

THE NATIONAL HISPANIC MEDIA COALITION, FREE PRESS, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS, AND ALLIES PRESSURE FACEBOOK ON SPANISH LANGUAGE DISINFORMATION GAP AHEAD OF SENATE HEARING

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Los Angeles, CA. – The National Hispanic Media Coalition, Free Press, the Center for American Progress, and several allies sent a letter to Mark Zuckerberg and Sheryl Sandberg to put pressure on Facebook's top leadership to address the inaction to curb the spread of Spanish-language disinformation. During his appearance before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Blumenthal challenged Mark Zuckerberg on Facebook's failure to protect Latinx and BIPOC communities from disinformation.

This letter comes in the wake of multiple asks from civil rights advocates to address Facebook's incompetent Spanish-language content moderation practices throughout the 2020 Election cycle and beyond. While calls to violence and false information are often taken down in English, various Spanish-language posts containing the same or similar content remain online to this day.

Joining this letter are over a dozen civil rights and social justice champions: Color Of Change, Global Project Against Hate and Extremism, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Hispanics in Philanthropy, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), MediaJustice, Mi Familia Vota, National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures, National Hispanic Media Coalition, National Latinx Psychological Association, The TransLatin@ Coalition, UltraViolet, UnidosUS, United States Hispanic Leadership Institute, Inc., and Voto Latino.

The following can be attributed to Brenda V. Castillo, President & CEO, National Hispanic Media Coalition: "White supremacists use disinformation as ammunition to target Spanish-language audiences, stripping dignity and humanity from our online experiences. Instead of safeguarding our democracy, Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook coddle white supremacists and conspiracists. Facebook's inaction to ensure Latinx and the Spanish-speaking people are safe on their platform conveys an insulting message. We are exhausted with Facebook's incompetency and refusal to take our lives seriously."

The following can be attributed to Carmen Scurato, Senior Policy Counsel, Free Press: "Facebook has shown blatant indifference toward stopping the spread of Spanish-language disinformation. Disinformation merchants targeted the Latinx community with conspiracy theories and lies during the run-up to the election. Facebook failed to remove this content, even though it violated Facebook policies, simply because the disinformation was in Spanish. That's unacceptable. Facebook must shore up efforts to protect the Latinx community and ensure that its platforms are no longer weaponized against marginalized communities."

The following can be attributed to Jessica Cobian, Senior Campaign Manager, Center for American Progress: "During today's Senate Judiciary hearing, Mark Zuckerberg claimed to be working on combating Spanish-language disinformation. Yet despite multiple warnings from our organizations about hateful activities and rampant election disinformation in Spanish, Facebook has repeatedly refused to remove much of the content that we have identified. We urge Facebook to make sufficient investments in Spanish-speaking, culturally competent content moderators, managers, and policymakers to understand and address hateful content targeting Spanish speakers in the U.S. If Facebook is committed to election integrity, it must make meaningful commitments to reconciling its glaring Spanish-language gap."

Our concerns continue to be ignored by Facebook and its leaders after years-long advocacy. Facebook's need to protect the Latinx and BIPOC communities will continue far beyond this election season.

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WHERE :

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