

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2004

Bradley A. Smith, Chairman
Ellen L. Weintraub, Vice-Chair
Federal Election Commission
999 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20463

Dear Commissioners Smith and Weintraub:

As Hispanic Members of Congress, we are writing to express our deep concerns about the pending Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on "political committee status" and the potential impact your Commission's decision may have on the Hispanic vote in our country.

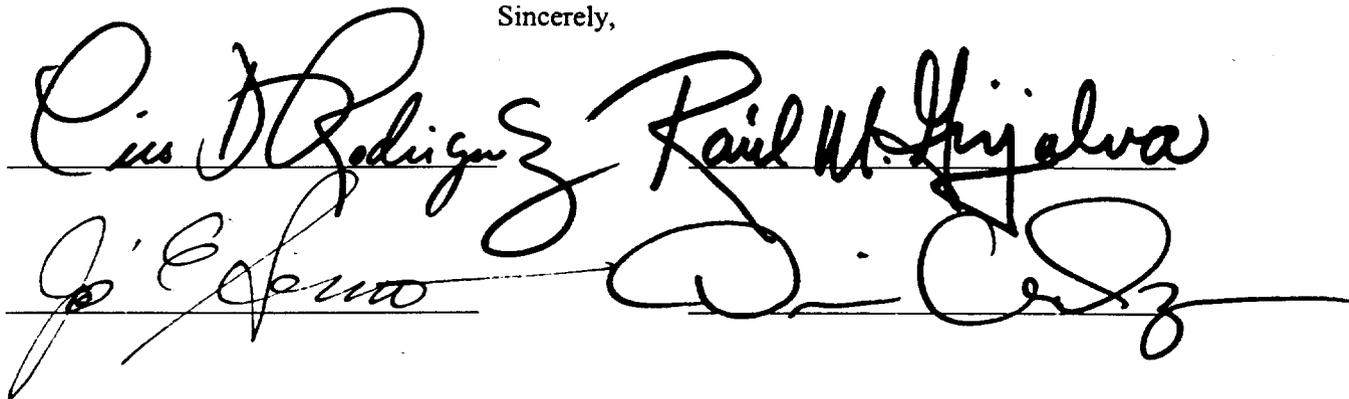
The 2000 Census indicates that there are over 13.2 million Latino voting age citizens. Yet, in the hotly contested environment of 2000, only 7.5 million Latinos were registered to vote, and only 5.9 million actually cast ballots.

We believe that increasing the democratic participation of members of our community is an essential component of improving our democracy and strengthening our union. Accordingly, we applaud the multitude of non-partisan voter registration and mobilization efforts that are flourishing in our communities. It is our sincere hope that as Latinos expand their share of the electorate, the concerns of our community will be more fully addressed by all policy makers.

Thus we are extremely opposed to the proposed rule that seeks to address "soft money" in the context of grassroots activity to increase voter participation. While all Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus at the time voted for the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, we strongly object to mid-cycle changes to the rules that govern political activity through a regulatory process.

We believe that the proposed regulations will undermine grassroots mobilization and the very political activity by ordinary citizens that our communities sorely needs. We urge you to reconsider both the timing and the nature the current rulemaking initiative.

Sincerely,


Luis Rodriguez Paul M. Hujalwa
Jo E. Serna

Robert M. Smith

Mrs. V. Gutierrez

Lucille Royal-Allard

Charles G. Taylor

Joe Barr

Clair B. Bunn

Hilda L. Solis

Rubén Hinojosa

Solomon P. Ortiz

D. Cruz

Linda F. Sánchez

Co-signers

Page 1

**Ciro D. Rodriguez
José E. Serrano**

**Raul M. Grijalva
Dennis Cardoza**

Page 2

**Robert Menendez
Luis V. Gutierrez
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Charles Gonzalez
Joe Baca**

**Hilda L. Solis
Rubén Hinojosa
Solomon P. Ortiz
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Xavier Becerra**