

United States Senate

June 17, 2010

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin:

As you work to craft the Fiscal Year 2011 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill, I ask that you include \$1,000,000 for the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention in Latino Communities administered by the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and their Institute of Hispanic Health (IHH). As you know, NCLR is the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States and works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of nearly 300 affiliated community-based organizations, NCLR reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Poverty, low literacy and language barriers impede access for Hispanic Americans to social services and cost effective prevention and primary health care. Hispanic workers often lack access to information about good nutrition and disease prevention and too often have no place to manage chronic conditions. With an estimated 41% obesity rate among Hispanic children, a figure that is double the nation's average, the Center will serve to address the growing national obesity epidemic.

This issue is particularly important in my state. In New Mexico, where 45% of our population is Hispanic, rates of overweight youth vary by ethnicity, from 16.4% for American Indian youth to 12.4% for Hispanics and 8% for Non-Hispanic Whites. There was an estimated 37% increase in diabetes prevalence in New Mexico from 1990 to 2000. Further, Hispanics in New Mexico are two times more likely to develop diabetes than Non-Hispanic Whites. As diabetes prevalence increases, so do diabetes-related complications such as cardiovascular disease, stroke, amputation, end-stage renal disease, and blindness. The economic burden of chronic diseases related to overweight and obesity is devastating to the New Mexico economy and is something that this funding will help to counter through NCLR's research, education and outreach on preventative care.

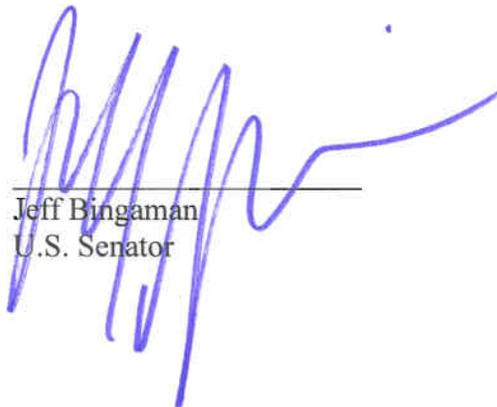
NCLR's Institute of Hispanic Health (IHH) is dedicated to reducing the incidence, burden, and impact of health problems in Hispanic Americans and works to deliver quality access to and use of its health promotion and disease prevention programs. The mission of the Center is to improve, promote and advocate for the health and well-being of Latino communities. The goal is

to reduce and eliminate health disparities and respond systematically to the unmet health promotion and disease prevention needs of Hispanic families.

The Center will support and respond to the overarching goals of the Department of Health and Human Services' *Healthy People 2020* in particular the goal of achieving health equity and eliminating disparities to improve overall health and well-being. These federal funds will allow the Center to conduct new research and respond to the health information and education needs of Hispanics. Strategies for success include the development of community-based outreach, and training and evaluation activities to address high rates of obesity in addition to other pressing health issues such as influenza, including both seasonal and the H1N1 virus.

Thank your for your leadership on these important issues of preventative care. I hope you will support this request for funding in FY11 in order to improve the health and well-being of Latino communities. In addition, I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has a pecuniary interest in this request, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 9 of Rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate. I further certify that I have posted a description of this request on my official website, along with the accompanying justification.

Sincerely,



Jeff Bingaman
U.S. Senator