

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **ILI is a Part of History – ILI President and CEO Invited to the White House to Witness as President Obama Signs a Measure Giving FDA Authority to Regulate Tobacco**

INDIANAPOLIS – On Monday, June 22, 2009, as President Obama signed into law the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, the Indiana Latino Institute, Inc.'s President and CEO, Aida McCammon was present to witness this historical event.

This piece of legislation is monumental at many levels. It was 45 years ago that the U.S. Surgeon General reported findings that the use of tobacco produces cancer. Then it took 14 years of negotiations for members of Congress with support from health advocates to bring forth legislation that would give the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to regulate tobacco products. Finally in June 2009 we witness the final passage of a bill that will protect children, educate consumers of the dangers of smoking and give the FDA authority to regulate tobacco.

Highlights of what the new law covers:

- Each packet of cigarettes will disclose all ingredients and additives
- It bans candy flavoring in cigarettes
- It bans billboard advertising within 1,000 feet of schools and playgrounds
- It will restrict Youth –Focused Marketing
- It will prohibit marketing measures misleading consumers (ex. Using “light, low or mild” on tobacco products)
- It will display new Warning Labels in each cigarette pack by July 2011 with information and graphics depicting health risks of smoking

What the law doesn't cover:

- It does not ban Menthol an additive in cigarettes preferred by many youth (but creates mechanisms for studies to be performed on the effect of Menthol in smokers, and opens the door for further regulation of this additive.)

- It doesn't regulate smokeless tobacco products (dissolvable disks, sticks and strips and other products that are extremely dangerous and are being marketed as "less harmful".)

Considering that 46% of Latino youth (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grades) across the nation who smoke prefer mentholated cigarettes, the regulations that will emanate from this law need to be strengthened to protect our youth.

Is it a comprehensive law that addresses all issues? No, but it is a wonderful start which opens the doors for the federal government to control and regulate tobacco and nicotine, the addictive drug in cigarettes. This law allows advocates to achieve a victory, but there is much to be done to improve culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention, education and cessation services for Latino communities. ILI has been advocating for 8 years to de normalize cigarette use, promote quitting, and protect communities from the dangers of second hand smoke.

Representing ILI and the National Latino Tobacco Control Network (NLTCN), Mrs. McCammon was proud and honored to be invited as a guest in the White House to witness a turning point in tobacco control and an achievement which will impact the public's health.

For further information on tobacco facts, prevention, education or cessation in English and Spanish contact the Indiana Latino Institute, Inc., 317-472-1055.

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