

**Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs (ICHLA)
Commission Meeting Minutes
Indiana Government Center South, Conf. Rooms 4 & 5
9-29-05**

Attendance:

Rep. John Aguilera- Commission Chair
Margie Chavez- Commission Vice Chair
Myrna Maldonado- Commission Secretary
Claudia Ontiveros-Fuentes- Commission Treasurer
Sen. Vi Simpson (via proxy Lawrence McCormack)
Adolfo Solis- House Lay member
Rev. Samuel Ruiz- House Lay member
Manuel Gonzalez- Senate Lay member
Sal Soto- Senate Lay member
Ronnie Cantu- Governor Appointee
Christine Cde Baca- Deputy Director, Civil Rights Commission
Gregory Kellam Scott- Director, Civil Rights Commission
Commissioner Ronald Stiver- Commissioner, Indiana Workforce Development
Carmen Quintana- Designee, Department of Health
Hilda Vazquez- Designee, Department of Education
Mistie Morales- Designee, Department of Correction

Staff:

Executive Director Amy Mendoza
Intern Laura Barrett

I. Establish Quorum

A quorum was established that consisted of 15 Commissioners.

II. Guest Speaker Introductions & Presentations

Chair Aguilera introduced Stan Jones from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and invited him to begin his presentation.

Stan Jones & Rep. Luke Messer, Indiana Commission for Higher Education

Stan Jones stated that he will be presenting high school drop-out statistics and introduced State Representative Luke Messer. Rep. Messer explained how the statewide graduation rate used to be calculated and how it continues to change. He said that a drop-out statistic used to be documented only when a student enrolled in the fall and dropped out within the same calendar year. Their Commission is currently studying freshman classes and their graduating classes four years later. This will capture the students who drop-out during the summer months. Rep. Messer informed the commissioners that Indiana has a 60%-70%. The documented graduation rate of 90% is not accurate. Rep. Messer explained the trend lines and gave an example of how Emanuel High School has a graduation rate in the teens. He compared how 1,000 of 4,000 initial, ninth grade IPS students will graduate on time, with Gary School Systems having a 50% graduation rate. Rep. Messer emphasized the importance of graduation. He shared outcome statistics of students who do not graduate. Rep. Messer said that students who drop-out are

destined for the following societal problems: 80% of prisoners are high school dropouts, have health problems and tend to be on welfare programs. They will be a higher cost to society. Stan Jones stated how we need to look at goals for kids. He spoke about the School Flux Program and how it encourages the family needs. Stan Jones gave an example of how the School Flux Program works: students work half a day in a job/trade environment and work the other half of the day at school. Mr. Jones emphasized how the school systems need more flexible models.

Chair Aguilera and Vice Chair Margie Chavez offered Stan Jones and Rep. Messer suggestions on making connections with their education contacts.

Darlene Slaby, Language Minority and Migrant Programs- Department of Education

Darlene Slaby asked to speak about state funding and ESL programs. She handed out information on state funding. Darlene Slaby informed the audience that the Indiana General Assembly began ESL funding in 1999. She explained that the original plans for ESL funding were \$750.00 per LEP student each year. She gave an example on how funding has been cut to only \$75.00 per LEP student. Approximately \$700,000.00 in state funding is set aside each year for ESL funding. Darlene Slaby confirmed that the funding amount has remained the same, while the LEP student population has increased dramatically. She said that Indiana schools are receiving on average, \$21.91 per student each year. There have been several discussions on both the impacts and the importance of ESL funding: Funding allows for greater school district flexibility (more than the “No Child Left Behind Act”), greater flexibility in funding allows schools to purchase materials, develop activities and mentoring, IPS had a newcomer center for funding which was supported through state monies, and inadequate dollar amount for funding. Darlene Slaby said that at one time, the ESL program was considered for elimination. She explained how ESL funding might be viewed as a “minimal victory,” because funding has remained the same, however, has not increased. She concluded that the majority of the ESL funding is being sent to school districts with a concentrated number of students. Darlene Slaby welcomed questions from the commission for discussion.

Rep. John Aguilera thanked the speaker and opened the discussion for questions.

Rep. John Aguilera reassured Darlene Slaby that she will have a chance to give a presentation to the members of the Indiana General Assembly. He suggested moving additional funding forward.

