

Ana Sol Gutiérrez
18th Legislative District
Montgomery County

House Appropriations Committee
Health and
Human Resources Subcommittee
Oversight Committee on Pensions



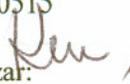
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April 23, 2007

The Honorable Ken Salazar
702 Senate Hart Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Salazar: 

As a member of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, and on behalf of the Latino communities that I represent in the State of Maryland, I am writing to thank you for introducing the National Museum of the American Latino Community Commission Act of 2007 (S500). We offer our strong and unqualified support of this legislation which will establish a federal commission to explore the viability of creating the "National Museum of the American Latino" in Washington, DC.

The lack of a Latino-focused institution located at the National Mall has long been of great concern to the Latino community. Most of the significant museums in our country sideline the National Mall between the United States Capitol and the Washington Monument. These museums purport to reflect the history, culture, and achievements of the people of the United States. Yet scarcely do any of the permanent exhibits in these museums represent the American Latino community's role in the history and culture of this country.

The importance of proper representation of Latinos and our contributions in our nation's foremost cultural institution cannot be underestimated. Latino children visiting our nation's capital have no place to point to with pride as commemorating the Latino presence in this country. Millions of schoolchildren and families as well as tourists from all over the world can visit Washington, DC without ever encountering a single museum, monument, or collection that helps to educate them about this nation's largest minority. The virtual invisibility of the history, contributions, and status of the Latino community to most of their fellow Americans is no longer tenable.

Immediate passage of S500 is a critical first step to remedying this unfortunate situation and creating an institution devoted to the research and study of American Latino life, art, history, and culture. Once again, I appreciate your leadership and look forward to working with you on advancing this historic effort.

Sincerely,


Ana Sol Gutiérrez

cc: Congressman Xavier Becerra