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National Coalition Launches Campaign to Ensure 2010 Census Counts All Latinos

U.S. Commerce Secretary Applauds Partnership to Prevent another Undercount of Second-Largest U.S. Population Group

LOS ANGELES – U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke joined an unprecedented coalition of prominent Latino organizations and national Spanish-language media today to launch a historic campaign – called *ya es hora ¡HAGASE CONTAR!* (It's Time, Make Yourself Count!) – to inform and motivate the nearly 50 million U.S. Latinos to fully participate in the 2010 Census.

The U.S. Census Bureau has had a poor track record when it comes to enumerating the growing U.S. Latino population. The 2000 Census, despite producing a net over count of the total population, produced an undercount of Latinos of around 3% (or one million Latinos). The *ya es hora, ¡HAGASE CONTAR!* Campaign will enhance the Bureau's efforts to count Latinos through a sustained and aggressive community education initiative to mobilize hundreds of local organizations on the ground. The campaign will also saturate targeted media with the assistance of Spanish-language partners *Univision, Entravision* and *impreMedia*.

“A census that fails to accurately count all Latinos is a failed census,” said Arturo Vargas, Executive Director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund (NALEO). “As a community we need to understand that full participation in American life requires standing up and being counted.”

Despite the intensive national effort that the Census Bureau intends to mount during 2009 and 2010, ensuring a full count of the Latino population will require a comprehensive, community-based effort. The census is taken largely through the U.S. postal system, and factors such as unlisted addresses, households with large families and high mobility rates contribute to persons being missed. The recession and large number of foreclosures in the Latino community will make enumerating this population even more difficult in 2010.

The *ya es hora, ¡HAGASE CONTAR!* Campaign will focus on promoting the importance of the census, educating individuals about filling out their census forms and encouraging households to mail back their responses once they complete their forms. This phase of the coalition's work builds on the success of the *ya es hora ¡Ciudadanía!* Campaign of 2007, in which 1.4 million Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) became U.S. citizens, and the *ya es hora ¡Ve y Vota!* Campaign of 2008, in which nearly ten million Latinos exercised their right to vote in the presidential election.

Partners in this phase of the *ya es hora* campaign include the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, *Entravision* Communications, *impreMedia*, *Univision* Communications Inc., League of United Latin American Citizens, *Mi Familia Vota* Education Fund, NALEO Educational Fund, Dominican American National Roundtable, National Council of La Raza and Service Employees International Union.

About the ya es hora Campaign

The ya es hora campaign is the largest and most comprehensive non-partisan effort to incorporate Latinos as full participants in the American political process. The campaign has dramatically impacted naturalization rates and spurred record Latino turnout in the 2008 presidential election.

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