Amy Mendoza asked how LEP funding was determined by the state.

Darlene Slaby stated that students will not receive funding if they are at LEP level 5. She also explained how there are three state approved assessments. However, currently she expressed that the state is moving towards one assessment that will be based on year to year statewide assessments.

Manuel Gonzalez informed the audience about how Hispanic government individuals do not know of the concern with the Sycamore Study in Indiana. He asked of the study’s economic impact. He also stated that the only other state to do a similar study was Arizona.

Rep. John Aguilera suggested to high light the Darlene Slaby’s main points of concern and to adopt a resolution with the General Assembly. John Aguilera said that he wants to make sure

her comments are heard by the General Assembly. He stated that he would like to see what happens in regards to the “official funding dollars.” He said that student funding has been cut by almost $\frac{3}{4}$.

Darlene Slaby spoke of the 1999 session. She said that legislators would like to hear more from the community rather than just the Department of Education and schools. Darlene Slaby discussed the graduation rate and how graduates can benefit the community. She also expressed how she would like to petition letters and have volunteers to make comments/share with other groups.

Judge Gregory Scott said that he hopes there is a collection for the application of the funds. He suggested that funds are aggregated and used towards salaries for individuals helping, books, newcomer centers or etc. Judge Scott stated how he would like to hear from the educators where applications are more proficient. He said that it is a tragedy.

Darlene Slaby stated that there is not a report requirement. She said that this requirement would require additional paperwork and cause an up-roar amongst teachers. She did mention how it would be possible for some reporting on larger districts to be done. This would show the effectiveness of the funding. Darlene Slaby also informed the audience that she has an ESL statewide task force with representatives from many school districts. This task force discusses how money is utilized, has a department website for information, including use of materials or things that funds could be used for.

Judge Scott asked if any universities are involved in the analysis on review.

Darlene Slaby said that only educators from grades K-12 make the analysis.

Judge Scott suggested making recommendations from higher education representatives to participate in the review on funding.

Darlene Slaby stated that representatives from universities have been guests but have not offered suggestions.

Rep. John Aguilera requested that the Education Committee pick up support and help. He referred Darlene Slaby to Commissioner Designee, Hilda Vasquez, from the Department of Education. Rep. John Aguilera thanked Darlene Slaby again.

Gilberto Perez, Northeastern Center, Inc.

Rep. John Aguilera introduced the next speaker as Gilberto Perez.

Gilberto Perez apologized for not attending the May/June Commission meeting.

Mr. Perez introduced himself as a representative from the Community Mental Health Center. He stated that this center has been providing medical services for twenty seven years within the northeast region of Indiana. He listed several different counties of which the center services. Gilberto Perez recognized his primary county of work as Noble County, which is a part of Ligonier, Indiana. He also informed the commissioners that in the early 1970's this center was a part of another center that serviced the neighboring community needs. Mr. Perez said that he is both a therapist and a team leader from the outpatient office for Latinos and cross-cultured individuals. His primary areas of focuses are therapy and anxiety problems. Mr. Perez

recognized the emotional strains that Latinos might experience: culture changes and long work hours for little money. The Mental Health Center concentrates on this need to provide support for those individuals who make life-changing transitions. Mr. Perez gave a brief history of his own background. He said that he was originally from Texas, but was born in Ohio. His parents were migrant workers. Mr. Perez stated that both he and his spouse have also lived/worked in Puerto Rico for five years. Mr. Perez shared the importance of giving back to his people and chose Indiana. He said that he has since resided within the Ligonier community since 2001. Mr. Perez has been helping with individual, group and family therapy, and also substance abuse. He confirmed that 100% of his patients are Spanish-speaking and sees this opportunity to service his community as a privilege. Mr. Perez stated that he refers to Ligonier Indiana as “Aguas Calientes,” because of their strong Latino population. Gilberto Perez presented the commission with a recently developed program called “Bienvenidos” or “Welcome.” This program is a prevention intervention plan for mental health. It has a seven week program curriculum that addresses mental health education and cultural adjustments such as traumatic migrations. There are four training locations that are held within the regional school districts. Migrant children are given the opportunity to discover what it means to be a part of the community. The goal of the program is to determine whether the students interact, integrate, assimilate or marginalize themselves within the local communities. Mr. Perez also stated that the center plans to implement another center for non-violence in Fort Wayne Indiana. The center has completed an outcomes evaluation system. This system allows the center to look at all of the programs and later makes a discharge sheet about what patients have learned. He stated that the majority of the patients feel more comfortable with themselves upon program completion. Mr. Perez informed the Commission that his center is currently looking at a facilitator training program and has chosen specific program locations. Two of these programs will be in Noble County, one in Allen County and one in Marion County. Mr. Perez said that the Bienvenido program is like a dream. It gives people a better understanding of the cultural transition process. He has also met with the local courts to learn more about key issues to discuss with his patients: risk factors, alcohol/drug problems, etc. risks. Mr. Perez concluded by giving the commission his anticipation of the program and where it will be in approximately five years. He welcomed questions from the commission.

