

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
BROADCAST LOCALISM HEARING
MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA
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**COMMENTS OF
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Introductions:

My name is Delia Saldivar. I am a Mexican immigrant and resident of Monterey County, California. I am the manager of KHDC – FM, a Latino controlled public radio station in Salinas and part of Radio Bilingüe, Inc., a statewide network of 5 full-powered FM stations serving California, with affiliates across the United States, Mexico and Puerto Rico. KHDC currently has two paid staff members (myself and another Latina) and approximately 35 community volunteers. We broadcast 24 hours a day and 7 days a week with music and informational programming to benefit our community. We broadcast primarily in Spanish and also in Mixteco, Hmong and some English. We are a community-based station and guided by our mission to provide information and access to our community through the radio airwaves.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Commission for allowing myself and other community members to submit testimony on the important issue of industry deregulation.

Need For Ethnic Controlled Media Outlets:

There is a growing need by our diverse citizenry for ethnic controlled media in California and across the United States. Through my comments, I would like to focus particularly on how the Latino community in California and nationwide can utilize media outlets to address issues, such as health disparities, in a linguistically and culturally competent way.

A. Population Figures:

Currently, one-third (32%) of California's population is Latino. Over two-thirds (70%) of this population is of Mexican decent with 45% being foreign-born. The Latino population continues to be one of the fastest growing in our state. California's Latino population is expected to double between 1995 and 2025 and account for one-third of the nation's total Latino population. By 2025, Latinos are projected to be the largest race or ethnic group in California, comprising 43 percent of the population. According to the 2000 Census, some California Counties are already a majority Latino - as in Tulare and Imperial Counties. The majority of this population prefers to communicate in Spanish, and refers to Spanish as their primary language and their language of comfort. However, the number of radio outlets, commercial and noncommercial that are owned or controlled by Mexican-Americans in California is less than 0.10%, except for the Radio Bilingüe stations.

B. Health Disparities:

The radio airwaves should be used to benefit the public and to address pressing issues. One of these issues is health. The level of health disparities in the Latino community is shocking. Here are some statistics. Currently 1.2 million Latinos of Mexican ancestry in the United States have been diagnosed with diabetes. Latinos are almost twice as likely than non-Latino whites to die or become severely ill from diabetes. Latino women are twice as likely as non-Hispanic white women to develop cervical cancer and are far more likely to die from it because they are far less likely to receive routine pap smears. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among Latinos in California and nationwide. Nationally, Latinos are twice as likely to receive late or no prenatal care when compare to non-Hispanic whites. Lastly, in California, almost 1/3 of Latino children and 41% of non-elderly adult Latinos are uninsured. The majority of these individuals are of Mexican-origin.

C. Reliable and Culturally Competent Information:

As illustrated by the sobering statistics, the need for comprehensive and culturally competent health information is wholly apparent. The Latino population is unique in its information and cultural needs, and come from diverse traditional communities in Mexico and Latin America. Each of these communities of origin have their own customs, history and, in some cases, their own native language. For the majority of Latinos, English is not their language of preference. So, naturally, Spanish-language programming better serves our community.

At our station, we broadcast programs and short messages that inform our Spanish-speaking listeners about ways to better care for themselves and their children. Media outlets and the radio industry can provide the outreach necessary to turn the statistics around. The need for reliable information from local sources continues to grow as the demographics of this State and the nation shift.

Consequently, as the need for reliable information grows, so has the consolidation of the media outlets. This consolidation includes Latino Spanish-language services such as the purchase of Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation (HBC) by Univision last year and the acquisition of Telemundo (the 2nd largest Spanish-language TV network) by NBC. The Spanish language corporate media offers less information to our communities, less cultural programming, and virtually no local informational programming. The corporate Spanish radio industry is increasing its broadcast of its own version of “shock radio” and liberally broadcasts music that glamorizes drugs and violence to increase their ratings. Unfortunately, in many markets, especially urban California markets; there is no Spanish language public radio service to provide an intelligent alternative for listeners.

Exclusion on the Radio Airwaves:

Simply stated, due to weakened regulations in the industry, a large segment of the population is being excluded from effective radio service. The current stakeholders who are media conglomerates do not represent or produce programming to address the needs of the growing majority of Californians and Latinos across the nation. We urge the FCC to examine closely the actual demographics of our State and of our nation, and

investigate whether or not the current situation provides equal access to linguistic or cultural minorities. After all, aren't these airwaves meant to serve the public?

Thank you for considering my comments.