



NEWS RELEASE

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund

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LATINOS FUEL ILLINOIS POPULATION GROWTH

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The growth of the Latino community since 2000 accounts for the population increase in Illinois in the last decade, according to a National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund analysis of newly released Census 2010 data.

Between 2000 and 2010, the Latino population in Illinois grew 33% from 1.5 million to 2.0 million, and the Latino share of the population grew from 12% to 16%. At the same time, the non-Latino population declined slightly by 0.8%. The state lost a congressional seat, but that loss would likely have been greater were it not for the increase in the state's Latino population.

“As Illinois now undertakes its 2011 redistricting, those who draw its maps must recognize Latino population growth by ensuring the new maps allow Latinos to effectively choose their elected leaders,” said NALEO Educational Fund Executive Director Arturo Vargas.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) prohibits jurisdictions from creating districts that through vote dilution may prevent Latinos and other protected population groups from electing candidates of their choice.

“We call on Illinois to strictly comply with VRA's requirements during this year's redistricting process. It is now time to make sure Latinos can embrace the opportunity to translate those Census numbers into full and fair representation,” said Vargas.

Seven of the 10 largest cities in Illinois are also home to a majority of the state's Latino populations: Chicago, Aurora, Cicero, Waukegan, Elgin, Joliet and Rockford. Nearly two-thirds of Illinois Latinos -- 61% -- live in Cook County, with a majority residing in Chicago, the third-most populous city in the nation. Latinos represent 28.9% of Chicago's population.

The Census 2010 data also reveal significant Latino populations in many of the largest cities in Illinois, with Cicero having the greatest share of Latinos (86.6%). (*see below*)

Top 10 Illinois Cities: 2010

City	Total Population	Latino Population	Latino Share of Population
Chicago	2,695,598	778,862	28.9%
Aurora	197,899	81,809	41.3%
Rockford	152,871	24,085	15.8%
Joliet	147,433	41,042	27.8%
Naperville	141,853	7,574	5.3%
Springfield	116,250	2,325	2.0%
Peoria	115,007	5,628	4.9%
Elgin	108,188	47,121	43.6%
Waukegan	89,078	47,612	53.4%
Cicero	83,891	72,609	86.6%

“In order to ensure the state’s future prosperity and well-being, policies must promote the economic, social and civic progress of the Latino community,” added Vargas. “The state’s leadership must be accountable to its growing Latino population and ensure with sound policies that it promotes the economic, social and civil progress of the Latino community.”

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About NALEO Educational Fund

The NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading non-partisan, non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.