

March 25, 2004

Department of the Navy  
Office of the Secretary  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Mr. Jorge Ponce

Dear Mr. Ponce:

This responds to your letter of February 18, 2004, written on behalf of the privately run Council of Federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Civil Rights Executives, wherein you express concern that the Department of the Navy's affirmative employment program is not separate from the human resources function.

Your letter evidences a clear misunderstanding of the Department of the Navy's command structure. As the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), I am, and have always been, the Department of the Navy's Director of EEO. My position reports directly to the agency head, the Secretary of the Navy. As the Department of the Navy's Director of EEO, I can assure we in the Department of the Navy strive to have the most effective affirmative employment program in the federal government. We believe the way to achieve that goal is to integrate EEO principles in all human resources functional areas, with a special emphasis on the recruitment area. In our view, recruitment is the foundation of a successful affirmative employment program. An affirmative employment program that is not integrated with recruitment and the other human resources functional areas is doomed to fail.

Although we may disagree on how to achieve the ultimate goal, I'm confident we both share an interest in a strong Department of the Navy affirmative employment program.

Sincerely,

William A. Navas, Jr.  
Assistant Secretary of the Navy  
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

P.S. We are also unique in the Department of Defense where in addition to the civilian workforce, we have responsibility for military and reserve personnel issues.