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# Latino Times

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MAY 1ST, 2ND & 3RD

## Lessons from Hispanic Heritage: The Architecture of Resilience

By Steve Ding

- SJ County Supervisor, Dist 4

There is a quiet wisdom embedded in Hispanic heritage that all of America would do well to remember, not as a cultural exhibit behind glass, but as a living blueprint for how communities actually hold together.

For generations, Hispanic families have organized daily life around four anchors that, taken together, form something I'd call a cultural operating system. The paseo, the evening walk, the gathering in the plazas, the ritual of community bonding. The iglesia provides spiritual grounding and moral continuity. The escuela shapes how the next generation understands the world. And the casa—the multi-generational home, serves as the nucleus where all of it converges. As Octavio Paz observed, in this tradition “the true

protagonist is the family.”

The Erosion We Cannot Ignore Modern American life moves at a pace that quietly dismantles these pillars. The mad rush of longer commutes, dual-income necessity, digital distraction, and geographic dispersion pulls families apart—not through malice, but through momentum. Grandparents live in one state, grandchildren in another. The evening walk is replaced by the evening scroll. Church attendance declines. The kitchen table, once the boardroom of family life, goes empty. What we lose is not sentimental, it is structural. Intimacy, intergenerational cohesion, and moral continuity are not luxuries. They are load-bearing walls in the architecture of a healthy society. When they weaken, every-

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## Lecciones de la herencia hispana: La arquitectura de la resiliencia

Por el Supervisor Steve Ding, Condado de San Joaquín Dist 4

Hay una sabiduría silenciosa arraigada en la herencia hispana que toda América haría bien en recordar—no como una exhibición cultural tras cristales, sino como un modelo vivo de cómo las comunidades realmente se mantienen unidas.

Durante generaciones, las familias hispanas han organizado la vida diaria en torno a cuatro pilares que, en conjunto, forman lo que yo llamaría un sistema operativo cultural. El paseo—la caminata vespertina, la reunión en la plaza—es el ritual de unión comunitaria. La iglesia proporciona un fundamento espiritual y continuidad moral. La escuela moldea cómo la próxima generación entiende el mundo. Y la casa—el hogar multigeneracional—sirve como el núcleo donde todo converge. Como observó Octavio Paz, en esta tradición “el verdadero protagonista es la familia.”

La erosión que no podemos ignorar La vida moderna estadounidense avanza a un ritmo que desmonta silenciosamente estos pilares. La carrera frenética de los largos trayectos al trabajo, la necesidad de doble ingreso, la distracción digital y la dispersión geográfica separan a las familias—no por malicia, sino por impulso. Los abuelos viven en un estado, los nietos en otro. Es paseo vespertino es reemplazada por el desplazamiento en la pantalla. La asistencia a la iglesia disminuye. La mesa de la cocina, que alguna vez fue la sala de juntas de la vida familiar, queda vacía.

Lo que perdemos no es sentimental—es estructural. La intimidad, la cohesión intergeneracional y la continuidad moral no son lujos. Son muros portantes en la arquitectura de una sociedad sana. Cuando se debilitan, todo, desde la salud mental de los jóvenes hasta la seguridad en los barrios y la confianza cívica, se ve afectado.

### La receta

La lección que la herencia hispana ofrece a América no es abstracta. Es una práctica diaria: comer juntos, caminar juntos, orar juntos, criar a los hijos en presencia de los mayores. Prioriza la casa sobre las métricas profesionales. Trata a la comunidad no como una red de contactos, sino como un vecindario. No son ideas nostálgicas—son estrategias de alto impacto para la resiliencia que se han puesto a prueba a lo largo de siglos y continentes.

Como Supervisor del Condado de San Joaquín, veo la fortaleza de este modelo cultural todos los días en nuestras comunidades. Es uno de los mayores activos de nuestra región. La pregunta ante todos nosotros—sin importar nuestro origen—es si aprenderemos de ello antes de que la corriente nos aleje demasiado de lo que realmente funciona.

Las tradiciones hispanas no solo enriquecen la experiencia estadounidense. Le ofrecen una corrección. La familia, el hogar, la iglesia y la comunidad no son valores del ayer. Son la infraestructura del mañana—si tenemos la sabiduría de construir sobre ellos.



## Mes de la educación financiera: Gerente de Comunidad de Chase en Stockton comparte consejos para fortalecer tu salud financiera

Patrocinado por JPMorganChase

Todos tenemos metas y necesidades financieras, ya sea comprar una casa, comenzar un negocio o simplemente sentirnos más tranquilos con nuestro dinero. No importa en qué etapa estés, nunca es demasiado pronto ni demasiado tarde para empezar.

Este Mes de la educación financiera, Andrea Andrade, Gerente de Comunidad de Chase en Stockton, recomendaciones prácticas para fortalecer

tu salud financiera, no solo este mes, sino durante todo el año.

P: ¿En qué áreas deberían enfocarse las personas para mejorar su bienestar financiero?

R: Para fortalecer tu salud financiera, conviene enfocarte en cuatro áreas clave: ingresar, proteger, gastar y ahorrar. Ingresar significa entender cuánto ganas y cómo ese dinero te ayuda a cumplir tus metas. Proteger tu dinero

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# Latino Times

## Stockton

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es mantenerlo a salvo de pérdidas, robos y gastos innecesarios. Gastar con intención te ayuda a mantener tus cuentas al día y avanzar hacia tus objetivos. Y ahorrar, aunque sea poco, te prepara para necesidades y oportunidades futuras.

