

STRENGTHENING OUR VOICES

NATIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS OF STATE LEGISLATORS

NEWSLETTER | FALL 2008

From the President



Rep. Joseph E. Miró

Welcome to *Strengthening our Voices* Fall Issue, we have come to the end of the year, and in this issue I would like to share with you NHCSL's 2008 accomplishments. It was an incredibly busy year, which started with the immigration debate at the forefront, the housing foreclosure crisis, the worst economic

crisis since the 1930s, a bailout of our financial institutions, an auto industry crisis and an incredible presidential campaign which culminated with a historical outcome.

We were busy, our states felt the pressure and among all these challenges we were able to make this one of NHCSL's most successful years. I thank all the legislators that actively supported the organization's activities in spite of state elections and their commitments to their communities at home. I was extremely proud to showcase my state of Delaware and host the NHCSL Sixth Health Disparities Conference, which for the first time was held independently by NHCSL. Our legislative membership increased and as a result we had the highest number of Hispanic state legislators in attendance at our National Summit this year. One of my goals for 2008 was to give NHCSL more visibility and recognition and I am extremely happy to report that together we were able to bring NHCSL to a national level. During my meetings in Washington, D.C., I was able to meet with many of our national sister organizations and partners to help foster and strengthen relationships. Today, our organization has an excellent reputation for the work that we do and receives recognition from the people we serve. In the year ahead I will continue to bring NHCSL to the table at national meetings where Hispanic issues are discussed and stress the importance of our participation and input in the decision making process. I would again like to thank the members for continuing to give their time away from their families to support this organization and my deepest gratitude to our amazing staff whose dedication makes everything possible.

Next year, we celebrate NHCSL's 20th Anniversary and we have already started the preparations for this important milestone. I look forward to working with you in 2009, and I wish you and your families the best during the Holiday season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Un abrazo,

Representative Joseph E. Miró, DE
NHCSL President

A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2008, NHCSL achieved record membership growth, strong BBA support and has set forth several new initiatives to ensure continued growth in the future. As the organization closes out another successful year we look forward to celebrating its 20th Anniversary in 2009. The following is a summary of some of NHCSL's activities and events during 2008.



Legislative Membership growth – NHCSL's membership continued with pronounced growth, a record number of new legislators have registered and joined our organization, and the commitment from existing members has never been stronger.

BBA Support - the NHCSL's Business Board of Advisors (BBA) continues to assist the NHCSL Executive Committee in the development of its policy issues and despite the apparent economic challenges of this past year, NHCSL continued to receive the support of current BBA members. In addition, NHCSL received funding from several new corporate members. Among the new companies that joined NHCSL in 2008 are: Wal-Mart Stores Inc., American Chemistry Council, Select Management Resources LLC and Eli Lilly & Company which moved up from associate to full business member.

President's New Initiatives – two initiatives were introduced by President Joseph E. Miró at his first Executive Committee Meeting on April 26th, 2008 in Washington, D.C. The first initiative was NHCSL's Educational Training Program for NHCSL legislators. The program will focus on how to draft, promote, disseminate, and best present legislative proposals for approval. The program will also include ethics training along with general practices that will enhance the ability of legislators to function effectively in their respective states. The description of this program and its implementation is scheduled for April 2009. The second initiative was the establishment of NHCSL Past Presidents' Luncheon, which took place for the first time during the 2008 Sixth National Summit in honor of Hispanic leaders and visionaries who previously held the distinguished position of the NHCSL presidency.

