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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

April 10, 2001

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS
AND FACILITIES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY READINESS
OVERSIGHT PANEL ON TERRORISM
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS
FIRST VICE CHAIR
CHAIR, HEALTH TASK FORCE

The Honorable Henry Bonilla
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your past support of the proposed Hispanic Leadership Institute in Agriculture and the Environment (Hispanic Leadership Institute) to be headquartered at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). I write to request that the Committee support a funding level of \$9,582,481 million over five years for the Hispanic Leadership Institute through the Conservation Operations Fund of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) at the Department of Agriculture. The Hispanic Leadership Institute requires \$2.5 million for FY 2002, though we would like full funding to guarantee students' ability to complete the program in the initial years.

The proposed project will develop advanced leadership capabilities within the Hispanic community through new academic training programs and fellowships, gain new insights on the impact of changing demographics across the nation, and improve interagency collaboration with the Hispanic community. As you know, UTSA will serve as the lead institution for the Hispanic Leadership Institute, working in partnership with Texas A&M and other Hispanic Serving Institutes across the nation. The presence of the Institute on the UTSA campus will not only foster the development of an agricultural research program, but enhance the university's status as a strong research institution. This Hispanic Leadership Institute will be of tremendous value to San Antonio and UTSA as well as the Departments of Agriculture and Interior.

The Hispanic Leadership Institute will be a joint project between the NRCS and the Forest Service. Since the Department of Interior funds the Forest Service, a similar request has been made of the Interior Subcommittee. I ask that the two subcommittees coordinate on funding this project.

Enclosed you will find an executive summary for the proposed Institute. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this matter. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Ciro
Ciro D. Rodriguez
Member of Congress

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