



Minority Media & Telecommunications Council
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January 31, 2008

Derek Poarch, Esq.
Chief
Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Emergency Alert System, EB Dockets 06-119 and 04-296

Dear Mr. Poarch:

The Commission's recent release of the Emergency Alert System Handbook is a welcome step toward creating a uniformed structure of disseminating vital information throughout our country during times of emergency. However, although Spanish language EAS alerts are specifically authorized in the rules, the Commission erred by failing to publish a Spanish language edition of the Handbook.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2006 American Community Survey, nearly 20% of people living in the United States – including almost the entire population of Puerto Rico - speak a language other than English in their homes. Further, many broadcast employees who could happen to be on duty during an emergency are not fluent in English. Thus, without a Spanish language version of the Handbook, a portion of our population is left vulnerable to the life or death consequences of natural disasters, threats and attacks to our country.

We trust that the Commission appreciates the sense of urgency in publishing a Spanish-language version of the Handbook before an event arises that requires the critical information that the EAS is intended to provide to our entire population.

Sincerely,

David Honig

David Honig
Counsel for the Independent Spanish Broadcasters
Association, the Office of Communication of the
United Church of Christ, Inc., and the Minority
Media and Telecommunications Council

cc: Frank Montero, Esq.
Cheryl Leanza, Esq.