

## National Puerto Rican Coalition Frames Its Upcoming Public Policy Agenda

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Washington, DC - The National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc. (NPRC) recently held its 2009 NPRC Policy Agenda Summit. The theme of the Summit was *Community in Motion: Honoring our Leaders and Framing the Future*. The Summit assembled policy analysts, law makers, and community leaders as a taskforce for the purpose of developing a series of policy guidelines on key Health and Education issue that impact on the Puerto Rican community. During the Summit, NPRC also honored the legacy of established Puerto Rican civic, education, business, and political leaders while recognizing the achievements of the upcoming generation.

At the public policy Health Action Taskforce session, sponsored by PhRMA and AARP, the exchange was focused around parity for Puerto Rico in Federal funds for Medicare and Medicaid spending as well as equal healthcare benefits for veterans living on the Island. At the Education Action Taskforce, sponsored by the National Educators Association (NEA), the discussion revolved around the No Child Left Behind Act and its impact on Puerto Rican students.

“Our community in Puerto Rico is burdened by a federal cap that disables the elderly and the most vulnerable from getting the best healthcare service they can get. Our educational system also needs an overhaul. Education is the biggest equalizer and educating our community is imperative” said Rafael A. Fantauzzi, President & CEO of NPRC. NPRC plans to release reports detailing their findings and recommendations on both health care and education later this summer.

The Summit opened with a Latinas Breakfast, sponsored by Univision and American Airlines. Keynote Speaker Jenniffer Gonzalez Colón, President of the House of Representatives for Puerto Rico, discussed the necessity of parity for Puerto Rico in the current healthcare reform debate. In addition to the Honorable Gonzalez Colon, the breakfast honored Latina civic, education, and business leaders. Among those honored were Deb Shaw, Elizabeth Oliver Farrow, Lyn Di Iorio, Lilliam Rosado, and Carmen Feliciano.

During the Community Lunch, sponsored by Telemundo, Comcast, and Ford Motor Company, Keynote Speaker Marilia Matos, Field Operations Director of Census 2010, addressed the importance of Hispanic participation during Census 2010. Community Speaker Honorable Kenneth McClintock, Secretary of State for Puerto Rico, also touched on the importance of being counted accurately. Secretary McClintock hailed the nomination of Sonia Sotomayor as the first Hispanic Supreme Court Justice exclaiming, “what a year to be Puerto Rican”.

The Summit closed with the Líderes of the Future Networking Reception recognized the contributions of young Puerto Rican leaders in the Federal Government. Among the young leaders honored were Frankie Martinez, Eduardo Hilera, Melanie Deal and Maria Olmedo Malagon. The closing reception was hosted by Rums of Puerto Rico, Coca Cola Company, and ASPIRA.

*The National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc. (NPRC) is the nation’s leading Puerto Rican public policy and advocacy non-profit organization. Founded in 1977 and representing the interests of more than eight million Puerto Rican U.S. citizens, NPRC’s mission is to systematically strengthen and enhance the social, political, and economic well-being of Puerto Ricans throughout the United States and in Puerto Rico with a special focus on the most vulnerable.*

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