

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Adriana Díaz, Communications Manager

312-376-1766 x226

312-860-5120 (cell)

adiaz@latinopolicyforum.org



Legislation to increase transparency and diversity on Illinois State boards signed into law
Latino Policy Forum statement on SB229

Chicago—August 26, 2014— Signed into law Tuesday, a bill initiated by the Latino Policy Forum and members of the Illinois Latino Agenda will pave a path towards greater diversity and increase transparency in state advisory bodies.

Sponsored by State Sen. William Delgado and State Rep. Esther Golar, the bill requires the Governor's office to report annually a break-down of the demographic composition of all boards and commissions to the state legislature. The report will also include demographic information from applicants who applied but were not appointed. It will be electronically published once a year.

"Promoting diversity within the State of Illinois is a shared value we can all embrace," said the Forum's executive director Sylvia Puente. "This law will help keep Illinois accountable by allowing us to ask, 'Are we doing a good enough job of being inclusive to all residents?'"

Before SB229 became law, it was optional for people serving on boards and commissions to disclose race and ethnicity. However, changes will now establish a standard expectation for the information state government wishes to acquire for reporting purposes. Eight other states have created similar requirements.

"The Illinois Latino Agenda is actively working to increase Latino representation on state boards and commissions. Last month, we were able to celebrate the appointment of Rudy Valdez to the Illinois Community College Board after advocating for his appointment," said Katya Nuques, associate director of Enlace Chicago and co-chair of the representation committee of the Illinois Latino Agenda. "SB 229 is an important step forward in promoting diversity and inclusion in state government."

SB229 was initiated by the Forum, the Illinois Latino Agenda and supported by several other organizations that champion equity including: the Chicago Urban League, the South Asian American Policy & Research Institute and the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations.

About the Latino Policy Forum

The Latino Policy Forum is the only organization in the Chicago area that facilitates the involvement of Latinos at all levels of public decision-making. The Forum conducts analysis to inform, influence and lead. Its goals are to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies, and engage diverse sectors of the community, with an understanding that advancing Latinos advances a shared future. For more information, visit www.latinopolicyforum.org.

About the Illinois Latino Agenda

The Illinois Latino Agenda is the largest coalition of Latino-led nonprofits in Illinois with 47 member organizations. It is committed to securing equitable resources and investment for Latinos while building their power, influence and leadership. The coalition is co-convened by the Forum, the Illinois Latino Family Commission and MALDEF's Midwest regional office.