

Press Releases

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HNBA OFFERS COOPERATIVE SOLUTION TO MEND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT GAP

Washington, DC [December 1, 2004] ---

A recently issued government report from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) shows Hispanics employees constitute 7% of the Federal workforce, as opposed to 13.1% of the civilian workforce. The new report also shows a worsening employment shortfall for Hispanic employees in the federal workforce compared to the civilian workforce. The shortfall in federal employment was 3% in 1988 compared to 6.1% in 2003.

The Hispanic National Bar Association, headquartered in Washington D.C., is the national voice of the Hispanic legal community and the nation's largest bipartisan Hispanic legal professional association. The HNBA represents the interests of over 27,000 attorneys, judges, law professors, and legal professionals throughout the United States.

The HNBA's National President, Alan M. Varela, Esq., of Albuquerque, New Mexico, stated, "Although the overall percentage of Hispanics employed by the federal government increased slightly by 1.8% over a fifteen year period, the percentage of Hispanics employed by civilian employers increased by almost 5% during the same period. The OPM report shows the gain by Hispanics in the civilian workforce was almost triple the gain in the federal workforce. Based on the objective evidence, there is no authentic indication that broad institutional inequities are being effectively addressed. The OPM report appears to demonstrate an almost total disconnect between the federal government's hiring practices over the past fifteen years and the moral goal of equitable representation. The good news is that recent gains by Hispanics in Cabinet level appointments are bold steps in the right direction. This positive example can, and should, be followed until the percentage of Hispanic federal employees reflects the percentage of working age Hispanics in the U.S. population. When the employment rates match the population, we'll know the institutionalized biases have been eliminated. The HNBA has a cooperative suggestion to help solve the disparity problem. Federal employers can actively look to the highly educated membership roster of the HNBA, and other Hispanic professional groups, to fill high-level positions. By working together with Hispanic professional groups, the federal government can move from talking about the problem to doing something about it. We are inviting the federal government to take concrete measures to tap into our sophisticated talent pool of dedicated professionals. The HNBA offers a network of over 27,000 Hispanic professionals well prepared to carry the heaviest mantles of leadership, responsibility, and public service. Our members are ready,

willing, and able to excel in important federal positions. At this point in time, there is no valid reason for a continual lack of results when it comes to eliminating the employment gap.”

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