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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of full funding for Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC). As a former school and current district administrator, and Co-Chairperson of the CT Legislative Achievement Gap Task Force, I have benefitted immensely from the work of LPRAC. Their understanding of the policy implications, research, and need for our English Learners (EL) help position educators like myself to advocate for children in our districts and throughout the state.

Over the last two years, several pieces of legislation were passed that can benefit EL students throughout the entire state. If it were not for LPRAC's leadership, guidance, advocacy, and understanding of the legislative process, we would not have been able to make the gains we made in CT. The work last year amended 30 year old legislation that provided structural obstacles for our most underperforming students in CT.

Cutting funding for LPRAC would, in essence, hurt the group of students that need to gain the most academically in order to be productive members of society. Through LPRAC's work, these students have an advocate in Hartford that can inform legislators in a positive way.

As the demographic shifts show, the Hispanic population's growth is quick and steady. My concern is that with a crippled or non-existent LPRAC, the costs of remediating issues that LPRAC can proactively address will be greater. I personally have benefitted from LPRAC as an educator. More importantly, thousands of students benefitted from their advocacy and support to amend and write new legislation. On behalf of the voices of those students who are better off because of the work of LPRAC, I respectfully request that they be fully-funded. The continued prosperity in CT depends on groups like LPRAC.

Regards,

Miguel A. Cardona, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent

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