NHCSL's Sixth Health Disparities Conference – NHCSL convened in Wilmington, Delaware on September 11-13 for NHCSL's Sixth Annual Health Disparities Conference which for the first time was held independently by NHCSL. During the conference the legislators received a historical overview of health topics discussed at previous NHCSL's Health Disparities conferences and had the opportunity to report on the benefits and knowledge gained. This year's conference focused on cardiovascular

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NHCSL AND THE NEW ADMINISTRATION



In early December 2008, Representative Joseph E. Miró (DE) and NHCSL's Executive Director met with the Obama-Biden transition team in Washington, D.C. on behalf of NHCSL. Our President has been working aggressively to ensure that your priorities and concerns are voiced to the right people at the right time "As the nation's 44th President, Barack Obama has been making history every day since his landslide victory on

November 4th," stated Rep. Miró. "And now, he is making history in his transition process as well, ensuring that all Hispanic interests and concerns have the appropriate audience."

At the helm of the transition is a well known and respected Hispanic leader, Mr. Frank Sanchez of Tampa, who recently met with the NHCSL to confirm his willingness to support our efforts, our agenda, and our ideas. Mr. Sanchez and several key members of his staff have held planning meetings with the NHCSL and other major national Hispanic organizations. In an unprecedented effort of inclusion in the policy making process, the Obama transition team is indeed moving forward in crafting policy solutions that will have a positive impact on Hispanics and all citizens of this country.

As Barack Obama begins his term as President of the United States during one of the most challenging times in recent history, we are certain that he will consider the NHCSL priorities when formulating his federal legislative agenda. There are several fundamental needs and rights that can and must be addressed, specifically as it relates to the education of Hispanic students in the U.S., the well being of immigrants in this country, the financial well being of our constituents, and the fundamental need for healthcare for all.

At NHCSL, we have compiled policy priorities for President-elect Obama, continue to have briefings and meetings with his transition team, and look forward to a long standing partnership that will enhance the work we do as state legislators. We will continue to keep you informed during the first 100 days of the new administration and hope to share with you the appointments of Hispanics to the highest levels of government. NHCSL is pleased to have the kind of dialogue and visibility with the new administration that will provide our members the opportunity to be heard on key issues affecting our constituencies.



Elizabeth Burgos, Executive Director
Tatiana Guerra, Policy and Communications Coordinator
Editor, Strengthening Our Voices
Juana Pacheco, Senior Policy Coordinator
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

Accomplishments *Continued from page 1*

disease, atherosclerosis and mental health. AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals provided a tour of their Research & Development facilities in Wilmington where they presented an overview of AstraZeneca Hispanic Networking Employee Group.

Among the high ranking officials, NHCSL was honored with the participation of Dr. Joxel Garcia, Assistant Secretary for Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, who provided the keynote address at the awards dinner. The Annual Health Disparities Leadership Awards were presented to Representative Rene Garcia (FL), Representative Minnie González (CT) and Senator Roberto Arango (PR) for their exceptional commitment to addressing health disparities in their local communities. The awards were presented by Representative Joseph E. Miró who commended the recipients for being examples of exceptional leadership and stated that "it is imperative that we work together to address inequalities in health care and through collaboration we will be able to close the gap on health disparities."

Sixth National Summit – The legislative membership of the NHCSL convened at the Sixth National Summit of Hispanic State Legislators on November 13-15 in Las Vegas,



Nevada for one of NHCSL's best attended conferences. NHCSL brought together 80 Hispanic legislators from throughout the country, the largest number of legislators that have ever attended this conference, to address the state of Hispanic America and to set forth the Hispanic national agenda for 2009.

NHCSL Summit topics included a presentation of the 2008 election results and the impact of the Hispanic vote. Other sessions focused on NHCSL's policy priorities in the areas of education, economic development, health and immigration. NHCSL's Housing Symposium addressed the country's housing crisis and the Immigration Debate was discussed from the perspectives of both neighboring countries, Canada and Mexico. Other attendees included corporate executives, educators, government officials, policymakers and other state and local officials.

