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**LATINOS JOIN COLORADO REDISTRICTING LITIGATION TO
PRESERVE AND ADVANCE ELECTORAL STRENGTH**

Latino groups and voters seek the creation of fair election districts that reflect growth of Latino Population

Denver, Colorado (July 22, 2011) – DENVER, CO – Today, the Colorado Latino Forum and Colorado Hispanic Bar Association filed a motion to join redistricting lawsuits currently pending in Denver District Court. CLF and CHBA seek to advocate for Colorado congressional districts that offer Latinos fair electoral opportunities. MALDEF and Faegre & Benson LLP, a well-known Denver law firm, represent the movants in the lawsuit, who seek to preserve Latino communities of interest because fracturing these communities would dilute Latino voting strength.

The General Assembly failed to adopt a congressional redistricting plan by the end of the 2011 legislative session. As a result, several individuals filed suit asking the court to draw the congressional redistricting plan. The court must consider the needs of many diverse communities when evaluating proposed redistricting plans, and the CLF and CHBA will advocate for protection of Colorado's Latinos, who historically have been underrepresented. The lawsuit seeks to protect the electoral rights of Latinos statewide, including in the Denver metropolitan area, Morgan and Weld counties, and southern Colorado from Pueblo to the San Luis Valley.

Olivia Mendoza, Executive Director of the CLF, stated "This is a critical moment in time to ensure that the Latino community is not disenfranchised through the electoral process and truly has a voice in the election of candidates."

Diego Hunt, President of the CHBA, stated "Latinos account for an ever-growing segment of the state's population, accounting for over 41% of Colorado's overall growth in the last ten years. We must ensure that we are properly regarded as important communities of interest in the redistricting process."

"The General Assembly failed to enact a new congressional map, and now we have turned to the courts," stated Nina Perales, MALDEF Vice President of Litigation. "Latinos in Colorado have filed to enter this case to ensure that the state's Latino population has a voice in congressional elections over the next ten years."

Regina Rodriguez, a partner with Faegre & Benson, stated: "This is a critical time and we, as a firm, are proud to partner with MALDEF as co-counsel, and CLF and CHBA as representatives of the Latino community, to be able to bring to bear the resources to ensure that the Latino communities' voices are heard and not overlooked in this process."

The CLF and the CHBA intervened in *Moreno v. Gessler* and *Hall v. Gessler*, cases pending before the District Court of the City and County of Denver.

To access the complaint, visit: www.chba.net

The Colorado Hispanic Bar Association is a nonpartisan, nonprofit professional association whose mission is to serve Colorado and promote justice by advancing Hispanic interests and issues in the legal profession and seeking equal protection for the Hispanic Community before the law.
