

June 2010 Issue



Message from the Executive Director Shala Perez

On behalf of the Kansas Hispanic and Latino American Affairs Commission we are very excited to bring you our first edition of our monthly newsletter and launch our new website. For this first edition we want to tell you who we are and what we do. We have been working closely with the Hispanic Legislative Caucus this session. Now you can sign up to receive our monthly e-newsletter on our website. Here is some information about the Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission.

About the Kansas Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission

The Kansas Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission (KHLAAC) is proud to be a part of the Governor's office. The Commission serves as a liaison for the Kansas Hispanic & Latino Community and the Office of the Governor.

KHLAAC works closely with the Kansas Hispanic Legislative Caucus and state agencies in order to improve the lives of all Kansans. The executive director of the commission is appointed by the governor and is the administrative officer of the commission. The volunteer, seven member board of commissioners is appointed by the governor, with no more than four members of the same political party serving at one time. Each congressional district in the state of Kansas is represented on the commission by at least one member who is a resident of the district and the remainder represent the state at large. Commission members are appointed for three-year terms, with no limit on the number of terms they may serve. Commission meetings are held quarterly at different locations around the state, and all meetings of the commission are open to the public.

The Kansas Hispanic & Latino American Affairs Commission functions, powers and duties:

- Gather and disseminate information and conduct hearings, conferences and special studies on problems and programs concerning Hispanics;
- Coordinate, assist and cooperate with the efforts of state departments and agencies to serve the needs of Hispanics especially in the area of culture, education, employment, health, housing, welfare and recreation;
- Develop, coordinate and assist other public and private organizations with understanding the problems of Hispanics;
- Develop, coordinate and assist other public and private organizations to provide services to Hispanics;
- Propose new programs concerning Hispanics;
- Evaluate existing programs and proposed legislation concerning Hispanics;
- Stimulate public awareness of the problems of Hispanics by conducting a program of public education
- Conduct training programs for community leadership and service project staff;
- Accept contributions from any person to assist in the effectuation of this section and to seek and enlist the cooperation of private, charitable, religious, labor, civic and benevolent organizations for the purposes of this section
- Solicit, receive and expend federal funds to effectuate the purposes of this act and enter into contracts and agreements with any federal agency for such purposes;
- Establish advisory committees on special subjects; and
- Cooperate with the state board of education in advising and assisting school districts, upon request, in conducting in-service training programs for bilingual education personnel.

NEWS

Commissioner's Corner **Arturo Ponce-commissioner, congressional district 1**



Participating in the 2010 Census is easy, important and safe. We have been doing lots of work with the census. If the Census Bureau does not receive a form by the time field assignments are made in April, a census taker must visit that address to ensure everyone is counted once and in the right place. You can find this article and more information about the census on the News link at our website .

Nonresponse Follow-up Facts

- ◇ The Census Bureau is required by the U.S. Constitution to count everyone living in this country, regardless of immigration or citizenship status.
- ◇ Over 130 million households across the nation received a census form in March 2010.
- ◇ The Nonresponse Follow-up (NRFU) operation is conducted in areas where 2010 census forms were mailed through the U.S. Postal Service or were hand-delivered by census employees. In both situations, residents were asked to fill out and return the forms by mail. If the Census Bureau does not receive a completed form from a residence by the end of the Mail out/Mail back period, a census taker will visit that address to take a count in-person.
- ◇ The Mail out/Mail back period ends in late April, with NRFU operations launching May 1, 2010.
- ◇ It is estimated that census workers will have to visit about 47.2 million homes during NRFU operations.
- ◇ Census takers must present an ID badge that contains a Department of Commerce watermark. The census taker may also be carrying a bag with a Census Bureau logo. If asked, the census taker will provide you with supervisor contact information and/or the Local Census Office phone number for verification. The census taker will only ask you the questions that appear on the census form. Census takers will not ask you for your social security number, bank account number, or credit card number.

What is the DREAM Act?

The Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act, or DREAM Act, is bipartisan legislation introduced at the federal level in both the House and the Senate. This legislation (S.729/H.R.1751) would grant conditional residency to undocumented students who were brought to the United States before the age of sixteen, demonstrate good moral character and graduate from high school. To obtain permanent residency students would have a six year period to complete at least two years of study at a community college or university and/or two years of military service. Under current laws there is no legal avenue for these children and young adults to apply for residency or citizenship. For more information on the DREAM Act please visit KHLAAC's website. There you will find updates and links to information and organizations pertaining to this topic.

