

September 14, 2009

Members of Santa Fe Youthworks Will Discuss Their Experiences at CHCI's Annual Policy Conference

Washington, DC – Tomorrow, Congressman Ben Ray Luján will be joined at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Annual Policy Conference by two Santa Fe youths, who will discuss their experiences as young Hispanics in an emerging clean energy economy. Rep. Luján helped to organize a discussion on Hispanics in the green economy at the Annual Policy Conference. To highlight Hispanic successes in this emerging field, he invited the youths to participate in the event. The two young people are part of Youthworks, a Santa Fe non-profit dedicated to providing job training, job placement assistance, and on site education for at-risk youth in the community. They have recently worked in Youthworks' green program, which focuses on placing youths in clean energy jobs.

“Our country is facing tough economic times and too often underserved communities are hit the hardest. Just this month, unemployment among the Latino population rose to 13 percent,” said Rep. Luján. “However, there is good news. Despite the economic downturn, the clean technology sector continues to prosper and green job opportunity continues to increase. Venture capital investments in the clean energy sector rose to more than \$4 billion in 2008, a 54 percent increase from 2007 levels. There is tremendous potential in a clean energy future, so we must strengthen our commitment to the new clean energy economy and to the role of the Hispanic community in this economy.”

During the event, Dominic Cantu and Douglas Rael, of Youthworks, will talk about their experiences as young Hispanics in an emerging clean energy economy. Melynn Shchuyler, executive director of Santa Fe Youthworks, will also speak.

Rep. Luján worked with Youthworks last spring when he participated in a project where Youthworks, in partnership with the Santa Fe Area Home Builders Association, Habitat for Humanity, and the Santa Fe Community College, broke ground on a Habitat for Humanity home being built completely green in an effort to train at-risk youth in green collar jobs.

Santa Fe Youthworks "green" programs focus on green jobs skills training for careers in fields such as green buildings construction, energy efficiency and weatherization, sustainability, conservation, and river restoration.

Rep. Luján is the Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' Green Economy and Renewable Energy Task Force.

**What: Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Annual Policy Conference Plenary,
"Latinos Leading in the Green Economy and Partnering for the Future"**

When: Tomorrow, Tuesday September 15, 2009, 2:30-4:30 pm (EST)

Where: Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC