



NHLA National Hispanic Leadership Agenda

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

December 2, 2020

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President-elect of the United States
Office of the President-elect
SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear President-elect Biden,

The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA) strongly supports your nomination of Alejandro Mayorkas as the next Secretary of Homeland Security of the United States.

NHLA is composed of over 40 leading national Hispanic civil rights and public policy organizations. Collectively, NHLA leads advocacy on the pressing civil rights and policy issues affecting the 60 million U.S. Latinos. NHLA strives to increase Latino visibility and leverages its collective efforts to build a stronger Latino influence in our country's affairs.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) helps oversee two of the issues we are very focused on: immigration and natural disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. The NHLA 2020 Policy Agenda for an incoming Administration includes a list of comprehensive immigration-related policy priorities. For instance, we expect renewed compliance with the *Flores* Settlement Agreement. We also expect your incoming Administration to end family detention and the Trump Administration's "zero-tolerance" policy, and for those held in detention, we expect proper healthcare, nutrition, and strong oversight and policies to prevent violence and discrimination in facilities, particularly toward women and LGBT immigrants. We also call on your Administration to undertake necessary and serious reforms to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and their operations. We expect your Administration to work closely with stakeholders to implement affirmative reforms and relief for the immigrant population to protect individuals from deportation and to make immigration benefits more accessible. We are confident in Mr. Mayorkas's ability to work with Latino and immigrant communities, among others, to tackle these issues.

The U.S. response to natural disasters must incorporate a framework of equity, climate preparedness, resilience, and mitigation. The majority of U.S. Latinos live in areas that have experienced devastating impacts of extreme climate-related events, such as Hurricanes Irma and Maria in Puerto Rico, longer and stronger wildfires in California, hurricanes and rising sea levels in Florida, and historic drought and heatwaves in Texas. Equitable treatment in the area of disaster recovery for Puerto Rico and a "Marshall Plan" to systematically invest the resources necessary to rebuild, revitalize, and revive the

Alianza Americas
American G.I. Forum
ASPIRA Association
AVANCE Inc.
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
Farmworker Justice
GreenLatinos
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities
Hispanic Federation
Hispanic National Bar Association
Hispanics in Philanthropy
Inter-University Program for Latino Research
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
League of United Latin American Citizens
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Mi Familia Vota
NALEO Education Fund
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives
National Association of Latino Arts and Culture
National Association of Latino Independent Producers
National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc.
National Day Laborer Organizing Network
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Institute for Latino Policy
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Latinx Psychological Association
Presente.org
SER Jobs for Progress National
Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
U.S.- Mexico Foundation UnidosUS
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce
Voto Latino

Island's economy are among NHLA's priorities. Across the United States, given the drinking water emergencies that face many communities, we support legislation to increase flexibility and accessibility of water-emergency related funding across federal agencies such as FEMA.

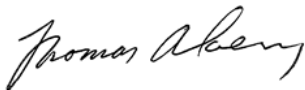
As former Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and Deputy Secretary of DHS, Mr. Mayorkas pushed for and swiftly implemented Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). His leadership in that groundbreaking effort to develop humane and reasonable immigration policies, reassures us that he will also lead efforts to push for necessary legislation to provide relief for Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status holders, and the larger undocumented immigrant population, and implement policies to increase access to, and ensure the fair adjudication of, immigration benefits. We are also heartened by his commitment to end the coordination of USCIS with ICE for enforcement purposes and to reemphasize the long American tradition of immigration as the defining characteristic that distinguishes our country, *E Pluribus Unum*.

Immigration policy requires humanity: a deep understanding of the reasons for migration and, ultimately, of the human condition of those that seek a better future. The humanity that Mr. Mayorkas clearly brings to his approach to immigration, disaster management, and national security, is a credit to him and to you.

We previously asked that you ensure that a diverse slate of Latinos comprise at least 20% of your appointed positions, in number and importance, including no fewer than five in Cabinet-level positions. Your nomination of Alejandro Mayorkas to head the Department of Homeland Security is an important first step to that goal. Thank you.

Please have your staff contact the Co-Chairs of the NHLA Immigration Committee Thomas A. Saenz, MALDEF, at tsaenz@maldef.org, and Laura M. Esquivel, Hispanic Federation, at lequivel@hispanicfederation.org, or the Co-Chairs of the Government Accountability Committee, Kenneth Romero, National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL), at kromero@nhcsl.org, and Al Gallegos, National Association of Hispanic Federal Employees (NAHFE), at president@nahfe.org, if you have any questions about NHLA's position regarding this or any other appointments, or if you need our help garnering national support for the nominees we have endorsed. Please also let us know the contact information of the persons you designate as the official points of contact on this and related matters.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Saenz
Chair, National Hispanic Leadership Agenda
NHLA Immigration Committee Co-Chair
President & General Counsel
Mexican American Legal Defense and
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Laura Esquivel
NHLA Immigration Committee Co-Chair
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