



AMERICAN G I FORUM OF THE U.S.

FRIDAY MARCH 23, 1979

HECTOR P. GARCIA, M.D.
FOUNDER

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THE HONORABLE MEMBERS
MEXICAN AMERICAN CAUCUS
THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE
AUSTIN, TEXAS .

DEAR BROTHERS & SISTERS.

AS THE FOUNDER OF THE AMERICAN G I FORUM AND AFTER HAVING BEEN INVOLVED FOR OVER 30 YEARS IN THE SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEM I AM ASKING YOUR SUPPORT IN A GOOD, POSITIVE SOLUTION, TO THOSE PROBLEMS. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT FOR SENATOR BENTSEN'S BILL NO SENATE BILL NO 665 THAT WOULD CREATE AN OFFICE OF HISPANIC AFFAIRS IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

I AM ENCLOSING A COPY OF THE ARTICLE WHEREIN THE SEN. SPOKE ABOUT IT AT OUR CONVENTION. ITS URGENT THAT YOU WIRE THE SENATOR AND THE PRESIDENT RIGHT AWAY TO LET HIM KNOW YOU FAVOR SUCH AN OFFICE.

NOT ONLY AM I ASKING YOU PERSONALLY BUT AS A GROUP AND ALSO ANY ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESS OR INDIVIDUALS TO DO SO IMMEDIATELY. THE DALLAS NEWSPAPER HAVE ALLREADY STARTED ATTACKING THE IDEA. FROM MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH THE LAST FOUR DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTS I CAN ASSURE YOU IT IS A MUST.

PLEASE SEND ME COPIES OF THE TELEGRAMS. BUT PLEASE, PLEASE DO IT IMMEDIATELY. CONTACT OTHER FRIENDS IN OTHER STATES. WE WILL WILL IF WE ACT NOW. DON'T WRITE PLEASE WIRE.

I WISH TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR WORK, I KNOW IT IS HARD AND REQUIRES DEDICATION BUT I AM NOT WORRIED ABOUT THAT SINCE I KNOW THERE IS SO FEW OF YOU AND SO MUCH TO DO. PERO QUE LES VAYA BIEN Y QUE DIOS LOS BENDIGA.

SU FUNDADOR.
Hector P. Garcia
DR. HECTOR P GARCIA
AMERICAN G I FORUM U.S.

"Please God — give us some council members who are for the average citizen again!"

— C. M. McMASTER

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White House Office Hispanic Affairs

SENATE BILL NO 665

Bentsen asks White House Office of Hispanic Affairs

By DOUG J. SWANSON

Staff Writer

U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen said here last night that he has introduced a bill to create an Office of Hispanic Affairs in the White House so the government can "deal effectively" with problems facing Mexican-Americans.

"The situation confronting the Hispanic community . . . has changed much for the better," Bentsen said at the American GI Forum annual Founder's Day banquet. "But we still have a long way to go."

The office would oversee Hispanic aid programs. The bill also provides for an advisory committee on Mexican-American problems.

"I would maintain that the federal government simply cannot deal effectively with the problems unless it fully comprehends the difficulties facing Mexican-Americans," the senator said.

He said improvement of educational opportunities for Hispanics is "one of the very highest of my objectives," along with more jobs.

Another important concern, Bentsen said, is ensuring that Mexican-Americans are treated fairly by police and the courts.



Bentsen speaking to GI Forum banquet
(Photo by Lee Dodds)

"Anyone accused of a crime in this country, regardless of his social or economic background, has a full right to full legal representation," he said.

Bentsen said the national media gave Americans an erroneous im-

pression of President Carter's recent trip to Mexico by focusing on the critical remarks by Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo.

"If you settle for what the press reported happened in Mexico in the first two hours, you will have

done a disservice to that trip," said Bentsen, who accompanied Carter on the visit. Later "there was a breakthrough, and a rapport began to develop," he said.

As a result, negotiations on a U.S. agreement to buy natural gas have resumed, he said. Also, Bentsen said, Mexico will cooperate in controlling pollution discharge into the Rio Grande, and is acknowledging "some measure of responsibility" for the illegal alien problem.

Most important, he said, Carter's meeting with Lopez Portillo has "helped establish the basis for a new era" in U.S.-Mexico relations.

U.S.-Mexico problems "did not occur overnight, and they will not be resolved overnight," Bentsen said. But Carter's trip was "an important step down that road."

Bentsen also praised the GI Forum as a group that has "fought injustice for more than 30 years." Now a national organization, it was founded here by Dr. Hector Garcia.

Among those recognized at the banquet were former U.S. Rep. John Young, Spanish Consul General Erik Ignacio Martel and U.S. Attorney Tony Canales.



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Senate

By Mr. BENTSEN:

S. 665. A bill to establish an Office of Hispanic Affairs in the Executive Office of the President, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

OFFICE OF HISPANIC AFFAIRS ACT OF 1979

• Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. President, today I am pleased to introduce legislation that will enable the executive branch of our Government to address more effectively the pressing and unique problems of Hispanic Americans. My legislation would establish an Office of Hispanic Affairs in the Executive Office of the President, charged with advising the Federal Government's executive departments and agencies on policies affecting Hispanic Americans. The office would assess the performance of the Federal Government in fostering equal opportunity for these citizens and advise the President on measures required to improve and strengthen programs that have been established to deal with issues unique to the Hispanic community. This legislation would also authorize task forces to study problems that confront Hispanics in such areas as employment, education, health, and housing. A report on the condition of Hispanic Americans would also be required and developed by the office.

Mr. President, the Federal Government is now preparing for the 1980 census. This population assessment is a vital governmental effort. It will provide the basis for all other statistics that are gathered and analyzed by the Federal Government. During the upcoming census year, the Bureau of the Census will focus particular emphasis on Hispanic Americans. I am pleased by this initiative and I commend the Bureau for developing census questions that will assist in producing a more representative enumeration of Hispanic Americans. With the aid of these data, we will for the first time have the opportunity to clarify problems that prevent Hispanic Americans from sharing fully in the opportunities of the American experience.

With the aid of efforts such as the census we can embark on the important task of bringing to bear those limited and precious resources available to the Government and focus them directly on the problems faced by Hispanic Americans. My legislation provides such an opportunity without creating a new layer of bureaucracy and without excessive Government expenditure.

My legislation seeks to bring together our current endeavors, our accomplishments, and to build upon our past efforts. The office I propose today, provides a mechanism for examining problems and targeting solutions more effectively. We have no need to reinvent the wheel to accomplish these important tasks. I submit that we merely require elements that can produce a better wheel.

Through careful analysis of problems, we can better develop remedies where needed and appropriate. Through judicious planning, we can manage our resources more effectively. Through the forces of creativity, we can tailor our programs to meet vital objectives.

I urge the Senate's support and careful consideration of this legislation, which I consider a vital step in dealing more directly with the legitimate needs of our Hispanic population. •