

January 13, 2015

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: NHLA Position on Amendments to H.R. 240, the Fiscal Year 2015 Homeland Security Appropriations Act

Dear Representative:

We write on behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of 39 leading national Latino nonpartisan civil rights and advocacy organizations, to urge you to vote against any amendments to H.R. 240, the Fiscal Year 2015 Homeland Security Appropriations Act, that would repeal, disrupt or impede the implementation of President Obama's administrative actions to address some of the most immediate and damaging flaws in our immigration practices.

NHLA's mission calls for unity among Hispanics nationwide to provide the Latino community with greater visibility and a stronger voice in our nation's affairs, including the pressing need to reform our nation's badly broken immigration system. NHLA will closely monitor the result of these votes and will include votes on, or in relation to, amendments seeking to restrict administrative actions regarding immigration enforcement in future NHLA congressional scorecards or other informational outreach efforts.

The following amendments are of most concern to NHLA:

Aderholt Amendment: This amendment effectively eliminates the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) programs, and the prioritization of immigrant enforcement on serious threats to our communities. This amendment would have a chilling effect on the Latino community, instilling fear of deportation for victims of domestic and sexual violence, emptying classrooms and contributing to the existence of an entire cadre of Latino children that are parentless and mired in poverty. **NHLA recommends a no vote.**

Blackburn Amendment: This amendment would eliminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, prohibit renewals and new adjudications. This amendment would subject DREAMers, who are peacefully contributing to our economy and community, to deportation and exploitation. Further, it would cause irreparable and disproportionate harm to Latino families and children, who are the primary recipients of deferred action. **NHLA recommends a no vote.**

American G.I. Forum
ASPIRA Association
Avance Inc.
Casa de Esperanza
Cuban American National Council
Farmworker Justice
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities
Hispanic Federation
Hispanic National Bar Association
Inter-University Program for Latino Research
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
League of United Latin American Citizens
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives
National Association of Hispanic Publications
NALEO Educational Fund
National Association of Latino Independent Producers
National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc.
National Council of La Raza
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
National Hispana Leadership Institute
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Hispanic Environmental Council
National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Institute for Latino Policy
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Puerto Rican Coalition
Presente.org
SER Jobs for Progress – National
Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce
U.S.- Mexico Foundation

DeSantis Amendment: This amendment prevents Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from funding, implementing, administering, enforcing or carrying out any enforcement priorities. This amendment puts certain survivors of domestic violence at risk of being deemed a top enforcement priority, undermining the bipartisan Congressional policies under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and other laws that protect domestic violence survivors. **NHLA recommends a no vote.**

Legislation that would repeal, disrupt or impede the Administration's ability to fully implement its Immigration Accountability Executive Actions would not only cause irreparable harm to individuals with grants of deferred action, but the family and community they leave behind. The impact of these amendments would cause disproportionate harm to Latino families, who are the primary recipients of current and future grants of deferred action. These amendments would also harm the economy by perpetuating the anti-competitive deviations in the underground economy. Instead of attempting to cripple the Administration's attempts to implement fair and humane immigration practices, Congress must work with the Administration to enact bipartisan, comprehensive, and long-lasting immigration reforms.

Please contact NHLA through Andrea Senteno, of MALDEF, at asenteno@maldef.org or 202-572-0558, or Bertha Guerrero, of the Hispanic Federation, at bguerrero@hispanicfederation.org or 202-641-7186 regarding this letter. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Saenz
MALDEF, President and General Counsel
NHLA Immigration Committee Co-Chair



Jose Calderón
Hispanic Federation, President
NHLA Immigration Committee Co-Chair