

I do not wish to see any further deregulation of media ownership rules. In fact, I feel that they should be tightened.

While we still have a small amount of diversity in the local news in the media market in which I reside, two large companies dominate the news-- Schurz Communications and Federated Media. If I am not mistaken, together in my county (population around 250,000), they own a TV station, the local paper, and 8 radio stations. Their employees also participate in and host several news/ political commentary and discussion programs that are produced by our local PBS Station. These numbers do not represent what they own in neighboring counties-- including a newspaper and a number of other radio stations...much of our media is regional and crosses county lines.

With further deregulation of media ownership rules, I can only imagine how much more our local media will decline. Already we see a growing amount "toward the corporate line" in our local media-- risk adverse reporting, less investigative reporting, more prefab "news" segments which seem like commercials, less difference in content among the various outlets, commentary/ editorials/ programming that repeatedly gives only one point of view, a lot of focus on weather rather than actual news, etc... One local news program frequently introduces a news story, gives partial detail and then the reporter says, "If you want the whole story, pick up a copy of tomorrow's newspaper" so they are cross promoting the newspaper during the actual tv news program. Radio news/ weather segments are provided by the tv staff so it is all the same no matter what source of news you use.

I can imagine that further deregulation of media ownership rules would eventually create a situation where little or none of our local news via television, newspaper or radio is even produced locally but rather comes from some centralized hub-- much like the national news programs and papers, also carbon copies of each other and risk adverse. An informed public is necessary for democracy to thrive. Diversity of news content is necessary for democracy to thrive. Further consolidation of media ownership is contrary to this process.

I would very much like to see the FCC take a firm stand against rule changes which will permit further consolidation of media ownership.