



EEOC News

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EEOC CHAIR DOMINGUEZ TO STEP DOWN AT TERM'S END *Second-Longest Serving Chair Oversaw Record Enforcement and Outreach, and Strategic Advances and Efficiencies*

WASHINGTON – Cari M. Dominguez, Chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), announced today that she will step down on Aug. 31, 2006, at the end of a five-year term during which she has overseen record enforcement of workplace discrimination laws and outreach, and repositioned the agency for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

“We have worked very hard over the last five years to preserve and promote the values that make our Nation so strong and unique. Our example of a society that relies on access and inclusion for its economic and social success inspires others to believe. Our work is not done, but we have made significant progress, and I’m very proud of our many accomplishments. The credit all goes to a hardworking team of dedicated public servants with whom I have had the privilege to serve at the Commission, and to President Bush for his support of our efforts.”

Ms. Dominguez was nominated by President Bush to chair the EEOC, unanimously confirmed by the Senate, and sworn in on Aug. 6, 2001. As Chair, she moved swiftly to enhance the Commission’s enforcement programs, customer service orientation, internal efficiency and fiscal responsibility. Under her leadership, the EEOC developed a five-point plan, which charts a course of action that emphasizes proactive prevention, proficient resolution, expansion of mediation, strategic enforcement and litigation, and organizational excellence.

Her term has been characterized by an unprecedented high number of training and outreach programs; a sharp increase in signed mediation agreements with record numbers of disputes settled through mediation; and a historically low inventory of pending charges due to prompt and proficient resolution. In addition, strategic enforcement and litigation efforts have resulted in an increase of merit findings with record benefits. She also focused on improving the federal sector complaint processing system, leading to significantly reduced average processing time for federal sector hearings and appeals.

During her tenure, a number of initiatives were launched, including the Commission’s annual Freedom to Compete Awards designed to showcase best employment practices; an aggressive campaign to advance the President’s New Freedom Initiative in the area of employment for individuals with disabilities; and accelerated outreach to small businesses, for which the Commission was awarded the Small Business Administration’s highest rating for compliance assistance.

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To enhance delivery of services and improve the efficiency of operations, Chair Dominguez implemented a repositioning plan of the agency's field structure in January 2006. The plan streamlined the management structure while increasing front line staff and expanding the agency's presence to high growth areas such as Mobile, Alabama and Las Vegas, Nevada. None of the existing fifty-one offices were closed and no one was laid off in the process. She also made fiscal responsibility a priority, leading to the Commission's first ever independent audit in 2003, and an unqualified opinion from independent auditors in 2004 and 2005.

Shortly after taking office, Chair Dominguez averted an expected month-long furlough by directly intervening and ensuring the inclusion of EEOC in a supplemental federal spending bill. She also oversaw vigorous efforts to support employees and their families amid the destruction of two major offices, in New York through 9/11 and in New Orleans through Hurricane Katrina.

Ms. Dominguez previously served from 1989-1993 in the U.S. Department of Labor as Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards and as Director of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. In the latter capacity, she launched and led the Labor Department's "Glass Ceiling Initiative," designed to remove invisible barriers from the workplace. Her extensive private sector experience includes senior positions as a corporate executive, international executive search and management consultant, and business owner.

Ms. Dominguez is well known for her long-term interest in coaching and mentoring youth and individuals in career transition, as well as for forging alliances and building networks across groups from diverse sectors and ideologies in support of equal opportunity efforts. Among her many contributions, she has served on the Leadership Foundation Board of the International Women's Forum whose mission is to prepare high potential women for senior leadership positions. She also helped found a K-8 school in Olney, Maryland and served as its first chair of the board. In addition, she has received numerous awards and recognitions, including being listed as one of the "100 Most Influential Hispanics in the Country" by Hispanic Business Magazine, and one of the "Two Thousand Most Notable American Women" by the American Biographical Institute. National Image Inc. presented her with the Chairman's 2002 Award for Excellence. In 2003, Loma Linda University conferred upon her the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanitarian Service. In 2005, she received the Spelman College Legacy of Leadership Award.

Effective Sept. 1, 2006, Commission Vice Chair Naomi Earp will assume the agency's operational responsibilities as Acting Chair.

The EEOC is the federal government agency responsible for enforcing the nation's anti-discrimination laws in the workplace. Further information about the agency is available (in English and Spanish) on the agency's web site at www.eeoc.gov.

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