

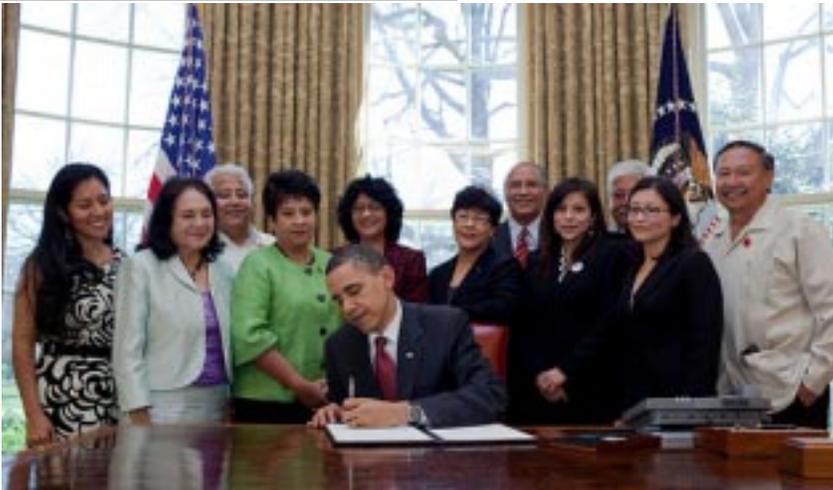
Hispanic Link weekly report

Vol. 28, No. 11 April 5, 2010
Your News Source Since 1983

MAKING THE NEWS THIS WEEK

Republican National Committee chief of staff **Ken McKay** resigns in wake of spending scandal at risque California nightclub...Veteran RNC advisor **Alex Castellanos** also quits and calls on chairman **Michael Steele** to resign, saying Steele has lost support of GOP donors and congressional leadership...**Lindsey Graham** (SC) remains the lone GOP senator supping an immigration reform bill...Fewer Californians support cutting benefits for undocumented immigrants. A new survey

shows respondents favor two alternatives: 1) tougher enforcement plus a temporary worker program; 2) tough enforcement but with a pathway to citizenship...**Elián González**, now 16, is photographed attending a Young Communists Union Congress in Cuba 10 years after he was rescued while floating off the coast of Florida. His mother drowned in their escape attempt...A magnitude 7.3 earthquake hits Mexicali, Baja California, on Easter, killing two people and leaving more than 80% of the downtown area in ruins...



With United Farm Workers leaders, staff and César Chávez's family as witnesses, President Obama signs proclamation making March 31 national César Chávez Day.

10,000 PARADE FOR JUSTICE, IMMIGRATION IN LOS ANGELES

By Shayla Selva

A sea of people, mostly dressed in white, paraded March 27 through the streets of Los Angeles in the *lucha*, or struggle, for justice and immigration reform.

U.S. flags were raised high while participants in cars between the closed-off streets honked. Hands stretched out from windows in abandoned high buildings to let the marchers know they were not alone.

The movement to declare justice and rights for immigrants began with a chant that roared, "A unified community will never be defeated."

Organizations including the Coalition for Human Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) and the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) came to support more than 10,000 participants, declaring their support of the message: "No More Separation of Families." Many had stories and causes to share, from better treatment of immigrants to improved working conditions and access to driver's licenses

"We ask President Barack Obama to stop the human raids," said Mexican American Feliciano Gómez. "We can no longer see

(continued on page 3)

Interim Immigrant Justice Report Reveals Congress Members Ignore Will of Voters

By Ruth Gened

An interim Immigrant Justice Report Card released this month by the National Latino Congreso reveals several strong disassociations between Congress members' sponsorship and voting records on comprehensive immigration reform-related issues and the desires of their constituents.

A recent Benenson Strategy Group poll showed that 68% of likely voters support pro-immigrant reforms such as legislation which would allow undocumented immigrants to apply for citizenship after satisfy-

Pro-immigration Votes

HOUSE	Dem. 75.2%	Rep. 6.9%
SENATE	Dem. 83.4%	Rep. 13.0%

ing certain requirements.

