

# Businessman revives PAC to boost Latino voter engagement. This time with safeguards

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SPRINGFIELD — Businessman [Cesar Ruiz](#) has launched a new political action committee this year with new safeguards but the same goal of electing Latino candidates.

“Nearly 1.5 million Latinos call Massachusetts home, yet Latino voter turnout remains in the single digits in presidential elections and even less in state and local elections,” Ruiz said in a news release formally announcing the formation of Latino Agenda Independent Expenditure PAC. “This is a clear sign of disengagement as well as an opportunity to activate Latino voter power, which The Latino Agenda intends to do.”

There are new safeguards because a year ago [Ruiz](#) dissolved his old PAC — called Hispanic Latinos Leaders Now Independent Expenditure Committee — and agreed to donate \$190,000 to charity as punishment for breaking state campaign finance laws.

In 2023, the old PAC committee made direct contributions totaling \$5,500 to 13 candidates for municipal offices in Holyoke, Chelsea, Waltham, Worcester and Leominster according to disciplinary [documents](#) posted by the state Office of Campaign and Political Finance.

Under state law, [independent expenditure](#) PACs may not contribute to candidates or other political committees, except for other Independent Expenditure PACs or ballot question committees. The independent expenditure PACs can accept unlimited contributions from individuals or entities. They can use the money to advocate for causes or candidates.

They cannot coordinate directly or indirectly with campaigns and cannot contribute to them, however.

The old PAC’s contributions from 2023 included support for Holyoke candidates Kocayne S. Givner, Tessa Murphy-Romboletti and Jose Maldonado Velez in the amount of \$250 each. Candidates Israel Rivera, Jenny Rivera, Jannelle Mojica and Axel Fontanez each received \$500.

Givner, Murphy-Romboletti and Israel Rivera all won City Council seats in Holyoke.

Ruiz has business interests in the Paper City, including the [Wyckoff Country Club](#) and a planned sports complex tied to the [International Volleyball Hall of Fame](#).

He is also CEO of Golden Years Home Care Services.

For the new PAC, Ruiz will rely on more input from people who have run political action committees and campaigns, said PAC director Tomás Gonzalez in a statement.

Ruiz, who didn't respond to calls and emails following Monday's news release, has already donated \$50,000 to the new PAC, according to a March filing with the state. Gonzalez, a Hyde Park-based political consultant, donated \$25, records show.

In addition to Ruiz, the PAC will raise money from other donors through the rest of 2025, with plans on championing issues and supporting Latino candidates from across Massachusetts in the 2026 races, Gonzalez said in an interview.

That would include state legislative and U.S. House races.

Gonzalez said the progressive-leaning Latino Agenda Independent Expenditure PAC won't support primary challenges to senior Democrats like U.S. Sen. Ed Markey or U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal.

"We are not in the business of taking out Democrats in leadership," he said.

Gonzalez said that while turnout remained basically steady, the Latino vote shifted by 10 to 14 points in Massachusetts' historically Latino cities — Springfield, Holyoke, Lawrence and Chelsea — towards support for President Donald Trump in 2024.

"We have a lot of work to do," he said.