

STRENGTHENING OUR VOICES

NATIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS OF STATE LEGISLATORS

NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2008

From the President



Rep. Joseph E. Miró (DE)

Dear NHCSL members:

Welcome to the spring issue of NHCSL's newsletter. As I mentioned in the previous issue, we have started an aggressive approach to bring a higher level of awareness on the most pressing issues affecting our community. We addressed some

of these issues during our meeting in Washington, D.C. held at the end of last month. The NHCSL Energy Briefing made possible by Edison Electric Institute provided us with an exclusive opportunity to hear from experts in this area and offered us concrete alternative solutions to the energy crises. In addition, during the Ensuring Latino Student Success: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from ENLACE Programs, we had an informative and productive panel discussion; our legislators had the opportunity to learn about best practices on how to implement policy in their states in support of this exemplary program and thus contributing to our efforts to reduce the educational gap. I would like to thank the legislators who participated in our activities and I hope you found these educational briefings beneficial and inspiring. You are part of our family and I hope that you continue to support our organization's activities by offering your time and commitment.

NHCSL continues to work on this year's Hispanic national agenda; our upcoming events are listed at the end of this issue. I encourage all Hispanic legislators to join me as well as your colleagues and friends at these important events.

Un abrazo,

Representative Joseph E. Miró, DE
NHCSL President

DOES ILLEGAL LABOR TAKE JOBS AWAY FROM LEGAL RESIDENTS?

Illegal immigration continues to be a controversial issue and a policy priority for NHCSL. Unfortunately, Hispanics' positive contributions to the United States are often overlooked and negative perceptions are often at the forefront of the current presidential campaign debates around the country. One of the main issues where public opinion is sharply divided is whether or not illegal labor takes jobs away from legal residents. Many individuals believe illegal immigrants represent a negative influence on our economy and a moral hazard to our society and thus show support for undocumented workers to be deported. Others believe the contrary, that by supporting immigrants' rights and recognizing their positive influences on our economy it would be possible for legislators to focus on how to help alleviate the necessity for illegal immigration by organizing around new immigration laws.

NHCSL members deal everyday with adversaries and public opinion with conviction and passion; they advocate tirelessly on behalf of the Hispanic community, however many are challenged with severe opposition when trying to introduce legislation in support of the rights of illegal workers. "Our current immigration system does not provide enough legal channels for foreign workers and given that the labor force in the U.S. is insufficient to the demand, businesses have to resort to illegal workers thus encouraging illegal immigration. In turn we have



millions of illegal workers living in fear, breaking the law for crossing the border looking for job opportunities, as well as industries operating on the wrong side of the law" stated NHCSL President, Representative Joseph E. Miró (DE). Labor intensive jobs in the areas of construction, housekeeping, grounds keeping, agricultural, painting, food preparation, packaging, roofing, butcher, fish and meat processing are all increasingly being done by illegal labor. In spite of this there has been enforcements at the state and local level of new laws aimed at reducing illegal immigration, such as workplace verification systems allowing employers to quickly verify the legal working status of their employees. There is also opposition against amnesty for undocumented aliens and for increases in permanent and temporary foreign work visas, for job fields where there is a lack of American workers. "We must first change our current immigration laws in accordance to the current labor market and then enforce them while fulfilling our country's labor needs" said Representative Miró.

Continued on page 3 See Jobs

IN THIS ISSUE



- Immigration: Does Illegal Labor Take Jobs Away from Legal Residents?
- Celebrate CSG's 75th Birthday!
- Calendar of Events
- NHCSL Internship Program -Where Are They Now?

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS (CSG) IT'S CELEBRATING 75 YEARS!

Join NHCSL in congratulating this outstanding organization which has supported our mission and goals since the beginning.

“I congratulate CSG for its 75th Anniversary and for their accomplishments throughout these years. NHCSL looks forward to continuing a mutual beneficial relationship with CSG in the years ahead”

-Representative Joseph E. Miró (DE)

Our relationship with CSG started when NHCSL headquarters were relocated to Washington D.C. in 1998. CSG, a visionary organization at the service of state leaders, believed in NHCSL's mission, recognized its potential and capabilities to strengthen the power of Hispanics and positively impact their lives in the United States. Hence, when Alan Sokolow, Director of the CSG's Eastern Region was approached by the leadership of NHCSL to form a mutual beneficial partnership and bring NHCSL to the national level, CSG took us under their wing without hesitation. NHCSL officially became an affiliate of CSG in 2003 and today CSG provides our organization with legal, professional and human resource assistance and has partnered with us in various community focused projects. NHCSL

treasures the support and mentorship given by CSG during our early years and we are proud of this invaluable partnership that has brought us together to work towards a common goal: sound, fair and effective public policy.



