

AUBURN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES
Initiative on Immigration



*Impacts of
Hispanic Immigrants
on the
State of Alabama*
A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION



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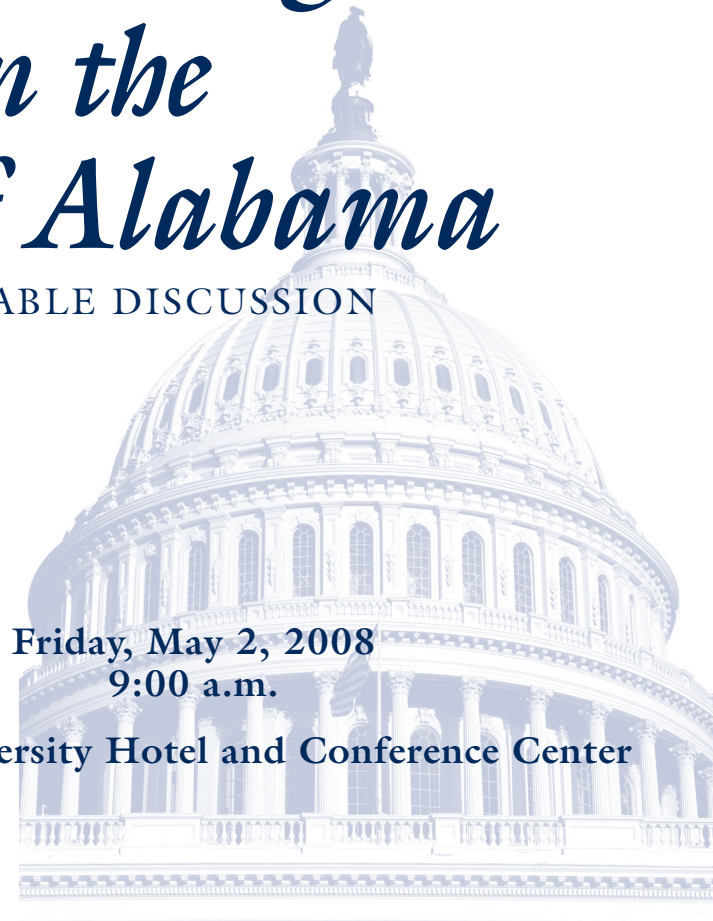
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Friday, May 2, 2008
9:00 a.m.

Auburn University Hotel and Conference Center



*An event that brings together experts to discuss and collaborate
on immigration issues in the State of Alabama ...*

The Center for Governmental Services focuses on identifying Governmental Excellence and Best Practices and routinely holds associated events. The first Governmental Excellence and Best Practices Conference was held in 2003 in Montgomery Alabama. The last conference was held in Washington, D.C. at the National Press Club on Improving Public Trust and Transparency in Government. The conferences bring together professionals from all levels of government, academics, and professionals representing the private sector to discuss and collaborate on best government practices.

Impacts of Hispanic Immigrants on the State of Alabama

A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION



Michael Robinson – Alabama Department of Public Safety

Michael Robinson is Executive Counsel for the Alabama Department of Public Safety. Among other initiatives, he makes essential contributions to the functioning of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers within the DPS.

Ron Sparks – Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries

Ron Sparks entered the United States Coast Guard following graduation from high school. After completing his service in the Coast Guard, Sparks graduated from Northeast Alabama Community College. At the age of 24 he became one of the youngest county commissioners elected in the State of Alabama. Sparks has also served on several state boards such as the Alabama Secretary of State's Task Force to reform election laws and the Lt. Governor's Task Force to reform and pass laws on violence in schools. In 1993 he was appointed Director of the 911 System and was instrumental in designing and implementing the on-line program in DeKalb County. In 1998, he was elected the State President of Alabama 911. In 1999, he was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture & Industries. He served in this post until 2003 when Sparks was sworn in as the Alabama Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries; he was re-elected in 2006.

Don-Terry Veal – Center for Governmental Services, AU

Dr. Don-Terry Veal is Director of Auburn University's Center for Governmental Services. He serves as chief administrator of several statewide governmentally mandated and professional credentialing associations. Dr. Veal is Founder and Chairman of the Auburn University annual national conference: Governmental Excellence and Best Practices. He speaks nationally and internationally to public and private organizations on issues dealing with excellence in government and on entrepreneurship. Dr. Veal recently made the keynote address on Transparency in Government and Community Development in the city of Gangwon-do, South Korea, for the International Local Government Symposium. Veal was Director of the African-American Entrepreneurship Summit, serves as the Editor-in-Chief of the Entrepreneurship Policy Journal. Veal served as Director of an international conference held in Cape Town South Africa, Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship. He served on the Rural Entrepreneurship Initiative Advisory Board of the Kellogg Foundation.

The issues surrounding immigration within the state of Alabama are critical. The impacts are of great magnitude, and will be for years to come, and for future generations – for our children and our grandchildren. The impacts will be evident through America's economy, work force, healthcare, education, government, social welfare, and on society in general.

The questions associated with immigration go beyond erecting fences at the southern border of the United States; whether to provide driver's licenses; and the bright colors, sounds and unique aromas that we sometimes equate with other cultures. These considerations cut to the very core of what America is and who Americans are – and our nation's foundations as a melting pot.