P: Si alguien quiere fortalecer su salud financiera, ¿cuáles son los tres primeros pasos que le recomendarías?

R: Primero, define tus metas con claridad: ¿qué quieres lograr y por qué es importante para ti? Después, arma un presupuesto para entender en qué se te va el dinero y planear cómo ahorrar. Por último, revisa ese presupuesto con frecuencia y ajústalo cuando sea necesario. Cada mes es distinto y la vida cambia, pero mantenerte atento y flexible te ayuda a seguir avanzando.

P: Seguir un presupuesto toma práctica. ¿Qué método recomiendas y cómo puede alguien adaptarlo para que sea fácil de mantener?

R: No existe una sola fórmula para todos. Lo más importante es elegir un sistema que de verdad vayas a usar. Hay muchas herramientas y aplicaciones que te ayudan a registrar tus gastos del mes y compararlos con lo que entra a tu hogar. Cuando entiendes a dónde se está yendo tu dinero, se vuelve más fácil ajustar hábitos y encontrar espacios para ahorrar.

P: Ahorrar para diferentes metas, como emergencias, retiro o compras importantes, puede sentirse abrumador. ¿Cómo ayudas a las personas a priorizar

y mantenerse constantes?

R: Siempre les recuerdo que cada dólar cuenta. Incluso ahorrar un poco de cada pago hace una diferencia con el tiempo. Lo ideal es definir metas específicas, como crear un fondo de emergencia o ahorrar para una compra grande, y hacer un presupuesto que respalde esas metas. Y si un mes no se logra, no pasa nada: no te castigues. Ajusta y sigue adelante.

P: Con el aumento del costo de vida ¿qué cambios pequeños y sostenibles has visto que tienen mayor impacto?

R: Cuando tu presupuesto refleja tus prioridades, no solo administras tu dinero: te das herramientas para tomar decisiones con más seguridad. Una estrategia muy útil es automatizar el ahorro para que suceda sin pensarlo. Incluye en tu presupuesto transferencias a tu cuenta de ahorros como si fueran un pago fijo, igual que una factura. Así te aseguras de ahorrar cada mes antes de gastar.

Ver crecer tus ahorros, aunque sea poco a poco, ayuda mucho a construir estabilidad y tranquilidad financiera.

En resumen

Puedes fortalecer tu salud financiera si te enfocas en ingresar, gastar, proteger y ahorrar. Mejorar tu bienestar financiero es un proceso de largo plazo, y cada paso te ayuda a sentirte más organizado y seguro mientras trabajas por tus metas. Para más información, visita tu sucursal local o entra a chase.com/financialgoals.

## New energy choice coming to San Joaquin in May 2026.

Ava Community Energy is a not-for-profit public agency that generates clean energy at competitive rates. Earnings are reinvested right back into the community—not shareholder profits.

Learn more at [AvaEnergy.org/sjc](https://AvaEnergy.org/sjc).

## Una nueva opción de electricidad llega al condado de San Joaquín en mayo de 2026.

Ava Community Energy es una agencia pública sin fines de lucro que genera energía limpia a precios competitivos. Las ganancias se reinvierten directamente en nuestra comunidad, no en beneficios para accionistas.

Obtenga más información en [AvaEnergy.org](https://AvaEnergy.org).





# Stockton Businesses get new lifeline as JPMorganChase expands small business support

By Latino Times

Stockton small businesses like many around the country are struggling with rising costs, economic uncertainty, and thin profit margins. Yet, perhaps there is a ray of sunshine in the forecast as these businesses just got a lifeline from the country's largest bank.

JPMorganChase recently announced a significant expansion of its efforts to support small businesses throughout the Bay Area and Stockton and Sacramento. The initiative includes scaling its coaching program, adding more business bankers to its staff, and donating a few million to revitalize downtown San Francisco.

The move comes as small businesses across the country face similar struggles, including persistent inflation, rising operating costs, and tighter cash flow that has made growth harder to sustain.

"Small business owners are the backbone of San Francisco's economy — they create jobs, strengthen neighborhoods, and help families build generational wealth," said Ben Walter, CEO of Chase for Business. "Our role is to match their ambition with capital, advice, and connections so they can grow, hire, and help drive the city's next chapter."

While the announcement centered on San Francisco, the expanded services are available to entrepreneurs throughout the region, including Stockton. At the center of the expansion is JPMorganChase's Coaching for Impact pro-

gram, a no-cost initiative offering one-on-one consulting, executive coaching, and on-demand education.

The program is designed to help business owners strengthen operations, improve credit readiness, and prepare for growth opportunities such as contracts and procurement. Since launching in 2020, more than 12,000 business owners nationwide have completed the program.

The expansion also includes more than \$2.5 million in new philanthropic grants aimed at strengthening small business ecosystems in San Francisco, supporting commercial corridors, and revitalizing San Francisco's downtown. In addition, JPMorganChase plans to add roughly 50 business bankers in the region, increasing its capacity to provide direct financial advice, access to capital, and connections to broader business resources.

For JPMorganChase business coach Pablo Solares-Rowbury, the coaching program and overall efforts are about more than just financial guidance, they are about providing a supportive environment that sets business owners up for success.

"It's very challenging (being a business owner)," he said. "You have to really love what you do."

