

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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**THE NATIONAL LATINO AIDS ACTION AGENDA NETWORK (NLAAN)  
RELEASE THE FEDERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS –  
ADDRESSING THE LATINO AIDS CRISIS**

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**Elected Officials and Community leaders officially announce Federal Policy  
Recommendations**

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**NEW YORK, NY – TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2008** – The Latino Commission on AIDS and its community partners join eight cities across the United States (Los Angeles, New York, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Puerto Rico, Miami, San Antonio and Chicago) in releasing **LATINO/HISPANIC HIV/AIDS FEDERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS – ADDRESSING THE LATINO AIDS CRISIS** to address the HIV/AIDS emergency in Latino/Hispanic communities across the nation including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. With 120 organizations represented by over 350 individuals already signed on in support of the document, the release comes in response to the health emergency caused by the accelerated growth of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Hispanic/Latino communities across the nation.

“It is unconscionable that Latinos are not getting equal access to the HIV/AIDS medical services they need and deserve,” stated Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez. “I am committed to correcting this injustice, and will continue my work—in concert with community activists and state and federal officials—to ensure the needs of HIV patients throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico are met.”

“Latinos are testing positive for HIV, being diagnosed with AIDS and dying from the disease at four times the rate per 100,000 when compared to Caucasians. This continued inattention to our needs is unacceptable. The **LATINO/HISPANIC HIV/AIDS FEDERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS – ADDRESSING THE LATINO AIDS CRISIS** are a wake up call to our nation and our elected officials,” said Latino Commission on AIDS President, Dennis de Leon.

The announcement received support from many leaders. “NASTAD is committed to raising HIV/AIDS awareness and improving quality of prevention, care and treatment services among Latino communities in the U.S. We are pleased with the progress made on the development of this important document. We are looking forward to reviewing the Federal Policy Recommendations,” declared Julie Scofield, Executive Director of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD).

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As of 2004, more than 93,000 Latinos in the United States have died as a result of AIDS-related illnesses, and the CDC estimates that more than 80,000 Hispanics are currently infected with AIDS. Over 60% of Latino HIV and AIDS cases are found in California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico. The Latino/Hispanic community has responded to this crisis as a single voice.

"A historic coming together of community leaders, health departments, service providers, researchers and advocates has helped us for the first time create a clear national agenda to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Latino community," stated Lillian Rodriguez, President of Hispanic Federation.

**LATINO/HISPANIC HIV/AIDS FEDERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS – ADDRESSING THE LATINO AIDS CRISIS** is a community effort to create an up-to-date HIV/AIDS public policy that identifies the key Latino needs, sets out specific recommendations, mobilizes Latino/Hispanic community leadership and produces an increase in access to services, equity in funding and better quality of life.

Photos available upon request.

For more information visit: [www.LatinoAIDSagenda.org](http://www.LatinoAIDSagenda.org).

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