

The giganto cable monopolies should NOT be permitted to grow larger. Further consolidation in the cable industry is a clear violation of horizontal ownership rules that must be re-established to serve the PUBLIC INTEREST. (Remember that?) This would seem to be common sense, so I find it astounding that you should actually have to be reminded of this.

The concentration of power and control over distribution of media is already a serious problem in this country and has been for at least a decade. Though we have more channels available than ever before, they are under the operation of only a handful of giant, mostly right-wing corporations.

If Comcast and Time Warner are allowed

to merge with Adelphia, the two companies will control nearly 50 percent of the national market.

This level of concentration in the cable industry (or any other industry, for that matter) is, for obvious reasons, unacceptable and clearly does NOT serve the public.

Since passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the deregulation of cable, consumers have seen their rates jump an average of 59 percent — with several areas experiencing even worse increases.

We are required to buy channels we don't want or need because the cable operators bundle them together. The extremely poor quality of customer service reflects the fact that cable

television is not a competitive market.

They don't care because they don't have to. Making them have to care is supposed to be YOUR job.

Meanwhile, the cost of cable modem service remains out of reach for most households, holding constant for years and selectively underserving rural and low-income Americans. The American people are watching the digital divide widen even as the need for access to high-speed networks increases.

Again, this is shameful evidence that you are not doing your jobs.

But wait, there's more.

Amazingly, the cable companies have all become less responsive over time to the needs and requirements of

communities. The quality of public accountability in local franchise agreements has declined, as big companies leverage their power to squeeze local governments.

In many communities, the truly independent sources of local news, information and culture come from the public channels produced at the local access centers.

Unfortunately, local channels lack the resources to produce the programming that citizens want and need.

The last thing we need is to reward the anti-competitive actions of cable giants by permitting greater consolidation in ownership, reducing competition, and encouraging more of the same.

Goddammit, do your  
friggin' jobs for a  
change and act to  
serve the PUBLIC  
INTEREST instead of  
the interests of the  
greedy,  
mean-spirited,  
selfish, and  
arrogant corporate  
goliaths.