



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF LATIN AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN COMMUNITIES
ALIANZA NACIONAL DE COMUNIDADES LATINO AMERICANAS Y CARIBEÑAS

NEWS STATEMENT

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N.Y. Governor Caves in to Political Pressure Sets Road to Real Mess Not Real Solutions

--- Governor Spitzer Should Stay Firm on His Role as an Effective Problem Solver ---

Los Angeles, CA – Under pressure from anti-immigrant forces, including from members of his own Democratic Party, New York Governor Eliot L. Spitzer (D) reversed his earlier decision to grant driver's licenses to all New Yorkers, regardless of their immigrant status, and caved in to political pressure by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities (NALACC), which has applauded the Governor's bold and legislatively-sound leadership on this issue, is deeply disappointed today and urges the Governor to stand his ground.

"New York, one of the states with the largest number of immigrants in the nation and the site of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, sent a clear message to the rest of America less than two weeks ago: undocumented immigrants are not a threat to the United States of America," stated Oscar Chacón, NALACC Executive Director. "Governor Spitzer made a common sense policy decision that has reverberated throughout the country. Unfortunately, his decision to grant a driver's license to all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status, has also met fierce opposition by a loud, well-organized, and well-financed few who are not interested in public safety or national security, but instead, are committed to a fear and hate-driven agenda."

"We applauded Governor Spitzer's initial leadership and vision on this issue. Americans should know that bringing immigrants out of the shadows can only be good for our country's security and our community's safety," stated Angela Sanbrano, NALACC National Board President. "We deplore the idea of setting up a two or more-tiered system of driver's licenses that in essence will brand undocumented immigrants with the equivalent of a scarlet letter and expose them to further actions by local, state, and federal officials who only have to look at the type of license they carry to arrest them and deport them."

"Governor Spitzer made the right decision to move forward with drivers licenses for all New Yorkers and not allow the skewed priorities of the Real ID Act to dictate what is best for New York," stated Mr. Chacón. "We call on Governor Spitzer to stand above the politics of fear and exclusion that are so rampant in the immigration debate today. What New York and our entire nation desperately need are common sense and effective solutions. We urge Governor Spitzer to stand firm against the criticism and set an example to others that America is a caring and just nation of laws, not witch hunts," concluded Mr. Chacón.

17 states have passed legislation rejecting the Real I.D. Act including Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Washington.

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NALACC is a network of immigrant-led organizations working to improve the quality of life in their communities, both in the United States and in their countries of origin. Visit us on the web at www.nalacc.org