

Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs
Meeting Minutes
Indiana Gov. Center South, Rm. B
11/17/05

Attendance:

Rep. John Aguilera-Commission Chair
Margie Chavez, Commission Vice Chair
Carmen Quintana-Designee, Department of Health
Ronnie Cantu-Governor Appointee
Manuel Gonzalez-Senate Lay Member
Mistie Morales-Designee, Dept. of Correction
Rita Cano-House Lay Member
Christine Cde. Baca-Designee, Civil Rights Commission
Lawrence McCormack-Proxy, Senator Vi Simpson
Hilda Vazquez-Designee, Department of Education
Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes, Commission Treasurer
Adolfo Solis, House Lay Member
Juana Watson, Senate Lay Member
Sal Soto, Senate Lay Member
Rev. Samuel Ruiz, House Lay Member

Staff:

Amy Mendoza, Executive Director
Intern Ryan C. Marques
Intern Laura Barrett

Audience:

James A. McCann, Purdue University: Bi-national Citizen Project
Monica Kozlowski, Office of Senator Richard Lugar: Veterans History Project

I. Establish Quorum

A quorum was established that consisted of 15 Commissioners

II. Guest Speaker Introductions & Presentations

Vice Chair Chavez introduced James A. McCann from Purdue University.

A. James A. McCann, Purdue University

Mr. McCann started his discussion about his past history of political research which encompassed publications, observing the 2000 Presidential Elections for both the Democratic and Republican parties, teaching political science at Harvard University and living and studying in Mexico. Mr. McCann opened his

presentation by calling to attention the title of his research prospectus, "Bi-national Civic Engagement: Mexican Immigrants in the Crossroads of America." Mr. McCann made a point to mention the word Bi-national, as to underlie this word, which encompasses the two countries in which the Mexican American immigrant represents. Mr. McCann pointed out that Indiana is currently a, "New Growth State," where approximately 200,000 Mexican immigrants live in the state today. Mr. McCann then addressed the topic of how much potential there is for civic incorporation of Mexican immigrants in Indiana. Mr. McCann listed some formal indicators of civic incorporation for Mexican immigrants such as naturalization, voter registration and turnout, and participation in community groups. Mr. McCann then touched upon the personal dispositions of civic incorporation such as attention to civic affairs, confidence and a sense of personal efficacy, interpersonal trust and a desire to live, work, and invest in Indiana over the long run. Mr. McCann then addressed the topic of the international dimension of civic incorporation through Mexican immigrants. Mr. McCann expressed the positive aspects about this topic by stating the possibility of maintaining connections to Mexico through remittances, local clubes de oriundos and the extension of absentee voting rights to Mexican expatriates. Mr. McCann mentioned that remittances constitute the second largest source of capital in Mexico. Mr. McCann also stated that when the Mexican Congress passed the extension of Absentee Voting Rights to Mexican Expatriates, it extended to 4 million voters. Mr. McCann expressed that there are two options when discussing civic incorporation in the bi-national context: "Zero-Sum" or "Win-Win." Mr. McCann expressed how an immigrant must divorce himself or herself from their home country and establish themselves as a national citizen by becoming involved in the community and other public matters. Mr. McCann then explained the design of his study which encompasses a two part survey of Mexican immigrants in Indiana. Mr. McCann will conduct a survey before the Mexican early campaign period (February/March 2006) and then conduct another one after the Mexican Election (July 2006). Mr. McCann stated that these surveys will be conducted by telephone and face-to-face interviewing in Spanish and English. Mr. McCann also expressed that there will be some focus group discussions on these surveys. Mr. McCann stated that what he wanted to gain from these surveys is what and how Mexican Immigrants learn from the Mexican Presidential campaign. Once Mr. McCann has retrieved and gathered all of the information from the surveys, he noted that he will be presenting the information through dissemination conferences, academic publications, reports for policymakers and NGOs (U.S. and Mexico) and publicly accessible survey data. Mr. McCann pointed out that his short term agenda is comprised of statewide networking, research support with the help of a graduate student and potential external resources (Tinker, Carnegie, Rockefeller, Indiana-based foundations and State Agencies).

Commissioner Watson stated that she was a representative of the Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky Mexican immigrants who fought for absentee voting. She then pointed out that what Mexican politicians are trying to say is that these 4 million

new voters could influence the election of Mexico and those who still live in Mexico.

