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CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS

117th Congress

April 25, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Kamala Harris
Vice President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

As Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), I write to you today to share CHC's requested slate of Executive Actions developed by the Members of our Caucus. Since the start of the Biden-Harris Administration, the CHC has been proud to work with your Administration to help Americans recover from the COVID-19 pandemic by passing the American Rescue Plan, and to secure a once-in-a-generation investment in America's infrastructure and competitiveness by passing the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act).

The CHC appreciates your leadership to reverse the former Administration's harmful policies and the steps your Administration has taken to move our country forward when it comes to critical issues across the economy, education, health care, and especially immigration. As we look ahead, the CHC urges your Administration to advance Executive Actions across the following issues to help bring relief to Hispanic communities across the country.

CHC's Slate of Executive Actions

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

- 1) Request the Administration issue an Executive Order with its comprehensive plans to ensure underserved communities, including Hispanic communities, are informed through in-language and culturally competent outreach regarding the funding and resources available for their communities through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- 2) Request the Administration produce bi-annual equity reports and analyses on the implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and investments in underserved communities. These analyses must include recommendations and actions on how the Administration plans to increase equity, such as by ensuring adequate notice of opportunity and strategic outreach.

Environmental Justice

- 1) Request that, as the Administration develops additional rulemaking regarding the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), the Administration require agencies to consider an area's cumulative pollutant levels and the total cumulative pollution impacts of a project consistent with Chair Ruiz's bill, the Environmental Justice Act, and require substantial notice to and meaningful public input from environmental justice communities consistent with Natural Resources Chair Grijalva's bill the Environmental Justice for All Act.

Immigration

- 1) Direct the Department of Homeland Security to designate and re-designate TPS for Latin American and Caribbean countries that warrant such designations due to ongoing conflict, natural disaster, or other temporary emergency conditions. The countries include, and are not limited to: El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen, Cameroon, Congo, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Guinea, Lebanon, Mexico, and Sierra Leone.
- 2) Direct United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Department of State to modernize its processing systems to efficiently process all pending and current immigration benefit applications expeditiously.
- 3) Direct DHS to expand the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program by updating eligibility dates and age caps and direct the Department of Health and Human Services to extend access to the Affordable Care Act Health Exchange for current DACA beneficiaries.
- 4) Direct DHS to exercise its parole authority by creating a Parole in Place (PIP) program in five-year increments for potential eligible beneficiaries of family-based petitions currently residing in the U.S.
- 5) Request the Administration stand by its decision to end Title 42 by May 23, 2022, and not delay its plans to do so, and request the Administration collaborate with the CHC to successfully implement its post Title 42 plans.
- 6) Direct DHS to terminate all existing contracts with private prisons and county jails and place a moratorium on future contracts or expansions.
- 7) Direct DHS to pivot from detention and ankle shackles and redirect its capital to alternative to detention programs such as the Family Case Management Pilot management, Community-Based Programs, and non-profit led alternative to detention programs, and provide opt-in social service programs operated in coordination with the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- 8) Direct the Treasury Department to address barriers and delays in applying for a processing Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) application by improving access to ITINs.
- 9) Direct DHS and the Department of State to redress the harms of the Muslim Ban and Trump's Additional Immigration Ban Presidential Proclamations by immediately and automatically reconsider, reopen, and expedite all immigrant and non-immigrant visa applications subject to the Muslim and African bans that have not yet been granted, including those denied under the prior Administration.
- 10) Direct DHS to remove the 700,000 nonpriority matters on the immigration court backlog to reduce the backlog and alleviate unnecessary pressure on hundreds of thousands of families and individuals threatened with deportation.
- 11) Direct DHS to lower its fee for Advanced Parole and other immigration benefit applications.

Hispanic Students

- 1) Request the Department of Education issue an extension of the moratorium on student loan debt payments through the end of the year.
- 2) Request the Department of Education cancel \$10K in student loan debt to support Hispanic aspiring professionals.
- 3) Request the Administration provide CHC Members quarterly progress briefings on the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics.
- 4) Request the Administration to Direct the Department of Education to require Interagency plans and Chair Reports are published publicly by September 2022, and annually thereafter. If the Department is unable to meet these deadlines, CHC requests the Administration formalize our asks by including the dates in the current Executive Order.

Health Care and Language Access

- 1) Request the Administration to extend the Public Health Emergency through the end of 2022.
- 2) Request that the Department of Justice issue new government-wide guidance for federal entities to comply with President Clinton's Executive Order 13166, which requires that federal entities develop and implement systems by which limited English proficient (LEP) individuals can meaningfully access the agency's services.
 - a. Each agency providing customer/constituent assistance should issue guidance to ensure meaningful access to these services for LEP persons.
 - b. DOJ must issue guidance that includes timelines and compliance reporting requirements for agencies and departments to issue Language Access Plans for the top languages spoken in the U.S. according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey.
- 3) Request that the White House issue a report outlining its communications plans to ensure the Administration's critical resources and updates reach Spanish language speakers and Spanish language media markets across the country.

We look forward to work with your Administration to advance our Executive Actions to address issues impacting Hispanic and immigrant communities across the country. For any policy questions, please reach out to Stephanie Palencia, Executive Director to the CHC at Stephanie.Palencia@mail.house.gov.

Respectfully,



Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus