



ICHLA

INDIANA COMMISSION ON HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS

STATE OF INDIANA

Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr., Governor
Amy L. Mendoza, Executive Director

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CONTACT: Amy Mendoza
317-233-5048

HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS COMMISSION RELEASES REPORT

March 27, 2006- The Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs, (ICHLA) released a Commission Report to Governor Mitch Daniels, Jr. and Indiana legislators last week titled, "Report of Findings & Recommendations 2004 – 2005." The report showcases both the current and the continuing research that the Commission has initiated through the use of city and town public forums, research initiatives from each subcommittee and input from monthly Commission meetings. Specific areas reviewed include: education, business/economic development, driver's license/immigration, health, civil rights/housing and other issues. The report also includes Commission recommendations to Governor Mitch Daniels, Jr. and Legislators. The report will be released in Spanish at a later date.

The report details that the Hispanic/Latino population in Indiana is currently estimated at 269,267 or 4.3% of Indiana's total population of 6,226,531. The most significant increases in Indiana's Hispanic/Latino population have occurred in rural counties. General issues prevalent in most areas for Spanish-speaking Hispanics/Latinos are language and cultural barriers.

Additional findings of the report include:

- In terms of the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Programs (ISTEP) scores, Hispanics/Latinos rank second to lowest, with Black students receiving the lowest scores between the year 2004-2005.
- While the number of LEP students reported in the state has more than tripled since 1999, this allocation amount of \$700,000 has never increased.
- Nationally, approximately 52% of all U.S. Hispanic/Latino students graduate high school each year, and of those students only 16% leave high school college-ready.
- Although many Hispanic/Latino workers maintain more than one job, a large discrepancy still persists between the national household median income and the Hispanic/Latino household median income.
- Hispanic/Latino workers face two particular problems: Immigration status and English-language training.
- Only 74 Indiana Hispanic/Latino owned businesses are currently certified with the State. This low number could be attributed to the many pitfalls that Hispanic/Latino owned businesses encounter through the certification process.
- Hispanic/Latino buying power in Indiana was \$4.9 billion in 2005 and will increase in 2010 to \$7.1 billion. This is attributed in part to the increased growth of the state's Hispanic/Latino population combined with recent increases in the number of Hispanic/Latino owned businesses.
- Signed into federal law in May, 2005, the REAL ID Act of 2005 directly conflicts with the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act by mandating prescriptive federal driver's license standards. The REAL ID Act does not provide any specific information on state documentation requirements when issuing driver's licenses or identification documents that do not adhere to the REAL ID Act guidelines.
- The Sagamore Institute for Policy Research proposed \$16,533,000.00 in economic savings if the State of Indiana implemented a driver's document program, consistent with the Commission's Driver's License/Immigration Subcommittee's Recommendations.
- In terms of access to healthcare, many Hispanics/Latinos and other minorities often receive low quality health services and are much less likely to receive access to routine medical procedures and other forms of preventative care.
- Limited English Proficient individuals have many specific needs in terms of access to care and services. There is a need for proper translation of prescription signage, disease and preventative care and educational materials.
- In 2001, the Indiana Healthcare Professional Development Commission reported that only 2.5% of active physicians were Hispanic or Latino.
- Affordable health insurance is a primary concern and barrier to adequate health care. Studies have shown that many Hispanics/Latinos do not have health insurance and are unable to pay for health services.
- Diabetes, heart disease and high cholesterol are among the top health conditions for Hispanics/Latinos.

- Air pollution from industry, toxic waste, disposal sites and other geographic characteristics linked with poverty and minority status often results in severe health implications for Hispanics/Latinos.
- Issues relating to Hispanic/Latino homeownership include the heavy reliance on mortgage brokers, the lack of participation in wealth-building opportunities and the use of mobile or manufactured housing loans instead of traditional loans
- Hispanic/Latino agricultural workers, fill the demand for seasonal labor where few of the State's permanent residents seek due to low-pay and harsh working conditions. In addition, many Hispanic/Latino agricultural workers encounter substandard housing, lack Medicaid or Medicare and experience ill treatment from their employers.

Recommendations made to Governor Mitch Daniels, Jr. and Indiana Legislators include:

- Establish support for the federal Development, Relief, and Education for Minors Act (DREAM Act) in order to provide access to higher education for many talented immigrant students. Increased higher education opportunities will equal future economic benefits for the state, including highly educated and skilled workers, lower poverty rates and other economic contributions
- Increase state allocation for the Non-English Speaking Program to the original \$75 per student which would increase the overall budget to approximately \$2,400,000
- Develop and implement professional development standards for teachers and staff in the areas of cultural competency and language training. Training should be implemented as needed based on student needs.
- Support the effort of the Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Division's goal of printing state certification forms in Spanish and making a stronger statewide effort to educate Hispanic/Latino business owners regarding state certification
- Encourage the General Assembly to propose legislation or create a pilot program similar to the Wisconsin Immigrant Lending Program
- Encourage the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the Indiana Department of Education to and compile more data on the Hispanic/Latino workforce to monitor and develop programs that will allow faster transitions into professional occupations.
- Develop and implement an Indiana Driver's Document Pilot Program
- Pass legislation for an Indiana Driver's Document, pending success of the Pilot Program
- Implement a renewal policy of three years, to reduce administrative and agency costs, confusion, etc.
- Develop a "facts sheet" that will explain the impact of any changes regarding Indiana law, Driver's License or Driving Document policies
- Make clear the distinction between a state's law enforcement duties and federal immigration procedures
- Ensure that Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is properly enforced to protect individuals from discrimination based on race, color or national origin in health related programs and services that receive federal funding
- Support Workforce Diversity, Cultural Competency and Health Disparity Elimination Objectives as listed in the Indiana Department of Health's "Healthy Indiana- a Minority Health Plan for the State of Indiana" 2003 report
- Pass legislation that would create a statewide certification system for health care translators and interpreters as recommended in the Indiana Commission on Health Care Translators and Interpreters Final Report, 2004
- Expand the certified court interpreters program
- Establish cultural training for all state emergency personnel – develop an action plan for process and implementation strategies
- Establish a community outreach campaign regarding "voter participation" and the translation of voting materials into Spanish

Amy Mendoza Hernandez, the Commission's Executive Director, said that the report also directs future areas of Commission research and activities. "The report provides a wealth of information to build a solid foundation regarding Indiana Hispanic/Latino issues. In the future, the Commission will research and recommend solutions on more specific topics such as gang awareness, domestic violence issues, Hispanic/Latino business issues, etc."

The Commission also released its 2006 – 2008 Strategic Plan last week, which details specific goals to be achieved with the appointment of community leaders to the Commission's 7 Committees. Both the full Commission report and the Strategic Plan can be found on the Commission's webpage (<http://www.in.gov/ichla>).