

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sara McElmurry: 312-351-3890, smcelmurry@latinopolicyforum.org

Latino population growth saves Illinois' loss of second House seat
Growing community brings economic and political benefit to the state

CHICAGO – December 22, 2010 – Illinois will be down a seat in the House of Representatives following the 2012 elections, according to yesterday's US Census Bureau announcement. Analysis from the Latino Policy Forum indicates that two seats would have been stripped from Illinois, had the state's Latino population not grown as dramatically as it has over the past decade.

"Latinos have made significant, well-documented contributions to the workforce and economy," said Sylvia Puente, executive director of the Latino Policy Forum. "But beyond economics, Census data show how Latinos' sheer numbers are benefiting Illinois."

Without a Latino population increase of nearly half a million people since 2000, Illinois would have fallen short of the population needed for an 18th House seat, having sufficient population for just 17 seats. This shortfall is estimated at 315,656 to 368,937 people, according to analysis from the Latino Policy Forum.

Based on total apportionment population, each House seat represents 710,767 people, meaning that Illinois' current 18-seat apportionment requires a population of 12,793,806. But without the Latino growth, Illinois population would have come in at an estimated 12,424,869, good for only 17 House seats.

While Latino-specific population numbers for 2010 are yet to be released, annual American Community Survey data shows that Illinois Latinos account for nearly 90 percent of the state's population growth since 2000 – not to mention 3 of every 4 new entrants to the local labor market and an estimated \$41 billion in state purchasing power. What's more, Latino Policy Forum analysis indicates that the state's growing Latino population will bring a staggering \$30 billion in Federal funding to the state over the next ten years – that's nearly \$1,500 per person per year for each of the 2 million Latinos potentially counted in the 2010 Census.

"Given all that the growing Latino community has contributed – and will contribute – to the state of Illinois, it's time that Latinos achieve parity in electoral representation at both the state and federal levels," said Puente. "Latinos have saved a seat for Illinois – it follows that a Latino representative have an additional seat at the table in the Congressional reapportionment."

About the Latino Policy Forum

The Latino Policy Forum is the only organization in the Chicago area that facilitates the involvement of Latinos at all levels of public decision-making. The Forum conducts analysis to inform, influence and lead. Its goals are to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies, and engage diverse sectors of the community, with an understanding that advancing Latinos advances a shared future. For more information, visit www.latinopolicyforum.org.

###