



Office of the Mayor  
*Diverse • Inclusive • Committed*

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
702 Hart Senate Building  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

April 9, 2007

Dear Senator Salazar:

I am writing in strong support of S.500/H.R.512, the Latino Museum Commission Act, to establish and fund a federal commission to explore the viability of creating the "National Museum of the American Latino" in Washington, DC.

The City of Riverside's commitment to the arts and to the principles of diversity and inclusivity propels us to support this effort. In fact, we are the "City of the Arts" of the fast growing Inland Empire region of Southern California, and we were one of the first cities in the nation to adopt a statement of our City's commitment to inclusivity, known as the "Building A More Inclusive Riverside Community" Statement. Earlier this year Dr. Jonathan Yorba, the City's Arts & Cultural Affairs Manager, provided testimony in support of the Museum for the Senate, and he is also a member of the Legislative Committee of the National Museum of the American Latino.

The lack of a Latino-focused institution located at the National Mall has long been of great concern to the Latino community. As you know, some of the most significant museums in our country line 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.

Even with the many challenges and opportunities facing the Latino community, the importance of proper representation of Latinos and their contributions in our nation's foremost cultural institution cannot be underestimated. Recent experience clearly demonstrates that 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 S.500/H.R.512 is a critical first step to remedying this under-representation and creating an institution devoted to the research and study of American Latino life, art, history, and culture.

Sincerely,

Ronald O. Loveridge  
Mayor