

Testimony of Julian Do

Co-Director, New America Media

October 3, 2006

Good evening, Mr. Chairman and panel of Commissioners. My name is Julian Do. I'm the Co-Director of New America Media.

New America Media is the country's first and largest national collaboration of ethnic news organizations founded by the non-profit Pacific News Service in 1996. New America Media has headquarters in California where ethnic medias are the primary source of news, information for over half of the state's new ethnic majorities.

Our mission is to promote the editorial visibility and economic viability of these critical sectors of American journalism as a way to build inclusive public discourse in our increasingly diverse and global society. New America Media produces and advocates editorial content from ethnic media sectors and develops pioneering marketing service on behalf of corporations, foundations and non-profits who are targeting ethnic media's ethnic communities.

New America Media also distribute multilingual pollings to bring voices of ethnic audiences into national focus and organizing events to give ethnic media direct

access to decision makers in governments, business and academic and foundation non-profit work.

About ten years ago Los Angeles by then was already one of the most diverse cities in America. Ethnic media programs on electronic media has been pretty dismissal. Sure, there were Univision channel 34 and Telemundo 52 and a number of Spanish radios. But the growing population of Asian communities like Chinese, Korean, Filipino and the Middle Eastern communities has been - has very limited media's presence.

There has always been a hunger for news about local communities. But in a place like LA we are talking about what's happening not just in a general audience, but also in the African-American communities, what's happening in the Filipino communities and the Guatemalan community and so forth. Unfortunately, we are not getting that.

Adding more insult to the injuries when big mainstream media decided to do stories on the Cambodian or El Salvadoran communities, the stories tend to be about crimes or tragedies. Ethnic communities have been for years trying to engage mainstream medias about their communities and also as sources of insights for better reporting. Well, with

media consolidations the situation has become worse. Our frustrations, a number of ethnic groups have resorted to satellite programs, however not all ethnic household could afford the cost of monthly fees which often average about \$50 to \$100 a month.

Today I would say the situations for a major market like LA has somewhat improvement, but for some and not for the others. There are now five public access Spanish language TV stations Telemundo, KAY -- and Television. Spanish language radio also has a big presence in LA but KLAX and KRCD and so on. So Spanish language media is very well represented in LA.

For other ethnic groups, KSCI channel 18 has been a unique multicultural TV station which offers Koreans, Chinese, Vietnamese and Filipino programming. Vietnamese programming also has limited access to air time on KHLAY channel 44. There are also Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese program on multilingual radio network in Pasadena in Orange County. But all in all, given the fact that LA has been the minority majority demographics news program in content has not reflected that. This is not just about fairness, but also on the basis of providing comprehensive news about our society.

About two years ago we had a power discussion between mainstream and ethnic medias on how do you cover a city like LA where the population is so diverse. Often times to the extent of covering news stories among ethnic communities, large walkout media tend to focus more on the sensational stories like tragedies or crimes. The conclusion was that, sure, there is no single media entity today that could provide comprehensive news coverage by our diversities. However, big media consolidation has made the situation even worse.

And all the powers agree that by expanding adequate air time to the growing diverse communities, needed local news would also be enhanced.

While we are seeing a great improvement for Spanish language media and certain Asian communities, there are groups such as the Middle Eastern communities and the Southeast Asian communities like the Filipinos have hardly half an hour or zero air time. The Thai with 70,000 have no TV or radio air time. And the Cambodians, 50,000 have only two hours but on cable.

With limited time left I would go straight directly to our recommendations. We would like to highlight our major points.

(1) FCC should look into programs to identify very unserved communities to assist them with more air time. Media consolidation does effect sustainability of many ethnic broadcast program. Ethnic media has the advantage of offering economy of scales on one stop for cheaper and more competitive ad rates.

And lastly, although there are now many nation media broadcasts network offering multilingual programs, there is a big difference when the station is actually owned by a minority operator. It would give the minority broadcast operator a greater chance of being sustainable and also adequate resources to cover issues concerning ethnic communities that are often overlooked or cannot be covered well by large mainstream media.