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CONTACT:
Jean Ross (916) 444-0500

CALIFORNIA'S LATINO WORKFORCE: GETTING AHEAD, BUT STILL FAR BEHIND

*Wages are up for California's Latino workers, but still lag far behind
their non-Latino colleagues.*

[Sacramento] – The gap between Latino and non-Latino wages in California has widened since 1979 despite substantial gains made by Latinos over the past eight years, according to a new report by the California Budget Project (CBP).

Moving Ahead or Falling Behind? California's Fast-Growing Latino Workforce examines the economic well-being of California's Latino workers – a large and rapidly growing percentage of the state's workforce – over the past decade. The new report compares the wages of Latinos to those of non-Latinos for a variety of jobs and examines the impact of educational attainment and place of birth (US or non-US) on earnings. Its conclusions, along with relevant data, include:

- A significant wage gap persists between California's Latino and non-Latino workers, even though Latino workers have posted strong wage gains since the mid-1990s.
- US-born Latino workers in California earn substantially higher wages than their foreign-born counterparts.
- Latino workers with higher levels of educational attainment have higher hourly earnings, although still lower than non-Latinos with similar levels of education.
- However, educational attainment does NOT by itself erase the wage gap between Latino and non-Latino workers in California.
- In California, Latino-headed families are disproportionately represented among the working poor.

Advance copies of *Moving Ahead or Falling Behind? California's Fast-Growing Latino Workforce*, along with interviews with CBP staff, will be available to reporters who agree to abide by a September 30, 2004 embargo. To request an advance copy, please call the CBP at (916) 444-0500 or send an email with your name, publication, and phone number to cbp@cbp.org. Advance copies will be available on Monday, September 27.

For full press release: www.cbp.org/2004/0409latinopr.pdf

The California Budget Project (CBP) was founded in 1994 to provide Californians with a source of timely, objective, and accessible expertise on state fiscal and economic policy issues. The CBP engages in independent fiscal and policy analysis and public education with the goal of improving public policies affecting the economic and social well-being of low- and middle-income Californians. Support for the CBP comes from foundation grants, publications, and individual contributions.