



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release
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Immigrant Rights Groups Ask the FCC to Protect Civic Engagement Over Cell Phones

Washington, D.C. - This afternoon, in a [letter](#) to the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), nearly thirty non-profit organizations representing people of color and/or working towards comprehensive immigration reform requested that the FCC swiftly exert authority over cell phone text messages.

"Text messaging is a necessary tool for many members of our organizations and for countless public interest and civil rights groups because, while many of our constituents do not have Internet access, nearly all of them have wireless cell phones," said Alex Nogales, President and CEO of the National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC). "Wireless service providers should not be permitted to discriminate against certain types of text messages at the expense of the general public."

Communities of color have been using text messaging to encourage democratic participation and galvanize support for important causes. One example is our "Text JUSTICE" campaign, which relies on text messages to mobilize communities across the nation whenever action is needed to support immigration reform. With over 100,000 subscribers, some estimate that "Text JUSTICE" is the largest text message action list in the country. This has given voice to many who, traditionally, have not been heard in this important debate. And it has been used to great effect. In May of this year, the "Text JUSTICE" campaign was implemented to assemble over 500,000 people throughout 30 states in support of just and humane immigration reform. This is only one of the many examples of how text messaging plays a vital role in activism in our communities.

Nogales added, "In recent history, some mobile providers have begun a troubling trend of discriminating amongst text messaging traffic and refusing to deliver texts with which they disagree. Our organizations invest a great deal of time and money into text message advocacy and should not have to worry about the uncertainty of whether or not a service provider will deem our ideas worthy of transmittal."

Organizations signing onto the letter include: National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC); America's Voice; Arkansas Community Council; Casa de Maryland, Inc.; CAUSA Oregon; Center for Community Change; Center for New Community; Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA); Citizen Orange; Gamaliel Foundation; Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU); Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR); Latino Print Network; League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC); Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition; National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP); National Immigration Forum; National Institute of Latino Policy (NILP); National Immigration Law Center (NILC); National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC); Northwest Federation of Community Organizations and Community Organizations in Action; OneAmerica, Washington State; Reform Immigration FOR America; Rights for All People / Derechos Para Todos; SOMOS, New Mexico; Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC); Sunflower Community Action, Kansas; Voces de la Frontera, and WCAN!, Washington State.

The National Hispanic Media Coalition is a non-profit, media advocacy organization established in 1986 in Los Angeles, California. Our mission is to improve the image of American Latinos as portrayed by the media, increase the number of American Latinos employed in all facets of the media industry, and advocate for media and telecommunications policies that benefit the Latino community.