Solares-Rowbury said participants in the coaching program gain access to a network of trusted advisors who provide insight on everything from operations management to marketing strategy and



guidance on applying for small business loans. Business owners do not need to be Chase customers to participate.

At a recent Chase for Business: The Experience event in San Francisco, an all-day expo that drew more than 400 entrepreneurs, business owners had the opportunity to receive personalized advice, attend workshops, and connect with experts.

One of the businesses with an exhibit at the event was Arden Cove, San Francisco-based travel accessories company based in San Francisco. The company has a storefront in the city's Embarcadero area and also an online store that reaches thousands of customers around the world.

The e-commerce business produces

anti-theft and water-resistant bags, backpacks, and other items for travel and everyday use. Founded in 2016 by sisters Karin Yuen and Carmen Yuen, the brand has grown to one of the top brands in its industry.

Karin Yuen said the exposure and connections from the Chase event were invaluable, particularly as the company looks to continue to scale. Karin said she hopes to one day hire full time employees and that she received helpful information at the event relevant to that goal, including how to set up a 401k retirement account for future employees.

"It's been really great," Karin said. "The exposure has been amazing... and meeting other business owners has been great."

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# El Concilio California Presents its 2026 Cinco de Mayo Multicultural Festival - Central Valley's Largest Cultural Celebration Returns to Stockton

Stockton, CA — El Concilio California proudly announces the return of the California Cinco de Mayo Multicultural Festival, taking place May 1–3, 2026, at the San Joaquin County Fairgrounds in Stockton. Now in its 31st year, this three-day celebration remains the largest Cinco de Mayo festival in the Central Valley, drawing anticipated attendees from across the Central Valley.

This free, family-friendly event showcases the region's rich cultural diversity through live entertainment, including music, Ballet Folklórico, youth performances, and multicultural presentations across multiple stages. Attendees can explore a vibrant Mercado featuring over 150 vendors, along with more than 20 food vendors offering diverse cuisines.

Festival attractions include a full-scale carnival, children's activity zones, a classic and lowrider car show, health and

community resource fairs, and interactive cultural exhibits. To increase accessibility, El Concilio California is offering ONLY ON THEIR WEBSITE deep-discounted Family Adventure 4-Packs (\$60 savings), discounted group packages (over \$150 savings), and promotions on unlimited carnival ride passes (\$10 savings), making it easier for families to enjoy the full festival experience.

A signature highlight is the Cinco de Mayo Multicultural Parade, held Sunday in Downtown Stockton - one of the oldest of its kind in the nation.

Beyond its cultural significance, the festival delivers measurable economic impact. The 2025 event generated an estimated \$1.2 million in local discretionary spending, supporting small businesses and regional economic activity.

"This festival is a celebration of identity, unity, and opportunity," said El Concilio California CEO and President,



José R. Rodríguez. "It brings families together while strengthening community connections and supporting local businesses."

General admission remains free, ensuring broad community access, park-

ing is \$10. The festival is made possible through sponsors, partners, and volunteers committed to a vibrant and inclusive San Joaquin County.

Learn more: <https://www.elconcilio.org/cinco-de-mayo-2026/>

## Ding continued from Front Page

thing from youth mental health to neighborhood safety to civic trust suffers.

### The Prescription

The lesson Hispanic heritage offers America is not abstract. It is daily

practice: eat together, walk together, worship together, raise children in the presence of elders. Prioritize casa over career metrics. Treat community not as a network but as a neighborhood. These are not nostalgic ideas, they are

high-leverage strategies for resilience that have been tested across centuries and continents.

As a San Joaquin County Supervisor, I see the strength of this cultural model every day in our communities. It is one of our region's greatest assets. The question before all of us, regardless of background, is whether we will

learn from it before the drift carries us too far from what actually works. Hispanic traditions don't merely enrich the American experience. They offer it a correction. Family, home, church, and community are not yesterday's values. They are tomorrow's infrastructure, if we have the wisdom to build on them.



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ESCANEE AQUÍ 





# ICE ha detenido a más de 6,200 niños en la era Trump; alertan por daños psicológicos

Por Maribel Velázquez

La política migratoria del presidente Donald Trump vuelve a estar en el centro del debate, esta vez por el impacto en menores de edad. De acuerdo con datos analizados por The Marshall Project, el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE) ha detenido a más de 6,200 niños durante el segundo mandato del mandatario, una cifra que ha encendido alarmas entre defensores de derechos humanos y expertos en salud.

El aumento de niños inmigrantes detenidos es significativo. Durante el último año de la administración de Joe Biden, el promedio diario de menores detenidos era de apenas 24. Con el regreso de Trump y la reactivación de la detención familiar, esa cifra se disparó a 226 menores al día, es decir, casi diez veces más.

Las condiciones dentro de los centros de detención también han sido cuestionadas. Testimonios recogidos por la misma organización describen falta de atención médica adecuada, acceso limitado a educación y alimentos en mal estado. “Todos los estadounidenses deberían estar consternados por el hecho de que estemos encarcelando a miles de niños”, advirtió Leecia Welch, asesora legal de la organización Children’s Rights. “Esto genera una cantidad increíble de trauma”.

Familias denuncian mala calidad de

los alimentos

La Academia Estadounidense de Pediatría ha advertido que incluso períodos cortos de detención pueden provocar efectos duraderos en la salud mental de los menores. Casos documentados incluyen ansiedad, regresión en el desarrollo —como niños que vuelven a mojar la cama— e incluso intentos de autolesión.

