

The NHLA's leaders are committed to improving the representation of Hispanics in the Federal Government career workforce.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Federal Employment

The NHLA's leaders are committed to improving the representation of Hispanics in the Federal Government career workforce, where hiring Hispanics has been relatively stagnant across the nation. Our members are active on this issue via the NHLA's Government Accountability Committee and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Hispanic Council on Federal Employment.

In 2000, the President signed Executive Order 13171 on Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government, noting the significant underrepresentation of Latinos, representing a mere 6.4% at that time. Fifteen years later, with limited growth in Hispanic representation in the Federal Government, rising to just 8.4%, this issue of underrepresentation remains protracted and problematic. Hispanics remain the most underrepresented group in the federal workforce. In 2014, Hispanics represented about 16.1% of the civilian labor force⁶² but only 8.4% of the Federal Government's workforce.⁶³ This is a negligible change from 8.2% in 2012. Similarly, Hispanic representation in the Career Senior Executive Service (SES) ranks was very poor at simply 4.4%, compared to 4.2% in 2012. With Hispanic new hires in the federal workforce in FY2014 at only 7.5%, the degree of Hispanic underrepresentation continues to be a serious problem.

The absence of a representational number of Hispanics across the Federal Government undercuts the government's ability to produce policies that are inclusive, fair, and responsive to the concerns of the Hispanic community. As a result, Hispanics, and the issues and programs affecting them, are either overlooked or managed ineffectively. In addition, federal employment has been a significant factor in the development of a stable middle class and its relative absence in the Hispanic community adds to this community's economic challenges, including its level of civic participation.

Projected mass retirements in the federal workforce present government departments and agencies with the opportunity to change the numbers, but only if federal employment policies and practices regarding the recruitment and hiring of Hispanics are completely revamped. Since Hispanics constitute the largest and fastest growing segment of the population, it would appear to be a perfect opportunity to both backfill positions and to commence an affirmative concentrated effort to change the paradigm from one of exclusion to one of inclusion. The Federal Government must work toward creating equal opportunities to remedy the historically severe underrepresentation of Hispanics in the federal workforce.

Policy Recommendations

The NHLA reiterates its position that the President needs to sign a new Executive Order specifically addressing the need for the Federal Government to correct the underrepresentation of Hispanics in its workforce. Without such a specific commitment from the White House, advisory mechanisms, such as the Hispanic Council on Federal Employment, will continue to be ineffective in addressing this problem.

This Presidential Executive Order on Hispanic Federal Employment should outline an aggressive program to substantially and affirmatively increase the number of Hispanics in the federal workforce, including increased representation of Hispanics in the career SES. The Federal Government should:

- Provide staff development programs to retain existing Hispanic federal workers and increase opportunities for promotion into higher ranks of government service.
- Develop a Federal Hispanic Accountability Model, to be promoted at departments and agencies by the Office of Personnel Management.
- Monitor progress toward reaching the Hispanic civilian labor force statistics as tangible hiring goals and hold department and agency leaders accountable by making Hispanic hiring goals part of the performance-based review system and using it as an evaluation tool for the promotion of managers.
- Eliminate citizenship requirements for employment with the Federal Government, unless constitutionally mandated.
- Require that Hispanic Council on Federal Employment (HCFE) recommendations be institutionalized into agencies' policy structures.
- Prevent agencies from receiving a positive green GPRA rating if their hiring of Hispanics fails to meet strategic targets.
- Place the agencies with the worst records of Hispanic hiring under special status requiring a major restructuring. This should include agencies, which have historically had the poorest records of Hispanic hiring.
- Require each agency to undergo an annual Federal Advisory Commission Act comprehensive review process addressing Hispanic underrepresentation in its workforce.
- Require agencies to develop partnerships through MOUs with Hispanic organizations that promote Hispanic hiring.
- Provide adequate resources to develop a pipeline program of Hispanic candidates leading into GS-14 and GS-15 positions, the career Senior Executive Service (SES) positions, and SES Candidate Development Programs (CDP).
- Develop a Mentoring Program for Hispanics aspiring to progress and/or advance into the supervisory/management and SES levels. Publicly disclose demographic data for federal flagship programs, such as the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program, career pathways, and special hiring authorities.

