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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **On the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, Now is the Time to Stand Up and Recommit to Voting Rights!**

**Orlando, Florida (August 6, 2015) – Today, as we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, it is time to take a stance and recommit to the continuous fight for equality and justice.** The United States Supreme Court recently struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by allowing several states to change their current election laws without the advance approval of the federal government. Nowhere is this battle more important than in the State of Florida, where in recent years, it has become more difficult to exercise one’s right to vote, especially for Latinos and other people of color.

Florida Governor Rick Scott (R) and his Attorney General Pam Bondi (R) reversed progress made by previous administrations to expand the voting rights for felons, resulting in over 1.6 million Floridians being barred from voting, the highest number in the Nation. Florida has been recognized for implementing restrictive voting policies, including the reduction of early voting, restrictions on voter-registration groups and massive voter purges that have disproportionately targeted Latinos in the State. Gerrymandering and redistricting is a constant problem within Florida politics.

“Voting rights in Florida have been a constant battle under the administration of Governor Rick Scott. This is particularly worrisome for many Latinos in our State” said Vivian Rodriguez, President of the Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida. “We have witness a concerted effort to disenfranchise Hispanics within the State, a political move geared toward cementing Republican power for generations to come”.

The Hispanic Democratic Caucus of Florida is committed to the expansion of voter participation in our State. We will continue our efforts to register Hispanics to vote and to educate the population on the political process. We support the proposed Voting Restoration Amendment, a ballot initiative sponsored by Floridians for a Fair Democracy, to amend the State Constitution in order to “restore the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions after they complete all terms of their sentence including parole or probation”. **We urge our members and all Latinos in Florida to [sign the petition](#) to make sure the Voting Restoration Amendment appears on the 2016 ballot**

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The **Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida**’s mission is to stimulate a participating interest in public affairs that will foster better and more representative government for Hispanics; increase the political power and influence of Hispanics Democrats within the Florida Democratic Party; unite the Hispanic Democrats in the State of Florida; promote principles of the Democratic party at all levels; encourage qualified Hispanic citizens to become candidates for public office and support applicable campaign efforts to elect all Democratic party nominees; support and solicit for legislation and government action on a national, state, county and local level which reflects the best interest of the Hispanic community.