



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **NALEO Educational Fund Applauds the Office of Management and Budget for Revising Standards to Collecting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity**

*"Today's announcement on the revised standards is a long overdue and critical step toward ensuring our nation collects the most complete and accurate data possible on the Latino community."*

— NALEO Educational Fund CEO Arturo Vargas

**WASHINGTON, DC** – The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund today released the following statement from Chief Executive Officer Arturo Vargas after the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released its revised standards for collecting federal data on race and ethnicity:

"Today's announcement of the revised standards is a long overdue and critical step toward ensuring our nation collects the most complete and accurate data possible on the Latino community. We commend the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Federal Interagency Technical Working Group on Race and Ethnicity Standards for revising these standards, which will help improve how federal data on race and ethnicity is collected.

"Since Census Bureau research has shown that a combined question to ask about Hispanic ethnicity and racial identification is a significant improvement in obtaining data about how Latinos identify compared to the previous two-question approach, we commend this change by the OMB. Under the previous standards, many Latinos did not see themselves in the separate question on race and either left the question blank or indicated that they were of 'Some Other Race' — a designation not recognized by the agency. The large number of Latinos who indicated that they were of 'Some Other Race' likely resulted in a distorted view of the racial identification of Latinos and other population groups.

"We also applaud the revisions allowing Latinos to indicate that they identify with more than one Hispanic subgroup. This approach will help illuminate the full diversity of the Latino community.

"While the adoption of the combined question approach for the basic categories of race and ethnicity is a significant step forward, NALEO Educational Fund continues to be deeply concerned about the standards' designation of the specific Latino subgroups that more detailed data must collect, and the wording and format of the checkboxes and write-in box examples provided in the standards for that purpose. We do not believe that this approach will clearly provide accurate and complete data about the full racial diversity of the Latino community.

"We appreciate that the OMB is establishing an Interagency Committee on Race and Ethnicity Statistical Standards (the 'Committee') to carry out further research, and that one of the top priorities of that research is to determine how to encourage respondents to select multiple racial and ethnic categories if appropriate, and to research methods for ensuring complete and accurate data about people who identify as Afro-Latino. The Committee and the Bureau should consult closely with Afro-Latino researchers, as well as community and civic leaders, to ensure that the research is fully informed by their expertise and perspectives.

"Since the OMB last updated its standards in 1997, NALEO Educational Fund has been at the forefront advocating for the modernization of those standards to better capture how Latinos' ethnic and racial identity has evolved. The release of the revised standards is just the beginning of a process that will require the OMB, the Census Bureau, and other government agencies to address several issues regarding the implementation of the standards. Our recommendations for [implementation](#) have encompassed the need to develop a combined question and approaches for coding and tabulation that provide data that fully and accurately reflect the full racial and subgroup diversity of the Latino community.

"As the Bureau prepares for the next census, it must consult with a broad and diverse group of Latino stakeholders in planning robust outreach with the community on the importance of answering a combined question that best reflects residents' ethnic and racial identity. The OMB and the Bureau should also conduct comprehensive education for all government agencies on implementing the standards to ensure nuanced analysis of disparities and outcomes for Latinos.

"NALEO Educational Fund will continue to be the leading advocate for improvements in data collection that fully and accurately reflect the diversity of the Latino community. We recognize the OMB's critical step in the right direction and look forward to a continued partnership with the OMB, the Committee, the Census Bureau, and other government agencies to ensure that the new standards help our nation collect the most complete and accurate data possible on the Latino community and all of our nation's residents."

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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.*