In contrast, only 37% of all pro-immigrant measures were supported by their elected representatives.

While three-quarters or more of Democratic members backed pro-immigrant proposals, Republican members rejected them overwhelmingly. (See shaded chart above.)

The NLC graded members based on their records of co-sponsoring bills or casting votes on others' proposals.

Despite the fact that the majority of Democrat, Republican and Independent voters favored legislation to facilitate acquisition of citizenship, the overall majority of members supported bills that would actually impede immigrants on the path toward legalization.

In releasing its survey, the National Latino Congreso stated, "It is important for members of Congress to know that Latino voters and other important immigrant groups will be studying their records to determine

(continued on page 3)

FIRM Members Say RNC, Steele Reneged on Deal

By Luis Carlos López

Following a closed-door meeting March 31 involving four representatives of the Republican National Committee and ten Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) leaders, the RNC announced its refusal to work within the party to find support for a comprehensive immigration reform bill this year.

Contrary to what immigration advocates claim they understood had been resolved, the RNC, chaired by Michael Steele, issued a statement saying the session was set up to discuss legal immigration only, and not a pathway to bipartisan support for holistic reform.

Advocacy group members asserted to Weekly Report that Steele stated clearly he recognized the need for the GOP to make a broader commitment.

"This was a first step," Tony Asion, execu-

(continued on page 2)

THE INSIDE STORIES

Jaime Escalante's legacy, p. 2

César Chávez mosaic moves to D.C., p. 5

Health insurance impact on Latinos, p. 6

Immigrant advocates: Fire ICE chief, p. 7

Political Poop

by Luis Carlos López



Trio of Latinos Appointed

President Barack Obama announced 15 recess appointments including three Hispanics, to administrative posts March 27.

He commented that "in the interest of scoring political points, Republicans in the Senate refuse to exercise their responsibility (to act on his nominations of the 15), I must act

in the interest of the American people and exercise my authority to fill these positions..."

The Latinos are Francisco Sánchez as Under Secretary for International Trade, Department of Commerce; Rafael Borrás as Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, and P. David López as General Counsel, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Obama Upbeat on Jobs

The Obama administration is showing some optimism with employment as the numbers show a steady 9.7% unemployment rate for the month of March. Secre-

tary of Labor Hilda Solís said 162,000 jobs were added, thanks to the Recovery Act. "We are slowly putting the American economy on the right track," she said.

Though the unemployment rate for Latinos edged from 12.4% to 12.6% and for blacks 15.8% to 16.5%, Solís said the department has programs such as the workforce investment in place to help people of color get the training they need.

Still troubling is that the average length of time the unemployed have been out of work is 31 weeks, making it the longest since 1948. The number of unemployed in the United States is estimated at 15 million.

East Los Angeles Calculus Teacher Jaime Escalante Dies at Age 79

By Adrian Rocha

Jaime Escalante, the renowned East Los Angeles math teacher who inspired the classic 1988 motion picture *Stand and Deliver*, died March 30 of gall bladder cancer. He passed away at age 79 in Sacramento where he resided with his son, Jaime Jr.

Following his successes in East Los Angeles, he taught high school for several years in California's capital city. In a 1992 Hispanic Link column, he explained the move, "I picked a tough school because I wanted to prove that what happened at Garfield High School in East Los Angeles can happen again."

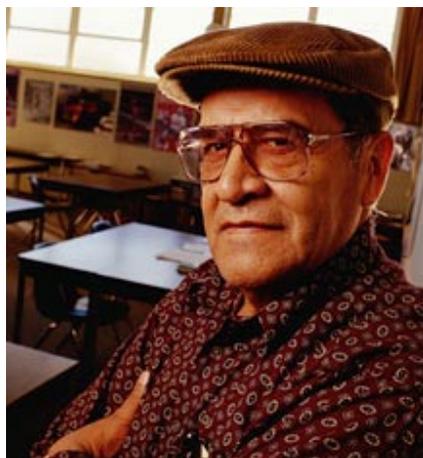
Born in La Paz, Bolivia, Escalante instructed physics and math for 14 years in his homeland before migrating to the United States in 1964. Tackling a new language and earning U.S. teaching credentials, he obtained a job as a math teacher at dominantly Mexican-American Garfield.

