



Press Release

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MMTC and 16 Concerned Organizations Urge FCC to Consider Unintended Consequences of Set Top Box Proposal on Diverse and Independent Programmers

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 12, 2016): The Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC), along with 16 leading national and social justice organizations (“Concerned Organizations,” listed below), recently filed a letter with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) urging the Commission to consider the unintended consequences of its recent set top box proposal on diverse and independent programmers.

The proposal under consideration, the details of which were released by FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler in a fact sheet and blog post last month, could potentially cause significant harm to diverse and independent programmers and burden consumers with increased costs and lower consumer privacy protections. Specifically, the Commission’s approach could:

- **Adversely impact diverse and independent programming networks** by establishing a regulatory mandate that allows device manufacturers to break up minority programming networks and repackage them as they see fit, disregarding the content licensing, distribution, promotion, and advertising agreements the programmers previously negotiated, and exploiting their hard work and investments to make their content more discoverable.
- **Harm consumers by establishing different regulation of the video marketplace and reducing legitimate consumer privacy protections.** Our joint letter points out that under congressionally mandated rules, cable, satellite, and broadcast industries would be regulated, while edge providers would not, affecting consumer privacy and other protections.
- **Be more costly for consumers** because it would require cable, satellite, and telco providers to re-engineer their networks and equipment, the costs of which could be passed along to consumers, and consumers may also be required to buy or lease additional equipment or upgrade existing devices.
- **Reward companies that do not value diversity**, and whose stunningly poor records on board, employment, and supplier diversity mirror their failure to invest in multicultural content and content creators on their platforms.

As noted in our letter, the Concerned Organizations strongly urge the Commission to pause its efforts and further explore our concerns due to the proposal’s likely impact.

List of Concerned Organizations:

Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)
Blacks in Government (BIG)
Cuban American National Council
National Organization of Black Elected Legislative (NOBEL) Women
LGBT Technology Partnership
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Latinos in Information Sciences and Technology Association (LISTA)
Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC)
National Association of Hispanic Publications
National Association of Multicultural Digital Entrepreneurs (NAMDE)
National Black Chamber of Commerce

National Newspaper Publishers Association
National Organization of Black County Officials (NOBCO)
National Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce
OCA – Asian Pacific American Advocates
Rainbow PUSH Coalition

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About MMTC:

The Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) is a non-partisan, national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving equal opportunity and civil rights in the mass media, telecommunications and broadband industries, and closing the digital divide. MMTC is generally recognized as the nation’s leading advocate for minority advancement in communications.