NCLR AND DEMOCRACIA U.S.A. LAUNCH A NEW PARTNERSHIP TO INCREASE LATINO VOTER PARTICIPATION

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Washington, DC (**CapitalWirePR**) February 27, 2008 – The National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the U.S., and Democracia U.S.A., one of the country's leading Latino-focused voter registration and civic engagements efforts, today announced an historic partnership designed to maximize Hispanic participation in the democratic process.

"The importance of the Latino vote in shaping our country's future has never been greater. This is the 'perfect moment in time' to combine Democracia U.S.A.'s proven expertise and NCLR's broad reach to promote increased Latino civic engagement in the 2008 elections and beyond," said Janet Murguía, NCLR President and CEO.

"Democracia U.S.A. brings substantial expertise and a strong track record of successfully registering and turning out new Latino voters. NCLR is a leading and highly respected voice for Latinos in America. By joining forces, Latinos will be engaged in the political process like never before," stated Jorge Mursuli, President of Democracia U.S.A.

"Despite Hispanic gains in the overall electorate, there is a lot of room for growth. If we registered and voted at the same rate as non-Latinos, the result in 2004 would have been more than two million additional Hispanic voters. This partnership presents a major opportunity to realize this enormous untapped potential," added Murguía.

Democracia U.S.A. was originally launched in 2004 by People For the American Way (PFAW) Foundation in Florida and registered 72,000 new voters in Florida that year. In 2006, the nonpartisan project expanded to Arizona, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania and was credited by the Associated Press with registering 70% of all new Hispanic voters.

Mursuli and Murguía expressed appreciation to the PFAW Foundation for establishing Democracia U.S.A. "People for the American Way Foundation's early investment in this project, dating back to 2002, has allowed us to be here today. I will always be thankful for their support," stated Mursuli. Murguía expressed her appreciation to the NCLR Board of Directors for taking this important step.

"People For the American Way Foundation is proud to have given Democracia U.S.A. a strong and successful start," said Nick Ucci, Acting President of PFAW Foundation. "We're excited to know that D-U.S.A. will thrive in an organization with such extensive roots in America's Hispanic and Latino communities. NCLR is the right place for Democracia U.S.A. to reach its fullest potential. We look forward to working together to oppose any barriers to full participation in public life. "

"A great part of Democracia U.S.A.'s achievements over the years has been thanks to the relationships we have built at the street level. Our voter registration and mobilization model is driven by our understanding of how Latino neighborhoods work, but we also use the latest technology to measure our success and ensure accountability. Our partnership with NCLR will help take this model to an unprecedented scale," Mursuli noted.

Under the agreement, Democracia U.S.A. will be incorporated as a separate nonprofit corporation with close ties to NCLR. The two organizations will share certain administrative and finance systems to maximize efficiency.

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CONTACT:

Jacqueline Pacheco
jpacheco@nclr.org
(202) 785-1670

Freddy Balsera
(305) 772-5189

1126 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036