

October 11, 2022

The Honorable Charlotte A. Burrows
Chairwoman
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
131 M Street NE
Washington, DC 20507

Dear Chairwoman Burrows,

Thank you for your diligent work in combating systemic racism since your appointment – your equity action plan the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) released further displays your commitment to the cause and will promote inclusion in federal workspaces.¹

As you know, over the past two years, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has been researching the underrepresentation of Latinos in the American media and entertainment workforce. In 2020, I requested that the GAO look into the exclusion of Latinos in the media and entertainment industry. The media and entertainment industry is the narrative-creating and imagine-defining institution in the United States. As such, it plays a vital role in communicating stories of past and present to the American public.

In 2021, the GAO's first report found that despite making up nearly 20 percent of the U.S. population and 18 percent of the workforce, Latinos only make up just 12 percent of workers in the media and entertainment industry. Without Latino voices to tell Latino stories, the void in our narrative becomes filled with harmful stereotypes about Latinos that are dangerous for our community and for the country as a whole. For example, "[o]ver half of American adults believe it is either completely true or somewhat true that the United States is experiencing an invasion at the southern border."³

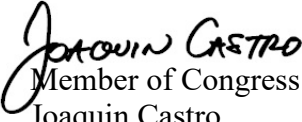
Last week, the GAO released their second report, which 1) details trends in Latino representation in the media and entertainment workforce over the past decade, 2) reviews best practices for diversity and inclusion adopted by the top 25 media companies, and 3) examines the federal government's role in antidiscrimination enforcement. Specifically, the GAO recommended that the EEOC enter into another memorandum of understanding with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that requires the EEOC to routinely share information on discrimination charges filed against broadcasters and cable and satellite television operations with the FCC. The report also recommends that the EEOC improve its approach to identifying local unions required to file an EEO-3 report.

¹ <https://www.eeoc.gov/equity>

In response to the report's recommendations, the EEOC agreed that data quality is vital when it comes to enforcing the nation's equal opportunity laws. However, the EEOC's comments lacked a thorough plan for implementing a new memorandum of understanding with the FCC and did not make any commitments to identifying local unions that are required to file an EEO-3 to ensure that they file such reports on the demographics of union members. As such, I respectfully ask that the EEOC produce a detailed plan about how the EOCC will enter a new memorandum of understanding with the FCC about routinely sharing data on discrimination charges against broadcasters and satellite television operators, even if this requires a majority vote from Commissioners, or how the EEOC will ensure that it is routinely sharing information about these charges with the FCC. I also respectfully ask for a detailed plan on how the EEOC will improve its process of routinely identifying local unions that are also local referral unions that need to file EEO-3 reports.

EEOC is in a unique position to help combat discrimination and racism in the media and entertainment workforce. We anticipate your response within 30 days, and we thank you for your attention and prompt response. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Celeste Acevedo at Celeste.Acevedo@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,


Member of Congress
Joaquin Castro