Uno de los puntos más críticos es el tiempo de detención. Aunque el acuerdo judicial conocido como “Flores” establece un límite de 20 días para menores, los datos muestran que más de 1,600 niños han permanecido bajo custodia por periodos superiores.

Las denuncias también apuntan a instalaciones específicas, como el Centro de Procesamiento de Inmigración de Dilley, en Texas, donde ha estado recluida una gran parte de los menores. En documentos judiciales, familias reportaron haber encontrado “gusanos y moho en la comida”, además de agua en mal estado. Un padre incluso declaró: “Los bebés están adelgazando porque apenas pueden comer”.

El gobierno federal ha rechazado estas acusaciones. En presentaciones ante tribunales, autoridades aseguran que no existe evidencia de alimentos contaminados y defienden que la atención médica cumple con los estándares. Además, un portavoz del ICE sostuvo que “estar detenido es una elección”, en



referencia a los programas de autodeportación promovidos por la administración.

Sin embargo, abogados migratorios y organizaciones civiles cuestionan esa postura, señalando que muchas familias enfrentan decisiones bajo presión y sin información clara.

El impacto tras la detención tampoco es menor, ya que más de 3,600 niños han sido deportados desde el inicio del segundo mandato de Trump, muchos de ellos sin previo aviso suficiente, obligando a sus familias a reconstruir sus vidas en condiciones precarias.

Para expertos como Elora Mukherjee, de la Universidad de Columbia, el problema es estructural. “Esto constituye una crueldad contra los niños”,

afirmó. “Refleja un sistema donde los más vulnerables están pagando el costo de decisiones políticas”.

El futuro es incierto. La administración Trump busca ampliar la capacidad de detención familiar y, al mismo tiempo, intenta eliminar el acuerdo Flores, lo que podría permitir la detención indefinida de menores.

“La cruel campaña de deportación masiva del gobierno de Trump está arrebatando infancias e infligiendo traumas que estos jóvenes llevarán consigo toda la vida. Es injusto y debe terminar”, reveló el demócrata Joaquín Castro en respuesta al análisis sobre los datos de detención recientemente publicados.

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# Papa León XIV califica de inaceptable la amenaza de Trump contra Irán

El papa León XIV calificó este martes de “inaceptable” la amenaza del presidente de Estados Unidos, Donald Trump, contra Irán y pidió hacer “todo lo posible” para “decir que no queremos la guerra, queremos la paz”.

“Hoy, como todos sabemos, también ha habido esta amenaza contra todo el pueblo de Irán. Y esto realmente no es aceptable. Aquí hay cuestiones ciertamente de derecho internacional, pero es mucho más una cuestión moral por el bien del pueblo, completo e íntegro”, dijo el papa en declaraciones a los medios en la localidad de Castelgandolfo.

El pontífice estadounidense, que

hizo estas declaraciones en italiano e inglés sin citar expresamente a Trump, invitó a “rezar, pero también hacer oír nuestra voz ante los legisladores estadounidenses, para decir que no queremos la guerra, queremos la paz”.

“Quisiera invitar a todos a pensar de verdad, en el corazón, en los tantos inocentes, los tantos niños, los tantos ancianos: totalmente inocentes que también serían víctimas de esta escalada de una guerra que ha comenzado... Ya desde los primeros días decíamos: volvamos al diálogo, a las negociaciones. Intentemos resolver los problemas sin llegar a este punto”, agregó.

Donald Trump amenazó este martes

con terminar con “toda una civilización” antes de expirar el ultimátum para que Irán reabra el estrecho de Ormuz, en una jornada marcada también por fuertes bombardeos y actividad diplomática.

El papa insistió en la necesidad de volver al diálogo y las negociaciones: “Intentemos resolver los problemas sin llegar a este punto. (...) Quisiera invitar a todos a rezar, pero también a buscar cómo comunicarse, quizás con los congresistas, con las autoridades, para decir que no queremos la guerra”.

“¡Queremos la paz! Somos un pueblo que ama la paz. ¡Hay tanta necesidad de paz en el mundo!”, exclamó León XIV. EFE



# Chicken Ranch Casino Resort Hosts Job Fair on April 16

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Jamestown, CA — Chicken Ranch Casino Resort invites job seekers to take the next step in their careers at an upcoming Job Fair on Thursday, April 16, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM, held in the Brahma Ballroom on the third level of the resort.

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offers competitive wages, comprehensive benefits, and a wide range of career opportunities across multiple departments. Whether starting a new career or advancing an existing one, candidates will find pathways for long-term growth within the organization.

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Candidates are encouraged to apply online in advance to streamline the process, but walk-ins are absolutely welcome.



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# ABLE Charter Schools Employee Spotlight

We would like to introduce you to Kiranjeet Kaur Bhandal, known to her students as Ms. Kaur. She is a dedicated educator at ABLE Charter Elementary who brings both passion and purpose to her classroom. Inspired by the meaning of her name, symbolizing dignity, equality, and strength, Ms. Kaur strives to instill confidence and resilience in every student she teaches.

With a Master of Life Science and a Master of Arts in Education, Ms. Kaur combines strong academic knowledge with effective instructional strategies. Since joining ABLE in

2021, she has taught upper elementary grades and is currently teaching sixth grade. Her student-centered approach focuses on meeting individual needs, fostering collaboration, and creating a safe, supportive environment where students feel valued and motivated to learn.

