

Testimony of Moctesuma Esparza

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Members of the FCC, Commissioners, I want to thank you for the opportunity to address you.

By background I'm a movie producer having produced movies like "The Milagro Beanfield War," "Selena," "Gettysburg," "Gods and Generals" introducing Dorothy Dandridge. And most recently "Walkout" for HBO.

I'm also the former owner of Cable TV Systems here in Southern California having gotten franchises from the city of LA, the county of LA, San Bernardino and now am an entrepreneur in the media field.

One of the things that the actions of the FCC have promoted and created over the last ten years are an atmosphere where people of color, Latinos in particular, will probably never be able to create media companies that reflect their point of view about the world and where we will be able to practice the same nepotism that the rest of Hollywood practices. I would like to practice nepotism.

The lack of tax certificates, the lack of lotteries, the continuing focus on concentration of ownership which creates a feeding presence for private equity firms

that are continually looking for returns that are not productive, that are not creating new values but that are merely aggregating assets and then squeezing them so a new private equity firm can then turn around and buy them; this is the pattern of what has been created. It is what is going on right now with Univision. It is what's going on with all the various companies.

Concentration of ownership means that the largest population here in Southern California for Latinos over two-thirds of which are native born, who live in English, don't get to see themselves on English language television in entertainment programming or in news. Yes, there is value in the Spanish language news and public affairs programming and there is probably an over indexing of watching it because it's the only place we get to see ourselves. But the entertainment side of that programming is foreign produced and has almost nothing to do with our lives in the United States, creates no employment, creates no possibilities for careers in this country. And that is something that is profoundly disturbing because it presents an image of who we are that keeps us out of the mainstream, that keeps us from assimilating the values that people so much want us to have that the mainstream purports are the values of the country,

which are the values that are really the core values we've always had, which is family, marriage, children and hard work.

(Applause).

To this point the really important statistic about us, not as if we're not 15 percent of the country, is that we are 28 percent of everyone who is under 30. We're 28 percent of everyone who is under 30 and we're invisible in television.

Your actions have a far, far, far consequence in terms of what happens to this country. I as a Latino, as an American Latino feel a deep responsibility that we have an obligation to protect the values, the prosperity, the standard of living and the promise of the American dream. Unless my community is empowered by being able to see itself, by being able to know it's contributions we will be ill equipped to inherit this country, because we are inheriting it. And your future is a future of Brazil's; a place, a polarization of the extreme rich and the extreme poor, of the uneducated and of the super privileged. That is not the American dream. That is not what this country is about. That is not the promise of this country. That is not the promise of the party of Abraham Lincoln, of Theodore Roosevelt or

even of the actions of President Nixon who created many, many progressive stands in regards to tax certificates, diversity of ownership and promoting that minorities should be part of the economic mainstream of this country.

Where is that party? And where is that party going today? I long for the party of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. May it come back. That party would not have tolerated injustice. It would not have tolerated bias or the heat --hate speech that gets out thrown out on our airwaves by Ken and Bob who continually victimizing small children in a small school, charter schools here in Los Angeles. This is not the actions of a group of people who fear that their owners are going to make them accountability. Their owners don't even seem to know that they are spouting hate speech.

You need to hold these owners accountable. You need to look to the values of this country and how are we going to protect them.

I love this country. We need to protect those values.

Thank you very much.