After cajoling school administrators, some students and their parents to accept his challenge, he instituted Garfield's first advanced placement calculus classes.

His greatest triumph — and shock — came in 1982 when he guided 18 of his students to pass the rigorous national Advanced Placement calculus exam, a feat comparable to excelling in college-level courses.

"He continuously raised the

expectations," recalls former student Erika Camacho, now a professor of mathematics and natural sciences at Arizona State



Jaime Escalante

University, "For Escalante, just doing good by itself was never good enough. We always had to excel. The better you did, the more he expected."

As much as he demanded from his students, he demanded more of himself. Tutoring before and after school, weekend sessions and summer school classes were his norm.

The film hit the big screen in 1988 and earned Edward James Olmos, who portrayed Escalante, an Oscar nomination and thrust the then 57-year-old Immigrant teacher into the spotlight. Members of Congress, education secretaries, and even U.S. presidents paid visits to his classroom in a community rife with dropouts.

Escalante never fully embraced his celebrity status, preferring the flickering fluorescent lights of his classroom to the flash of cameras. He believed all students, if fortified with *ganas*, the desire to succeed, had unlimited potential regardless of their social or economic status.

He is survived by his wife Fabiola, two sons Jaime Jr. and Fernando, six grandchildren and a legacy that continues to inspire thousands of Latinos and others whose successes are part of his legacy.

Hoyt: Republicans suffer from bipolar political amnesia

(continued from page 1)

tive director of North Carolina-based *E! Pueblo* Inc. told Weekly Report outside the RNC building following the meeting. "He promised that he would make some contacts and that we would have a follow-up meeting. I believe the man when he says he is willing to move forward."

Steele had spoken openly until halfway through the meeting, when one of Steele's aides warned him that he was going too far in his statements.

"The Republican Party seems to have a weird bipolar political amnesia when it comes to immigrants and Latinos," Joshua Hoyt, executive director for the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, told Weekly Report.

A release put out by FIRM following the meeting claimed Steele promised to work within the Republican Party to tone down

the negative rhetoric and gain the critical support of half a dozen or so Republicans hoping to introduce a reform bill before April 30.

Later that afternoon, the RNC responded with a statement that the meeting was about legal immigration and not about comprehensive reform leaving many advocacy members wondering about the Republican commitment to reach out to Latinos.

CORRECTION

On page 3 of our March 29 immigration rally coverage, the photo identified as our contributing writer Ilana Strauss was of actress Zooey Deschanel. Strauss's photo is at the right.

Weekly Report regrets this error.



STRAUSS

QUOTING . . .

"That is pandering to an extreme right wing, which has an insatiable demand for deportation. It would be remarkable to me if the Obama administration's hallmark achievement on immigration policy was to continue the Bush-era mass deportation practices of ICE."

--America's Voice executive director Frank Sharry, reacting to Weekly Report question about ICE using massive deportation tactics to gain Republican support for comprehensive reform.

Wait No Longer: Be Counted Now

Guest Columnist

Janet Murguía



country to participate in the 2010 Census.

Our communities are an integral part of the face of our nation. Yet we continue to deal with setbacks to proper documentation of our growth and diversity.

The visceral tone of the immigration debate coupled with misinformation has caused anxiety among many in the Latino community. Those who are undocumented hesitate to participate out of fear that their information may be shared within other government agencies and result in detention or deportation. Census information is protected and confidential, and the Constitution says every person must be counted.

LATINOS CHECKED 'SOME OTHER RACE'

That means Census officials will not, and cannot, share a person's information with any other jurisdictions. They face a harsh penalty if they do. Just recently, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano confirmed this vow of confidentiality in a letter to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Along with dispelling myths about legal status and the Census, it is also important to address the questions that might confuse our community. For many Latinos, who are often products of centuries of racial intermingling, the race options in Question 9 alone do not work. We all know that Latinos are an ethnic group and can be of any race, including white, Afro-Latino, and Native American.

