

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,

As a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am greatly disappointed by the lack of informative television programming.

Local public affairs programming is virtually non-existent--constituting less than one half of 1% of all local programming. More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Our democracy is at risk when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections.

Since broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us. One of the reasons some citizens choose not to vote is they are unsure who to vote for. It is becoming extremely difficult to know what is truth and what is a lie. You can watch tv and see a positive ad for an official and say "hey thats who I am going to vote for" and then the next day see a negative ad for the same person. So what do you do now? In order to really know who you are voting for and back your choice 100% you have to research. Many people do not have the time or resources to do this; many people are not making educated votes, they are simply choosing someone they think they like. The problem with that is they may not agree with that persons views on subjects but not even know it. The television is unfortunatley the way many people decide how to vote. IF the only thing they have to go by are ads they are being seriously mislead and in the end misrepresented.

Sincerely,

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