Mr. McCann agreed with Commissioner Watson and stated that there are indeed problems with the Mexican Presidential campaign.

Commissioner Watson stated that Roberto Suro helped out with representing the absentee voting and that the University of Notre Dame conducted a similar study in Illinois.

Commissioner Chavez called for any more questions.

Commissioner Gonzalez referred to the context of zero sum and commented on how this issue of absentee voting for Mexican expatriates will influence U.S. Legislation. He then pointed out how social security will be affected and the effect Mexican President Vicente Fox has on preaching to President Bush about immigration reform.

Mr. McCann responded by stating that his Spanish-English questionnaire which will cover policies on social security, labor issues, NAFTA, cross border mobilizing and extending voter rights will help shape public opinion. Mr. McCann stated that he would be willing to develop a larger questionnaire covering topics such as civic life, social services and education.

Commissioner Chavez asked Mr. McCann in what way would he like to see support for this project from the Commission.

Mr. McCann stated that he will have to draft some preliminary budget figures and then contact the Commission.

Commissioner Chavez asked if the Commission would be able to publish the information/findings gathered from his study as public information.

Mr. McCann stated that he would create a conventional track and then a public interest one as well.

Commissioner Watson stated that the Sagamore Institute is conducting an economic impact report on Indiana and its immigrant population. She also expressed the need of an education report detailing the dropout rate among Hispanic/Latino students.

Mr. McCann mentioned a potential study in the near future covering education among Hispanics and Latinos.

Commissioner Chavez stated that as a Commission this would be a good study to support.

Commissioner Gonzalez expressed that during the Commission's retreat, the Sagamore Institute study, the University of Notre Dame study and Mr. McCann's study would be a good time to discuss how the Commission is going to support these studies.

Commissioner Soto questioned the rule on voting for funding for a study without taking the time to discuss it with all the Commission members.

Executive Director Mendoza mentioned the Commission's business survey and trying to find a way in which the Commission and Mr. McCann can collaborate on constructing a more efficient and effective survey.

Chairman Aguilera thanked Mr. McCann for presenting.

Chairman Aguilera introduced Monica Kozlowski from U.S. Senator Richard Lugar's office.

B. Monica Kozlowski, U.S. Senator Richard Lugar's office.

Ms. Kozlowski distributed a poster entailing the details of the Indiana Veteran's History Project which will be displayed in the U.S. Library of Congress. Ms. Kozlowski stated that every staff member for Senator Lugar's Indiana office has been assigned a county in Indiana to interview veterans. She also mentioned that Senator Lugar's Indiana office is partnering with schools in order for students to interview veterans which will help students learn more about the past wars while at the same time conducting community service. She stated that the majority of the interviews are being taped on tape recorders which will be archived in the Library of Congress. In addition, Ms. Kozlowski stated that every individual veteran had to sign release forms for privacy purposes and submit a timeline. Ms. Kozlowski also mentioned that more than 200 veterans have been interviewed and a good number of veteran spouses as well. Ms. Kozlowski pointed out that she has not been able to interview as many Hispanic/Latino veterans as well as African American veterans for this project. She believes that when conducting interviews with these different ethnic groups, it will provide her and others the chance to see a different perspective of wartime experience.

Commissioner Chavez asked Ms. Kozlowski how many Indiana veterans who have been interviewed are in the Library of Congress.

Ms. Kozlowski stated that there are 5,800 Indiana veterans who have been interviewed and are archived in the Library of Congress.

Executive Director Mendoza explained the Commission's History Project and the possibility of partnering with Senator Lugar's Indiana office in order to add to the Commission's timeline. Executive Director Mendoza also stated that she would like to see a timeline created on Indiana Hispanic veterans.

Ms. Kozlowski stated that she has seen this project tailored to specific classes.

Chairman Aguilera thanked Ms. Kozlowski for her presentation.

III. Commission Business

A. Review and accept 10-27-05 Commission meeting minutes

Chairman Aguilera made a motion to review and accept the October 27th, 2005 Commission meeting minutes. A second motion was made and accepted.

