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Wednesday, August 30, 2006

The Honorable Elizabeth Dole  
United States Senate  
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Dole:

On behalf of the League of United Latin Americans, our nation's oldest and largest Hispanic civil rights organization, I write to you to express our dismay with an advertisement produced by the National Republican Senatorial Committee. This commercial is designed to inflame anti-Mexican sentiments among the electorate by suggesting that those who use the Matricula Consular card are a possible terrorist threat to the United States. Nothing could be further from the truth and the fact that the NRSC is attempting to exploit racial divisions in the United States for political gain is unacceptable.

At LULAC, we believe in advancing the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health and civil rights of the Hispanic population of the United States. The NRSC ad is an affront to all Hispanics in Rhode Island and will incite xenophobia and resentment towards Latinos nationwide.

This ad blatantly pictures Cranston Mayor Stephen Laffey superimposed upon the Mexican flag throughout the commercial which attempts to brand all Mexican immigrants that use the Consular Identification Card as terrorists that endanger our national security. However, not a single Mexican national has been accused of involvement with terrorist attacks on the United States in the modern era. Furthermore, accepting the Matricula Consular, does not jeopardize our national security because the Matricular Consular is more secure than the typical state drivers license and far more secure than the US birth certificate or social security card. The Matricular Consular employs seven different security measures including sophisticated tamper-proof holograms that make the cards extremely difficult to forge or modify. The bottom line is that it is far easier to obtain fraudulent US birth certificates, social security cards and US drivers licenses and those documents are far more useful to would be terrorists than a Matricular Consular.

Lastly, this ad is a personal injustice to millions of Americans that have a Mexican heritage, as well as to the law-abiding Mexicans and other immigrants who reside in this country. They are our nation's hardest workers. They are a family-oriented community that pays their taxes, strengthens our economy, and only wish to seek a better life for themselves and their loved ones. They are not criminals or terrorists as this commercial casts them out to be.

Senator Elizabeth Dole

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In a time in which both sides of Congress and the Senate should be working together to draft and approve legislation that supports comprehensive immigration reform, the National Republican Senatorial Committee should avoid polarizing the country further with negative stereotypes about immigrant communities. Immigrants should not be used as scapegoats to our nation's problems, or in this case Rhode Island's.

National Republican Senatorial Committee cannot claim to want to reach out to Hispanic Americans while comparing them to terrorists in their television commercials. These commercials will harm the Hispanic community by giving rise to more anti-Latino attacks based upon the totally incorrect stereotype that Hispanics are a terrorist threat to the United States. We urge you to do the right thing and have the advertisements removed from the air and the NRSC web site immediately.

I await your favorable response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosa Rosales".

Rosa Rosales

LULAC National President

Cc: Senator Lincoln Chafee