November 7, 2017

To: FCC

From: Gary Luke

Re: MB Docket No. 17-289

I have no financial stake in the change in rulings under consideration. I am merely an interested citizen.

I take issue with the reasoning for eliminating the Newspaper/Broadcast Cross-Ownership Rule and the Radio/Television Cross-Ownership Rule.

Those rules were put in place to preserve viewpoint diversity in local markets. The logic of the present recommendation to eliminate these rules is that diversity of views has been achieved, presumably by the expansion of internet channels. I agree that the unfiltered internet provides many opinions, but I make a distinction between channels that adhere to the guidelines of journalistic reporting—traditional newspapers, television news, radio news—and the anything-goes output found on blogs, social media, and highly partisan information sources. The latter can furnish thoughtful, provocative, and compelling ideas—but we must not call that journalism. By their own admission, services such as Google, Facebook and Twitter are not institutions of journalism. And no such professional standards are required of the sources that employ Google, Facebook, and Twitter to circulate their content.

The institution of news journalism is a core feature of public discourse in this country—relied upon by the nation. I fear that the proposed elimination of ownership rules will ultimately make singular viewpoints dominant. That will move the country irresponsibly in the wrong direction.