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November 24, 2009

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CEO
Viacom Inc.
1515 Broadway
New York, NY 10036

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Dear Mr. Dauman:

SECRETARY
John F. Calvelli

The National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) would like to express its concern and displeasure with the upcoming MTV reality program *Jersey Shore*. Witnessing the promotional video alone was enough to create a high amount of concern specifically highlighting the language and examples of what we are fearful may depict Italian Americans in an unflattering light that reinforces incorrect and negative stereotypes of an entire ethnic group.

GENERAL COUNSEL
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We find this program alarming in that it attempts to make a direct connection between “guido culture” and Italian-American identity. “Guido” is widely viewed as a pejorative term and reinforces negative stereotypes. While some Italian Americans may adhere to the *guido culture*, the attempt to directly interconnect *Guido* and Italian American is not only inaccurate but alarming. A show such as this one is a giant leap backwards for our society and damages the image and sensibilities of Italian Americans. Italian Americans as a group have provided substantial contributions to all areas of American society ranging from art, business, education, politics and so much more.

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As the largest ethnic group in New Jersey and the nation’s fifth largest, Italian Americans constitute a substantial market. If this program were to be shown, NIAF would alert our constituency and the American public about its harmful nature. We urge the Viacom/MTV leadership to re-evaluate the idea of showing this program.

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Italian American contributions to New Jersey and the United States are considerable. New Jersey has produced prominent Italian Americans such as Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr., General Raymond T. Odierno and Bruce Springsteen. MTV should make a program about that instead.

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The National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational foundation that promotes Italian American culture and heritage and is committed to promoting a positive image of Italian Americans. NIAF is the voice for Italian Americans in Washington, DC and works closely with the Italian American Congressional Delegation and The White House while serving as an educational resource on the community. Should you wish to discuss this, please contact Johnny Strada at NIAF at (202) 939-3121 or jstrada@niaf.org.

Sincerely,

Robert Allegrini
Chairman, Image Enhancement Committee

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
John Marino

*NIAF Regional Vice President

CC: Ms. Judy McGrath, Chairman and CEO, MTV Networks