

## 10.4 Expanding Rights

In what ways did the protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s achieve their goals?

### Explore

## The Latin American Movement Grows

How did the Latin American movement achieve its goals?

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, many Latin American activist groups sought to end employment and housing discrimination, improve job training, increase access to financial institutions, and promote bilingual education for Latin Americans. At the same time, many Latin Americans sought to reclaim and promote public understanding of Latin American cultural identities. Political activists and artists worked together to increase public awareness of Latin American communities, including their histories, cultures, and ongoing struggles for civil rights.

Education was an important focus for Latin American activists. In 1967, a Los Angeles, California-based group called the Brown Berets organized school walkouts to protest the quality of education given to students who spoke Spanish at home. That year, a study authorized by a California's state school superintendent found that only about 125 out of 896 school districts had programs for students with limited English proficiency. The Los Angeles school protests led to the arrest of 13 Mexican American, or Chicano, activists on conspiracy charges. Eventually, however, the schools did meet some of the activists' demands. These and other actions across the nation led Congress to pass the Bilingual Education Act in 1968. The 1968 act, also called Title VII, offered federal grants to school districts who taught bilingual education to low-income students. In the 1970s, it was supported with additional amendments and laws. Schools throughout the country now provide services to students who do not speak English at home to help them become strong students in English.

Another notable group was La Raza Unida, a political party that represented the Chicano movement. La Raza Unida, whose name translates as "The United Race," was formed in Texas in 1970. The party supported many candidates for local offices. In 1972, Ramsey Muñiz, a La Raza Unida candidate, won 6 percent of Texans' vote for governor. While these were small vote totals, they demonstrated the power of Latin Americans as a voting group.

These actions brought about several successes. From 1974 to 1984, the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project helped add 1.7 million Latino voters to the rolls. In 1975, Congress amended the Voting Rights Act, extending its protections to everyone needing language assistance to vote. From 1974 to 1984, the number of Latino elected officials also nearly doubled, from around 1,300 to around 2,500. In 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act granted amnesty to undocumented residents who had been continuously in the United States since 1982 and legalized temporary agricultural workers. It also imposed penalties for employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers.

