1. **Comprehensive Immigration Reform**

The time is now for Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform with the potential to improve the lives and livelihoods of millions of families. HNBA advocates for a comprehensive reform bill that will ensure all people are treated with dignity and fairness. The legislation should, among other things, incorporate into law the relief afforded under DACA and DAPA, provide a clear path to citizenship, and forbid militarization of the border or criminalization of immigrants. The President’s Executive Action on immigration should be incorporated into legislation to ensure that relief from deportation is provided for those eligible.

2. **Voting Rights**

One of the bedrock rights in our democracy is the right to vote. In recent years, attempts have been made to restrict access to the polls through onerous voter identification laws, reduced early voting opportunities, and a judicial assault on the Voting Rights Act. HNBA opposes these efforts, which would result in reduced Latino voter turnout at a time when our growing population is reaching unprecedented levels of civic participation. The HNBA advocates for passage of the Voting Rights Advancement Act.

3. **Timely Confirmation of Diverse Judges to the Federal Bench and Diverse Nominees to the Executive Branch**

Our system of justice cannot function effectively when significant judicial vacancies plague our courts, creating judicial emergencies across the country, or when the courts lack the diversity necessary to inspire the confidence and respect of a diverse nation. The HNBA has worked vigorously to identify, endorse, and advocate for qualified judicial nominees to fill the numerous vacancies in the federal court system. The HNBA supports the timely consideration of all judicial nominees.

As the demographics of America continue to change, so too must the face of our government. Including Latinos at all levels of the federal workforce enables our government to better execute policies that will effectively reach and serve Latino citizens. HNBA advocates for the nomination of diverse leaders to fill executive branch positions and for the Senate to hold confirmation votes without undue delay.
4. **Criminal Justice Reform**

The United States is home to 5 percent of the world’s population, but 25 percent of the world’s prisoners, spending $80 billion a year to keep people in prison. The HNBA supports criminal justice reform efforts to address the following:

- Improve Community/Police Relations
- Introduce Use of Body Cameras in a context that properly addresses privacy and fourth amendment issues, data storage and retention, open records laws, police training, and other appropriate regulations
- Better empirical data regarding success and failures of released prisoners’ re-entry programs
- Adequate funding for re-entry programs that have proven to be successful
- Support programs that allow inmates to obtain GED or high school diploma and tech training
- Expungement of criminal records for certain lower felony offenses after a certain time period, where research demonstrates there is very low chance of recidivism (“redemption time”)
- Support programs that provide and foster support systems for inmates (family days, etc)
- Sentencing guidelines, especially as they apply to juveniles; and also the DOJ’s Clemency Project, which seeks to address prior sentencing disparities through a reinvigorated use of clemency;
- “Ban the box” on applications for employment;
- Solitary confinement, especially regarding youth

5. **Employment Non-Discrimination**

Even though the Supreme Court’s Obergefell’s ruling brought marriage equality to all 50 states, 31 states still lack clear, fully inclusive non-discrimination protections for LGBT people, meaning that despite the ruling, LGBT people can get legally married but still be at risk of being denied services or be fired from employment or evicted from housing for who they are. The HNBA supports The Equality Act, which establishes explicit, permanent protections against discrimination based on an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity in matters of employment, housing, access to public places, federal funding, credit, education, and jury service.

6. **Equal Pay & Minimum Wage**

According to the US Labor Department, in 2014 women working full time in the US were paid on average 79 percent of what men were paid. For Latinas, the pay gap is wider (55% according to a 2013 study by the National Partnership for Women and Families). The HNBA supports legislation that would require employers to pay employees equally for substantially similar work, even if their titles are different or they work at different sites. The HNBA also supports efforts to establish a fair minimum wage for workers.
7. **STEM** –
The Obama administration has articulated a clear priority for STEM education, with a call on the nation to develop, recruit, and retain 100,000 STEM teachers and for colleges and universities to graduate an additional 1 million students with STEM majors in the next 10 years. Latinos/as are currently underrepresented in undergraduate and graduate STEM programs and are not sufficiently exposed to STEM subjects at the K-12 levels. Currently less than 2 percent of the STEM workforce is Latino/a (while almost 20 percent of the country’s youth population is Latino/a). The HNBA supports funding for program initiatives that expose Latino/a students to STEM-focused education and careers at earlier ages, and are designed to increase the number of Latino/as and other low-income and minority students attaining degrees in STEM fields.

8. **Lifeline Assistance Program Expansion to Broadband**-
The Lifeline Assistance Program, enacted during the Reagan administration, provides subsidies so low-income people can afford basic telephone service. The Federal Communications Commission has proposed an expansion to include broadband, in effect bringing Lifeline into the 21st century by extending it to the way most people in the United States communicate today. Broadband Internet access is now critical to how we do business and communicate, but is not available to many of our communities who cannot afford it. In addition to covering access to broadband, under the proposals carriers would no longer have a role in determining who is eligible for Lifeline, which has led to abuse. In addition, the subsidy would go directly to the consumer and not the carrier, which would make the subsidy portable and allow the consumer to select the most suitable carrier. Expansion of Lifeline to support broadband services will give many Latinos/as opportunities for social and economic advancement that are not now possible. The HNBA supports the FCC efforts to expand Lifeline to cover broadband access.

9. **Legal Representation of Refugees**
With the influx of refugees from countries around the world, including unaccompanied minors, the HNBA supports funding to provide these refugees with access to legal representation to protect their rights.

10. **Puerto Rico**
Since the economy in Puerto Rico, a territory of the United States, began to contract in 2006, it has shrunk by more than 10% and employment on the island has fallen by 14%. Over the last decade, Puerto Rico’s government has laid off close to 30,000 employees, closed nearly 200 schools, raised taxes, and reformed pension funds. During the same time, more than 300,000 Puerto Ricans moved to the U.S. mainland, substantially reducing the island’s tax revenue. These factors, among others, have combined to create an economic crisis, with a staggering $72 billion debt amid a historic economic crunch. In short, this is a dire situation. The Puerto Rican government can’t resolve its debt problem on its own since it cannot take advantage of the Chapter 9 bankruptcy protections available to U.S. municipalities. HNBA advocates for action on the part of Congress as well as the Executive Branch to assist Puerto Rico to restructure its debt, so that the United States citizens living in Puerto Rico have a fair chance of survival.