

DOLORES HUERTA FOUNDATION

August 6, 2019

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi
U.S. House of Representatives

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McConnell,

It has now been over 25 years that the Smithsonian's own *Willful Neglect* report raised the alarm to Congress that American Latinos are virtually left out of all of its museums and centers. Sadly, instead of springing to action to address the serious exclusion of the nation's largest, youngest, and rapidly growing ethnic group, little attention was paid and little progress made. **So today, I write to you on behalf of Dolores Huerta Foundation to endorse the National Museum of the American Latino Act (H.R. 2420, S. 1267), a bill that finally addresses the concerning lack of understanding and appreciation of American Latinos in our national institutions.**

Too few Americans (Latinos and non-Latinos alike) realize that American Latinos have been on this land for over 500 years. Americans do not realize that Latinos have fought in every war since the Revolutionary War nor do they know about our contributions to civil rights, the sciences and business. This lack of understanding can lead to dangerous misinformation and stereotyping for the American Latino community. A major commitment and show of support from our nation's representatives is now urgently needed to combat the decades of neglect.

The National Museum of the American Latino Act will begin the planning and create the mechanisms needed to make this long overdue museum a reality. Eight years after the Commission to investigate the potential for an American Latino Museum completed its work, this bill is the necessary next step. It puts this museum on the National Mall among all of the other landmark Smithsonian museums also demonstrating the story of our great nation to millions of visitors each year. This institution must be the next addition to what is known as our "nation's front yard."

Dolores Huerta Foundation encourages you to prioritize the passage of this bill *this* year. It is an issue we will be watching closely and we look forward to working together with you to see it through.

Best,



Dolores Huerta, President