Chair Aguilera thanked the speaker and acknowledged the rapid of Hispanics within the Elkhart area. Chair Aguilera said he had the opportunity to speak with the National Hispanic Caucus and the National Black Caucus and extended an invitation for Gilberto Perez to attend or become a part of it as well. Chair Aguilera said that it was interesting how individuals are bringing attention to the Latino mental health problem.

Director Amy Mendoza asked Mr. Perez if there were any other programs similar to his center in other parts of the state.

Gilberto Perez said that mental health is a part of health. He said that he was not sure of other programs, but wants to meet with leaders from various communities in order to help implement such programs. Mr. Perez said that he would like to see initiatives for funding for individuals. This will create centers for those people who want to better their lives.

Judge Scott asked Gilberto Perez about facilities and staffing issues.

Gilberto Perez said that he was the the first therapist in the center. He said that his center currently has a bilingual, case manager and a Puerto Rican, bilingual, female therapist. Mr.

Perez stated that he generally works with the parents, while the female therapist tends to work with the students and various other female mental health issues. He said that the center has a bilingual secretary.

Judge Scott requested Gilberto Perez' contact information and recommended his nephew for assistance.

Misty Morales also requested contact information from Gilberto Perez on behalf of the Department of Correction. She offered the Department of Correction's assistance.

Rev. Samuel Ruiz commented about the program's importance. He stated that a critical target is the mental health issue. He said that he has seen issues within both churches and schools. Townships are asking pastors for help. He suggested for everyone to talk to their government agencies. Rev. Samuel Ruiz concluded on how society must solve the root of the problem.

Director Amy Mendoza said that the Health Subcommittee would like more information. She encouraged the subcommittee help and would like the statistics on improvement, alcohol abuse and etc. Gilberto Perez agreed to provide statistics.

Gilberto Perez invited the Commission to attend an initiative that his center will be hosting in November. This event is called the Inaugural Latino Behavioral Health Summit. Guest speakers and workshops will be available. He has extended invitations both internationally and across the nation. Mr. Perez encouraged the commissioners to become involved with leaders from across the nation. The commission plans to have a display table at the event. Juana Watson plans to present Latino immigrant information. Gilberto Perez thanked the Commission again and encouraged everyone to attend this Health Summit in Angola, Indiana.

III. Commission Business

A. Review and accept 8-30-05 Commission meeting minutes

Rep. John Aguilera made a motion to review and accept the August 30, 2005 Commission meeting minutes. A second motion was made.

B. The 5th Annual Statewide Hispanic/Latino Conference Update

Chair Aguilera began the 5th Annual Statewide Hispanic/Latino Conference Update. He invited Margie Chavez to speak on the upcoming conference.

Margie Chavez said that the conference is taking shape and the budget has been approved. She also stated that the Commission has the key note speakers. Additional work must be done in order to increase the attendance. She said that there are only forty-five individuals registered. Margie Chavez also informed the Commission that the dinner tickets for students have been discounted to only \$25.00.

Salvador Soto stated that both the press releases and media information are almost ready to be sent.

Chair Aguilera talked about the special task force meeting dates and times. He also commented on the unused official money from last year. He said that he plans to anticipate next year's event. He commented on the conference's networking benefits.

Margie Chavez encouraged commissioners to help with ticket sales through table sponsorship forms, especially to students. She reminded the commissioners about the important dinner message at the conference. Chair Aguilera suggested using networks that are already out there.

