



NEWS RELEASE

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NALEO Educational Fund Statement on Inauguration of President Biden and Vice President Harris

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund released a statement from Board Chair Mara Candelaria Reardon on today's inauguration of Joseph R. Biden as the 46th President of the United States:

"NALEO Educational Fund congratulates President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris on today's inauguration as we attempt to move the country beyond a turbulent 2020 and work together to advance our mission of full Latino participation in the American political process. The historic nature of this moment is especially notable as we congratulate Vice President Harris for being the first woman to ever hold the office.

"We commend the administration for its nomination of Xavier Becerra for Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alejandro Mayorkas for Secretary of Homeland Security, Dr. Miguel Cardona for Secretary of Education, and Isabel Guzman for head of the Small Business Administration. These appointments reaffirm the importance of Latino representation at the highest levels of the nation's Executive Branch, bringing the talent and perspectives of exceptionally-qualified Latino public servants to address the critical issues our nation faces. As the administration continues to staff up at all White House office and federal agency levels, we renew our request that Latinos make up 20% of all presidential appointees to more fully reflect the diversity of our nation.

"The top priorities identified by the Biden administration disproportionately affect the Latino community, and we look forward to working with the administration on these policies, including ameliorating the public health and economic crises created by the COVID-19 pandemic. We applaud the administration for its announcements regarding its plan to take action on issues that affect the ability of Latinos to become full participants in civic life. This includes proposals that recognize the contributions immigrants make to this country by providing a path to U.S. citizenship for law-abiding, tax-paying immigrants and their families. We also welcome the administration's commitment to examining approaches to improving naturalization, and we urge immediate action to eliminate barriers that put naturalization beyond the reach of the nation's nearly nine million legal permanent residents who are eligible for U.S. citizenship.

"One of America's most pressing priorities is to ensure that the Census Bureau has the time necessary to produce the most accurate and fair Census 2020 numbers possible. We urge the administration to work with Congress to extend the statutory reporting deadlines for the delivery of the apportionment counts and redistricting data. We also urge the administration to help restore the credibility of the Census Bureau as an agency free of political manipulation.

The administration has made a promising start by reversing unconstitutional policies that would have undermined the quality of Census data and our core democratic principles, and we urge it to quickly to nominate a qualified director who will serve as an unwavering steward of the scientific integrity of Census data. In the interim, the administration should support the Acting Director and professional staff of the Census Bureau. We also strongly urge Commerce Secretary-designate Gina Raimondo to make the Census Bureau a priority once she is confirmed for her Cabinet position.

"Latinos are the nation's second-largest population group, and America's future prosperity and well-being are dependent on the success of the Latino community. The Biden administration has an opportunity to significantly strengthen our economy and our democracy by ensuring that Latinos are fully represented at the highest level of government and that its policies address the core challenges facing Latinos and all Americans. NALEO Educational Fund stands ready to work alongside the Biden administration and the 117th Congress to achieve these important goals."

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About NALEO Educational Fund

NALEO Educational Fund is the nation's leading non-partisan, non-profit organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, from citizenship to public service.