



NEGRON Consulting

February 10, 2009

Dear Appropriations Committee Member:

The Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission ("LPRAC") has been a vital part of the Hispanic community and Connecticut 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 is critically important the Legislature continue to recognize how vital it is for this agency to continue serving the needs of the Hispanic population in Connecticut. As a management consultant, I have worked with LPRAC and its leadership on research projects concerning Hispanics in Connecticut and have always found them to be very helpful, insightful, and professional.

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 such as the Department of Education, the Department of Social Services, Department of Public Health and Administrative Services to ensure that the programming available within those organizations is readily made available to the Hispanic community statewide.

The Hispanic community has been hurting for many more years than the current harsh economic times. It would be so detrimental to eliminate an important organization that brings those major concerns to the table of those with the power and influence to be able to make the situation equitable for those under-served in the areas of employment, housing, health and education.

I encourage and request that the Appropriations Committee and, through it, the Legislature, recognize the value of LPRAC and ensure that it remains a part of the State budget. I am confident that LPRAC and its leadership can agree to cooperate and implement any and all measures required to respond to the current difficult economic environment and do its equitable part. However, to eliminate the LPRAC is simply an extreme measure without merit, forewarning or thoughtful transition plan and would be more harmful than beneficial. LPRAC is a voice for the fastest growing segment of the State's population and it is important that the group be heard and acknowledged – in other words, be ably represented by its State Representatives at this time. I know firsthand that many of you have spoken publicly on the need for increased cultural competencies at State agencies, and for the need for additional representation on State commissions and committees. This is your opportunity to "walk the talk", and as the LPRAC Chair indicated in his letter of February 9, 2009 to Governor Rell, there is a clear need to take "a more surgical and strategic approach to balancing the budget". The current position is insensitive and not strategic.

I can be reached at 203.458.1842 should you have any questions and stand ready to provide testimony if it would help their cause.

Respectfully,

*Michael J. Negrón*

Michael J. Negrón, Managing Director

(Note: Consultant to the Connecticut Latino Leadership Council)