

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 28, 2006

The Honorable Bill Frist
Majority Leader
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Frist and Minority Leader Reid:

As the Senate considers the nomination of John M.R. Kneuer for the position of assistant secretary for communications and information of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), we, the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, urge you to delay his nomination until he and the agency establish a renewed commitment to conducting periodic studies on the state of minority media ownership in the United States, a commitment that has been overlooked for the last six years.

As the Federal Communications Commission returns to the debate of rewriting its rules on media ownership, this is a critical time for lawmakers and regulators to be armed with sound data analysis on minority media ownership. Such data and analysis are necessary if we are to shape policies that both create a dynamic marketplace and serve the public interest. However, under the guidance of Mr. John Kneuer, the NTIA has demonstrated a disturbing lack of interest in this significant issue.

Consider the fact that as recently as this past spring organizations such as the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) submitted written letters to the secretary of Commerce denouncing the NTIA's failure to document and track the issues and trends affecting minority ownership. In a letter dated April 27, 2006, Mr. Kneuer, serving as acting assistant secretary for communications and information at the NTIA, responded to NAHJ stating that, "Viewpoint diversity, localism, and competition remain long-held values supporting broadcast regulation in the United States." However, despite an alleged interest in these values, Mr. Kneuer's letter stated that, "Presently, NTIA has no plans to conduct a minority ownership study." Instead of considering a return to a much needed research issue or giving a valid reason for why he is deciding not to continue the study, Mr. Kneuer directed NAHJ to the FCC's ownership reports, which are merely listings of information drawn from FCC licensing—not comprehensive data reports.

We are dismayed that the NTIA has not been more responsive to conducting studies on minority media ownership. It is troubling that the last report was released nearly six years ago, in


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December of 2000. If we as Members of Congress and the FCC are to improve diversity in the media industry, the NTIA must be dedicated to being accountable for its actions by responsibly tracking, analyzing, and reporting the impact of its policies (or potential policies) on media ownership. Ultimately, this dedication must stem from an NTIA executive who recognizes the value of diversity and encourages actions to improve diversity shortfalls.

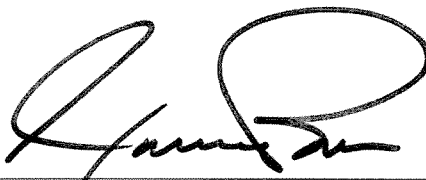
Until Mr. Kneuer and the NTIA commit to conducting studies on minority media ownership on a regular basis, we must ask that the nomination of Mr. Kneuer be delayed.

We thank you for your continued leadership and look forward to joining you in support of promoting government accountability, robust competition, and diversity in America's media industry.


Sincerely,



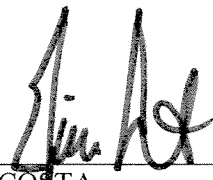
Grace Napolitano
Chairwoman
Congressional Hispanic Caucus




Xavier Becerra
Technology, Communications & Arts Task Force Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus




JOE BACA
Member of Congress



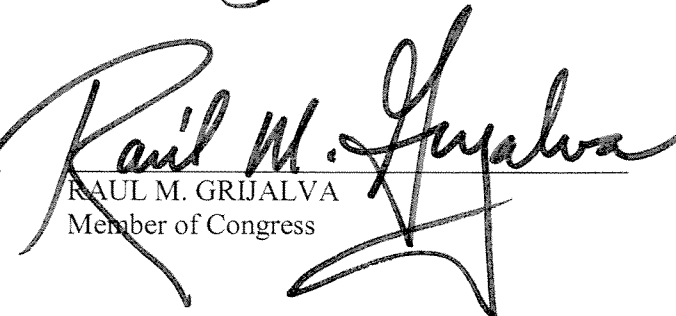
JIM COSTA
Member of Congress



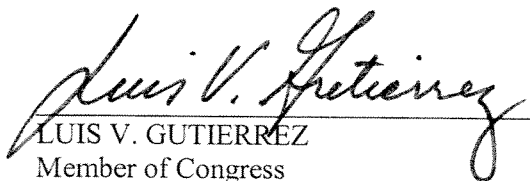
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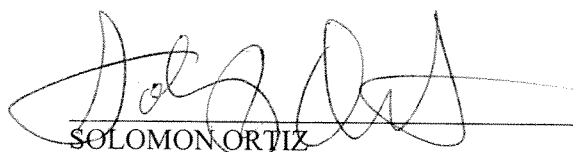
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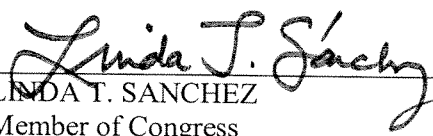

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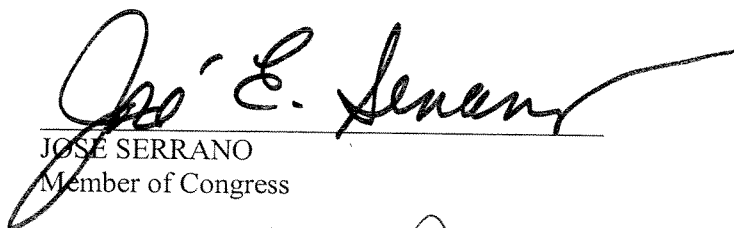

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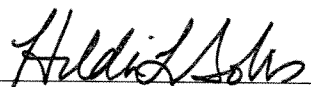

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Member of Congress

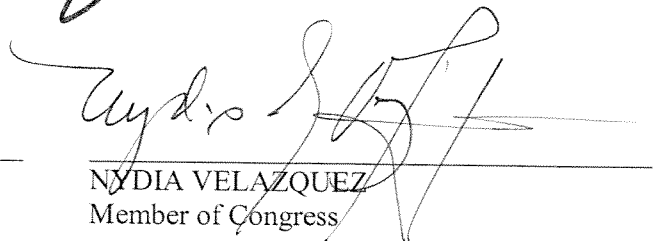

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