Regardless of your politics, religion, principles, etc., the fact is that immigration is alive and well in the state of Alabama.

The Center for Governmental Services (CGS) has developed an initiative to examine and research questions surrounding the effects of immigration in Alabama. This round table discussion represents the second in a series. CGS will provide additional opportunities for discussion through the CGS Initiative on Immigration.

Meetings will be held at various locations throughout Alabama. Future meetings will include discussions on issues that have an impact on local and county government.

The Center for Governmental Services will also continue to provide technical support, training, survey services and outreach for governmental agencies, industry, and business as it relates to our immigrant populations in Alabama.

Don-Terry Veal, Ph.D.

Director

A Center for Governmental Services initiative on Immigration

Participant Biographies

Sue Ann Balch – International Education at Auburn University

Ms. Balch graduated from Auburn University in History and Political Science. She has taught school at several locations in the state of Alabama and in Virginia. Ms. Balch also attended graduate school at both Auburn University at Montgomery and Auburn University. She completed law school while working as an Academic Counselor in the College of Engineering at AU and then served as law clerk for Circuit Judge Richard Lane. She is a trained mediator in both District and Circuit courts, and is a licensed Attorney in Alabama and in Federal Courts. Ms. Balch currently serves as President of the Alabama Association of International Educators. Balch is the Assistant Director of International Education for Auburn University, and is also the Primary Designated Service Officer and Responsible Officer for the United States Department of State, and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service for AU.

Scott Beason – Alabama State Senator, District 17

Senator Scott Beason is serving his first term in the Alabama Senate. He was elected to two consecutive terms in the Alabama House of Representatives. Senator Beason received a Degree in Geology from the University of Alabama. He is a successful businessman and owner of Custom Renovators and Old South Construction. He is a member of the Jefferson County Republican Executive Committee and the Alabama Republican Executive Committee in addition to the Senate committees on which he serves.

Frank Burt, Jr. – County Commissioner, and Chair, Baldwin County

Frank Burt, Jr. is a graduate of Auburn University where he received a B.S. Degree in Pharmacy. Burt served in the United States Navy and began his career as a Pharmacist Bay Minette until he retired in 1998. Burt currently serves as Chairman of the Baldwin County Commission, is a member of the North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce, member of the United States Selective Service Board, former member and President of a rural water system, former member of the North Baldwin Hospital Board, member of the Environment, Energy & Land Use Steering Committee for the National Association of Counties and member of the Watershed Management Advisory Committee for the National Association of Counties. Burt is currently serving as Purchasing Division Commissioner and is in his sixth term.

Dennis R. Coe – Superintendent, Henry County Schools

Dennis Coe is serving his second term as Superintendent of Schools in Henry County. He is winner of the 2007 Superintendents of Alabama “Power of One” Award for outstanding service during the 2007 legislative session, and was selected as one of three state superintendents to represent Alabama at the 2008 AASA Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. Member of Committee on Accountability and Acceleration of Student Learning (CAASL) for the State of Alabama. Coe is a member of CLAS, AEA, SSA, and NEA.

Thomas M. Eden, III – Attorney

Tommy Eden is an attorney in private practice. He has worked in firms located in Atlanta, Birmingham, and, currently, in Opelika. He deals primarily with the areas of management labor and employment law, drug testing law, and all aspects of employment law in defense of employers in federal court. Eden graduated from Auburn University and from Cumberland School of Law at Samford University.

Jana Gutierrez - AU Faculty

Dr. Gutierrez is associate professor and teaches in the Foreign Language department at AU. Gutierrez also serves as Faculty Advisor for the Auburn Latino Association of Students.

Tim Lennox – Anchor, Alabama Public Television

Tim Lennox is host of Alabama Public Television’s “For The Record”, a weekly news and analysis program. He also produces “Alabama Stories” documentaries for APT. Tim is a native New Yorker, born in The Bronx, raised in Queens. He served three years in the U.S. Army, including one year in Quang Tri, Vietnam, where he worked as a print and broadcast journalist. After working for several radio stations in New York and New Jersey, Lennox moved to Birmingham where he worked for a radio station as news director, talk show host and program director. Tim started hosting “Southern Exposure” and joined APT in 1997 where he serves as anchor.

Michael Robinson – Alabama Department of Public Safety

Michael Robinson is Executive Counsel for the Alabama Department of Public Safety. Among other initiatives, he makes essential contributions to the functioning of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers within the DPS.

T.D. “Ted” Little – Alabama State Senator, District 27

Senator Little represents District 27 in the Alabama State Senate. Little graduated in Industrial Management from the University of Alabama where he also earned his J.D. He is a practicing attorney. Senator Little served in the Senate from 1975-1986 and from 1991 to the present. He serves as Chair of the Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability Committee. Additionally he serves on the Board of Chatahoochee Valley Community College Foundation, on the Dean’s Development Board of the AU School of Human Sciences, and on the Executive Committee of the Council of State Governments.

Jose R. Llanes - Economist, Professor and Department Head, AU

Dr. Jose R. Llanes is an economist and professor of organization and leadership at the College of Education. He was born in Cuba and came to the US as a political refugee forty years ago. He has conducted research in immigration and has published extensively on that topic. He joined the Auburn family in 2006 as Department Head of the Foundations, Leadership and Technology Department.