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**National Latino Leaders Urge Congress to Vote NO on Repeal of President's
Immigration Actions**

*Votes on Amendments to Homeland Security funding bill will be included in
NHLA's Congressional Scorecard*

Washington, D.C. -- The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of 39 of the nation's preeminent Latino organizations, sent a letter to every member of the U.S. House of Representatives today strongly urging them to vote against the Aderholt, Blackburn, and DeSantis amendments to H.R. 240, the Fiscal Year 2015 Homeland Security Appropriations Act, that would repeal or impede the implementation of President Obama's administrative actions to address some of the most immediate and damaging flaws in the federal government's immigration practices.

In its letter, NHLA also informed Members of Congress that votes on these amendments will be included in NHLA's Congressional scorecard for the 114th Congress. Rather than block the implementation of fair and humane immigration practices, NHLA urges Congress to work with the Administration to enact bipartisan and long-lasting immigration reforms.

"Rather than joining the broad coalition of business, labor, and faith groups to fix our broken immigration system with comprehensive legislation, House leadership has chosen to start the 114th Congress in an anti-immigrant and anti-compromise fashion," said **Hector Sánchez, NHLA Chair and Executive Director of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement**. "We urge the House to pass a clean Homeland Security Appropriations act. Turning the clock back on immigration enforcement that puts people in fear of deportation and family separation is cruel and wrong-headed. There will be no social, economic, or public safety benefit to the nation. Congress should reject these amendments."

"These amendments represent another cynical attempt to pervert our government structure and to divert policy progress, all in order to pander to extreme fringe elements of our national polity," stated **Thomas A. Saenz, MALDEF President and General Counsel**. "House members should reject this invitation to descend into Know-Nothingism."

"It's exceedingly disconcerting to see the House Majority continue to embrace the most extreme and injurious immigration proposals," said **Jose Calderon, Hispanic Federation President**. "To deprive a child of their mother or father or a young person who has grown up in America of their dreams is not a conservative principle. It is just plain mean-spiritedness. If House Republicans are serious about leading, they must put forth a just and pragmatic plan to fix our nation's immigration system."

"Our fruits, vegetables, poultry, milk and other products of our farms depend on the labor of seasonal farmworkers. The large majority of seasonal agricultural workers are immigrants. Most are undocumented, vulnerable to abuse and living in fear of deportation. President Obama's executive action on immigration will

provide limited, temporary relief to some undocumented immigrants; much more is needed. We call on Congress to reject the misguided, harsh efforts to prevent this humanitarian, economically sensible administrative relief from helping farmworkers and their children,” stated **Bruce Goldstein, President, Farmworker Justice**.

“The House majority’s opposition to President Obama’s recent immigration reforms is unconscionable. Expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the new Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) will save lives, keep families together, and ensure that immigrant women and families can contribute to our nation’s shared prosperity without the constant threat of deportation. These programs are an important step in the right direction – particularly for immigrant women who are the backbones of their families and communities. The House majority must cease playing political games and should instead work to pass humane reforms to immigration policy, including by ensuring immigrant women and families can participate in the affordable healthcare programs to which they already contribute,” said **Jessica González-Rojas, Executive Director of the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)**.

“The Republicans are at a critical juncture,” stated **National Hispanic Media Coalition’s President & CEO, Alex Nogales**. “Will they be a party that supports Latino families, or that fights, both in words and in actions, to destroy them? It’s as simple as that.”

“This is not a fight between Republicans and the President—it’s about people. Attempts to destroy the only relief millions of American families have seen on immigration for the last 25 years are irresponsible at best. Even more so when there are no serious alternative proposals on the table that protect American families, our economy, and our national security. We hope the new Republican majority can demonstrate stewardship by arriving at the sensible, sound legislation the country needs. But the amendments that were added to this bill are prime examples of what not to do,” said **Janet Murguía, President and CEO of NCLR (National Council of La Raza)**.

