



La Mujer Obrera

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Dear President Obama, Congressman Reyes and Mayor Cook:

The global economic crisis has filled the news for months, but the women workers of El Paso have struggled with the profound poverty and unemployment of the border for years.

Rather than waiting with arms crossed, the women created a plan out of the ashes of the economy that was destroyed by the global economic crisis, and put it into action—through Mercado Mayapan, they created more than 100 jobs, and a strategy to create a future with dignity for the women, their families and El Paso.

But these jobs and this future are now completely at risk because up to now, government funding has been piecemeal, and inadequate, only enough to say “they helped” but not enough to genuinely create a future for women.

\$3.5 million in stimulus funds are needed not only to save 106 jobs but create at least 60 more for women. This would generate at least \$2.8 million in revenues, create microenterprises and establish a solid foundation for Mercado Mayapan to grow jobs, businesses and income for low-income women in El Paso.

Where are the funds to save jobs and create economic opportunity for low-income women on the border? Very few stimulus funds have come in support of women workers, and the City has strangled the use of the few resources that arrived. The Empowerment Zone has been tied up in bureaucratic fights between the City and HUD for years while families in the zone continue to suffer from some of the city’s highest rates of unemployment and poverty. President Obama has sent stimulus funds for bridges and roads, and has created bailouts for the rich bankers—where are the funds for women in El Paso?

If it is possible to bail out car dealers and auto companies, then why can’t the women on the border receive the investment they need to create a stable future. When will Obama keep his promises to Hispanics? When will Latina women on the border and their communities become a priority for him and his administration?

We want an immediate emergency meeting with federal, state and local officials responsible for stimulus funds to resolve this crisis.

La Mujer Obrera and Mercado Mayapan have done everything possible to build the basis for a new economy for immigrant women workers and their families on the border. However the city and the federal governments have failed to adequately support these efforts.

So at this time, La Mujer Obrera is suspending Mercado Mayapan and its operations to focus attention on the dire need for the government to provide the resources needed to develop jobs and businesses for Mexican immigrant women and their families.

We call on all members of the community to join us in demanding that the City and Federal governments invest in a future for low-income women on the border.

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