



NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release
January 12, 2015

Contact: Amanda Bosquez, abosquez@naleo.org
(202) 546-2536, (361) 548-6989 (cell)

Paula Valle Castanon, pvalle@naleo.org
(213) 747-7606 ext. 4414, (323) 253-6431 (cell)

NALEO Responds to President Barack Obama's 2016 State of the Union Address

Organization calls on Congress and President to work together to ensure promises turn into action for the nation's second largest population group and all Americans

WASHINGTON, D.C. - *The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) issued the following statement regarding President Barack Obama's 2016 State of the Union address:*

“With Latinos comprising nearly one of every five Americans today, the success of our country has become intrinsically tied to the future of the nation's second largest population group. Given our nation's changing demographics, it is increasingly critical that the President and congressional leadership deliver on the promises made in 2016 and beyond.

“The State of the Union needs to be more than just political theater. Latinos and all Americans continue to wait for words to be turned into action on the key issues affecting their day-to-day lives. We need progress on policies that will improve the schools our students attend, create more job opportunities, bring the immigrant community out of the shadows and ensure the right to vote is accessible for all. While we wait for action, many kids remain without access to rigorous preparation for post-secondary, life and work opportunities, families struggle to put food on the table, immigrants remain vulnerable and our democracy becomes increasingly responsive to only the privileged few.

“It is time for the President and our nation's congressional leadership to work across party lines to deliver on the many promises made to Latinos year in and year out. Like many Americans, the Latino community has grown weary of the political infighting that has become common in our nation's capital and on the campaign trail. The problems facing the Latino community are all too real and our leadership must move on policies that will allow our nation to reach the high bar that we have set for ourselves.

“Latinos have never shied away from a challenge, and we ask that the President and Congress do the same by avoiding political posturing and instead putting in the hard work of turning broken promises into action.

“Issues like immigrant integration have demonstrated that there are areas of common ground where our nation’s leadership can reach across the aisle on policies that benefit Latinos and all Americans. More than 8.8 million legal permanent residents are eligible to become citizens, with our economy and democracy the biggest beneficiaries when these New Americans succeed. Delaying administrative increases in the naturalization fee and supporting funding for English language and civics classes will ensure that the significant progress that has been made on this front continues.

“As the President acknowledged in tonight’s address, ‘it’s change that can broaden opportunity, or widen inequality’. The time has come to make the changes needed to make the American Dream more accessible, not less accessible for the nation’s second largest population group.

“Our constituency of more than 6,100 Latino elected and appointed officials nationwide stands ready to work side-by-side with the President, the Administration and Congress to move forward policies that spur job creation, increase rigorous educational opportunities for all students, protect voting rights and fix the nation’s broken immigration system in pursuit of this goal.

“We cannot succeed as a nation without ensuring the success of the Latino community. Now is the time to act, put politics aside and turn promises into reality for Latinos and all Americans.”

###

About NALEO

The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials is the leadership organization of the nation’s more than 6,100 Latino elected and appointed officials.