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**U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Convenes National Conversation  
on a New Era in Civil Rights**

**Washington, DC** – On Tuesday, September 14, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights will host a diverse group of scholars, policy makers, public intellectuals, civil rights practitioners and members of the general public to begin a national conversation on defining a new civil rights agenda for the 21st century. The Commission’s goal is to spur a fresh dialogue that will lead to a refashioning of the means, goals and methods of civil rights so that they more effectively address the needs of disadvantaged Americans, a disproportionate number of whom are people of color.

“Despite the establishment and enforcement of anti-discrimination laws and discrimination’s decline, substantial racial and ethnic disparities persist in areas such as socioeconomic status, education, employment and incarceration rates. Aggressive enforcement of civil rights laws hasn’t been effective at lessening these disparities,” says Gerald A. Reynolds, Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. “This conference endeavors to ask why and will focus on charting a new course for civil rights that takes these realities into account.”

The full-day conference, “A New Era: Defining Civil Rights in the 21st Century,” will be held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. Discussion topics will include the role of family structure, new tools for a new civil rights era, education as a path forward and the future of the Civil Rights Commission.

“It’s been more than 50 years since the passage of the first Civil Rights Act, and it’s time for an open and frank discussion about the future of civil rights in America,” says Reynolds. “We live in a different era and must overcome different challenges. We need to build a new foundation that will help Americans of all backgrounds realize their full potential and achieve the American dream.”

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with monitoring federal civil rights enforcement. Members include Chairman Gerald A. Reynolds, Vice Chair Abigail Thernstrom, and Commissioners Todd F. Gaziano, Gail Heriot, Peter N. Kirsanow, Arlan D. Melendez, Ashley L. Taylor, Jr., and Michael Yaki. Martin Dannenfelser is the staff director. Commission meetings are open to the general public and the media. The Commission’s website is <http://www.usccr.gov>.

**Media Contact**

Christine Bragale  
christine@tepagevents.com  
(240) 316-3200, ext. 206