- Intentionally increase recruitment and placement of Hispanics in the Presidential Management Fellows Program, especially Hispanics from HSIs; if there is resistance or a lack of commitment to increasing Hispanic representation in this program, then a separate program for Hispanics should be created and funded.
- Proactively encourage federal agencies to sponsor/ hire Hispanics and students from HSIs into federal internships and contract for such internships through third-party Hispanic providers.

There is only one Hispanic serving as Small Business Director among the top 25 federal agencies.

FEDERAL CAREER EMPLOYMENT SCORECARD

The NHLA will develop and distribute a Federal Career Employment Scorecard. The NHLA periodically issues an assessment of the Administration on its efforts to ensure the full inclusion of Hispanics throughout the federal workforce and issues a scorecard on the level of Hispanic employment within each federal agency.

The NHLA Federal Career Employment Scorecard will reflect the representation of Hispanics within those agencies. The categories specifically related to Hispanics that will be scored will be: GS-5 through GS-11; GS-12 through GS-13; GS-14 and GS-15 and; Senior Executive Service (SES) levels.

It will also evaluate programs developed to address the underrepresentation of Hispanics, including how those programs are implemented; enforced; funded vs. other non-Hispanic programs; the Applicant Data Pool collected for Hispanics; and the number of Hispanics selected from that Applicant Pool by occupation.

The fundamental purpose of the Scorecard is to ensure that leaders, organizations, the public, and the media are fully informed about the performance of federal agencies as related to the underrepresentation of career and non-career employees in the Federal Government.

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FEDERAL PROCUREMENT

In fiscal year 2011, the latest year for which we have data, of the \$98.2 billion in government awards, Hispanic-owned companies won only about 8.4% of that total, or \$8.21 billion. That year, only the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Small Business Administration exceeded their minority-owned small business procurement goals.

Under the 8(a) program, while Hispanic businesses constitute 40% of all minority-owned firms in the United States, they receive only 14% of the dollar value of all contracts awarded in that program. Hispanic businesses are also underrepresented among recipients of SBA loans and technical assistance grants. Additionally, the growth rate of women-owned businesses is outpacing the number of male-owned businesses.⁶⁴ In fact, the number of Latina-owned businesses has grown an astounding 87.5%.⁶⁵ According to the National Women's Business Council, Latinas own close to 788,000 businesses in the U.S., an impressive 45% increase since 2002 and a 133% growth since 1997.⁶⁶ Likewise, Latinas own 36% of businesses owned by minority women, and one of every 10 women-owned businesses overall, yet they represent less than one percent of government contractors from the five percent of the prime and subcontractors for women-owned small business established by federal executive agencies according to the SBA.⁶⁷ Moreover, there is only one Hispanic serving as Small Business Director among the top 25 federal agencies.

The number of women-owned firms is increasing faster than the number of men-owned businesses.

POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

The NHLA recognizes that the future of the Latino community hinges on the ability to sit at every decision-making table in our government. Our democracy works best when we have a reflective democracy that is representative of the diverse voices of every community. Despite the growth of the Latino population and their increased civic participation, Latinos account for a fraction of state and presidential political appointments.

The NHLA Latino Appointments Program helps tackle the pipeline problem by creating the infrastructure to identify and support Latino candidates interested in political appointments, running state pilot programs with our coalition members to increase political appointments made by Governors, and creating a network of current and former appointees that we can support as they move up the pipeline and that we engage to serve as mentors for those coming up behind them.

Over time, tied to Presidential elections, it appears that Hispanic appointments have increased within each term. It also appears that following the creation of the NHLA Latino Appointments Program, Hispanic appointments increased more steadily. The apparent correlation between increased representation and direct intervention provides evidence in favor of the need for an Executive Order on Hispanic Federal Employment.

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