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Further, the Congreso participants caucused on more than 165 policy resolutions, ranging from civil rights and economic development to immigration and healthcare that were developed during last year's conference. While new resolutions were not considered, several were debated and amended.

This third annual "Congreso" concluded on Sunday with leaders, including Congresswoman Hilda Solis (D-CA) and Hispanic Federation Washington DC Director James Albino calling for increased cooperation between Latinos and African Americans. Rep. Solis noted that by joining together, African Americans and Latinos have a historic ability to influence the upcoming presidential election. "It is an important time," Solis said.

The Congreso drew participants from many leading Latino organizations, including the William C. Velazquez Institute, Southwest Voter Registration Education Project, National Hispanic Environmental Council, National Day Labor Organization Network, National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and the League of United Latin American Citizens.



HF Washington Office Director James Albino (far left) on a legislative panel with Congresswoman Hilda Solis at this year's National Latino Congreso.

Fight against Hypertension and Cardiovascular Conditions!
To get informed, call Liliana Melgar at the Hispanic Federation at **1-866-432-9832**



La Esquina Legal

Why are my medical records so important?

Your medical records are used by doctors and nurses to make sure that you receive proper medical attention. In order to receive appropriate medical treatment, these records need to be up-to-date and accurate. Also, medical records are extremely important for insurance purposes; for example, if you visit the emergency room and there is no record of that visit, or the record is incorrect, your insurance company might not cover the expenses, leaving you responsible for the charges.

As a responsible health care patient, you should make sure that your records are accurate, and the law ensures that you have the opportunity to do just that; it is your right to see your medical records under New York State and Federal Laws. In fact, the law says that your health care provider must show you your records within 10 days of your written request. Also, the New York State Public Health law Section Eighteen states that you cannot be charged more than \$0.75 per page for your records.

After seeing your medical records, you have the right to make corrections to them if you feel that they are not accurate. The Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) allows you to correct your records if you think that your doctor or nurse did not take correct notes of you medical complaints. This is especially important if you think you may have a case of medical malpractice; without accurate records of your medical history, it may be impossible to prove anything you said to a doctor. This makes it difficult to prove that a doctor has made a mistake.

If you have any questions about your rights to your medical records, contact the New York State Office of Professional Medical Conduct (OPMC) at (800)663-6114, or access their website: www.health.state.ny.us.

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