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Today's Positive Step For Broadcast Equal Employment Opportunity

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 14, 2019): The Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) commends the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) decision today to seek public comment on a proposal to ramp up enforcement of the FCC's broadcast employment nondiscrimination rule. The proposal to improve enforcement of the rule was offered by a diverse group of 33 national organizations, the "EEO Supporters," that are led by MMTC. Prior to today's vote, the proposal had been pending before the FCC since 2004.

The EEO Supporters asked the FCC specifically to ban the predominant use of word-of-mouth recruitment from a homogeneous workplace. This practice is suspect in a digital age in which publicly accessible internet postings of job vacancies is routinely, and easily, used to ensure broad recruitment. Since 1980, the FCC repeatedly has held that the predominant use of word-of-mouth recruitment is unlawful under these circumstances. The Commission's vote today marks a definitive step by the Pai administration toward preventing race and gender discrimination in FCC-regulated industries.

Maurita Coley, President and CEO of MMTC, made the following statement:

The Commission's vote today to open a comment period on EEO enforcement methods is long overdue and most welcome. MMTC especially recognizes and appreciates the eloquent advocacy of Commissioners Rosenworcel and Starks, who concurred in today's vote to underscore the urgency of aggressive equal employment opportunity enforcement.

MMTC will await the release of the text of today's decision before commenting in detail on Commission's plans.

Notably, the FCC's action today occurs on former FCC General Counsel Henry Geller's 95th birthday. Mr. Geller, who served as the FCC's general counsel during President Lyndon Johnson's administration, is a warrior whose quiet but compelling persuasion was instrumental in making the FCC, in 1968, the first federal agency to require equal employment opportunity by its licensees.

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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, telecom and broadband industries, and closing the digital divide. MMTC is generally recognized as the nation's leading advocate for minority advancement in communications.