Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

November 5, 2014

1175

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

It has come to our attention that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has received two Applications for Review calling into question the Media Bureau's decision to renew the license of New Jersey broadcast station, WWOR-TV. We hope you will swiftly evaluate the concerns outlined and reconsider the decision in light of the many claims raised by stakeholders.

For years, the people of New Jersey, public interest groups, and New Jersey's community leaders have called on the FCC to ensure this station, which utilizes public airwaves, serves its legal obligation to provide local news and information to our communities. In 1982, WWOR-TV[1] relocated from New York to Secaucus, New Jersey, explicitly in order to renew its television license under Section 331 of the Communications Act of 1934, which states the FCC shall allocate a television frequency license to a state that does not have one. Thus, when the FCC granted this license, it was expected that the station would serve the special needs of Northern New Jersey. To this day, the station has not met its obligation to fulfill these original programing requirements, yet has been able to continue its operations. The shortcomings of this station have persisted for decades, and it is troubling that that despite years of insufficient New Jersey-specific programming, the FCC decided to renew the station's license.

Furthermore, the station has been operated in violation of the FCC's own media ownership rules since 2000. The Commission's staff provided a temporary waiver which, unless reversed, allows an otherwise prohibited cross-ownership to take place for many more years to come, undermining the FCC's goal of promoting diversity and localism in the media.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this important issue. We urge you to carefully consider the Applications for Review and act expeditiously in your deliberations. We hope your final decision will be consistent and reflect the FCC's longstanding policy goals of diversity, localism, and competition that serve as the cornerstones of American communications policy.

[1] The license holder for WWOR-TV has undergone several transfers and is currently held by Fox.

Sincerely,

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

Robert Menendez
United States Senator

Frank Pallone, Jr.
United States Representative

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 26, 2014

The Honorable Robert Menendez
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Menendez:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Applications for Review filed in the license renewal proceeding regarding WWOR-TV. I appreciate hearing your views and recognize your long-standing interest in this matter. Your letter will be made a part of the record of the proceeding.

As you note, the Media Bureau granted WWOR-TV's license renewal on August 8, 2014, finding that the station had operated in the public interest, convenience, and necessity over the prior license term after reviewing the extensive record developed in the proceeding, including the allegations that the station has failed to meet its obligations to Northern New Jersey residents. The pending Applications for Review were timely filed subsequent to the Bureau's action and are currently under review.

I agree with you that the Commission should quickly resolve these pending issues, and I know that each of the petitioners met with my staff this month to discuss their filings in detail. I assure you that the concerns raised by the parties are being carefully considered and will be presented to the full Commission for consideration in the coming weeks.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 26, 2014

The Honorable Cory Booker
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Booker:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Applications for Review filed in the license renewal proceeding regarding WWOR-TV. I appreciate hearing your views and recognize your long-standing interest in this matter. Your letter will be made a part of the record of the proceeding.

As you note, the Media Bureau granted WWOR-TV's license renewal on August 8, 2014, finding that the station had operated in the public interest, convenience, and necessity over the prior license term after reviewing the extensive record developed in the proceeding, including the allegations that the station has failed to meet its obligations to Northern New Jersey residents. The pending Applications for Review were timely filed subsequent to the Bureau's action and are currently under review.

I agree with you that the Commission should quickly resolve these pending issues, and I know that each of the petitioners met with my staff this month to discuss their filings in detail. I assure you that the concerns raised by the parties are being carefully considered and will be presented to the full Commission for consideration in the coming weeks.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 26, 2014

The Honorable Frank Pallone
U.S. House of Representatives
237 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pallone:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Applications for Review filed in the license renewal proceeding regarding WWOR-TV. I appreciate hearing your views and recognize your long-standing interest in this matter. Your letter will be made a part of the record of the proceeding.

As you note, the Media Bureau granted WWOR-TV's license renewal on August 8, 2014, finding that the station had operated in the public interest, convenience, and necessity over the prior license term after reviewing the extensive record developed in the proceeding, including the allegations that the station has failed to meet its obligations to Northern New Jersey residents. The pending Applications for Review were timely filed subsequent to the Bureau's action and are currently under review.

I agree with you that the Commission should quickly resolve these pending issues, and I know that each of the petitioners met with my staff this month to discuss their filings in detail. I assure you that the concerns raised by the parties are being carefully considered and will be presented to the full Commission for consideration in the coming weeks.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler