

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules.

I AM ALARMED AND OUTRAGED THAT THE FCC IS EVEN CONSIDERING SCRAPPING THE REMAINING RULES REGARDING THE CONSOLIDATION OF MEDIA OWNERSHIP WITHIN MARKETS.

Chairman Powell has purportedly said that little if any public comment need be solicited because it can all be done via the Internet. However, the fact that the broadcast media - which have a major conflict of interest in the matter of market and media consolidation - have reported on the story only once since last Fall (at 4:30 a.m.) clearly illustrates the nature of the problem. If the media fail to inform the public about this or any issue, the public remain ignorant and powerless to comment. Catch-22.

THE PUBLIC OWNS THE AIRWAVES, not the government and not the for-profit corporations that lease them from the government. It is the government's responsibility to serve the public in this matter and therefore to solicit as much public input as possible, not the least or the most convenient. A single meeting in Richmond, VA is laughably inadequate. Board member Coppes is to be applauded for his integrity in bringing hearings to other cities and for helping to alert the public the danger we now face.

THE DISSEMINATION OF DIVERSE VOICES AND INFORMATION IS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM OF DEMOCRACY. Without it, we will be irrevocably weakened, cut off at the knees, just as HIV/AIDS kills by destroying the body's defense mechanisms.

I BESEECH THE FCC NOT TO CHANGE THE RULES. I WOULD RATHER SEE A HALT ON FURTHER CONSOLIDATION AS CURRENTLY ALLOWED UNDER THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996.

YOURS SINCERELY  
Peter van der Ven, DMD



SEATTLE

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DEAR FCC -

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I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277. The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. I believe that the Commission's traditional goals—to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market—can only be served by retaining all of the current media ownership rules under review. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already large entities in the broadcast industry.

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I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative effects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. *There may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.*

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is a central pillar of our democracy that founders of the country believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If FCC policy changes to allow national media "market share" to be concentrated among still fewer "corporations," the public's ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

I strongly urge the FCC to pay attention to the public comments received at public hearing in Richmond, New York, Seattle, Durham, and hopefully in other cities around the nation. I think it is important for the FCC to consider not only the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

Thank you.

*John D. ...*  
SEATTLE, WA

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