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

As a citizen, I am concerned about a healthy democracy, which requires a diversity of views and robust debate.

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. In fact, the rules have already been considerably loosened with deliterious effect over the past three decades. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

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. In fact, much of the data upon which the studies were based was received from the very industry that stands to benefit from further media consolidation. The FCC did not have the time or apparently the inclination to find the facts for itself based on independent information.

The airwaves belong the public. The FCC is charged by statute to regulate the public airwaves in the public interest. In this, the current proposals are plainly delinquent.

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.

A healthy democracy requires a robust exchange of views from many diverse sources.

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

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to 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.

Please do not let the media be controlled by just a handful of huge companies. In order to have a healthy democracy, it is essential for more than one political opinion to be reflected in the media.

I am deeply concerned that the FCC commissioners and staff took millions of dollars in trips and other perks from the very industry the FCC is supposed to regulate and the very actors that will benefit directly from further media consolidation. At the same time, virtually no such benefits were received from consumer rights organizations.

I also understand that the comments received are overwhelmingly (>99:1) against further relaxation of the rules. In a democracy, while public comment is not dispositive on any issue such as this, the views of the public for whom the FCC is supposed to regulate the airwaves should be taken into account. At the very least, this public outcry should result in extensive public hearings accross the country.

Sincerely,

George Brieger
181 Webster Avenue
Brooklyn, New York