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LULAC calls on politicians to act on Latino issues, begins statewide town hall meetings

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DES MOINES – The Iowa League of United Latin American Citizens today called on newly elected state and national leaders to follow through on promises to pass a comprehensive immigration reform law and to work toward better job and educational opportunities for Latinos.

Latinos, nationally, played a significant role in the outcome of last week's election. Overall, Latinos represented 10 percent of voters with 12 million voters. And according to multiple news reports, anywhere from 71 percent to 77 percent of those Latinos voted for President Barack Obama. Obama in his victory speech specifically mentioned Latinos and the need for immigration reform.

Now, Iowa LULAC members are calling on Obama and other elected leaders to make good on their promises. LULAC leaders will meet Thursday, Nov. 15, to discuss these efforts. Members are currently organization a Latino Legislative Day for when the Iowa Legislature reconvenes in January, and will work to meet with Iowa's senators and representatives in the coming months.

"The massive turnout of Latino voters in last week's election should prove to President Obama and other elected leaders that we are an influential sector of the population," said Joe Enriquez Henry, state director of Iowa LULAC. "As a result, we expect that the President and our other representatives in Washington, D.C., will address the needs that affect our people. Likewise, we hope that our elected leaders in Iowa will turn their attention to efforts that are more inclusive to the Latino community."

Iowa LULAC helped to rally the Latino vote through mailings to about 30,000 registered Latino voters in the state that informed voters of LULAC's agenda and issues, and encouraged them to vote for candidates who supported those positions. In addition, telephone calls were made the weekend before the election to several thousand voters to remind them of the upcoming election and to encourage them to vote.

Iowa LULAC also will take its efforts on the road. In January, members will utilize the information gathered in a statewide analysis of the Latino-voting community to travel to cities and areas of the state with high concentrations of Latinos. LULAC will host town hall meetings to discuss issues that affect our community and to organize new LULAC councils throughout the state.

"With the number of Latinos who live in Iowa, there's no reason why we shouldn't become a more active voice in issues that affect us," Enriquez Henry said. "Our hope is that with these town hall meetings, we can ignite Latinos to form more LULAC councils throughout the state to advocate on behalf of Latinos."

For more information, contact Joe Enriquez Henry at 515.208.7312; or Melissa Walker at 515.681.7731 or media@iowalatinos.org. Visit www.lulaciowa.org.

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