

July 2, 2009

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: National Hispanic Media Coalition's Petition for Inquiry into hate speech in media

Dear Ms. Dortch:

We, the undersigned, urge the Commission to promptly grant the National Hispanic Media Coalition's (NHMC) request that the Commission initiate an inquiry into the extent, nature and effects of hate speech, and possible ways to counteract or reduce its negative impacts. In the alternative, we request that the Commission put NHMC's petition for inquiry out for public comment.

As the NHMC acknowledges, hate speech does not only affect Latinos. Many groups have suffered harm at the hands of hate speech, including but not limited to: women, African Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Muslims, Jews, Catholics, gays and lesbians, people with disabilities, and even Caucasian Americans. As noted in the petition, these harms are twofold: hate speech is a factor in hate crimes and it causes psychological harm to its recipients, especially youth.

By opening a docket for comment on the petition, the Commission will collect data and information about hate speech, raise public awareness of the issue, and allow citizens to comment on the hate speech happening in their communities in an accessible and transparent forum.

Respectfully submitted,

Asian American Justice Center (AAJC)
Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good
CeaseSPIN, Inc. (CeaseSPIN.org)
Center for Media Justice
Center on Latino and Latina Rights and Equality of the City University of New York School of Law
Common Cause
Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting

Florida Public Interest Research Group
Free Press
Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials (GALEO)
Hispanic/Latinos Anti-Defamation Coalition, SF
Industry Ears
Main Street Project
Media Action Grassroots Network
Media Alliance
Media Mobilizing Project (MMP)
Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund (MALDEF)
Minnesotano Media Empowerment Project, Department of Chicano Studies, University of Minnesota
National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP)
National Organization for Women (NOW)
Oregon Alliance to Reform Media
Prometheus Radio Project
Public Interest Pictures and Broadcast Blues
Rainbow/PUSH Coalition
Reclaim the Media
Texas Media Empowerment Project
The Benton Foundation
The Center for Rural Strategies
The New Mexico Media Literacy Project
The Praxis Project
United Church of Christ, Office of Communication, Inc. (UCC)
UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc
U.S. Public Interest Research Group

cc: Chairman Julius Genachowski, Commissioner Michael Copps, Commissioner Robert McDowell, Sherrese Smith, Bruce Liang Gottlieb, Rick Chessen, Rosemary Harold