

March 24, 2015

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: NHLA Opposition to H. Con. Res. 27, the House Budget Resolution

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of 39 leading nonpartisan national Latino advocacy organizations, **we strongly urge you to vote against H. Con. Res. 27, the Fiscal Year 2016 House Budget Resolution.** NHLA will closely monitor votes on the FY16 House Budget Resolution and will include them in future NHLA scorecards evaluating Members' support for the Latino community.

The House Budget Resolution exacerbates the trend in recent years of achieving deficit reduction through shortchanging the investments our economy needs in order to grow. Sixty-nine percent of the \$5.3 trillion of cuts in the House Budget Resolution are to programs that serve families and individuals with low or modest incomes, even though these programs constitute less than 25 percent of the costs of federal programs overall. In contrast to these cuts on low and modest income households, the House Budget Resolution increases defense spending by \$400 billion over ten years, and fails to close any tax loopholes that benefit large corporations or the wealthiest Americans.

This is an unfair budget that places the burden of deficit reduction on those struggling to make ends meet, while asking for no sacrifices from those who have benefited from the largest gains in wealth over the past decade.

In particular, the House Budget Resolution runs counter to NHLA's budget priorities in the following ways:

- 1. Reckless Cuts to Domestic Priorities.** The House Budget Resolution calls for cutting the funding for non-defense discretionary programs by at least \$759 billion below existing sequestration levels through 2025. This would result in a 33 percent cut to funding for non-defense discretionary programs between 2010 and 2025, leaving insufficient resources to invest in education, job-training, childcare, infrastructure, and important government functions such as the enforcement of civil rights and labor laws, and conducting the census.
- 2. Slashes the Safety Net.** The House Budget Resolution would make deep cuts to safety-net programs that serve the most vulnerable in society, requiring \$1.1 trillion in mostly unspecified cuts to entitlement programs. Among those that are specified, the resolution would cut the Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by \$125 billion between 2021 and 2025, a staggering cut of one-third to the entire SNAP program. Massive cuts of this scale would inevitably result in ending food

assistance or reducing benefits for millions of households. Other programs likely to face cuts include school lunch and other child nutrition programs, and Supplemental Security Income for the elderly and disabled poor.

3. **Fails to Provide Tax Relief to Working Families.** NHLA has repeatedly called for tax reform that helps working families through the strengthening of tax credits that reward work and keep millions of adults and children out of poverty. Specifically, we have called for making permanent the 2009 expansions of the refundable portions of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) that provide relief to lower income individuals and families. In contrast, the House Budget Resolution would let the refundable portions of these two tax credits expire. Scaling back the EITC and CTC in this manner would push over 16 million people, including eight million children, into poverty or deeper into poverty. Specifically, the EITC rollback would affect two million Latino working families, and the CTC rollback would impact three million Latino working families with six million children.
4. **Takes Away Affordable Health Care.** The House Budget Resolution would repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA), eliminating subsidies that make health insurance plans affordable and reversing the expansion of Medicaid that has been undertaken by most states. Over 16 million previously uninsured people have obtained health insurance coverage thanks to the ACA, which has contributed to a drop in the rates of uninsured Latinos from 36 to at least 23 percent. Repealing the ACA would jeopardize the health insurance of the 2.6 million Latino adults who gained health insurance coverage between the start of the ACA's initial open enrollment period in October 2013 and June 2014 – a figure that is likely higher since the end of the second enrollment period.

The House Budget Resolution would also convert Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program into a single block grant and cut its funding by \$913 billion. This cut is *in addition* to repealing the ACA's Medicaid expansion, jeopardizing the health of millions of children and adults in lower income households.

We appreciate your attention to our concerns. For additional information, please do not hesitate to contact NHLA through Albert Jacquez of NCLR, at (202) 785-1670 or ajacquez@nclr.org.

Sincerely,



Hector E. Sanchez
Executive Director, Labor Council for
Latin American Advancement
Chair, NHLA



Eric Rodriguez
Vice President, Office of Research, Advocacy, and
Legislation, NCLR
Chair, NHLA Economic Empowerment Committee