Ms. Kaur emphasizes high expectations while encouraging steady progress, reminding students that even small steps lead to growth. Through engaging strategies such as cooperative learning, hands-on activities, and real-world connections, she helps students develop critical think-

ing skills and confidence. Her dedication to relationships and student empowerment reflects her belief that education transforms lives, one child at a time.

She believes ABLE Charter Elementary stands out as a welcoming, inclusive, and innovative school community where students thrive. At ABLE, students are prepared for future success through a balance of academic excellence and character development, becoming confident, collaborative learners and leaders, where every child is known, supported, and encouraged to grow into the best ver-



sion of themselves.

Outside the classroom, she enjoys time with her family, traveling, cooking, reading, and practicing yoga.

## Empleado destacado de ABLE Charter Schools

Queremos presentarles a Kiranjeet Kaur Bhandal, conocida por sus alumnos como la señora Kaur. Es una educadora dedicada en ABLE Charter Elementary que aporta tanto pasión como propósito a su aula. Inspirada por el significado de su nombre, que simboliza dignidad, igualdad y fortaleza, la Sra. Kaur se esfuerza por infundir confianza y resiliencia en cada estudiante al que enseña.

Con un Máster en Ciencias de la Vida y un Máster en Artes en Educación, la Sra. Kaur combina sólidos conocimientos académicos con estrategias educativas eficaces. Desde que se unió a ABLE en 2021, ha enseñado en

cursos de primaria avanzada y actualmente imparte sexto grado. Su enfoque centrado en el estudiante se centra en satisfacer necesidades individuales, fomentar la colaboración y crear un entorno seguro y de apoyo donde los estudiantes se sientan valorados y motivados para aprender.

La Sra. Kaur enfatiza las altas expectativas mientras fomenta un progreso constante, recordando a los estudiantes que incluso pequeños pasos conducen al crecimiento. A través de estrategias interesantes como el aprendizaje cooperativo, actividades prácticas y conexiones con el mundo real, ayuda a los estudiantes a desarrollar habili-

dades de pensamiento crítico y confianza. Su dedicación a las relaciones y al empoderamiento del alumnado refleja su creencia de que la educación transforma vidas, un niño a la vez.

Ella cree que ABLE Charter Elementary destaca como una comunidad escolar acogedora, inclusiva e innovadora donde los estudiantes prosperan. En ABLE, los estudiantes están preparados para el éxito futuro mediante un equilibrio entre excelencia académica y desarrollo de carácter, convirtiéndose en aprendices y líderes confiados y colaborativos, donde cada niño es conocido, apoyado y animado a crecer hasta convertirse en la mejor



versión de sí mismo.

Fuera del aula, la Sra. Kaur disfruta del tiempo con su familia, viajando, cocinando, leyendo y practicando yoga.

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El Consejo de Gobiernos de San Joaquín, en su calidad de Agencia de Planificación del Transporte Regional (RTPA, por sus siglas en inglés) y Organización de Planificación Metropolitana (MPO, por sus siglas en inglés) para el Condado de San Joaquín, se complace en anunciar la disponibilidad del borrador inicial del Informe de Evaluación de Necesidades de Transporte Público No Satisfechas para el Año Fiscal 2026-27, mismo que se pone a disposición del público para su revisión y comentarios. Dicho informe puede consultarse en línea en [www.sjcog.org/UTN](http://www.sjcog.org/UTN), o de manera presencial en las oficinas del SJCOG, ubicadas en 555 E. Weber Avenue, Stockton, CA 95202. El período de comentarios públicos comenzará el 15 de abril de 2026 y concluirá el 15 de mayo de 2026. Los comentarios podrán enviarse a Joel G. Campos, Planificador Regional Principal, a los correos electrónicos [campos@sjcog.org](mailto:campos@sjcog.org) o [utn@sjcog.org](mailto:utn@sjcog.org). La Junta Directiva del SJCOG votará una resolución sobre los hallazgos contenidos en la evaluación el 25 de junio de 2026.



# On Trump and Iran, Europeans Are All for One, Each to Their Own

European countries are charting a course amid the war in Iran that combines institutional multilateralism with realist bilateralism

By Paolo Pontoniere

ROME — From Paris to Berlin, and from Madrid to Rome, European media coverage in recent days reflects a continent recalibrating its strategic posture. Indeed, headlines suggest that a dramatic reordering of transatlantic relations is under way.

The shifts come amid rising tensions over the U.S.-Israel war in Iran and Europe's reluctance to become entangled in the conflict.

One of the clearest signals yet of this widening breach involves a French container vessel that reportedly passed through the Strait of Hormuz, the strategic waterway through which up to 20% of the world's oil supply passes, on April 2.

Iran abruptly shut the strait through a combination of drone strikes, threats and sea mines after initial U.S.-Israeli attacks at the outset of the war, now in its second month.

Japanese authorities are said to be pursuing similar arrangements as those of France.

While not yet fully confirmed by official communiqués, European press coverage treats the developments as plausible extensions of ongoing back-channel diplomacy between Europe's leaders and Iranian authorities.

'A new order'

The developments come on the heels of remarks by President Trump during an April 1 national address suggesting the United States could abandon its traditional security guarantees under NATO while urging European nations to "get their own oil" from the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump also repeated threats to destroy Iran's civilian infrastructure — including bridges and power plants — unless it reopens the Strait during an April 6 press conference. Such attacks would constitute war crimes under international law.