C. Public Forum Update

Chair Aguilera began the public forum update.

Director Amy Mendoza spoke about the attendees and gave the bullet points given at the forum. She stated that the commissioners need to come up with forum recommendations. Commissioner attendance at the public forums is very important. She informed the commissioners that Tippecanoe County does not have mainstream, Hispanic/Latino television or radio stations.

Margie Chavez said that the next public forum meeting will be on October 18, 2005 in Marion, Indiana. She said that it was the first time that local officials requested the Commission to attend. The forum location was changed from Kokomo to Marion because of Marion's outreach request.

Manuel Gonzalez said that Marion's officials are reaching out.

Margie Chavez encouraged commissioner attendance at the Marion forum and its importance.

D. Regional & Departmental Updates

Chair Aguilera began the regional & departmental updates. Director Amy Mendoza invited Mistie Morales to speak on behalf of the Department of Correction.

Mistie Morales said that within the last few weeks, the Department of Correction has been working with the Indiana Ombudsman Bureau. She introduced Charlene Navarro as an additional guest speaker from the Bureau.

Charlene Navarro said that she was appointed in May 2005. She clarified that the Bureau is housed within the Department of Administration, but is separate from the Department of Correction.

Chair Aguilera stated that the intent of the Bureau is to review with the Commission and asked for the next step.

Ms. Navarro stated that Commissioner Donahue is constantly updated on the actions of the Department of Correction. She plans to submit the first part of a three-part recommendation to go in front of Commissioner Donahue. Ms. Navarro said she would

like Commissioner Donahue to commit to recognizing the non-English speaking population and to provide for them. She said that this population goes unrecognized by Department of Correction. There are no documented numbers that specifically show how many individuals are Spanish-speaking. Ms. Navarro said that Hispanics/Latinos are usually listed as “other,” which is assumed to be 5.9%.

Chair Aguilera asked if Ms. Navarro is keeping a count for those who ask for her help with services and their contact information.

Ms. Navarro said that she cannot keep track of who submits the complaints by race. She said everything goes through the Diagnostic Center. Ms. Navarro informed the Commission that this center does not provide information pamphlets in Spanish. She feels that these Spanish speaking-individuals who go through the system, simply do not know any better. They are not aware of disciplinary appeals or grievances and cannot get substance abuse treatment or participate in certain programs. They are normally released and return again to the system. She agreed that this is also a big issue with Commissioner Donahue. Ms. Navarro suggested signs, pamphlets and commissary forms in Spanish. She said that she would like to see community members to help these individuals fill out forms. This would be very cost effective. Ms. Navarro said that there are no available translation services for the department.

Chair Aguilera asked Ms. Navarro to return to another Commission meeting. He would also like Commissioner Donahue to attend with more specific details.

Rev. Samuel Ruiz asked about the available resources. He said that he has given names of specific books for the department to use, however, was informed that there are no translators for these resources. He said he would like to talk more about this need.

Chair Aguilera suggested putting this matter on the next meeting’s agenda.

Ms. Navarro requested the Commission’s support. She would like to take this support back to Commissioner Donahue and see what can be done.

Margie Chavez stated that additional suggestions should be directed to Mistie Morales or to Ms. Navarro. Ms. Navarro gave her contact information as: (317) 234-3982 cnavarro@idoa.in.gov.

Chair Aguilera asked for other regional/departmental updates.

Adolfo Solis gave his regional update. He spoke briefly about doing a public forum in Portland and having a ribbon cutting ceremony for Casa de Portland. Adolfo Solis requested participation from the commissioners. The date will be confirmed by Director Mendoza at a later date.

Director Mendoza asked if there were any mainstream Latino centers within the area.

Adolfo Solis stated that the United Hispanic Americans of Fort Wayne have been giving support.

Chair Aguilera thanked Adolfo Solis and asked for other updates.

Margie Chavez began her FSSA update. She spoke about the "In Shape Initiative" She informed the commissioners about the awareness kickoff on the upcoming Monday. She stated that Secretary Robe will be opening and introducing the initiative as a wellness plan. Margie Chavez said that she will also be speaking about her loss of 58 lbs. current to date. This initiative involves state employees who are starting walking groups and are exchanging recipes. These individuals want to change their lifestyles. Tobacco awareness will be available and Advantage Health Care will do free screenings of sugar and blood pressure. She said that their Commission has also looked at two different health clubs that could lower their rates.

