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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 28, 2011

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**Florida State Advisory Committee to U.S. Commission on Civil Rights**  
**Reports Improvements in State Migrant Education Programs**

Washington DC - The Florida State Advisory Committee (SAC) to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has issued its report on migrant education programs in Florida, *Migrant Education in Florida: State and School Districts Showing Improvement in Education Programs for Migrant Children*. The study was undertaken by the Florida SAC as a follow-up to its 2007 report that examined educational resources for migrant students in the state compared to non-migrant children. The report is available on the Commission's website at [www.usccr.gov](http://www.usccr.gov).

Florida is the third largest state, behind only California and Texas, in terms of the number of migrant children served in its public schools. Migrant students have various risk factors in common with other disadvantaged students, such as poverty, poorer health and language difficulties, and research has shown a persistent achievement gap between migrant children and non-migrant children. However, migrant children also face additional challenges, such as disruption of education, poor record-keeping and communication between schools, cultural and language barriers, and social isolation. These challenges are even more acute for students in schools and school districts serving large numbers of migrant children. Such concentrations of low-income, limited English-proficient, and socially isolated students in schools and districts may strain available resources even when additional resources are provided.

In its report, the Florida State Advisory Committee notes that since it first reported on migrant education in 2007, Migrant Education Program (MEP) officials at the state and school district level have developed new educational strategies for migrant children. There have been substantive changes in the structure and delivery of educational programs to migrant children, and as a result the achievement gap between migrant children and other children seems to have narrowed in recent years.

The Florida State Advisory Committee also reports that in order for migrant children to achieve academic success it is essential to have full integration of social services with educational programs as children from migrant families often live in difficult circumstances. For example, schools must work with social service providers to ensure that families of migrant children have adequate nutrition and housing. Schools serving migrant children, therefore, should coordinate a network of social services with the school.

Presently Congress provides about \$20 million dollars to Florida under Part C, Title I, of the No Child Left Behind Act in educational assistance targeted to migrant children. The Florida State Advisory

Committee believes this investment will pay dividends to society in the future and urges Congress to continue its funding of the MEP programs.

By law, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has established a State Advisory Committee in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. These State Advisory Committees are composed of state citizens who serve without compensation. State Advisory Committees advise the Commission of civil rights issues in their states that are within the Commission's jurisdiction. State Advisory Committee reports may rely on studies and data generated by third parties, and are not subject to an independent review by Commission staff. The views expressed in State Advisory Committee reports and findings, conclusions, and recommendations contained therein are those of a majority of the State Advisory Committee members and do not necessarily represent the views of the Commission or its individual members, nor do they represent the policies of the U.S. Government. The Chairman of the Florida State Advisory Committee is Dr. Elena Flom.