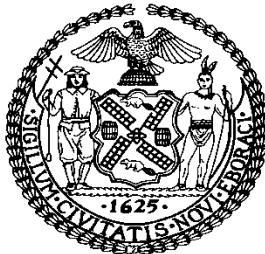


Committee Staff:

Committee on Immigration

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## THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

### **BRIEFING PAPER**

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### **COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION**

Hon. Carlos Menchaca, Chair

**January 27, 2016**

### **OVERSIGHT:**

How can the City Support Ethnic Media to Ensure that Immigrant Communities Receive Information on Local Matters?

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

On January 27, 2016, the Committee on Immigration, chaired by Carlos Menchaca, will hold a public hearing to learn about how shifting trends in ethnic and minority media could impact the amount of information immigrant and minority communities receive about local matters.<sup>1</sup> The Committee will explore ways in which the City can support ethnic and minority media and, in turn, support immigrant and minority communities. Representatives from the New York City Mayor’s Office for Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), members of the local ethnic and minority press, as well as community leaders are expected to testify.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

A 2005 report Bendixen & Associates prepared for the New California Media in conjunction with the Center for American Progress and Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund claims that roughly a quarter of the U.S. population is either a primary or secondary consumer of ethnic media. “Primary consumers” are defined as individuals who rely primarily on ethnic media for information.<sup>2</sup> Of the 64 million adults sampled in the study, 29 million of them were considered primary consumers.<sup>3</sup> The report states that “45 percent of all African American, Hispanic, Asian American, Native American and Arab American adults prefer ethnic television, radio or newspapers to their mainstream counterparts.”<sup>4</sup> “Secondary consumers” are those adults who “prefer mainstream media but also access ethnic television, radio, newspapers or websites on a

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<sup>1</sup> “Ethnic Media in America: The Giant Hidden in Plain Sight,” New California Media, Center for American Progress, and Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, 2005, available at: <http://www.npr.org/documents/2005/jul/ncmfreport.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

regular basis.” The study found that approximately 22 million of the sampled adults fell into this category.<sup>5</sup> The report derives that, since 51 million of the 64 adults sampled were either primary or secondary consumers of ethnic media, accordingly, approximately 80 percent of the ethnic populations in the U.S. that they studied are reached by ethnic media regularly.<sup>6</sup>

a. Print News Media

The Nielsen Scarboroughs’s 2014 Newspaper Penetration Report found that roughly 56 percent of newspaper readers consume newspapers only in their printed form.<sup>7</sup> Despite the high reliance on print media sources, in 2014, news outlets saw a five percent decline in print advertising revenue and between three and four percent decline in circulation.<sup>8</sup> While there were gains in digital media advertising revenues, the increase was not enough to offset print advertising losses.<sup>9</sup>

The impact of these declines on ethnic and minority media was addressed in the Pew Research Center’s annual “State of the News Media 2015” report which states that, in 2014, “three major long-standing Hispanic daily newspapers saw decreases in print circulation.”<sup>10</sup> This includes New York City’s daily Spanish-language newspaper, El Diario La Prensa which saw a nine percent drop in circulation.<sup>11</sup> Recently, El Diario La Prensa’s new management came under scrutiny for allegedly “redirect[ing] their coverage toward national news and hav[ing] cut roughly three-quarters of the paper’s editorial staff

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> Barthel, Michael. “State of the News Media 2015: Newspaper Fact Sheet,” Pew Research Center, April 29, 2015, available at: <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/newspapers-fact-sheet/>.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> Matsa, Katerina Eva. “State of the News Media 2015: Hispanic Media Fact Sheet,” Pew Research Center, April 29, 2015, available at: <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/hispanic-media-fact-sheet/>.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

since taking over.”<sup>12</sup> Similarly, circulation has dropped among African-American newspapers nation-wide, including the New York Amsterdam News which saw a seven percent drop in 2014.<sup>13</sup>

b. Digital News Media

Research shows that among the top 25 digital news outlets, the majority are those like the New York Times and the Washington Post, which have the largest mainstream U.S. circulation.<sup>14</sup> Although these 25 receive the most web-traffic, it appears that readers do not stay engaged for long. The findings show that, on average, viewers accessing this national content through computers or mobile devices spent an average of only three minutes on the site, which led the Pew Research Center to the conclusion that viewers turned to these sites with the intent of browsing rather than seeking out information.<sup>15</sup> The Pew Research Center also concluded that these results support the findings of a separate study, which uncovered that “the vast majority of local residents prefer their local paper to newspaper brands such as the [New York] Times” – most news seekers look to local outlets when seeking specific information.”<sup>16</sup>

c. Television News Media

While arguably not to the extent of print news media, many ethnic and minority television news outlets are also facing declines in revenue and programming. The Pew

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<sup>12</sup> Planas, Roque. “America’s Oldest Spanish-Language Newspaper Struggles for Survival,” The Huffington Post: Huffpost Media, January 15, 2016, available at:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/spanish-language-newspaper-struggles-for-survival\\_us\\_568fec9de4b0cad15e64837c](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/spanish-language-newspaper-struggles-for-survival_us_568fec9de4b0cad15e64837c).

<sup>13</sup> Vogt, Nancy. “State of the News Media 2015: African American Media Fact Sheet,” Pew Research Center, April 29, 2015, available at: <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/african-american-media-fact-sheet/>.

