

THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIVE USCCR COMMISSIONERS URGE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGED HARASSMENT OF HISPANIC VOTERS

WASHINGTON, DC – This afternoon, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Chairman Gerald A. Reynolds and Commissioners Jennifer Braceras, Peter N. Kirsanow, Ashley L. Taylor, Jr. and Michael Yaki urged Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales to “fully and vigorously” investigate correspondence allegedly sent to some residents of Orange County, California with Hispanic surnames stating that it is illegal for immigrants to cast ballots in elections. Immigrants who go to the polls, the letter continues, could be subject to incarceration or deportation. “Given the time-sensitive nature of this issue,” the Commissioners admonished, “we urge you to take immediate steps to assure Latino voters that there is no penalty to lawful voting and to correct any misimpressions or misrepresentations.”

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with monitoring federal civil rights enforcement. Members include Chairman Gerald A. Reynolds, Vice Chairman Abigail Thernstrom, and Commissioners Jennifer C. Braceras, Peter N. Kirsanow, Arlan D. Melendez, Ashley L. Taylor, and Michael Yaki. Kenneth L. Marcus is Staff Director. Commission meetings are open to the media and general public.

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