



35th Anniversary

HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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November 16, 2012

Via Electronic Mail: yourletters@washingtontimes.com

The Washington Times
3600 New York Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Re: Letter to the Editor, October 31, 2012

Dear Editor:

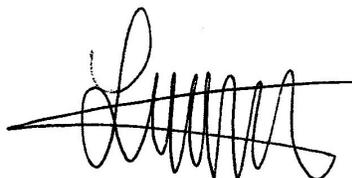
On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (“HBA-DC”), I write to inform you of the official position of the association with regard to so-called “Voter ID” laws. While we are proud to have healthy and amicable differences of personal opinion within our membership and past leadership, the official position of HBA-DC must take into consideration our mission and history.

On November 13, 2012, the Board of Directors of HBA-DC approved a resolution recognizing that while states have a legitimate interest in the prevention of voter fraud, that interest is not to be served at the expense of disenfranchising voters. Thus we oppose the imposition of voter restrictions that pose a real threat of disenfranchising any voter, Hispanic or otherwise. And the threat indeed exists, as the U.S. Department of Justice has demonstrated by halting voting regulatory efforts in Texas, Florida, South Carolina, and other states. Courts in several states, including Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, have likewise blocked the implementation of these laws for the very same probability of harming voters’ rights.

We remain ever mindful of the history of discrimination in this county surrounding the right to vote and share the concerns of other likeminded civic groups, such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the League of United Latin American Citizens, the NAACP, and others. What concerns these groups is that many Voter ID laws, such as the Arizona law, have strict photo ID requirements that inflict costs, in time and money, that disproportionately impact the rights of poor voters, many of them Hispanic, as well as youth and elderly citizens. Perhaps these burdens could be justified if voter fraud were a real problem in the United States. But the likelihood of such fraud has been estimated by a Brennan Center study to be 0.00003%, on par with the risk of injury from lightning. Indeed, courts in several states, including Georgia, Missouri, and New Mexico, have found no evidence of fraud.

When it comes to the integrity of the vote, HBA-DC believes that states must proceed with care, enacting laws that do not intimidate or discourage eligible Americans from voting, in the name of combating a problem that does not truly exist.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lyzka P. DeLaCruz', with a long horizontal line extending to the left from the start of the signature.

Lyzka P. DeLaCruz
President