"Every bridge in Iran will be decimated by 12 o'clock tomorrow night, where every power plant in Iran will be out of business, burning, exploding and never to be used again," said the president, who has several times now extended previous deadlines set for the strait's reopening.

Responding to the unfolding crisis, French President Emmanuel Macron declared in remarks directed toward South Korea and reported widely across European media, "We should not be passive in this new disorder. We have to build a new order."

Macron's language — echoed in editorials from France's *Le Monde* to Italy's *La Repubblica* — is being interpreted as a call for strategic autonomy, not merely crisis management.

In Italy, a rebuke of Trump-era policies In Italy, meanwhile, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has embarked on a series of high-level visits across the Middle East with the goal of securing bilateral guarantees on oil and gas sup-

plies amid fears of disruption in the Gulf.

At the same time, Italy's *Domani* reports that Rome has quietly signaled limits to its alignment with Washington. Italian authorities reportedly declined U.S. requests to utilize the Naval Air Station Sigonella — a move laden with historical resonance.

The base was the site of the 1985 Sigonella crisis, when then-Prime Minister Bettino Craxi ordered Italian forces to block a U.S. aircraft attempting to transfer a Palestinian suspect. That standoff marked a rare assertion of European sovereignty against American pressure — an episode now frequently invoked in Italian commentary as a precedent for today's tensions.

Complicating Meloni's position is her recent failed referendum on judicial reforms. Italian media, including *La Stampa* and *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, frame the defeat not only as a constitutional rebuke but also as a broader rejection of her perceived alignment with Trump-era policies and support for Israeli military actions in Iran.

Scramble to secure energy

Spain has taken a more overtly oppositional stance. According to reports in *El País*, Madrid denied U.S. military aircraft access to its airspace for operations linked to Middle Eastern deployments. The decision has been framed domestically as a defense of international law and a refusal to be drawn into escalation.

Trump responded by threatening to cut all trade with Madrid, calling Spain a "loser" and a

In Germany, *Der Spiegel* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* describe a government pursuing a dual strategy: reinforcing EU-level energy coordination while expanding direct agreements with Gulf producers. Berlin is also reportedly accelerating contingency planning for maritime security independent of U.S. naval leadership.

Similarly, Netherlands outlets such as *DutchNews/NL Times* report increased Dutch participation in European-led maritime surveillance missions, alongside quiet diplomatic outreach to regional energy suppliers. A 'double track' strategy

What emerges from this patchwork of national responses is a broader European doctrine — one that combines institutional multilateralism with realist bilateralism. European leaders are emphasizing cooperation through EU mechanisms and international law, while calls for mediation, de-escalation, and new frameworks for global governance are gaining prominence, particularly in Paris and Brussels.

At the same time, individual states are pursuing direct deals with energy-producing nations to secure

immediate national interests. Italy's outreach, France's reported arrangement with Iran, and Germany's supplier diversification all move in this direction.

According to Meig Highlights this "double track" approach reflects both necessity and ambition: Europe is attempting to hedge against U.S. unpredictability while laying groundwork for a more autonomous and durable geopolitical role.

Waning American leadership

A recurring question in European commentary since 2025 has been whether Trump's rhetoric is producing the opposite of its intended effect. Rather than fracturing Europe, his remarks appear — particularly at this historical junction — to be accelerating the continent's integration on defense and energy policy.

Editorials across *Le Monde*, *El País*, and *Die Zeit* suggest that external pressure is strengthening the hand of pro-European institutions while weakening nationalist movements traditionally skeptical of EU cohesion.

Officials in Brussels, for example, are increasingly critical of Hungarian

leader Viktor Orbán, whose positions are widely portrayed in European media as aligned with both Moscow and Trump-era Washington. Commentators in Politico Europe and Euronews describe Orbán as a disruptive force — complicating efforts to present a unified European response at a moment of external pressure.

In Italy, Meloni's referendum defeat is being interpreted by many analysts as evidence that close alignment with Washington may carry domestic political costs.

Europe is not abandoning the United States — but it is definitively preparing for a world in which American leadership is waning and less reliable. The emerging strategy is neither purely federalist nor purely nationalist. It is a hybrid: coordinated where possible, independent where necessary.

Whether this moment marks a lasting shift in the global order remains to be seen. But as one senior EU diplomat told *Le Monde*: "For the first time in decades, Europe is not just reacting to history — it is trying to shape it."

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# In Race for California Governor, Farmers and Farmworkers Take Center Stage

By Juan Esparza Loera

FRESNO, Calif. – In the race to take over the reins as governor of California, the world’s fourth-largest economy, the top candidates in a crowded field tried to stand apart from each other during two recent gubernatorial forums in Fresno.

Addressed to two distinct audiences separated along racial and economic lines, both events centered on the future of agriculture and the farmworkers who keep it going.

The first forum held April 1 at Fresno State University, titled “Affordability and Rural California,” centered largely around discussion of water for agriculture, regulations that harm farmers and energy needs.

Fresno sits in the heart of California’s Central Valley, where big ag plays a dominant role in the region’s economy and local politics. Farmers here have long bristled against the state’s regulatory framework, including limits on groundwater pumping and drought-fueled shortages.

Candidates — Republican and Democrat — scrambled to identify with the audience of about 500 at the Resnick Student Center, mostly farmers or business people, nearly all of them white.

