

Immigration Day of Action

On January 28, a group of students from MDS (Sonia's high school Spanish class and three students from Dayni's journalism class, myself included) went downtown for Immigration Day of Action, organized by Somos Pueblo Unidos. This day is about trying to change legislature around issues involving immigrants and their families. We went down to the Farmer's Market where Somos Pueblo Unidos explained to us what we would be doing that day. They also provided breakfast, along with shirts and signs, so we could be identified with being with Somos Pueblo Unidos.

They then sent us off to training, where we learned about how to protest peacefully, and how to talk to senators, about the legislature we wanted to see become laws. Other schools were also there with us during the training and march. The bills we wanted to see signed into law were HB 31 (raising the state's minimum wage), HB 141 (expectations that the state of New Mexico will keep our personal information confidential), HB 2 (DWS needs more resources to recover stolen wages), SB 196 (equal access to public safety resources without fear of deportation or separation from their families), SB 275 (making sure NM can be a leader in wind and solar energy, without leaving rural workers behind), and SB 218 (making it easier to get a state driver's license for everyday New Mexicans). SB are senate bills and HB are house bills. In the training, they taught us how to lobby a senator. First you introduce yourself, then introduce the problem (the bill you're trying to get passed), ask them what the solution is, give the solution you want to see happen, and then tell the senator what they can do to be the solution.

After the training, we gathered as a big group and started marching towards the roundhouse. Some of the signs I saw along the way read, "Immigrants are part of New Mexico's

fabric!” “No más migra!” “ No ban, No wall!” “Up, up with education! Down, down with deportation!” Those are just a few that I saw. When we reached the roundhouse, Somos Pueblo Unidos gathered us around a stage, and started chanting. Other people came up too and started telling their stories, and urging senators to fix issues in the legislature. We broke for lunch (Upper Crust and Señor Murphy’s), and when we came back we were ready to lobby some senators.

We went into the roundhouse and walked around for a bit, before we found a senator. The first senator we talked to was Senator Bill Tallman, a democrat. We talked to him about SB 196, and he said he would vote for it and support it. He was very nice and conversational. I felt like he really cared about what we had to say. The second senator we talked to was Steven P. Neville, a republican. We also asked him about SB 196 and his response was that he could not support or vote for the bill because illegal immigrants deserve to be deported when accessing public safety resources. He also said since he was a republican he couldn’t possibly support it because he needs to stick to his party’s policy and views. He was very rude when answering, and it felt like he didn’t want to talk to us, though a lot of people had been asking him about bills that day, but that’s not an excuse to be annoyed and rude to us just because we were asking him about a bill that involves not deporting someone. Overall, though, it was a very fun and enlightening experience.