

I support media diversity

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 urge the Commissioners and Congress to consider that THE PUBLIC AIRWAYS BELONG TO THE PUBLIC - NOT CORPORATE BROADCASTERS. The media uses our airwaves at OUR discretion. Permission to use our airwaves brings in billions of dollars to the media in the form of corporate profit. In return for this, the media OWES a great debt to the American people. That debt to us is paid by providing us with balanced and fair information, diverse viewpoints and entertainment as well as a full range of community services including local public affairs programming and public service announcements.

The FCC has argued that there are more media outlets today than ever before. Technically this is true. But, the spectrum of views presented it has become more limited than at any time in history!

A free and unfettered Fourth Estate is essential to the future of a free and robust democratic society. Putting control of the Fourth Estate into the hands of mega-corporations whose entire interest is in increasing profits with as little as possible thought to serving the public interest is UNTHINKABLE and DANGEROUS!

A case in point. The virtual SILENCE on this issue from the very media conglomerates that stand to gain from the proposed rulemaking. Doesn't this concern you????? Doesn't this make you consider that rushing to further deregulate the media might not be the prudent action to take?

And just what is the rush? ONE public hearing to gather input from the public on this matter that affects the entire nation - every man, woman and child? Disgraceful! Combined with the media's silence on the matter it is no wonder that more than 70% of the public is unaware of the proposed rulemaking.

Once the genie is out of the bottle, it does no good to hold post-rulemaking hearings. Except, of course, to inform the public of how they have been robbed. It is essential that the rulemaking be at the very least postponed until the American public is fully informed of the ramifications of media deregulation and has a chance to respond. Am I being cynical in thinking that the American public will be outraged at this wholesale give-away of their rights to be informed and that this is the real reason that just one hearing has been held? That the media is silent on the issue?

In an effort to be totally honest, I must admit that I have an intimate, personal knowledge of deregulation. I cannot talk about that "personal knowledge" because I had to sign, under duress, a separation agreement that precludes sharing my information when I was "downsized" from my position at one of those media giants that will greatly gain by further media deregulation. But what I know does not bode well for the American public's right to know and be served by the media.

Thank you,

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