



General Email:
FairLatinoRepresentation@gmail.com
twitter: @LatinoRepresent
Facebook Page:
[https://www.facebook.com/
FairLatinoRepresentation\]](https://www.facebook.com/FairLatinoRepresentation/)
Website:
www.latinorepresentation.org

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July 22, 2015

Ms. Chirlane McCray
Chair
New York City Commission on Gender Equity
City Hall
New York, NY 10013

Dear First Lady McCray:

I am writing on behalf of the Campaign for Fair Latino Representation to request a meeting with you and Commissioners Silda Palerm, Lorraine Cortes-Vazquez, Yrthya Dinzey-Flores, Cecilia Gaston and the Honorable Melissa Mark-Viverito to discuss our concerns about the underrepresentation of Latina women and the Hispanic LGBTQ community in city government and the problem of the lack of gender equity in the City of New York in general. We believe that such an initiative on gender fairness is long overdue and would like to explore how we can support your efforts in this area.

As you know, New York's 2.5 million Latinos make up close to a third of the population and our community has one of the city's highest poverty rates. This makes Latinos the largest poverty population making the plight of Latina women one of the most dire. Latinas suffer the social problems that such extreme poverty brings in terms of domestic violence, suffer from high levels of human trafficking, and employment discrimination and pay equity issues, earning only 57 cents for every dollar a man earns. These problems are further aggravated by the large number of Latinas who are undocumented and non-English speaking. The Latino community also shares in a greater recognition of its LGBTQ community and the challenges it faces as our numbers grow.

In light of these common concerns, we would like to discuss with you:

- What role the Latino community can play in supporting your advisory group to the Mayor in developing initiatives and methods to achieve the goals of the Mayor's platform to reduce inequality, with a focus on gender-based inequality;
- How we can best advocate for Latina/o women, girls, transgender and intersex residents and support programs that have been created to remove barriers to full participation in all areas of women's personal and work lives;
- How can we contribute to your study of the nature and extent of both the intentional and unintentional discrimination that women face in the City of New York, and their impacts on the economic, civic and social well-being of women, especially as this affects the Latino community;
- What role can we play in making recommendations to the Mayor regarding legislative or executive action to improve the lives of women;
- How can we help in your efforts to educate the public about Latina women's issues;
- How can we help in identifying a network of Latino organizations in the public and private sectors working to expand opportunities for women;
- Is there a role we can play in working with the Mayor's Office, the Mayor's Office of Appointments, and advocacy and community organizations to identify and hire an Executive Director of the Commission, and additional members of the Commission; and,
- Is there a role that Latino and other men should be playing in promoting the work of the Commission, including their membership on the Commission?

We very much look forward to meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss our concerns and ways in which we can assist you in your efforts to protect the human rights of Latinos, other people of color and protected classes. I can be contacted at 646-963-1114 and Nievesj38@gmail.com to set a date and time to meet. For further information on our Campaign, visit our website at www.latinorepresentation.org, which also includes a set of recommendations for improving the city's efforts at promoting diversity of its workforce by the full inclusion of Latinos.

Sincerely,

Javier A. Nieves

Javier A. Nieves

Chair

Campaign for Fair Latino Representation

cc: Maya Wiley, Mayor's Special Counsel
Silda Palerm, Chair, NYC Commission on Gender Equity
Juan Cartagena, President and General Counsel, LatinoJustice PRLDEF