



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS
116TH CONGRESS

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Dear Secretary-Designate Becerra,

On behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), we write to congratulate you on your historic nomination to lead the Department of Human and Health Services (HHS). We have seen your work and leadership first-hand when you served in Congress and we are excited to work closely with you as we recover from this pandemic. HHS is responsible for protecting the health and wellness of Americans by providing a number of programs and services through the department and its agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Administration of Children and Families (ACF).

As our country faces unprecedented challenges, we have the rare opportunity to rebuild our country in a way that meets the needs of minority populations and reflects the image of our diverse American constituency, and we are committed to helping you and the department you may lead toward this goal.

Latinos represent the largest and second-fastest growing ethnic group in the nation, making up nearly 20 percent of the U.S. population. However, Latinos are the most underrepresented minority group in the federal workforce making up just 8 percent of personnel. As you work to assemble your own department leadership and sub-cabinet, we hope the CHC can be a resource so you may develop a department which is representative of the population it serves. It is imperative that Latinos account for about 20 percent of representation across all suites of federal government, including within each department and agency.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating impacts on the Latinos community, highlighting inequities in both the health and labor sectors. Making up almost 18 percent of the labor force Latinos are overrepresented in the essential workforce with higher risk of exposure to coronavirus. Our communities faced some of the highest rates of unemployment and largest numbers of people leaving the labor force due to the pandemic. Additionally, the CDC identified that Latinos have the highest rates of hospitalization and death due to COVID-19.

We believe that HHS can appoint individuals who both understand the issues that impact our community and are willing to work closely with our community. The diverse hiring of Hispanic personnel in Washington, DC and across the country will establish a strong foundation for a more equitable and prosperous future.

We will continue to relay information we believe will be useful during this critical time. We remain committed to working with the President-Elect, you, and the full transition team to ensure a successful Biden administration.

Sincerely,

Chairman Joaquin Castro
Congressional Hispanic Caucus

Chairman-elect Raul Ruiz
Congressional Hispanic Caucus