“I congratulate CSG for its 75th Anniversary and for their accomplishments throughout these years. NHCSL looks forward to continuing a mutual beneficial relationship with CSG in the years ahead”

Representative Joseph E. Miró (DE)

Felicitades CSG!

NHCSL President, Legislative Membership and Staff

For more information visit www.csg.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 13-14

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles: A Partnership Between You and Your Community
Scottsdale, Arizona

July 25-26

NHCSL Executive Committee & BBA Meeting
New Orleans, Louisiana

September 12-13

NHCSL Health Disparities Conference
Wilmington, Delaware



November 13-16, 2008

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

BBA MEMBERS: SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR NHCSL SIXTH NATIONAL SUMMIT ARE NOW AVAILABLE!

“Noche de Celebración”	\$50,000
Gold Sponsor	\$25,000
Patron Sponsor	\$15,000

Sponsorship of NHCSL National Summit offers a series of great benefits for you and your company. Sponsorships are available on a first come first serve basis. Visit www.nhcsl.org for more information.

Strengthen Your Voice!

- Advertise in our newsletter
- Share your legislative accomplishments
- Send us recommendations



Email: tatiana.guerra@nhcsl.org

NHCSL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM "WHERE ARE THEY NOW?"

NHCSL Internship program was established in 2004 to give students the opportunity to experience first-hand the dedication and perseverance of the legislators in public service. The internship gives the students an introduction to public policy pertaining to Hispanic issues and gives them the chance to contribute to the hard work of nonprofit organizations. The program goal is to positively impact the Hispanic community by training future advocates and preparing them for successful and productive careers in the areas of public service and community development.



Hector A. Albertorio
NHCSL Spring 2005 Intern
3rd Year Law School Student
Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico
School of Law

"Working at NHCSL was a great experience. It gave me the tools I needed to feel comfortable in a businesslike environment. The challenges faced as an intern were very similar to those commonly faced in the professional spectrum; challenges that bring out the best in a student. The most rewarding aspect of being an intern at NHCSL was networking because I had the privilege of meeting very important and influential people from state legislators to corporate executives at the state as well as the national level. This exposure has helped develop my career as a lawyer and has become a stepping stone in the development of a future political career"



Miguel Colom
NHCSL Summer 2007 Intern

"Being an intern in the NHCSL office was an amazing opportunity because I was able to experience Washington's professional culture firsthand. I was given a great deal of responsibility as well, such as writing articles in the organization's quarterly newsletter and communicating with state legislative officials and staff. The NHCSL staff members were encouraging and helpful, attributes that are necessary when an intern begins work in such a new environment. While working with the NHCSL I was able to use my abilities in a way that sparked my imagination, and cemented my interest in public service."

Miguel graduated this month with a B.A. in International Politics from Penn State University.

He is looking to get involved in U.S. Foreign Policy with a concentration in Latin American politics.



Elizabeth Burgos, Executive Director
Tatiana Guerra, Policy and Communications Manager
Editor, Strengthening Our Voices
Rhina Villatoro, Policy and Communications Associate

444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 404, Washington, DC 20001

Tel: 202-434-8070 | Fax: 202-434-8072 | www.nhcsl.org



Wilmarie Montijo Polo
NHCSL Fall 2007 Intern

"Words can not describe my experience as an intern at NHCSL. I am grateful to the entire team of NHCSL for giving me the opportunity to advance my career. My internship at NHCSL exceeded my professional, academic and personal expectations. I am proud to say that as a Hispanic young leader I now know that I can make a difference in our community and I will forever thank NHCSL for making me see that no matter how difficult the road may get, there is always a way to shine, you just need to believe in yourself".

Wilmarie is currently working as a Legislative Assistant at the Puerto Rico Senate under the leadership of Senator Jose Garriga Pico.

For more information about NHCSL Internship program or to apply for the summer semester please contact tatiana.guerra@nhcsl.org.

