

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 6, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
S-146, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: Congressional Hispanic Conference Urges Senate & House Appropriations  
Committees to Fund the National Museum of the American Latino**

Dear Chairwoman Collins and Chairman Cole:

As Members of the Republican-led Congressional Hispanic Conference, we write to express our strong support for the continued funding of the National Museum of the American Latino in the FY26 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

To our deepest concern, the FY26 presidential budget eliminates funding for this critical priority and instead seeks to revert the Museum to a scaled-down, transitory “center” that would not only contradict current statute but undermine the lasting contributions of the Latino community.

Signed into law by President Trump on December 27, 2020, Public Law 116-260 authorized the establishment of the National Museum of the American Latino to serve as the “keystone” for Americans and other visitors to learn about Latino art, history, and culture in the United States.”<sup>1</sup> Before its final passage in Congress, the measure that established the Museum passed the House of Representatives by unanimous voice vote on July 27, 2020—demonstrating its overwhelming bipartisan support.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, H.R.133, 116th Congress (2020). [https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/133#:~:text=Shown%20Here%20\(12/27/2020\)&text=This%20division%20provides%20FY2021%20appropriations,Drug%20Administration%2C%20and%20related%20agencies.&text=the%20Food%20Safety%20and%20Inspection%20Service](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/133#:~:text=Shown%20Here%20(12/27/2020)&text=This%20division%20provides%20FY2021%20appropriations,Drug%20Administration%2C%20and%20related%20agencies.&text=the%20Food%20Safety%20and%20Inspection%20Service).

<sup>2</sup>National Museum of the American Latino Act, H.R.2420, 116th Congress (2020). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2420>

As a congressional body, our members recognized then, as we do now, that the absence of a permanent Smithsonian Museum, located on the National Mall for millions to see, and dedicated to the Latino community, is a disservice to the American public. As the second-largest ethnic group in the country, comprising nearly 20 percent of the population, Latinos have made enduring contributions to our national story across the arts, athletics, sciences, economy, and the Armed Forces.<sup>3</sup> Failing to adequately display their place in American history through a dedicated and statutorily required Museum is unacceptable.

While we recognize and commend the Trump administration's commitment to fiscal responsibility, preserving America's history and heritage is a worthwhile investment. For that reason, we were extremely concerned to see that the Technical Supplement to the 2026 Budget excludes funding for the development of the National Museum of the American Latino.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, suggestions to reestablish a now-defunct and pared-down predecessor, the Smithsonian Latino Center, is not something we embrace as this is a no substitute for a dedicated, brick-and-mortar, world-class museum on the National Mall.<sup>5</sup>

We also understand, and support, efforts to root out anti-American sentiment and DEI over merit-based ideology across our government. That is why the leadership and membership of the Congressional Hispanic Conference have taken proactive steps to ensure the National Museum of the American Latino remains unbiased. In past appropriations cycles, the Congressional Hispanic Conference worked directly with Chairman Simpson and Smithsonian leadership to strike proposed exhibits that glorified socialism or portrayed Hispanic Americans solely from a victim-based standpoint.<sup>6</sup>

Public Law 116-260 also reinforces this aversion to “woke” and biased historical narratives by mandating the appointment of two Members of Congress on a bipartisan basis, including one Republican from the Congressional Hispanic Conference, to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Smithsonian Institution. This framework provides critical safeguards to ensure the museum remains nonpartisan and grounded in true American values.

In closing, the Congressional Hispanic Conference respectfully urges the Committee to work with the Trump administration to provide necessary funding for the National Museum of the American Latino in the FY26 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

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<sup>3</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). 2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html>

<sup>4</sup>Executive Office of the President. (2025). Budget of the U.S. Government: Appendix, Fiscal Year 2026. [https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/appendix\\_fy2026.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/appendix_fy2026.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>Smithsonian Institution. (2024). Smithsonian Fiscal Year 2026 Congressional Budget Justification. <https://www.si.edu/sites/default/files/about/fy2026-budgetrequestcongress.pdf>

<sup>6</sup>Congressional Hispanic Conference. (2023). English/Español: Congressional Hispanic Conference members meet with Smithsonian leadership. <https://hispanicconference-gonzales.house.gov/media/press-releases/englishspanol-congressional-hispanic-conference-members-meet-smithsonian>

This museum was authorized through the leadership of President Trump during his first term; now, under his renewed leadership, we have the opportunity to finish the job and deliver on this historic investment that will educate and inspire Americans for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tony Gonzales', written over a horizontal line.


Tony Gonzales  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Monica De La Cruz', written over a horizontal line.

Monica De La Cruz  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Malliotakis', written over a horizontal line.

Nicole Malliotakis  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabe Evans', written over a horizontal line.

Gabe Evans  
Member of Congress