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Comprehensive Immigration Reform Efforts in the Latino Community

Washington, D.C. – Following the events that took place all over the country highlighting the immigration issue, The Latino Coalition (TLC) issued today the following statements:

“As the actions of the last few weeks and days demonstrate, we are at a pivotal moment in the immigration debate,” said TLC President Robert Deposada. “A thoughtful solution to this very complex issue will not be reached if we get swept up by confrontational statements, actions or positions. Currently, there is a group of radical individuals trying to hijack the debate on immigration reform. It is important to note that these individuals have been completely absent during the legislative process and are doing everything in their power to make sure the issue remains unresolved and available as a partisan issue in the upcoming elections. The only purpose that serves is to polarize the debate during an election year and making it less possible to reach comprehensive immigration reform.”

“Now more than ever we need responsible leadership, especially in the Hispanic community to forge meaningful immigration reform,” said TLC board member Juan Carlos Benitez. “We need to be promoting a positive image of immigrants and the benefits they bring to our country. Self-serving efforts purely for partisan gain are unfortunate and will not result in what is best for Hispanic immigrants.”

“Our message needs to be positive and focused on national and economic security for our country,” Deposada added. “We need to promote the need for comprehensive immigration reform in positive economic and security terms. We must promote respect and enforcement of our laws and encourage a system that promotes legal immigration.”

“In order to reduce the demand for illegal labor, we must create legal means for individuals to work in this country,” said TLC board member Sal Gomez. “While it is important that businesses are held accountable, there needs to be clear cut, consistent, functional and enforceable policy directed at how businesses use immigrant workers. It is important that Congress, working with President Bush, reach a meaningful and long-term solution.”

The Latino Coalition is a non-profit, non-partisan organization based in Washington, D.C. The organization was established to address policy issues that directly affect the well being of Hispanics in the United States. The Latino Coalition’s agenda is to develop and promote policies that will foster economic equivalency and enhance overall business, economic, and social development of Hispanics. For more information, please visit our website at www.TheLatinoCoalition.com.

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