Jobs *Continued from page 1*

Our country's education system is not design to produce the type of labor force prepared to take labor intensive jobs upon graduation. High school graduates are not expected to go into the unskilled labor force and American families do not raise their children to become busboys or to work in the produce fields. Middle and high school students do not take shop classes anymore; they sit in front of a computer beginning at age 5 and by the time the reach high school they are already designing web pages. American workers don't generally compete with immigrants, they don't generally want the low-paying, low-skilled jobs that immigrant workers come to fill. Our education system's objective is to produce graduates that will work with their minds, with a competitive salary and benefits and without exposing themselves to dangerous job risks like asbestos, lead and other health threats. Our native-born work force is shrinking, baby boomers are entering retirement, birth rates are falling and as a nation we are more educated than the previous generation. As long as the American education system produces this type of work force and graduates are expected to work in non labor intensive positions, there will be a shortage of manual laborers.

NHCSL is an advocate for immigrants' rights and of the importance of bringing illegal workers into the system with the adoption of a comprehensive immigration reform. Unfortunately, this debate continues to be stalled in Congress. The economy however can not wait. The economy continues to move and it entices more workers than are legally allowed. NHCSL continues to bring attention to common misconceptions about illegal workers and labor market. NHCSL believes that our country needs a comprehensive immigration reform so that the economy can focus on bringing in "legal" labor. The labor market has evolved over the past 20 years and NHCSL remains committed to immigration law reform.



NHCSL Executive Committee

President

Representative Joseph E. Miró
Delaware

President-Elect

Senator Bernadette Sanchez
New Mexico

Vice President for Public Policy

Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez
Maryland

Vice President for Membership

Representative Minnie González
Deputy Majority Whip At Large
Connecticut

Treasurer

Representative Floyd Esquibel
Wyoming

Secretary

Representative Mario Goico
Kansas

Immediate Past President

Assemblyman Felix W. Ortiz
New York

Members

Representative José F. Aponte Hernandez

Speaker of the House
Puerto Rico

Representative Mara Candelaria

Indiana

Senator Carlos Cisneros

New Mexico

Representative Michel Consejo

Vermont

Representative Angel Cruz

Pennsylvania

Representative Augustine Dominguez

Minnesota

Representative Steve Gallardo

Arizona

Representative Rene Garcia

Florida

Senator Efrain González, Jr.

New York

Senator Gloria Arias-Haskins

South Carolina

Representative Ben Lujan

Speaker of the House
New Mexico

Representative Pedro Marin

Georgia

Representative Iris Martinez

Illinois

Senator Antonio Muñoz

Illinois

Senator Kenneth McClintock

Senate President
Puerto Rico

Representative Dora Olivo

Vice Chair, Mexican American
Legislative Caucus
Texas

Senator Juan M. Pichardo

Deputy Majority Leader/Minority Issues
Rhode Island

Assemblyman Peter Rivera

New York

Senator Ross Romero

Utah

Representative Jeffrey Sánchez

Massachusetts

Senator Leticia Van de Putte

Texas

Representative Juan Zapata

Florida

NHCSL Executive Director

Elizabeth Burgos

Business Board of Advisors Leadership

Chairman

Rafael Fernandez, Jr.
SVP, State Government Relations
Recording Industry
Association of America

Vice Chairman

Armando Mejia Gallardo
District Director, State Government Affairs
Altria Group, Inc.

Vice President for Corporate Policy

Raul Damas
Senior Manager, Public Affairs
Pfizer, Inc.

Vice President for Membership

Mary Foerster
Director of Diversity
AARP

Secretary

Emilio Gonzalez
Vice President, Strategic Alliances
Verizon Communications

The National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL) is the preeminent organization representing the interests of 300 Hispanic state legislators from all states, commonwealths, and territories of the United States. Founded in 1989 as a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)3, NHCSL is a catalyst and advocate for joint action on issues of common concern, such as health, education, immigration, homeownership and economic development to all segments of the Hispanic community. NHCSL also works to design and

implement policies and procedures that will impact the quality of life for Hispanic communities; serves as a forum for information exchange and member networking; an institute for leadership training; a liaison with sister U.S. Hispanic organizations; a promoter of public/private partnerships with business and labor; and a partner with Hispanic state and provincial legislators and their associations representing Central and South America.



444 North Capitol Street, NW
Suite 404
Washington, DC 20001

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 3070
Washington DC