



Hinojosa and Biden Welcome Hispanic Members to Congress

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The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) and Vice President Joe Biden welcomed Hispanic members of the new Congress at a swearing-in ceremony on Jan. 3.

Biden performed the swearing in of the members -- including Rep. Ruben Hinojosa, chairman of the CHCI -- in the East Hall at Union Station in Washington, D.C. Speakers included Biden, Hinojosa, Sen. Robert Menendez and Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis.

"It's no longer about what can be done for the Hispanic community," said Biden. "The question is what the Hispanic community is going to do to take this country to a totally new place."

The 36 new and returning members comprise the largest class of Hispanic congressional members in the country's history.

"Hispanic Americans have come such a long way, and that progress is evident here tonight," said Hinojosa. The freshmen members "electrified this past election. Their energy is contagious and their stories are inspiring. They bring decades of experience, new ideas, passion and commitment and will be invaluable to the success of the (Congressional Hispanic Caucus) and the CHCI."

Hinojosa represents Texas' 15th congressional district and serves on the House Financial Services and Education committees.

Menendez pointed to how much the "political and demographic landscape has changed" in the U.S. in the 21st century. "That change is now reflected throughout the halls of Congress and through a renewed focus on achieving immigration reform that reflects both our interests and values as Americans," he added.

Solis said that "Because of CHCI, the 113th Congress will see a record number of Latinos." The Hispanic community is now able to bring new strength to bear "on everything from population growth, to consumer power and political muscle."

CHCI programs serve nearly 1,700 young Hispanics annually. Many are first in their family to go to college, and most come from families with annual incomes below \$30,000.

The CHCI is a nonprofit and nonpartisan 501(c) (3) organization that provides leadership development programs and educational services to students and young emerging leaders. Its board of directors is composed of Hispanic members of Congress and nonprofit, union and corporate leaders.

For more information call CHCI at (202) 543-1771 or visit www.chci.org.

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute contributed to this report.

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