

"With a name like Bill Richardson, it's a bit of a challenge," said Tom Reynolds, Richardson's press secretary.

"His name is not a traditional Hispanic name so the

Hispanic community doesn't readily make that connection," he said.

The Richardson campaign recently launched "Mi Familia" — a grassroots fundraising and support-building effort directed toward Hispanics in Arizona, Nevada and California.

"Hispanics won't vote for us just because the governor is Hispanic," Reynolds said. "He is equally concerned as they are about health care, Iraq, education and energy, so our message is just as important as our shared heritage."

Economic disaster brews

Employers and immigrant rights groups are speaking out against rules announced Aug. 10 by the Bush Administration requiring employers to fire workers without valid Social Security numbers.

Opponents argue that the regulations, effective in one month, will create a disastrous ripple effect in the U.S. economy and disrupt the lives

of an estimated 12 million undocumented people in the U.S.

"Throwing this rock in the pond will have devastating consequences," says Craig Regelbrugge, co-chairman of the Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform and spokesman for the American Nursery & Landscape Association in a Business Week report. "The anti-immigrant crowd hasn't thought

through what would happen if this entire workforce went away. Who will be there to put meat and vegetables on American dinner tables? The only unaffected group will be Americans who do not eat.

Industries that employ large numbers of undocumented workers, such as agriculture, construction, cleaning, and maintenance, will be disproportionately affected by the rules.

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