B. History Project Update

Commissioner Chavez mentioned that the big poster will be going up in the Statehouse, which will include pictures and biographies of each commissioner for ICHLA. She then stated that the other display will entail community Hispanic/Latino leaders, but she addressed that there are not that many known Hispanic/Latino community leaders in each county. Commissioner Chavez would like to have Hispanic/Latino teachers for the display and she called for each commissioner to contact at least one Hispanic/Latino community leader. She also mentioned that she met with the Ft. Wayne Historical Society and stated that the Commission's banner is hanging inside the Historical Society's building in Fort Wayne. Commissioner Chavez expressed that it is important to start collaborating with other Historical Societies around Indiana in order to help out with the Commission's History sub-committee.

Commissioner Chavez stated that the Commissioner's poster will be going up on December 1st, 2005 in the Statehouse.

Chairman Aguilera called for any questions or comments.

C. Regional & Departmental Updates

Commissioner Solis stated that he is helping and working on La Casa of Portland with funding from the Mayor's office of Portland. In addition, Commissioner Solis mentioned that La Casa of Portland will be offering English as a second language courses. He also stated that he would like to set up a meeting time with the ICHLA commissioners at La Casa of Portland on December 8th or 12th.

Commissioner Watson mentioned a meeting which she attended on November, 16, 2005 that included hundreds of people who were concerned about the driver's license issue.

Commissioner Soto asked who held the meeting.

Commissioner Watson stated that she found out that particular day (November 16th, 2005) that there was going to be a meeting at Washington High School during the night concerning the driver's license issue. She also addressed the need to educate Hispanics about civil procedures and peaceful demonstrations.

Chairman Aguilera expressed that the driver's license issue is a very heated one and the Commission must be able to deliver to the public well documented information. He also mentioned that Commissioner Morales will be the chairperson for the Commission's Driver's License sub-committee. In addition, Commissioner Aguilera expressed that everyone must recognize that this is not only a problem in Indiana, but is prevalent in every state. Commissioner Aguilera also stated that he attended a forum in Tampa Bay, Florida with the National Hispanic State Legislatures organization and reported that most states cannot follow through with the REAL ID requirements and how the Federal government will not accept La Matricula Card. He identified states such as Tennessee and Utah due to their efforts of creating only short term fixes with Driver's Certificates.

Commissioner Watson stated that the Hispanics and the other people present at the November 16th, 2005 meeting did not understand the demonstration process.

Commissioner Aguilera mentioned that there was too much unjust timing with Anti-Immigration groups and their efforts of only providing one side of the argument.

Executive Director Mendoza talked about the heated discussions at the November 16th, 2005 meeting and mentioned that the Commission's Driver's License report be printed in Spanish.

Commissioner Aguilera stated that the Commission should not shy away from its argument concerning the Driver's License issue. He then mentioned that it would be effective for the report to be printed in Spanish. Commissioner Aguilera then went on to discuss how he drafted bills last session (2005) to tackle this issue, but he held back in implementing these bills in order to see the other party's argument and viewpoint on this issue. Commissioner Aguilera expressed that the Commission should look at the new BMV statutes and tell them what the implications will be.

Executive Director Mendoza stated that the Commission should discuss procedures while at the retreat to fund the Driver's License report so it can be printed in Spanish. She also mentioned that the Driver's License sub-committee will meet on November 30th, 2005.

Chairman Aguilera would like Governor Daniels to talk with the Commission before going ahead with his own directives.

Commissioner Ruiz stated that the media is the third power of influence over people in the United States and there is a particular Indianapolis radio station that has been creating much animosity among the Hispanic Community in regards to the Driver's License issue. He then mentioned that the Commission should work with Univision to notify the public what the Commission is doing.

Chairman Aguilera emphasized the point in releasing the Commission's reports to the public in order to inform them of what the Commission is doing.

Commissioner Chavez stated that the people at the November 16, 2005 meeting thought Chairman Aguilera was stationed in Washington D.C. Commissioner Chavez then mentioned that she went on one of the Hispanic radio stations in Indianapolis to invite the public to the Commission meetings in order for them to understand what the Commission is doing for the Hispanic/Latino community.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that the Indiana State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce devoted 20 minutes to the Driver's License issue at its monthly meeting. Commissioner Gonzalez also mentioned that he was in South Bend yesterday talking about the same issue. In addition, he agrees with Commissioner Chavez in how the Commission must come up with ways in order to promote what the Commission is doing for the Hispanic/Latino community in regards to the Driver's License issue.