“My great-grandfather was a farmer. My father was a farmer, and I am not. And that is because of what has happened to American agriculture,” said Katie Porter, one of eight Democrats vying to replace outgoing Gov. Gavin

Newsom, widely considered a contender for the 2028 Democratic presidential ticket.

The same afternoon, five Democratic candidates addressed a diverse crowd of 400 — mostly Latinos, Punjabis and Hmong — at the Fresno City College auditorium. The event, the “Workers and Families of the Central Valley” forum, was organized by the UC Merced Community and Labor Center.

“I want the hardest-working and the lowest-paid to have California so they can live their dream. I do it because I was the son of immigrant workers,” said former U.S. Health Secretary Xavier Becerra.

A high stakes race

The stakes in the race are high as two Republicans – former FOX News host and businessman Steve Hilton and Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco – look to finish atop a June 2 primary field packed with at least eight viable Democrats that could see them qualify for the November general election.

In deep blue California, polling shows Hilton — a Trump-endorsed former FOX news host — at the top, with Bianco in third as concerns among Democrats grow that Republicans will consolidate support as Democratic voters dilute theirs.

Billionaire Tom Steyer, who has largely bankrolled his own campaign sits in second, with Rep. Eric Swalwell in fourth. Not far behind are Porter, former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio

Villaraigosa, and Becerra.

San José Mayor Matt Mahan, a late entrant but armed with major donations from Silicon Valley, is in single digits in the polls. Superintendent Tony Thurmond is also in single digits.

State law bars Gov. Newsom from running for a third term.

GOP, Dems say ag is overregulated Valley farmers, who have helped make agriculture a \$61.2 billion industry, have long grumbled about lack of water, the state’s burdensome Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), and a slew of other regulations they say is strangling their operations.

The gubernatorial hopefuls at the Fresno State forum agreed.

“It wasn’t farmers that ruined your industry. It wasn’t farmers that ruined the water industry. It wasn’t farmers that put all the regulations on yourselves,” said Bianco to applause. “It was all of these people (on stage), and it was their policies and it was partisan politics.”

Bianco, who currently serves as sheriff in Riverside County, recently garnered attention after his office seized 620,000 ballots tied to the 2025 election. The sheriff claimed to be investigating claims of voter fraud. Voting rights advocates say the move threatened to undermine election integrity. California Attorney General Rob Bonta sued, after which Bianco halted further investigation.

Mahan also blamed Sacramento for

the farmers’ woes.

“For far too long, the interests of our ag economy and our rural towns and cities/communities have been second tier if they’ve even been on the agenda in Sacramento,” said Mahan, who stressed he grew up in Watsonville, an agricultural community along the Central Coast. “The truth is most of our policies are not working in practice. We have made it too difficult to expand infrastructure and water supply.”

Villaraigosa, making his second bid for governor, said California is overregulated. He mentioned finding out in Bakersfield that the cost for farmers went “from \$160 an acre regulatory cost to \$1,600.”

“That’s not sustainable. There actually is agreement that things are broken in Sacramento. It’s not just about partisanship,” said Villaraigosa. “It’s about people that never worked on a farm that think they get food from a box or a can and really don’t know what goes into all of it. We need to bring farmers into the regulatory environment.”

Martín Chávez is a farm management executive in Kings County. Leaving the event, he said Hilton was his clear choice.

“He’s actually showing up. He’s talking to people,” said Chávez. “He’s shown up to our workplace and actually spent a day with us seeing what some of the challenges we face in the ag community are.”

See **FARMERS** Page 11



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# Don't Miss Festa Italiana Coming June 7th in Lodi, CA

Get into the spirit of Italy on Sunday, June 7th from 10:00am to 4:00pm, at the Lodi Grape Festival Grounds. This grand event brings the community together with the finest food, activities and entertainment of the Italian culture.

Renowned Italian Tenor Pasquale Esposito will once again dazzle the audience as headliner on the Morada

Produce Main Stage! Nino, d'Italiano, and The Trucco Band will perform. The Balliamo! Italian Folk Dancers will headline in the Pavilion while you stroll and enjoy wine tasting. The Stockton Garage Band and other local entertainment will welcome festival attendees on the Benevenuti Stage. The Bambini Zone will delight your little ones - enjoying Sparkles and Ravi-

oli the clowns, Rhymosaurs, and the Bambini Dancers who will also teach Italian Dance lessons! Strolling through the venue will be the Funambulus Italian Stilt Walkers who delight attendees of all ages! Festa offers delicious Italian food from local Italian chefs, including new local restaurants. Festa also features a Mercato Marketplace with shops, cooking demonstrations, Italian art and history, bocce ball, salami toss, the automobili show, wine tasting, olive oil and local product tastings, and much more! The "Boss of the Sauce" contest is back, and the Pavilion will have an Italian history display.

Festa Italiana! is a family-friendly event for all ages! You'll get to taste food from the most esteemed Italia restau-



rants and chefs in the area, participate in authentic Italian activities and games and enjoy live music.

Tickets are \$15 at the door. Children

12 and under are admitted free with an adult. Parking is free!

Please visit [festa-italiana.com](http://festa-italiana.com) for further event information!

