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## *Hispanic-American Veterans of Connecticut, Inc. (HAVOCT)* *Connecticut's First Hispanic-American Veterans Community Organization* A 501 c 3 Organization

February 10, 2009

Honorable Toni Harp, Co-Chair  
Senator  
Honorable Juan Candelaria, Co-Chair  
State Representative  
Appropriations Committee  
State Legislature  
State of Connecticut  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Sen. Harp & Rep. Candelaria:

The Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission has been a vital part of the Hispanic community for the past 14 years. It was the Legislature, in keeping with current trends of addressing the issues of a growing community, who had the foresight to establish this Commission in the first place. It behooves the Legislature to continue to recognize how vital it is for this agency to continue serving the needs of the Hispanic population in Connecticut.

The Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission has been the voice of the Hispanic community in many areas including health, education, immigrant issues and youth to just name a few. They have been instrumental in working with many partners in the community and helped HAVOCT, Inc to advocate and pass HB #5799 which provided bilingual VSO services at DVA.

The Hispanic community has been hurting for many more years than the current harsh economic times. It would be so detrimental to do away with an agency that can bring those major concerns to the table of those with the power and influence to be able to make the situation just a little better for those under-served in areas of employment, housing, health and education.

We implore the Appropriations Committee and, through it, the Legislature to recognize the value of this organization and ensure that it remains a part of the State budget. We are sure that they can agree to institute any and all measures that will assist with this hard economic downturn but to remove them now would be to silence a huge population that is in dire need of services at this time. Hispanic veterans are faring a little better for LPRAC's intervention.

We can be reached at 860-721-5849 should you have any questions and stand ready to provide testimony if it would help their cause.

Respectfully,

*Juan L. Cruz*

Juan L. Cruz, Interim President