That's why it's so important in 2010 that Latinos answer both Questions 8 and 9 on the Census form about ethnicity and race, especially since these data are used to enforce laws such as the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act.

In the 2000 Census, 97% of those who responded "some other race" were Latino, according to a report presented to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights last year. In fact, 42% of Hispanics selected "some other race," adding to crucial undercounting. Any person who answers "yes" to the question of Hispanic origin may further explain that he or she is Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, or Puerto Rican, or write in any other Latino heritage under the sun — Argentinean, Chilean, Ecuadorian, Colombian or Spaniard, to name a few.

We must not underestimate the importance of getting a correct count of Latinos. The Hispanic community cannot afford to be misrepresented and undercounted when billions of dollars and the further empowerment of the Latino community are at stake.

This year, don't wait. Be counted now.

(Janet Murguía is president and CEO of the National Council of La Raza. To send comments to her, email jstewart@nclr.org)

You've seen the commercials. You've walked past the posters. Yet your Census 2010 form is still sitting on your kitchen table. "I'll get to it soon," you think to yourself. The truth is, now is the best time to fill it out and submit it before the Census deploys workers to knock on your door.

Ten questions in ten minutes. Latinos must take this historic opportunity to be counted.

We need an accurate depiction of our nation's makeup. Over the last two decades, the Latino community has become a national community, living in our country's smallest towns and its biggest cities, in states from coast to coast. But in the 2000 Census, an estimated one million Latinos were not counted, costing billions of dollars in federal funding.

L.A. COUNTY LOST \$600 MILLION

For example, Los Angeles County, home to 4.7 million Latinos, lost \$600 million in deferral funding since the last Census. The schools, roadways and other services in these communities missed the opportunity to benefit from this crucial funding. An accurate count of Latinos benefits all the members of the communities in which we live, and the country as a whole.

We can talk about money, but a full Census count of Latinos is also important for the empowerment of our community. Latinos turned out to march in cities across the country in 2006 to show the nation we would not be silent in the face of attacks against our community.

We voted in record numbers in 2008 to elect candidates who would effectively represent us in our government. Being counted in the Census is the next logical step.

An accurate count of the Latino population in 2010 could lead to a gain in congressional seats in states such as Texas, Arizona and Nevada, where the Latino population has significantly tipped the balance of the political scales.

The National Council of *La Raza* (NCLR), the largest national Latino civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States, has joined elected officials and national Latino groups on a variety of campaign efforts aimed at motivating the 47 million Latinos in the

*Sin pelos
en la lengua*

Kay Bárbaro

PERSONAL TESTIMONY: Testimonials about the enduring magic performed by Jaime Escalante when he introduced AP calculus classes at Garfield High School in East Los Angeles have been flowing since his death this month.

Here's an extra revealing one by former Garfield student Erika Camacho, who is now a professor at Arizona State University in Phoenix. She shared it with our editor Luis Carlos López.

Related Erika:

By continuously challenging us to do better and better, he used what in the Latino culture we know as tough love. I remember saying to him, "Kimo, look I got it! I know how to do this problem," and he came back with "Great! Now do these two more before you forget how."

Of course, he had a smile on his face, but when I asked, "Are you serious?" he responded, "Absolutely." So he gave me two more

problems to do. As I was saying "it isn't fair," he stopped me right away and said, "Stop wasting power by complaining. Now you're making me think that you got lucky."

On another occasion I remember saying "I can't do this" as I put my pencil down. He heard me from across the room and said loud and clear, "*Esta mensa*" — this dummy — "is giving up so quickly. She is not ready for this class. Maybe she belongs out there with all the other *mensas* memorizing cheers. (I was cheerleader and he would utilize this anytime he could.)"

He started jumping up and down, kicking, pretending to be a cheerleader. It was funny. I was laughing but at the same time I was so mad and embarrassed that I told myself, "I will show him!"

So I got my pencil and started to think hard and finally I was able to do the question.

I showed him the answer and he said with a smile, "You are not a cheerleader. You are smart!"

For Escalante, just doing good by myself was never good enough. We always had to be doing our best and excelling. He continuously raised the expectations — the better you did, the more he expected the next day.