“As an organization devoted to preventing domestic violence and creating healthy families and communities, Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network condemns legislative actions that would roll back the President’s executive order to halt deportations for hardworking and dedicated immigrants. We are particularly opposed to the DeSantis amendment, which pushes back on ground that the Violence Against Women Act gained in protecting immigrant victims of domestic violence. Preventing DHS from implementing the November 20, 2014 memorandum on deportation priorities removes the “mitigating factor” that takes into consideration the experience of an immigrant victim of domestic violence when making removal decisions. Instead of separating families and pushing them further into the shadows, Congress should concentrate its efforts on passing comprehensive immigration reform. Already thousands of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault endure abuse at the hands of perpetrators who use lack of immigration status as a tool to exert power and control. The President’s executive action also serves to protect these victims,” said **Juan Carlos Areán, Acting CEO of Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network**.

“House Republicans are playing a dangerous game in their effort to undermine President Obama’s executive action on deportations. By targeting Homeland Security funding for this purpose at a time when the nation’s terror threat is so high is irresponsible. It is clear to us that the President is acting well within his authority and that his limiting deportations in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform is sound public policy. By opposing the President on this issue, the Republican Party is further alienating Latino and other immigrant communities at their peril,” stated **Angelo Falcón, President, National Institute for Latino Policy (NiLP)**.

“The President’s recent Executive Action on immigration was only a first step toward regularizing the situation of millions of undocumented immigrants caught in a broken system,” said the **Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) President and CEO Antonio R. Flores**. “We urge Congress to put its energies into much-needed Comprehensive Immigration Reform rather than into efforts

to roll back the executive action. Such efforts serve only to further complicate the immigration process and potentially to put the nation's security in jeopardy."

"It's absolutely shameful. Republican efforts to roll back the President's executive order account for nothing less than an all-out war against Latino and immigrant families. We worked tirelessly for years to ensure that President Obama and the Democrats were held accountable and rolled back unprecedented deportation levels. Now, we will work to do everything within our power to stop Republican xenophobic policies that only lead to the mass deportation of our families and Dreamers," said **Arturo Carmona, Executive Director of Presente.org**.

"As members of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL) and elected officials we represent large constituencies throughout the country. By denying such a large population the right to work, study and contribute to our economy is downright unconscionable. President Obama's Executive Action on Immigration was a stepping stone in the right direction towards achieving our overall goal," stated **Senator Catherine Miranda (AZ), Vice President for Public Policy, NHCSL**.

"We urge all members of the House to oppose any amendments to the DHS funding bill that would roll back the President's actions on immigration," said **Ignacio Salazar, President and CEO of SER-Jobs for Progress National, Inc.** "These actions serve as a critical first step to fixing our broken immigration system, which has been left unaddressed for far too long."

"The Republican House of Representatives is fighting a losing battle by going against the will of the American people that supports President Obama's actions related to immigration reform. It is disappointing that the House is using the DHS funding bill as the vehicle to play political games. Last year, the House of Representatives missed an opportunity to pass a sound bipartisan immigration bill and by doing so left millions of undocumented people to continue to live in limbo. LULAC, the nation's oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization, calls on the new Congress to stop playing politics with important legislation and pass a sound comprehensive immigration reform bill," said **Brent Wilkes, LULAC National Executive Director**.

For the full text of NHLA's letter to Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, [click here](http://preview.nationalhispanicleadership.org/images/Final_NHLA_Letter_DHS_-_Opposition_to_HR240_amdts_01-13-15.pdf) or copy and paste this web address into your browser: http://preview.nationalhispanicleadership.org/images/Final_NHLA_Letter_DHS_-_Opposition_to_HR240_amdts_01-13-15.pdf

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Established in 1991, the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA) brings together Hispanic leaders to establish policy priorities that address, and raise public awareness of, the major issues affecting the Latino community and the nation as a whole. In 2013, NHLA launched the Latinos United for Immigration Reform campaign. For more information, please visit www.nationalhispanicleadership.org and LatinosUnited.org and follow @NHLAagenda.

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