



**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs  
Commission Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, March 28, 2013  
3:00pm – 4:30pm  
Conference Center Room 12  
Indiana Government Center South  
Indianapolis, IN**

**Commissioners Present:**

Richard Espinosa, Senate Lay Member, Fort Wayne  
Alfredo Gonzalez, Governor Appointee, Indianapolis (TELEPHONE)  
Pedro Ledo, Jr., Senate Lay Member, Fort Wayne (Chair)  
Virginia Hernandez, Designee, Civil Rights Commission (Treasurer)

**Commissioners Not Present:**

Tina Little, Designee, Dept of Correction  
Charlie Garcia, House Lay Member, Indianapolis  
Christian Gallo, Senate Lay Member, Lafayette (Vice-Chair)  
Rep. Rebecca Kubacki  
Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon  
Andrea Perez, Designee, Department of Health  
Teresa Velez, Designee, Family and Social Services Administration  
Gerardo Gonzalez, House Lay Member, Bloomington  
Lenee Reedus, Designee, Dept of Education  
Jesusa Rivera, House Lay Member, South Bend  
Guadalupe 'Herb' Hernandez, Senate Lay member, Fort Wayne  
Diego Morales, House Lay Member, Indianapolis  
Senator Frank Mrvan  
Senator Greg Walker

**Visitors:**

Terry Spradlin, IU Center for Evaluation and Education Policy

**Staff Present:**

Danny Lopez, Executive Director

## **Opening**

Chairman Pedro Ledo, Jr. called the meeting to order noting the lack of quorum.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Ledo noted that minutes could not be approved due to lack of quorum but asked if any commissioners had suggested changes. None were made.

## **Approval of Financials**

Again, the lack of quorum prohibited commissioners from voting upon the financials. Executive Director Danny Lopez said that the only expense during the month was tied to the Latino Student Day initiative, laid out in the Strategic Plan. Lopez then noted that the commission remains safely under budget and is working to maximize its remaining resources for initiatives through the end of the year.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Lopez said that Representative Mara Candelaria-Reardon and her staff had succeeded in attracting nearly 35 more students than anticipated for Latino Student Page Day at the Statehouse, and that commissioners such as Representative Rebecca Kubacki and others had also sent students from their area. In all, nearly 135 Latino high school students attended the event. For next year, even more regions of the state would be identified and their school districts encouraged to send students for this important event, which allowed students to meet their representatives and conduct a mock session of the State House of Representatives.

Lopez said that a considerable amount of media had be done during the month, with op-eds and radio and print interviews on a variety of Hispanic-related topics. He said that his communications director would be working on a template for an electronic newsletter that could be blasted out to the commission's listserv.

## **Chairman's Report**

Ledo said that, given that this is his first meeting, he did not have any real report. He thanked commissioners for having the faith in him to lead the commissioner forward and noted that education and training were two key components to advancing the Latino community. He said that the commission could be instrumental in crafting legislative recommendations, specifically in the field of education.

## **Guest Presentation**

Terry Spradlin of CEEP discussed with commissioners the results of the focus groups that his team, in conjunction with the commission, conducted in six communities across the state. Spradlin said that CEEP, as a non-partisan research policy group that's part of IU, works with partners to evaluate policy and conduct research in the field of education.

Spradlin's research indicated an interest in early education initiatives and other education-related topics, mass transit, and local programs and services. The report has been distributed to commissioners and will be used to spark a conversation about policy and legislative recommendations.

Following the presentation, Spradlin said that he would be available to participate in the April meeting when more commissioners would be in attendance. He said he would cover the report again and answer any questions from commissioners.

Ledo asked if Spradlin had a sense of the legal status of most participants, and Spradlin said that this question was not asked. He said that participation was anonymous.

Spradlin said he found that some of the biggest challenges indicated by Latinos in Indiana were the language barrier and perceived lack of extra-curricular opportunities for their children. Ledo said that, as a Cuban-American, coming to Miami, where refugees were able to get acclimated before moving on to other cities, he could speak to the importance of feeling welcomed by a community. Espinosa concurred and said that the community in which he grew up in Texas was similar.

Lopez said that commonalities and differences between the discussions in different parts of the state would be part of the conversation among commissioners at the April meeting.

### **Adjournment**

At 4:23pm, the meeting was adjourned.