

As the FCC reconsiders its media ownership rules, I urge you to prevent further media consolidation in America. We must stop this monopolizing of the airwaves and print media.

If the same company owns both a newspaper, and the TV/radio station(s) in the same locality, and if the same limited editorial process controls each outlet, it just saturates the area with all the same news-- which can amount to a kind of propaganda network.

There's a popular theory that when distinct, separate companies operate the respective TV/radio stations and newspapers in a community, they compete with each other for viewership, and the result is a wider scope of timely, accurate and pertinent information for the public. This theory is seriously flawed. Although separate ownership of media outlets may actually allow for better diversity of information, competition is not what causes diversity.

In fact, media consolidation and its attendant problems are a direct result of competition. More competition only results in more consolidation, and thus increased centralizing of information. Competition is both the motivating force behind corporate consolidation, and the process by which big corporations defeat smaller companies and render them untenable. Competition is therefore not a viable solution to the problems presented by media consolidation.

Quality news and information has nothing to do with competition. If we are to maintain a democratic society, then we must realize that a democracy cannot function without a well-informed electorate. Without a diversity of viewpoints expressed in the media, the public cannot develop a well-rounded perspective on important issues. What is required then is a diversity of viewpoints, presented through a decentralized network of information sources. That is why separate ownership of media companies in any locality is the best alternative to corporate consolidation of media outlets.

Different parts of the country will of course have different needs, and therefore decentralization of local news sources is the best way to serve each community. Meanwhile, a more diverse presentation within the national and international news helps give a broader perspective on the world, and helps each community relate to the larger picture.

As it stands, there's already so much media consolidation that if I want a realistic perspective, I have to go outside the mainstream American news outlets.

It would be better if I could be confident that a diversity of viewpoints were already available from local outlets, which would help me make well-informed decisions about pertinent issues.

Thank you for your consideration of this most important issue.

