

June 18, 2015

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

The undersigned Latino organizations write in support of H.R. 1814 (Rep. Grijalva; Rep. M. Fitzpatrick), a bipartisan bill that would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which is set to expire on September 30, 2015.

Created by Congress in 1965, the LWCF preserves natural areas, water resources, provides recreational opportunities, and improves access to the outdoors for all Americans. Funded by the use of revenues from the depletion of one set of natural resources – offshore oil and gas – to support the conservation of another set of precious resources – our land and water – the LWCF is essential to the Latino community's health, culture, and the future of our children. From national parks like the Rocky Mountains, the Grand Canyon, and the Great Smoky Mountains, to national wildlife refuges, national historic sites, national forests, rivers and lakes, community parks, trails, and ball fields, the LWCF has helped protect America's most treasured places in every state. Moreover, more than 41,000 state and local park projects were set aside for Americans to enjoy thanks to the LWCF.

The LWCF has been instrumental in creating recreational opportunities for Latinos in urban, suburban, and rural areas to get outdoors through the parks, trails, and recreation projects dependent upon LWCF funding. Access to these green spaces contributes to the health and well-being of Latino families. The importance of the LWCF to Latinos is underscored by the fact that our community is disproportionately affected by environmental factors which place long-term health in serious jeopardy. Forty percent of Latino children are overweight, and 50 percent are on track to develop diabetes. The recreational and outdoor opportunities created by the LWCF could help to reduce or reverse these trends.

From the Santa Fe National Forest and Watershed, a National Park Service Latino Heritage Site significant for its history as the home to Hispano settlers, and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the recently established Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge that provides critical outdoor and educational opportunities to the Latino communities in Bernalillo and Valencia Counties in New Mexico, the LWCF has preserved public lands significant to the Latino community's cultural and historical heritage. The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the Cabrillo Beach Development and Roberto Clemente State Park are a few of the special places set aside to honor the contributions of Latinos to our nation.

The LWCF protects our open spaces and improves access of these public lands for everyone, but its importance to the Latino community is without question. The 2015 Colorado College State of the Rockies Poll found that when it comes to specific environmental priorities, there is nearly unanimous Latino support for protecting and conserving natural areas for future generations (97 percent), protecting and conserving wildlife habitat (96 percent) and making sure that rangers have the resources they need to take care of public lands and provide services to visitors

(96 percent). The poll also found that nearly 3 out of every 4 Latinos support the continuation of funding for the LWCF. The preservation of these public lands and its accessibility is essential to the Latino community's health, culture, and future of our children.

As this law is set to expire this September, the undersigned national and local Latino organizations urge you to co-sponsor H.R. 1814 to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

For the important contributions they make to the Latino community's health, well-being, and access to our nation's natural treasures, we urge you to fully fund and reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund through the passage of H.R. 1814.

Sincerely,

Acacia Network  
ACCION East  
Aid for AIDS  
Andrew Glover Youth Program  
Arte  
ASPIRA Association  
ASPIRA of New York  
Azul  
Casita Maria  
Center for Latino Progress  
Centro Civico de Amsterdam  
Circulo de la Hispanidad  
Committee for Hispanic Children and Families  
Community Association of Progressive Dominicans (ACDP)  
Community Health Councils  
Community Organization for Parents and Youth (COPAY)  
Comunilife  
Cuban American National Council  
Dominican Women's Development Center  
Dominico-American Society  
East Harlem Council for Community Improvement  
El Puente  
Esperanza Immigration Legal Services  
GreenLatinos  
Hispanic Access Foundation  
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)  
Hispanic Brotherhood of Rockville Centre  
Hispanic Center of Greater Danbury  
Hispanic Federation  
Hispanic Health Council  
Hispanic Health Initiatives  
Hispanic Resource Center of Larchmont and Mamaroneck

Hispanos Unidos de Buffalo  
Institute for Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly  
Junta for Progressive Action  
La Casa de Don Pedro  
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)  
Latino Commission on AIDS  
Latino Community Services  
Latino Outdoors  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)  
Loisaida  
Make the Road New York  
MANA, A National Latina Organization  
Multicultural Community Resource Center  
National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities  
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives  
National Council of La Raza  
National Hispanic Environment Council  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Puerto Rican Coalition  
New York Council on Adoptable Children  
Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance (NoMAA)  
Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights  
Nuevo Sendero  
Puerto Rican Action Board  
Puerto Rican Association for Human Development  
Puerto Rican Family Institute  
Regional Aid for Interim Needs (RAIN)  
San Juan Center  
SER - Jobs for Progress National  
Spanish Community of Wallingford  
Spanish Speaking Center of New Britain  
Spanish Speaking Elderly Council – RAICES  
St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction  
U.S.-Mexico Foundation  
United Bronx Parents  
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI)  
Violence Intervention Program  
Westchester Hispanic Coalition  
William C. Velazquez Institute