## Lights! Camera! Gala! Join the Community Hospice & Health Services Foundation for An Evening of Hollywood Elegance

Modesto, CA – On Saturday, April 18, 2026, community members will gather at the Mark Gallo Health and Fitness Center located at Central Catholic High School in Modesto, California for the annual Community Hospice & Health Services "Lights! Camera! Gala!". Guests will enjoy an extravagant evening of music, appetizers and dinner by John Surla, Silent and Live Auction, Awards, and a Grand Prize Raffle to the Bahamas, all while supporting the patients and families of CHHS.

Several community members will be recognized for their dedicated service and support in advancing the organization's mission. Claudia and Mick Krausnick will be awarded the John and June Rogers Philanthropic Award. The Krausnick's have played a key role in furthering the mission of CHHS with their time, leadership and

generosity. The Julio R. and Aileen Gallo Leadership Award will be awarded to Chad Van Houten for his invaluable guidance and integrity, serving on the CHHS Board of Directors since 2018. The Harold A. Peterson III, Heart of Hospice Award will be presented to Donnette Reel, a longstanding and inspirational leader who fosters a culture of compassion and dignity within CHHS and the community.

Event proceeds benefit the patients, families, and programs of Community Hospice & Health Services. For registration or volunteer opportunities call the Foundation at 209.578.6370 or email [chfevents@hospiceheart.org](mailto:chfevents@hospiceheart.org).

About Community Hospice & Health Services Foundation Community Hospice & Health Services Foundation is a community-based nonprofit,

raising awareness and funds to support the patients and families of CHHS.

About Community Hospice & Health Services

Community Hospice & Health Services (CHHS) is a nonprofit, community-based agency, serving the greater Central Valley since 1979. CHHS embraces more than 2,500 patients and families each year providing support through vital programs including hospice and palliative care for adults and pediatrics, general inpatient care and respite care at the Alexander Cohen Hospice House, hospice family bereavement support, Hope Counseling outpatient mental health counseling for adults and children, and Camp Wokini, a youth camp for children and teens who have experienced loss. For more information about CHHS programs call 209.578.6300 or visit [hospiceheart.org](http://hospiceheart.org).



## Farmers

continued from Page 10

A focus on working families

The discussion at the FCC auditorium, meanwhile, focused on affordability and improving the conditions for farmworkers, the backbone of California's ag sector and a population now besieged by the Trump Administration's aggressive immigration enforcement policies.

Estimates suggest that between half and even as high as 75% of farmworkers in the state are undocumented. A majority live in low-income households.

Villaraigosa noted that California is expensive to live in, especially in the Central Valley where poverty ranks among the highest in the state. Education, he said, is the ticket out of poverty.

"We need to make college free in California. At a minimum, the CSU (state universities) have to be free," he said.

California, with the world's fourth-largest economy, can afford to help, the candidates agreed.

"I understand \$274 billion to this economy is what immigrants bring," said Villaraigosa, addressing the audience, "and we need to acknowledge

that and treat them humanely."

Nearly one-third of California residents are immigrants, including some 2.3 million undocumented individuals. Together they comprise around 8% of the state's overall workforce.

Thurmond leaned into economic and housing issues.

"We have to make it possible for everyone here to live the American Dream again and to buy a home," he said. "As governor, I will build 2 million housing units, provide down payment assistance programs and make sure that everyone has good-paying jobs."

Referencing rising concerns over the displacement of workers by artificial intelligence, Becerra said AI should not displace workers but support them.

"Every time we have a leap in technology, people lose their jobs," said Becerra. "So let's not be fooled. We don't have to repeat that history."

Mahan offered a more sanguine take. "The truth is we have an incredible opportunity in California to lead the world in agricultural innovation," he said, calling for greater investments in research and an "ecosystem of entrepreneurs."

## Stockton Cargo SC Reveals 2026 Season Schedule

Defending USL W NorCal Division Champions Begin Season on the Road Home Opener May 16th v. San Juan SC

Stockton- Stockton Cargo SC, defending USL W NorCal Division Champions, announced their 2026 USL W Schedule.

Coming off their first playoff appearance and a berth in the Western Conference Finals, the Stockton Cargo SC look to take aim at the 2026 USL W League Championship with a roster of core returning players along with exciting additions.

The Cargo Begin their year on the road Saturday May 9th at USL W Expansion side Monterey Bay FC, and open at home Saturday, May 16th at 7pm vs. San Juan SC. The Home Opener will also feature the "Battle of the 209 Tacos" sponsored by San Joaquin County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; a contest to determine the best Tacos in the 209 area code. Full schedule can be seen here: [2026 Stockton Cargo SC Schedule](#). The regular season concludes Saturday, June 27th at 7pm with a home game vs. Marin FC Sirens.

For 2026, the Cargo return to the home of their 2025 Playoff Run, Sanguinetti Field at St. Mary's High School, promising a better fan experience and environment. Season tickets for all 5 home games are \$50 per person for adults and \$25 per person for youth ages 16 and under. Individual game tickets for 2026 will be \$10 per person for adults and \$5 for youth ages 16 and under. Tickets can be purchased at: [Stockton Cargo SC Tickets](#)

The Cargo are once again proud to be joined for 2026 by our Front of Jersey Sponsor: California Resources Corporation/Carbon TerraVault, Game Day Shorts Sponsor Ava Community Energy, Ticket Sponsor SaveMart Supermarkets and Pack Sponsors San Joaquin County Districts Attorney Ron Freitas, The Port of Stockton and State Farm Insurance Agent Angel Sepulveda.

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