

Dr. Alina Valdes, Democratic Candidate for Florida CD25

Biography

Dr. Valdes is a Cuban-born immigrant having left Cuba as a young child with her family. She was raised and educated in the NYC area, where she received a BS in Chemistry with a concentration in Biochemistry from Herbert H. Lehman College of the City University of New York and an MD from New York Medical College.

Her passion and dedication to the underserved Latino Community of the South Bronx landed her a position at Morris Heights Health Center, a community-based facility providing comprehensive health services, from 1991-1999.

Upon moving to Florida, Alina concentrated her efforts on her family but also found time to teach as Adjunct Professor at the Miami-Dade College Physician Assistant Program. In 2010, Dr. Valdes returned to her passion of caring for the underserved, this time providing health care to the homeless and mostly uninsured patients in Broward and Miami-Dade by working at the Miami Rescue Mission Clinics. She also resumed her love of teaching by becoming a Clinical Preceptor to medical, physician assistant, and nursing students at these health facilities. She is presently working at the Hollywood Outreach Health Clinic two days a week.

Dr. Valdes focuses on three priority issues:

Immigration reform

Since we are a land of immigrants, we need to work towards fair immigration reform so millions can achieve their American dream -- as many like me have done -- through hard work and perseverance. Like others before them, dreamers should be able to stay as productive citizens of our society, especially after getting their education here.

We cannot continue to ignore the problem of undocumented people who basically do not exist even though many pay taxes and spend a good portion of their income in goods and services-- which in turn provides a significant economic boost to the neighborhoods where they live. We must continue to be that beacon of light welcoming people to our shores so that the melting pot will continue to provide diversity, which brings with it new ideas to make our country stronger.

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Health care

I believe that health care is a human right to which all people are entitled in order to live a healthy and productive life. In the long run, having a healthier population will decrease overall health care costs, thereby saving money in unnecessary treatment for preventable diseases. Women's health care, including their reproductive choices, is fundamental to the healthy growth of society.

As a physician who has taken care of many poor, uninsured people, I cannot over-emphasize the importance of having health insurance so that people can seek and receive medical care early on in a disease rather than waiting until they become disabled from a condition that could have been prevented if treated early. This has led me to the conclusion that we need to work towards achieving a single-payer system which follows each person for their entire life.

Environment

As Floridians, we cannot continue to ignore climate change and hope it will go away. The vast majority of climatologists agree that climate change is not only real but that we, as humans and the carbon footprint we leave behind by burning fossil fuels, are the cause.

Addressing climate change in Florida, which is one of the most vulnerable states due to its low elevation and predominantly limestone base, must be a priority if we are to remain above water. Otherwise, not only will there be a devastating economic impact on the state but the people will be in danger as we have seen from the severe weather events that have been attributed to global warming and its consequences.

Since we are the "Sunshine State", we can turn to solar energy and thereby create well-paying technical and manufacturing jobs. This will also provide renewable, low-cost energy to Floridians while decreasing our carbon footprint for the future generations.

As part of The Climate Mobilization movement, I will "Introduce and support legislation that acknowledges climate change as a global crisis and demands mobilization, Advocate publicly for a WWII-scale climate mobilization in the halls of government and in the media, and Enlist fellow leaders from all parties in this effort. Thus I pledge to mobilize, in defense of civilization and the natural world."