Washington D.C. – Yesterday, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez was presented with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund's (MALDEF) Lifetime Achievement, Excellence in Government Service Award at its 2012 Washington D.C. Awards Gala. Congressman Gonzalez issued the following statement regarding the award:

"My career was only made possible by the struggles overcome and the work accomplished by MALDEF and other Latino trailblazers before me. Throughout its history, MALDEF has been a force in our society for change and civil rights through the often unseen efforts of advocacy and litigation. They have defeated injustices and produced generations of new Latino leaders to take on future obstacles, and to be included in this legacy is a tremendous honor which I humbly accept."

Charlie Ericksen, Founder of Hispanic Link News Service, and Judge Vanessa Ruiz, District of Columbia Court of Appeals, were also presented with Lifetime Achievement Awards.

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