I support media diversity
I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The BiennialReview of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

I have very little in common with the "homogenized" presentations by production companies in New York or Los Angeles. These are not the areas in which I live! My neighbors and I gather around the radio here to listen to local announcers and programming. Some of this is funded by the Public Television or Radio organizations, and not privately. These sources of news and reporting are independent but struggling.

I believe they are at risk in any of the changes proposed by the FCC or anyone else who would like to remove the word "public" from the mission statement of the FCC. Competition in the media is not the same as competition in the marketplace. Ideas are free, or that's what we hope. With too much competition (by changing ownership rules) some smaller voices will be crushed and the voice of the people will be removed to smaller and less significant venues. This is perhaps a more comfortable place for those wishing these rules to be changed.

During the Peristroika of the former USSR, Harry Shearer once said, "If you want freedom of the Press, go to Moscow!" This is more true than ever!

The "real story" behind our government's inner processes is being obliterated by the bright lights of the major media who act like they have no business investigating where our tax dollars are spent. This is not MY media, but it's what we got and it's insufficient compared to what was available during the 1960's. Too much has dissolved in the way of protections of the public against the successful and the rich who seek to dominate any agency of the federal government which has the words "Public Interest" in their mission statement.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While 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 part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition, I support the FCC's plan to hold a public hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA in February 2003. I strongly encourage the Commission to hold similar hearings in all parts of the country and solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be

the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Sincerely,

CF Perez