

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 19, 2008

The Honorable Norman Dicks  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment  
and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Larry Craig  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
123 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), we write to request funding for the following for Fiscal Year 2009, which fall under your Subcommittee's jurisdiction.

- **\$2.1 million for the National Museum of the American Latino Commission, under the National Park Service (DOI)**  
Ensuring appropriate funding will enable the Commission to study and plan for a potential museum in Washington, D.C. dedicated to the arts, history, and culture of American Latinos. Upon passage of S. 500, this Commission will be authorized for appropriations to carry out the activities of the Commission—\$2,100,000 for the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this act and \$1,100,000 for the second fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this act.
- **\$1,612,000 for the Latino Center's Latino Initiatives Pool of the Smithsonian Institution**  
The Latino Initiatives Pool is funded out of an appropriation for Institution-Wide Programs at the Smithsonian Institution. The Pool, administered by the Smithsonian Latino Center, funds Smithsonian programs that focus on U.S. Latino experiences and contributions to science, history, art, music, culture, the humanities, and society. Pool funds have greatly enhanced Smithsonian exhibits, collections, management programs, education, research, and community and public outreach projects. Smithsonian grantees are selected on a competitive basis from proposals that demonstrate efficient deployment of the pool, other Smithsonian resources, and external funding. In recent years, the requests for the Latino Initiatives Pool funds have been twice the level of the appropriation. Despite the increasing popularity and need for Latino-related projects at the Smithsonian, the allocation for the pool has not increased significantly since the program was founded: it was \$1 million in 1995 and the current Administration request is for \$1,121,000.

Additionally, we respectfully request the following language be added to the Appropriations legislation:

- **Regarding the Environmental Justice Executive Order, under the EPA**

This language directs the Environmental Protection Agency to submit a report on the implementation of recommendations for environmental justice programs identified by the Government Accountability Office and the EPA's Office of Inspector General. It also includes language which limits spending on action in contravention of or to delay implementation of Executive Order 12898.

Report Language: "The Committee directs the Agency to submit a report, no later than 180 days after enactment of this bill, on its implementation of recommendations included in the 2004 and 2006 Inspector General (2004-P-0007 and 2006-P-00034) on environmental justice. The report should also identify actions to modify the Administrator's emergency management procedures to incorporate environment justice in the Agency's Incident Command Structure (in accordance with the December 18, 2006, letter from the Deputy Administrator to the Acting Inspector General of the Agency). The Agency shall submit the report to both the Committees on Appropriations and Energy and Commerce."

Bill Language: "Prohibiting the use of funds in contravention of executive order 12898, regarding environmental justice in minority populations."

- **Regarding the Smithsonian Latino Center's Latino Initiatives Pool (LIP), under the Smithsonian Institution**

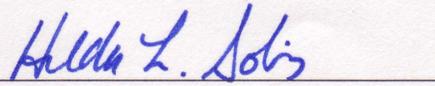
The CHC requests that the Committee work with the Smithsonian Institution to include language in this bill that will insure that each institution-wide program has a separate line item in budget requests. Currently, the LIP is wrapped up with four other pools as Institution-wide programs. Having it stand alone would obligate all the funds to Latino programming rather than being at the discretion of the Smithsonian. During both the 2007 and 2008 budget cycles and with the possibility of a Continuing Resolution, the Institution identified the LIP as an area to decrease to meet the proposed budget cuts. Such cuts would have been a significantly blow to Latino programming across the institution.

We appreciate your consideration of our request to support these programs and language of importance to the Hispanic community. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,



Joe Baca  
Chair  
Congressional Hispanic Caucus



Hilda L. Solis  
Chair  
CHC Health and the Environment Task Force