Margie Chavez said Secretary Robe will be making recommendations for the empty spaces within the government center for uses such as: gym equipment and showers. There are three sessions: 11:00am, 12:00am and 1:00pm. She also mentioned that there will be several giveaways such as bright yellow shirts. Margie Chavez extended an invitation to everyone present.

Amy Mendoza said that she would like to do regional discussions on African-American and Latino integrations. She encouraged Judge Scott to comment.

Judge Scott informed the Commission that he would like to look into the community integration issues and gain a better understanding.

Chair Aguilera asked for the next Commission meeting date and requested everyone's attendance.

Manuel Gonzalez gave his business subcommittee update. He said that he is working with intern, Ryan Marques, on a survey to determine how many Hispanic businesses are present within Marion County. Manuel would like the Commission to review the survey. He stated that the Indiana State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has endorsed the survey. Manuel Gonzalez spoke of the Sycamore Institute's Review. He said that the Arizona study is being used as a template. Manuel said that he would like the Commission to work with the Legislators by showing them the economic impact.

Margie Chavez requested to give an update on the minutes of the last meeting. She stated that Governor Mitch Daniels has now documented the Matricular card as a legal ID. This signed proclamation was celebrated with a ceremony in the State House. The Governor attended the Mexican Festival Parade in East Chicago and he spoke in English/Spanish to the crowd present. He also participated in the Hispanic Heritage month events in Indianapolis. Margie Chavez said that the Administration now recognizes Latinos count in Indiana. She requested more data as a Commission to help take initiative of communities.

Judge Scott requested for the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to be on the November Commission meeting agenda. He said that the provisions need to be extended. He said that the Civil Rights Commission will review it and may want to take action upon it. However, the US Congress must act and the President must sign. He talked about the Civil Rights Consortium meeting. He attended this meeting with Christine Cde Baca, Amy Mendoza and intern, Laura Barrett. Judge Scott wanted to inform the commissioners that

the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs Commission is now a member of the Civil Rights Consortium of Indiana.

Amy Mendoza commented on the importance of working with the different agencies throughout the state. She said that joining the Consortium creates a network and helps bridge the gap with minorities.

E. Subcommittee meeting announcements

Margie Chavez requested subcommittee announcements

Amy Mendoza announced subcommittee meetings:

Civil Rights & Housing:

Date: 10/25/05

Location: TBA; Fort Wayne, IN

Time: TBA

Date: 11/29/05

Location: TBA; Logansport, IN

Time: TBA

Date: 12/12/05

Location: TBA; Indianapolis, IN

Time: TBA

Education:

Date: 10/24/05

Location: TBA; Lake County

Time: TBA

Date: 11/17/05

Location: TBA; Fort Wayne, IN

Time: TBA

Date: 12/8/05

Location: TBA; Indianapolis, IN

Time: TBA

Business/Economic Development

Date: 9/30/05

Location: TBA

Time: TBA

Date: 10/7/05

Location: TBA

Time: TBA

Date: 10/28/05

Location: TBA
Time: TBA

Media:
Date: 10/19/05
Location: TBA
Time: 4:00pm

Date: 11/15/05
Location: TBA
Time: 4:00pm

Date: 12/9/05
Location: TBA
Time: 4:00pm

She informed the commissioners on surveys and their importance. Amy Mendoza also spoke about how intern, Ryan Marques, is working on a business survey. The commissioners will be updated on its progress.

F. Hispanic/Latino population growth in Indiana counties

Amy Mendoza spoke about the Hispanic/Latino statistics on population estimates from the US Census. She handed out copies of the charts/tables. The rural area of Cass County had the highest percentage growth. Jackson County, St. Joseph County and White County also had high percentages. She said that the estimates for 2004 were not released for counties but she did have the figures for the State of Indiana. Amy Mendoza gave a handout for the estimated increase of the population in the state and plans to include it in the upcoming conference book.

Margie Chavez said that state officials needs view the population increases.

IV. Announcements/Audience Question & Answer

Additional information on county statistics was requested.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Vice Chair Margie Chavez at approximately 12:25pm.