



**Remarks by George P. Bush
Latino Leaders Luncheon Series
Eagle Leadership Award**

**Aug 25, 2020
Virtual**

George Bush: *Buenos dias, amigos.* Thank you all very much for having me. Being with my friends at the Latino Leaders Network is always a pleasure and receiving the Eagle Leadership Award is a true honor. This award is given in recognition of significant impact on the lives of Latinos living in the United States, and I'm humbled that you believe that I am worthy of this honor.

While I'm proud to represent a broad coalition of all Texans of all 28 million people in my state, I'm certainly mindful of my example as a Hispanic public figure. As a child growing up in a famous family, my parents fought hard to preserve my connection to Mexican culture. Spanish was spoken in the household, and the values of hard work and community were instilled to me not only by my dad, [speaks in Spanish].

Like many other children of color, I experienced the darker side, regretfully, of our country. I encountered racism and was

called ethnic slurs on the baseball field or in school halls, but I never lost sight of the power of what my father once called the right to rise. This is the Lincolnian view that in America, anybody can be somebody, that every person gets a chance to do something special no matter who you are, where you live, or how you look, and that's exactly the story of our community.

It's certainly the story of Hispanic Texans. In fact, you can't tell the story of Texas without talking about Hispanics, even the story of our founding. It was Tejanos who helped turn the tide against Santa Anna during the Texas independence. We think of the founding of Texas and we think of names that stand the test of time like Houston and Austin, but there were other Tejanos who were less famous, but no less important in that struggle like de Zabala and Navarro. These heroes defied a tyrant. And because of them, Texas became a free and independent republic.

Today, nearly 200 years after that struggle, we again look to the leadership of our great state and we see two Hispanics that are elected statewide including myself. I'd like to say that as Texans, we all drink from a well we didn't dig. It was a well that was dug by the founders of our state. The same applies to our country. It is our job to ensure that this well continues to serve all Americans for years to come. That's why

as Texas land commissioner, I've worked hard on issues that impact the lives of everyday Texans. I've worked hard on public education, where millions of Texas children, majority of whom are Hispanics, are being trained for the opportunities of tomorrow. I chair the Permanent School Fund, which provides a large source of revenue to public schools and I fought really hard for school choice and parental choice and education in our state. I've worked hard on economic development so that jobs and careers are available to all of our people even during difficult economic times.

My office oversees 13 million acres of state-owned lands that develops everything from oil and gas development to alternative energy sources, and it's helped provide meaningful careers to so many people in different communities of our state. I work hard to help our military veterans. I happen to have served in our nation's military myself and I consider this an important job where we've streamlined veteran services and honor those who have honored us with the highest possible role that there is in our nation, and those are members of our military.

But beyond this, I try to lead by example. You may recall the mass shooting in El Paso, in the Walmart of the summer of 2019. I was the first Republican in the nation to call out white nationalism and its targeting of the Hispanic community. I've continued to encourage that our party, the party of Lincoln

needs to do a better job to welcome more Hispanics into the fold.

[speaks in Spanish] Congressman Hurd, Congressman Díaz-Balart, [speaks in Spanish]. I thank the Latino Leaders Network. I appreciate you letting me speak to you today. Stay safe, stay healthy, and I look forward to seeing you all very soon. May God bless you, may God bless the state of Texas, may God bless the United States of America.