

**STATEMENT BY U.S. SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
ON
NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH
September 15 – October 15, 2008**

September 15 to October 15 is National Hispanic Heritage Month, a time in which all Americas have an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of the Hispanic community and its many contributions to our nation.

From love of family and faith to service to our nation, Hispanic Americans are committed to the principles that have made our nation great – justice, equality and freedom. Today, I also want to thank the many brave Hispanic men and women who have answered the call to serve our nation, willing to give their lives for the freedom and democracy we all hold dear.

America is a rich tapestry of cultures, woven together to make our nation strong and vibrant. Hispanic Americans are one of the strongest, fastest growing ethnic communities in our country. Today, more than 44 million Hispanic Americans live in the United States, constituting 14 percent of our population.

The Hispanic American community is hard working and committed to achieving the American Dream. We are a rich and prosperous nation and over the centuries Hispanic Americans have made many contributions to our nation. I thank them for their love of country and their rich cultural heritage that has enriched our lives.