

JIM BEALL, JR.



for the twenty-fourth Assembly District

Jan. 3, 2011

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Understanding the Overrepresentation of Latino Children in California's Child Welfare System

SAN JOSE -- Assemblymember Jim Beall, chairman of the Select Committee on Foster Care, will convene a special hearing in San Jose next week to examine the persistently high numbers of Latino children in California's child welfare system and discuss effective strategies to keep families together.

Friday, Jan. 6

10:30 a.m.-12:30p.m.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, McDonnell Hall

2020 East San Antonio St., San Jose

A 10 a.m. news conference will be held before the hearing.

The disproportionate representation of Latino children has been a continuing problem, a circumstance that demands new approaches. In Santa Clara County, the Department of Family and Children Services reported that Latino children comprised 59 percent of the active cases in the child welfare system in November.

Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers of America and president of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, will testify and be joined by La Raza Roundtable Chair **Victor Garza**, Santa Clara County Board President **Dave Cortese**, San Jose **Mayor Chuck Reed**, and California Department of Social Services Director **Will Lightbourne**.

The hearing includes a briefing on the “Harvard Study Consensus Process,” a collaborative initiated by La Raza Roundtable to promote and enhance use of interest-based negotiations by participating stakeholder leaders to reach consensus on transformative multi-systems change.

In support of consensus building, the Office of **Bishop Patrick J. McGrath**, Diocese of San Jose, has graciously welcomed the select committee and made the historic McDonnell Hall at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church available to it for Friday’s hearing.

Other experts invited to testify include: **Dr. Jeff Smith**, Santa Clara County Executive Officer; San Jose City Manager **Debra Figone**; Supervising Judge **Katherine Lucero**, Santa Clara County Superior Court; San Jose Police Chief **Chris Moore**; **Monsignor John Sandersfeld**, Diocese of San Jose; **Rev. Deacon Sal Alvarez**, Chairman of the La Raza Roundtable de California Summit on Latino Overrepresentation; **Maria Fuentes**, San Jose/Evergreen Community College District Board Trustee; **Benny Diaz**, President of the California League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC); **Bill Aragon**, of the National Child Welfare Commission Audit Committee; **Noemi Baeza**, Chair of the California Latino Social Work Network; **Danny Garza**, Chair of the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA); and **Angel Kelly**, Chair of El Comite -- Preservacion de la Familia of the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency.