

For Immediate Release

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## NALEO Educational Fund Applauds Congress for Passing Key Legislation that Recognizes the Cultural and Historic Contributions of Latinos in the United States

***NALEO Educational Fund urges President Bush to sign the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 which includes legislation on the National Museum of the American Latino Act (H.R. 512/S.500) and the Cesar Estrada Chavez Study Act (H.R. 359/S.327) into law***

**Washington, DC** --The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund issued the following statement in reaction to this week's passage of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (S.2739) in the House of Representatives. This legislation includes (H.R. 512/S.500), the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of the American Latino Act, sponsored by Congressman Xavier Becerra, Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Senators Ken Salazar, Menendez and Martinez, and the Cesar Estrada Chávez Study Act (H.R. 359/S.327), sponsored by Congresswoman Hilda L. Solis and Senators McCain, Menendez and Salazar. The Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 passed in the Senate on April 10th is waiting to be signed by the President.

"The National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, the nation's leading organization that facilitates the full participation of Latinos in the American political process, commends Congress for approving legislation that recognizes the cultural and historical contributions of Latinos in the United States.

The National Museum of the American Latino Act would establish and fund a federal commission to explore the viability of creating the "National Museum of the American Latino" in Washington, DC. The addition of a National Museum of the American Latino in such a prominent location would serve to promote the contributions of Latinos to the United States and would become a historic milestone for the Latino community. The museums in the National Mall reflect the history, culture, and achievements of the people of the United States. Thus, it is only fitting that the contributions made in every sector of our society by Americans of Latino descent be included on the Mall in order to accurately portray the story of this great country, to both visitors from the United States and the entire world.

The Cesar Estrada Chávez Study Act would authorize the U.S. Department of Interior to study lands important in the life of Cesar Chávez for possible inclusion into the National Park System and would recognize the historical contributions of one of our most prominent Latino leaders. As a Mexican American farm worker, labor leader, and civil rights activist, Chávez co-founded the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers of America. His efforts led to unprecedented improvements in the conditions for workers, and advanced the cause of justice in our nation. Cesar Chávez's birthday has become a holiday in four states, and across the United States, many parks, libraries, streets, cultural centers, and schools have been named in his honor. This legislation is a fitting tribute to the legacy of one of the greatest American civil rights leaders.

The NALEO Educational Fund urges President Bush to sign the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 into law as a vital and positive first step to completing the story that is the Great American Experience."

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