



Samuel A.A. Levine
Commissioner

42 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dial 311
(212-NEW-YORK)

nyc.gov/dcwp

Remarks as Prepared: DCWP Commissioner Levine Delivers Remarks at Community and Ethnic Media Roundtable

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Thank you, Deputy Mayor Su and Commissioner Ali.

Good afternoon! I'm Commissioner Sam Levine of the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection.

Thank you everyone for being here today! This roundtable brings together key City agencies with media professionals whose reporting serves New York's immigrant communities as a critical source of news and connection.

Across New York City, immigrant communities continue to face barriers when navigating government systems, accessing worker protections, and understanding the resources available to them.

In a moment where we see ICE dragging people out of hospitals and disappeared off the street, DCWP has never been more committed to reaching immigrant New Yorkers directly and helping them understand their rights as workers, consumers and small business owners.

And when it comes to multimillion-dollar mergers trying to squeeze immigrant wallets? DCWP's answer is simple: not on our watch.

The proposed \$500 million merger of money remittance companies Western Union and Intermex is cause for serious concern.

In a comment the Mayor Mamdani submitted to the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) last month, we expressed alarm that the merger will hurt working families and immigrant communities in New York City who rely on money transfer services.

In addition to a 1% excise tax on cash remittance transactions imposed by the recent federal omnibus budget reconciliation bill, the merger threatens to impose a new private tax on these same remittances in the form of higher, supracompetitive prices that will flow directly to Western Union's corporate coffers.



Weak merger enforcement isn't confined to Wall Street or Silicon Valley. It is showing up as a tax on immigrants and working families across New York City.

From the highest corporate levels to everyday life in New York City, DCWP is thoroughly committed to leveraging its authority to deliver economic relief and protect immigrant New Yorkers from predatory, deceptive, and unfair practices.

To that end, in March, DCWP's enforcement teams conducted 275 inspections of Immigrant Service Providers throughout the five boroughs, resulting in over 40 summonses and over 150 violations.

Our work sends a clear message: exploiting immigrant communities will not be tolerated in New York City.

That is why today's conversation matters. Ethnic media is often the first and most trusted source of information in immigrant communities. You help bridge the gap between city resources and the people who need them most.

By working together — agencies and community media — we can ensure immigrant New Yorkers receive accurate information, avoid fraud, and access the services they deserve safely and with dignity.

New York City's strength has always come from its immigrant communities. Our responsibility is to ensure that every New Yorker — regardless of their immigration status — has the information and support they need to thrive.

Thank you.