

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 6, 2011

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers
House Committee on Appropriations
Room H-307
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-146A
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Norman Dicks
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Inouye and Rogers and Ranking Members Cochran and Dicks,

We write to respectfully request that you include the provisions of the Smithsonian American Latino Museum Act (S. 1868/H.R. 3459) in the final appropriations measure to fund the federal government into next year.

As you may be aware, this legislation simply designates the Arts and Industries building as the site for the Smithsonian American Latino Museum, yet does not ask for any federal funding. This proposal enjoys bipartisan support among Members who recognize the vibrant Hispanic communities in their states.

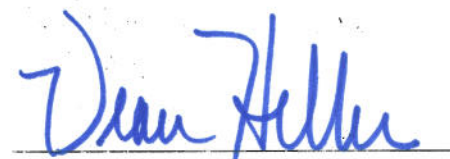
Enactment of this legislation would provide an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of Hispanic Americans through the Smithsonian Institution, which has played a vital role in educating citizens about the history of our nation for more than 150 years. Also important to note given the current fiscal climate is the fact that this legislation does not commit taxpayer funds to the Smithsonian American Latino Museum. This bill directs the Smithsonian Board of Regents to identify and evaluate viable funding models for construction and operation of the Museum.

American Latinos are an important part of the fabric of communities throughout our nation. A museum to honor this rich culture would go a long way to educate all Americans about the contributions Hispanic Americans have made throughout our country's history.

As supporters of this measure, we encourage you to include the provisions of the bipartisan, bicameral Smithsonian American Latino Museum Act in the year-end appropriations bill.

Sincerely,


ROBERT MENENDEZ
U.S. Senator


DEAN HELLER
U.S. Senator