The 2008 John S. Martinez Excellence in Leadership Award was presented to Puerto Rico Senate President and newly appointed Secretary of State, Kenneth McClintock. "Senator McClintock is an outstanding example of leadership in Puerto Rico, in our organization and in the U.S. We are honored to have him as a member of NHCSL" stated Representative Miró. The Excellence in Leadership Award is presented annually to a Hispanic legislator who embodies passion, dedication and great achievement. Among other high ranking officials that participated at this year's Summit were, Oscar B. Goodman, Mayor of Las Vegas; Marc LePage, Consul General of Canada to San Francisco/Silicon Valley; Mariano Lemus Gas, Consul of Mexico in Las Vegas; Dr. Joxel Garcia, Assistant Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;

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NHCSL 2008 JOHN S. MARTINEZ SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

On September 28th Delegate Ana Sol Gutiérrez (MD), Rep. Elizabeth Hernandez (IL), Rep. Pedro Marin (GA) and Senator Juan Pichardo (RI) presented the NHCSL John S. Martinez Scholarship awards of \$1,500 to 12 talented Hispanic students who were attending a legislative hearing, during the 4th Annual NALEO National Summit on the State of Latino Education & Legislative Hearing on Pre-K and Early Grades, in Washington, D.C. “We are proud of our scholarship recipients,” said NHCSL President Rep. Joseph E. Miró (DE). “Through our partnership with Comcast we can provide Hispanic students the opportunity to attend college and learn about public service at an early age.”

This initiative is possible through a \$150,000 grant from the Comcast Foundation. Scholarships are given to 12 Hispanic students each year, from public high schools in Colorado, Florida, Illinois and Maryland. “This grant provides Latino students a unique opportunity to gain leadership skills and learn about the public and private sectors,” said Susan Gonzales, Vice President for the Comcast Foundation. “We are proud to partner with the NHCSL’s John S. Martinez Scholarship Fund.”



Congratulations 2008 recipients!

Isaiah Fransua, Alexandria Salazar and Yadira Solis from Colorado; Rebecca Espinosa, Emilio Lopez and Glysel M. Rivera from Florida; Maritza Gomez, Brenda Ortega and Omar A. Torres from Illinois; Barbara Hendrick, Ruben Antonio Muñoz Ochoa and Mariana Olaizola from Maryland.

Applications for the 2009 JSM Scholarship will be available soon. We urge NHCSL legislators to visit the public high schools in their districts and remind students to apply.

Accomplishments *Continued from page 2*

Henry Bonilla, former U.S. Congressman; José Cisneros, San Francisco Treasurer and Assemblyman Mo Denis, Nevada State Representative.

The 2008 Summit Journal, with the complete outline of its workshops and sessions, will be published in March 2009 and posted at www.nhcsl.org.

NHCSL continues to improve the effectiveness of Hispanic legislators to positively impact public policy and the quality of life for all segments of the Hispanic community. Through its conferences and forums NHCSL informs, educates, and encourages the active participation of Hispanics in the political and electoral process within their communities and the promotion of their diverse and rich cultures, heritages, and languages. As we close the year, we are reminded that the goals of NHCSL are often achieved as a result of the collaboration of legislators and corporate members as well as other supportive corporations, government agencies, labor and civic organizations and associations. 🇺🇸

Business Board of Advisors (BBA) New Leadership Team 2009 – 2011



Emilio Gonzalez
Verizon Communications
Chair



Sara Johnson Davis
Novartis Pharmaceuticals
Vice Chair



Armando Mejia
Altria Corporate Services, Inc.
VP for Corporate Policy



Jerry Fuentes
AT&T
VP for Membership



Juan Otero
Comcast
Secretary



Rafael Fernandez
BBA Chair
2006-2008

NHCSL would like to acknowledge and thank the leadership and support of Rafael Fernandez from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) who served as Chair of the BBA from 2006-2008. Rafael contributed in many ways, most notably for establishing the NHCSL National Summit Venue Selection committee and the BBA Industry Working Group Committees. The projects that were designed under his leadership will continue to guide the work of the BBA in the future.

SEVENTH NATIONAL SUMMIT

November 12-14, 2009
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA



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Delaware

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Senator Bernadette Sanchez
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NHCSL Executive Director

Elizabeth Burgos

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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
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Washington, DC 20001

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