Arizona Immigration Law SB1070

Arizona Immigration Law SB1070 requires all the immigrants to have their immigration documents with them to verify their status. The law gives Police Officials an authority to ask and to see the information not only from aliens but from any individual that is considered suspicious or when there is enough suspicion that suspect is not legal resident. For links to additional information about this law please see our website.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Legislative Wrap-up

SB 353 (Increase penalties for human trafficking) Introduced by Sen. Derek Schmidt (R) on January 11, 2010, to establish several crimes involving the human trafficking. The bill declares coercing employment, which is forcing a person into performing labor or services due to threatening a person, to be a severity level 9 felony. Peonage is knowingly holding a person in a condition of involuntary servitude, and is considered a severity level 8 felony. The bill also establishes recruiting, harboring, transporting or obtaining labor or services through the use of coercion, force or fraud to be human trafficking, which can be prosecuted as a severity level 2 felony. Status: The motion passed in the Senate (40 to 0) on March 30, 2010.

SB 572 (amendment to Proposed state budget for 2011)

Motion by Rep. Lance Kinzer (R) on May 4, 2010, to prohibit for next fiscal year the ability of illegal aliens to qualify for in-state tuition rates at Kansas colleges and to redirect the \$400,000 budget savings from that action to other state budget priorities. Status: The motion failed in the House (50 to 70) on May 4, 2010.

SB 572 (amendment to Proposed state budget for 2011) Introduced by Rep. Anthony Brown (R) on May 7, 2010. This law would make the failure to carry immigration documents a crime and give the police broad power to detain anyone suspected of being in the country illegally. Status: Ruled not germane. The ruling passed in the House by voice vote on May 7, 2010.

HB 2745 (Create new tax on the transmission of money) was proposed to tax money sent by all immigrants back home. Introduced by Rep. Richard Carlson (R) on March 23, 2010, in his role as committee chair, to impose a state excise tax on the transmission of money by those defined elsewhere in state law as commercial money transmitters. The amount of tax would be \$5 per transmission plus two percent of any amount transferred in excess of \$500. Proceeds of the tax would go to a new Medicaid health care fund. Status: Referred to the House Taxation Committee on March 24, 2010.

Message from Representative Ruiz: SB 572 (amendment to Proposed state budget for 2011)



Hello KHLAAC readers:
We did defeat the attempt to kill in-state tuition.

I asked Rep. Kinzer (R Olathe) at the well, how many students are using the opportunity given to them by the state.

He answered approximately 232 students, in the scheme of things this is very minute to the total population of college students in the state.

I then proceeded to call the action punitive and decreasing the value of the state of Kansas; comparing the attempt right in line with Arizona, Oklahoma, Texas and Missouri's racist legislation aimed at the Latino immigrants.

EVENTS

Hispanic Day on the Hill-Leadership Summit

March 31, 2010 The Kansas Hispanic and Latino American Affairs Commission hosted its annual event Hispanic Day On The Hill in Topeka. Hispanic Day on the Hill is an opportunity for the Hispanic community to meet with the Kansas Legislature, Kansas agencies, and community leaders to discuss issues impacting Hispanic Americans. This year, the focus was on learning about the political process and the importance of civic engagement. Governor Mark Parkinson joined KHLAAC and Hispanic leaders from across Kansas at the event, where he emphasized the importance of the Hispanic community in the economic growth of Kansas.



Liberal Community Meeting

Shala Perez and Arturo Ponce met with Liberal's community leaders to discuss advancement of the area's Hispanic population and build partnerships with KHLAAC and the area's Hispanic leaders, businesses, organizations, and community. Photo by Tony Hernandez.



Diversity Network's 4th Annual Cultural Celebration



The state of Kansas celebrated the diversity of its workforce. The event featured ethnic foods and entertainment, including East Indian cultural dancers, Native American hoop dance and Topeka High's drum line.

Cinco de Mayo



KHLAAC participated in the Cinco de Mayo parade in Liberal, Kansas. The festival celebrations highlight the growing diversity in Southwest Kansas.

Join us at our next quarterly meeting.

July 29, 2010

10:00AM - 4:00PM

Location: 311 N. Grant
Liberal, KS