



Illinois Latino Agenda

Contact:

Juan Rangel, UNO, 312-907-0283

Isabel Adon, Latino Policy Forum, 773-610-9130

En Español: Artemio Arreola, ICIRR, 847-338-5821

Broad-Based Union of Latino Organizations Rallies for Redistricting

Diverse groups of Latino community in unified call: Promote Latino, minority voting rights

CHICAGO – May 18, 2011 – Today an alliance of Latino organizations including the Illinois Latino Agenda, led by the Latino Policy Forum, and the Latino Coalition for Fair Redistricting, led by the United Neighborhood Organization (UNO), has united to speak in a singular voice on the subject of remapping. The unified group announced consensus around core principles for federal and state redistricting priorities for the Latino community.

“The Latino community has obvious strength in numbers, but are a true force through our unity” said Sylvia Puente, executive director of the Latino Policy Forum (and co-convenor of the Illinois Latino Agenda). “Several Latino coalitions have taken varied redistricting proposals to Springfield in the past weeks, and we now unanimously support the same priority: That legislators protect the growing base of Latino voters in this state.”

Juan Rangel, CEO of UNO and convenor of the Latino Coalition for Fair Redistricting added, “We need to not only protect the Latino community gains over the past two decades but also send a strong message to the Illinois Legislature that our community expects more House and Senate districts to be included in the new State of Illinois legislative map.”

The group—comprised of Latino nonprofit organizations, business leaders, and other community stakeholders from across the city and suburbs—calls for the legislature to recognize the following principles when drawing Latino and other minority districts as part of current remap efforts:

- Protect the rights of Latino communities by creating Latino districts commensurate with the growth of the Latino population in the state of Illinois;
- Ensure that districts representing other racial and ethnic minority communities are drawn to maintain these communities intact; and
- Preserve African American districts.

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Latino leaders have been working diligently to demonstrate how new legislative maps can be drawn in accordance with these core principles, while adhering to the federal Voting Rights Act and the new Illinois Voter Rights Act of 2011. The latter was enacted earlier this year to ensure transparency and minority voting rights.

At the federal level, the alliance supports the creation of one Congressional district with a Latino population of 65-plus percent, along with a second influence district that unites and keeps adjacent Latino communities cohesive.

At the state level, the group's focus is in the Chicago suburbs, which now are home to nearly 60 percent of the state's Latino population. The group calls for the creation of what would be Illinois' first suburban Latino majority district, to be drawn in Aurora. The group also backs the creation of 13 Latino majority and influence districts—districts that would include a 20-63 percent Latino population—outside of Chicago.

"Diverse political representation should be embraced in Illinois. It ensures the full participation of all of our electorate in our common purpose of moving our State forward", said coalition member Artemio Arreola, Political Director for Illinois Coalition for Immigration and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) (a member of the Illinois Latino Agenda). He added, "Although great strides have been made away from racially divisive dialogue in politics, maps still need to reflect common interests and communities with shared experiences."

About this Broad-Based Latino Group: The list of organizations supporting this alliance includes various members of both the Illinois Latino Agenda and Latino Coalition for Fair Redistricting: Alivo Medical Center, Arden Shore Child & Family Services, Association House, Casa Central, Centro de Información, Cicero Area Project, Coalicion Latinos Unidos de Lake County, Corazón Community Services, CUPULA, El Hogar del Niño, El Valor, Erie Neighborhood House, Federaciones de Clubes Michoacanos, Gads Hill Center, Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc., Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA), Hispanic Housing Development Corporation, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Interfaith Leadership Project, Latino Organization of the Southwest, Latino Policy Forum, Latinos Progresando, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) – Illinois, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) – Waukegan, Mujeres Latinas en Acción, National Latino Education Institute, Puerto Rican Agenda, Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, Rainbow House, Southwest Chamber of Commerce, The Resurrection Project, and United Neighborhood Organization (UNO), Youth Service Project.
