NEWS RELEASE

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Statement From NALEO Educational Fund CEO Erica Bernal-Martinez on the Supreme Court's Ruling in *Louisiana V. Callais*

***WASHINGTON, D.C.* –** The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund released the following statement from **CEO Erica Bernal-Martinez** after the Supreme Court ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais*:

"Today's Supreme Court ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais* is a direct attack on Latino voters — and on every elected and appointed official who has fought to represent them.

"With this 6-3 decision, the Court has dealt a devastating blow to the Voting Rights Act and to the promise that every American deserves true representation in Congress and across all levels of government. By declaring that the very act of correcting racial discrimination in voting can itself be unconstitutional, the Court has done something we should call by its right name: it has made it easier to erase Latino communities from the political map. Section 2 — the last meaningful federal protection against racially discriminatory redistricting — has been effectively gutted.

"For NALEO members, this is not abstract. We represent Latino elected and appointed officials serving at every level of government — from Congress to city councils to the election administrators who make our democracy function. Our members don't have the luxury of pretending structural barriers don't exist. They govern communities that face them every day. Today's ruling leaves those communities with far fewer tools to fight back.

"The impact is stark. Congressional and state legislature seats in Texas and Florida currently held by Latinos are now directly at risk of being redrawn out of existence, and other states could take action that further jeopardizes Latino representation as well. When Latino voters are packed into a corner or carved apart across districts, they don't just lose a seat — they lose their voice. They lose the chance to send someone to Congress who actually knows their name, their neighborhood, their struggles. That is what erasure looks like in a democracy.

"NALEO Educational Fund will not accept a democracy where Latino voters can cast a ballot but cannot find true representation in Congress and beyond. We urge states to enact effective voting rights legislation that can provide the protections against discrimination the federal Voting Rights Act no longer provides, and we call on Congress to act immediately to restore what this Court has weakened — starting with the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. The promise of the Voting Rights Act must not be abandoned."

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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.