

Dear Staffer,

I have personally attended FCC localism hearings to protest a seeming blind preference for corporate interests over democratic diversity in media ownership. The reluctance of this regulatory body to mitigate harmful consolidation of information sources available to the American public can only signal a rejection of a very basic American value: the people's rule.

Following is the standardized letter created by Free Press. I support it without qualification. However, I want the committee members to understand the individual involvement this issue will inspire. The inability of the FCC to act as a regulatory body and, furthermore, the reintroduction of deregulation after the proposal was soundly rejected by a collective citizen voice points to the need for stronger measures and louder voices. I hope the board will consider this and weigh the benefits of its present course.

Thank you,

Ian Kivelin Davis

I am writing to express my strong disapproval of any relaxation or elimination of the public interest limits on media ownership. Localism and diversity are the cornerstones of a democratic media system, and we cannot afford to compromise them in any way.

Limits on media consolidation have been a bulwark against the concentration of economic power in the marketplace of ideas -- a critical part of balancing the public service mission of the media with their private profit motive. Our democracy requires the free flow of information from a broad range of diverse voices.

Any public policy seeking to protect diversity in the media must recognize the simple fact that ownership matters. Media consolidation has already led to declines in local and minority ownership as well as the homogenization of content in radio and television. Permitting cross-ownership of newspapers and broadcast stations, or allowing further concentration in local television markets, will only worsen the problems we already have.

When the FCC attempted to weaken and remove media ownership limits in 2003, millions of Americans rose up in protest. Congress and the courts ultimately intervened to turn back that misguided regulatory process.

Now that these same rules are being reconsidered, the FCC should stand firm with the public against further concentration of media ownership in the hands of the few. A vote against media consolidation is a vote for democracy.