



Ohio Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs - Ezra C. Escudero, Director

Mission

The Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs provides leadership in addressing issues concerning Hispanic/Latino Ohioans. The Commission serves as a liaison between government and the Hispanic/Latino community in Ohio and advocates the development and implementation of policies and programs to address the needs of the Hispanic/Latino Ohioans, especially but not limited to education, employment, economic development, health and housing.

History

The Commission was created by Legislative Act and signed into Law by Governor James Rhodes on July 8, 1977. The Statute provided for eleven members on the Board of Commissioners appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Statute requires that all Board members shall speak Spanish, shall be of Hispanic/Latino origin, and shall be American citizens or lawful, permanent resident aliens. The membership shall be representative of the geographical and numerical distribution of Ohio's Hispanic/Latino population. The Commission shall meet not less than six (6) times per calendar year, and six (6) members shall constitute a quorum.

Commission Duties

Statute charges the Commission with the following:

- Gather and disseminate information and conduct hearings, conferences, investigations, and special studies on problems and programs concerning Hispanic/Latino people
- Secure appropriate recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of Hispanic/Latino people to this State
- Stimulate public awareness of the problems of Hispanic/Latino people by conducting a program of public education
- Develop, coordinate, and assist other public and private organizations that serve Hispanic/Latino people, including the conducting of training programs for community leadership and service project staff
- Advise the Governor, General Assembly, and State Departments and Agencies of the nature, magnitude, and priorities of the problems of Hispanic/Latino people
- Advise the Governor, General Assembly, and State Departments and Agencies on, and assist in the development and implementation of, comprehensive and coordinated policies, programs, and

- procedures focusing on the special problems and needs of Hispanic/Latino people, especially in the fields of education, employment, energy, health, housing, welfare, and recreation
- Propose new programs concerning Hispanic/Latino people to public and private agencies and evaluate for such agencies existing programs or prospective legislation concerning Hispanic/Latino people
 - Review and approve grants to be made from Federal, State, or Private funds which are administered or subcontracted by the Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs
 - Review and approve the annual report prepared by the Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs.

The Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs is administered by the Director of Hispanic/Latino Affairs, who together with the staff is accountable to the Commission. The Office is responsible for compiling and providing the Commission information about, and advice on, solutions to the problems of Hispanic and Latino people. The Office shall execute the tasks assigned by the Commission which shall include but not be limited to:

- Serve as a clearinghouse to review and comment on all proposals to meet the needs of Hispanic and Latino people that are submitted to it by public and private agencies
- Apply for and accept grants and gifts from governmental and private sources to be administered by the office or subcontracted to local agencies Office of Hispanic/Latino Affairs
- Monitor and evaluate all programs subcontracted to local agencies by the Commission
- Endeavor to assure that Hispanic and Latino people have access to decision-making bodies in all State and local governmental departments and agencies
- Submit a full written annual report of its activities, accomplishments, and recommendations to the Commission
- Establish advisory Committees on special subjects as needed to facilitate and maximize community participation in the operation of the Commission. The Committees shall be composed of persons representing community organizations and charitable institutions, public officials, and such other persons as the office determines
- Establish, with state and local governments and private business and industry, relations that promote and assure equal opportunity for Hispanic and Latino people in government, education, and employment.