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The Latino Policy Forum Calls on Illinois Legislators to Redraw Fair, Equitable Districts in Light of New Census Data

The 2020 census confirms that Latinos are driving population growth across the US and Chicago and mitigated Illinois' population decline

CHICAGO -- According to recent data from the 2020 US Census, Illinois added 309,832 Latinos, the largest population increase among racial/ethnic groups statewide. This despite the fact that Illinois was one of three states to experience a decline in total population over the last 10 years, losing just over 18,000 individuals.

In June, state legislators used American Community Survey (ACS) data as part of their basis for drawing Illinois district maps. Depending on which ACS data set was used, anywhere between 120,000 and 150,000 Latinos were not counted. This discrepancy is great enough to warrant a redrawing of the maps.

"Our concerns that Latinos were shortchanged in the redistricting process have been substantiated," said Sylvia Puente, President & CEO of the Latino Policy Forum. "With the official census data, it's now apparent that Latinos were not fully represented in the development of statehouse districts. That means that the Latino population of many districts could be larger, and Latinos could have more power to elect the representatives of their choice."

The state's Latino growth was consistent with that of the United States at large, where the Latino population grew by about 11.6 million individuals, as well as the City of Chicago, where it grew by slightly over 40,000 individuals for an increase of about 5 percent over the last 10 years.

"Our population growth has not been fully recognized or incorporated into the Illinois redistricting process," Puente said. "We call upon our legislators to do the right thing and use this data to redraw districts. Our election systems must honor our state's diversity in a fair and equitable manner."

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