<sup>14</sup> Barthel, Michael. “State of the News Media 2015: Newspaper Fact Sheet,” Pew Research Center, April 29, 2015, available at: <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/newspapers-fact-sheet/>.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

Research Center reports that “[a]udiences for news programs on Univision, the largest Spanish-language media company in the U.S., were down in 2014 compared with 2013 at the national and local levels.”<sup>17</sup> While certain gains were made for African-American targeted television programming, significant employee cuts and reduction in local news production seem to mitigate the gains.<sup>18</sup>

#### d. Impact on Ethnic and Minority Media

The Los Angeles based Metamorphosis Project first introduced the concept of “geo-ethnic media” and highlighted its role in “engaging new immigrants in community belonging and civic engagement.”<sup>19</sup> Research shows that ethnic and minority media sources are more likely to carry information about local community events, such as health fairs, clinics and programs” than mainstream sources.<sup>20</sup> Studies of African-American newspapers show that they are more likely to “dispens[e] personal mobilization information (e.g., how to get help),” as well as prioritize issues of particular concern to the African-American community.<sup>21</sup> Experts suggest a strong likelihood that the same principles “hold for Latino media (both Spanish language and “geo-ethnic” targeted media) and Hispanic populations.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Matsa, Katerina Eva. “State of the News Media 2015: Hispanic Media Fact Sheet,” Pew Research Center, April 29, 2015, available at: <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/hispanic-media-fact-sheet/>.

<sup>18</sup> Vogt, Nancy, “State of the News Media 2015: African American Media Fact Sheet,” Pew Research Center, April 29, 2015, available at: <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/african-american-media-fact-sheet/>.

<sup>19</sup> Kong, Shuyu. “Geo-Ethnic Story Telling,” Media and Communication in the Chinese Diaspora: Rethinking Transnationalism,” September 2015, excerpt available at: <https://books.google.com/books?id=s-6PCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA152&lpg=PA152&dq=impact+of+ethnic+media+on+society&source=bl&ots=Z-ENfknWNb&sig=aQ0XdBvGHXIDueP0uKjxn8EjozU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwih3bnO1afKAhWKNiYKHf9sBoUQ6AEIXTAJ#v=onepage&q=impact%20of%20ethnic%20media%20on%20society&f=false>

<sup>20</sup> Len-Rios, Maria E., Cohen, Elisia, and Caburnay, Charlene. “Readers use Black Newspapers for Health/Cancer Information.” National Institute of Health, *Newsp Res J.* 2010 WINTER; 31(1): 20–35, available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3152198/>.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

### **III. LOCAL USE OF ETHNIC AND MINORITY MEDIA**

The City of New York has long collaborated with local news outlets to ensure that information about local matters and resources is disseminated widely. Additionally, the City has placed special focus on partnering with local ethnic and minority media to ensure that important information reaches immigrant and minority communities in a timely manner and comes from trusted sources.

In 2013, there were more than 270 publications that served New York City's immigrant and minority communities.<sup>23</sup> The combined circulation of these publications totaled 4.5 million, roughly 55 percent of the city's population, and received 18 percent of the City's \$18 million advertising budget.<sup>24</sup> The City's allocation of advertising dollars has, at times, come under scrutiny.<sup>25</sup>

An analysis published by the Center for Community and Ethnic Media of the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism in 2013 found that, between November 2010 and November 2011, the City spent 3.7 percent of its advertising dollars on Spanish-language publications; 2.8 percent on outlets serving the Chinese community, approximately 1.6 percent on outlets targeting the African American community; and lower percentages for Russian, Korean, and Haitian publications. The Center recommended that the City, as part of its language access initiatives, diversify its advertising contractors and adjust the

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<sup>23</sup> Center for Community and Ethnic Media. "Getting the Word Out: How and Where New York City Advertises," CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, March 2013, available at: <http://ccem.journalism.cuny.edu/research/>

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> *Id.* ("In a testy exchange, with more than 100 small ethnic publishers at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism in January 2012, Coffey tried to explain why the city's advertising budget has remained so narrowly focused on a handful of large, mainstream English-language publications.")

advertising spending percentages to better reflect New York City’s ethnic, racial and cultural makeup.<sup>26</sup>

#### **IV. ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

Evidence suggests that “print only” newspaper readers are less likely to have gone to college, have lower incomes, and are generally less engaged with local civic and political activities such as neighborhood organizations or contacting elected officials.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, locally produced news programs provide an important intersection between different communicative spaces, while at the same time responding to the more local and immediate needs of diasporic audiences.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the significant reduction in print media and locally sourced content may have a detrimental impact on communities that are already at high risk of being marginalized.<sup>29</sup>

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

Today’s hearing will examine what, if anything, the City of New York can do to support ethnic media in order to ensure that immigrant communities receive information on local matters. The hearing will also provide an opportunity for City agencies, members of the local ethnic and minority press, as well as community leaders, to share their concerns and recommendations on the matter.

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<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

<sup>27</sup> Barthel, Michael, “Around half of newspaper readers rely only on print edition,” Pew Research Center, January 6, 2016, available at: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/06/around-half-of-newspaper-readers-rely-only-on-print-edition/>.

<sup>28</sup> Kong, Shuyu, “Geo-Ethnic Story Telling,” Media and Communication in the Chinese Diaspora: Re-thinking Transnationalism,” September 2015, excerpt available at: <https://books.google.com/books?id=s-6PCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA152&lpg=PA152&dq=impact+of+ethnic+media+on+society&source=bl&ots=Z-ENfnkWNb&sig=aQ0XdBvGHXIDueP0uKjxn8EjzU&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwih3bnO1afKAhWKNiYKHF9sBoUQ6AEIXTAJ#v=onepage&q=impact%20of%20ethnic%20media%20on%20society&f=false>

<sup>29</sup> *Id.*