



For Immediate Release:

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Illinois Latino Agenda Meets with Mayor Brandon Johnson, Share Policy Priorities and Ask for Continued Collaboration

ILA members discussed their organization's policy priorities with Mayor Johnson and offered their members' expertise to help inform policy decisions

media interviews available

CHICAGO - Illinois Latino Agenda (ILA) members and Mayor Johnson met yesterday, amidst an escalating migrant crisis and as Mayor Johnson contemplates key appointments in his administration. During the meeting, ILA members advocated for the key priority issues for members and their organizations, among them additional resources to address the migrant crisis, the prioritization of equitable representation in his administration, continued investment in violence prevention programs and organizations, and intentional inclusion of Latino neighborhoods in long-term community development plans.

ILA members have decades of experience serving Latinos in Illinois by providing frontline services, managing advocacy efforts, conducting in-depth research into what their communities need, supporting small and growing Latino-owned businesses, and responding to crises that impact Latino communities. They can be a valuable partner to Mayor Johnson's administration and are looking forward to continued collaboration with his administration to ensure the wellbeing of Latinos throughout Chicago.

"We are very pleased to have had a fruitful and collaborative conversation with Mayor Johnson and members of his administration to ensure Latino communities are supported and represented in all decision making to ensure better outcomes for our people," **said Sylvia Puente, Co-Chair of the Illinois Latino Agenda and CEO of the Latino Policy Forum.** "The ILA understands the needs of Latinos throughout our city because we have been working with these communities and advocating on their behalf for decades through our organizations. We look forward to building a partnership with the Mayor's office."

ILA members have served on Mayor Johnson's transition teams and as a coalition that is embedded in the social service and advocacy infrastructure of the city, the ILA is committed to building a fruitful partnership with the Johnson administration. A meeting to further discuss policy recommendations is scheduled to happen on September 27th.

"We are invested in building systems of care and we value the insights and lived-experiences of ILA members," **said Deputy Chief of Staff Cristina Pacione-Zayas.** "Like the Illinois Latino Agenda, we believe there are enough resources for everyone, and we are committed to collaborating and building a partnership that will help create opportunities for all Chicagoans."

Mayor Brandon Johnson's administration committed to working on representation in his key appointments and has agreed to appointing a long-term liaison from his office to keep open communications with ILA. That liaison is currently Chief of Policy and Advocacy S. Mayumi "Umi" Grigsby.

In attendance at the meeting were Mayor Johnson, Deputy Chief of Staff Cristina Pacione-Zayas, Chief of Policy and Advocacy S. Mayumi "Umi" Grigsby, First Deputy for Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights Rey Wences-Najera, Jose Marco-Paredes, Jose Muñoz, Juan Carlos Linares, Juan Morado, Jr., Karina Ayala-Bermejo, Maria Pike, Maricela Garcia, Mario Perez, Martin Montes, Miguel A. Blancarte, Jr., Raul Raymundo, Ric Estrada, Roberto Valdez, Jr., and Sylvia Puente.

The Illinois Latino Agenda is a coalition that advocates for representation of Latinos across all sectors and works to advance the economic, political, and social prosperity of Latino communities throughout Illinois.

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