Chairman Aguilera discussed the implications of the state issuing driver's certificate which could not be used as Federal identification.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that there is a large group of people who do not understand this issue and they are the ones leading the Hispanic/Latino community.

Commissioner Watson stated that she is going to report to Governor Daniels about the driver's certificate but calls for more support from the Commission.

Chairman Aguilera would like the Governor's office and the Commission to work together and derive the same ideas. In addition, Chairman Aguilera mentioned how it is important to draft good legislation concerning this issue.

Commissioner Watson stated that Governor Daniels had an interview with Univision concerning this issue.

Commissioner Ontiveros called for more promotion of the Driver's License report by the Commission.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that it is important to condense and articulate the Commission's Driver's License report in order for the public to better understand the issue and the Commission's recommendations.

Chairman Aguilera stated that it is important for the Commission to remain focused on the Driver's License report and calls for more diligence and accessibility in Spanish.

Commissioner Chavez stated that there are three bi-lingual newspapers in Indianapolis that would like to do a spread on the Commission's actions.

Chairman Aguilera called for the Commission's meetings to be videotaped. In addition, Chairman Aguilera mentioned that there will be a national summit of the states on the Driver's License issue and the leader of the summit will be the Speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives.

D. 2005 Annual Report Discussions and Assignments

Executive Director Mendoza mentioned the Commission budget in regards to the 2005 ICHLA Conference and how it is subject to change in the near future.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that the Commission's Economic sub-committee is going to set up a networking session that involves vendors, Hispanic/Latino owned businesses and State Legislatures in regards to the FSSA request and procurement program at the Indiana Historical Society. Commissioner Gonzalez expressed that this networking session will allow vendors to identify potential Hispanic/Latino sub-contractors and hopefully spark negotiations.

Executive Director Mendoza pointed out the Commission's traveling display and how she is looking to add on to the display. In addition, Executive Director Mendoza talked about the Annual Report Outline and

how it is subject to change. She also pointed out that a significant amount of data needs to be provided by certain commissioner members for the Annual Report.

E. Medicare RX Access Network

Commissioner Chavez stated that the Commission should vote for the Medicare RX Access network. Commissioner Chavez stated that she is scared that people are going to get thrown into a Medicare plan where no one knows what is going on. She expressed that she plans to educate people on this new program.

Chairman Aguilera mentioned that he had a public service announcement on this issue and how people must get registered.

Commissioner Solis stated that he would like more information on the Medicare RX Access plan

Chairman Aguilera mentioned that the Commission should put a link on the Commission's webpage for this program.

F. National Council of Hispanic/Latino Commission Directors.

Executive Director Mendoza asked the commission members for approval to attend the National Council of Hispanic/Latino Commission Directors meeting.

Commission members voted yes for her travel.

Chairman Aguilera suggested to Executive Director Mendoza that she network with the National Hispanic Caucus in order to work with legislators.

IV. Announcements/Audience Question & Answer

Executive Director Mendoza mentioned the up and coming sub-committee schedule.

BMV Representative introduced himself.

Commissioner Ruiz called for the BMV representative to come to the December 6th Commission forum.

Chairman Aguilera announced Commissioner Soto's departure from the Commission.

Chairman Aguilera mentioned potential legislation that deals with graduation rates and agreeing on formulas that would set forward the procedure in accurately counting drop outs and graduates.

Chairman Aguilera also mentioned his attendance at a Jewish community function in Washington D.C. and how he will always remember and respect those who have perished in the Holocaust. In addition, Chairman Aguilera mentioned his election as Vice-President for the National Hispanic Caucus.

Chairman Aguilera also stated that he is proposing to draft legislation that will create an opportunity for East Chicago citizens to vote for members of their school board rather than members being appointed.

Executive Director Mendoza mentioned a few details about the Commission's retreat.

Commissioner Cde. Baca mentioned that the Indiana State Civil Rights Commission will host the Martin Luther King Celebration on January 12th, 2006

V. Adjournment

The Commission meeting was adjourned by Chairman Aguilera at approximately 12:00 P.M.