

National Hispanic Leadership Agenda

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

December 3, 2020

President-Elect Joseph R. Biden
Office of the President-elect
Washington, D.C.

Dear President-Elect Biden,

The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), comprised of over forty of the leading national Hispanic civil rights and public policy organizations, has come together to enthusiastically endorse Dr. Cecilia Martinez, Co-founder and Executive Director at the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy (CEED), to be nominated as the next Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

At a time when systemic inequality in the enforcement of our environmental protection laws is literally a determining factor on who can survive COVID-19, we need a leader who has dedicated her life's work to fighting for justice and equity in environmental policy and that leader is Dr. Martinez. Her deep understanding of environmental policy, academic expertise, hands-on experience working with environmental justice communities across the country, and her ability to bring together all of the sectors that make up the environmental movement, make her eminently qualified for this vital role. Dr. Martinez brings a wealth of experience and [expertise](#) to the position and would provide bold, effective leadership of CEQ on behalf of all the constituencies it serves.

The Biden-Harris environmental agenda recognizes the impact of systemic inequality in our environmental laws, and the incoming administration shares a greater vision of environmental justice than any administration in U.S. history. President-Elect Biden recognized that depth of experience when he tapped Dr. Martinez to lead the agency review team charged with evaluating the White House Council on Environmental Quality – the key post in coordinating the crafting of new environmental regulations. These issues are a matter of life and death in many of our communities and that is why our organizations came together to strongly encourage the President-Elect to nominate Dr. Martinez as Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality to make good on that agenda.

Dr. Martinez demonstrated her ability to work effectively to reach common ground with her groundbreaking work on the groundbreaking Equitable & Just National Climate Platform that brought together a group of environmental justice and national environmental group advocates to build trust and collaboration, develop policy ideas all could support, and create pathways for future inclusive policy development. Dr. Martinez was key to launching this initiative and through her tenacity and commitment, they were able to come together to reach a historic agreement on key climate principles for the benefit of all. For this and her other significant achievements, she was [named](#) as Time Magazine's most influential 100 people of 2020.

Alianza Americas
American G.I. Forum
ASPIRA Association
AVANCE Inc.
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
Farmworker Justice
Green Latinos
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities
Hispanic Federation
Hispanic National Bar Association
Hispanics in Philanthropy
Inter-University Program for Latino Research
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
League of United Latin American Citizens
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
Mi Familia Vota
NALEO Education Fund
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives
National Association of Latino Arts and Culture
National Association of Latino Independent Producers
National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc.
National Day Laborer Organizing Network
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Latinx Psychological Association
Presente.org
SER Jobs for Progress National
Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
U.S.- Mexico Foundation
UnidosUS
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce
Voto Latino

There has never been a Chair of CEQ that was an environmental justice leader even though frontline communities suffer the most from local and global environmental degradation. This nation is overdue for leadership at CEQ that not only understands the complexities of the environmental and climate justice sector but is also steeped in the academic world and ready to come to the table with all stakeholders. Dr. Martinez is the complete package; she embodies a unique breadth of experience, has unassailable expertise, is outcome-driven, and has an unwavering commitment to equity.

For all of these reasons and more, Dr. Cecilia Martinez, Co-founder and Executive Director at the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy (CEED), is uniquely qualified to be the next Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Saenz
Chair, National Hispanic Leadership Agenda
NHLA Immigration Committee Co-Chair
President & General Counsel
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)



Mark Magaña
Co-Chair, Environmental and Energy Committee, NHLA
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Vice President, Federal Policy and Advocacy, Hispanic Federation