

98-120

**MINORITIES FOR BROADCAST OPPORTUNITIES**

June 12, 2006

The Honorable Kevin Martin  
 Chairman  
 Federal Communications Commission  
 445 12th Street, S.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20554

**FILED/ACCEPTED****OCT 16 2006**

Federal Communications Commission  
 Office of the Secretary

Dear Chairman Martin:

As active minority participants in the American media landscape, we are committed to ensuring that opportunities continue to exist for independent, and minority-owned, voices in the multimedia industry. Independent and minority broadcasters have contributed greatly towards the diversity of programming found on our nation's airwaves, but with the continuing trend toward media consolidation and the concentration of media access in fewer hands, many of these voices may become extinct. Therefore, when you revisit the issue of multicast must-carry during your June 15th FCC meeting, we would urge you to vote in the affirmative for a multicast must-carry provision in digital television, which is a critical component for re-establishing a level playing field so that all broadcasters and television programmers can compete in the digital television marketplace.

To give you an understanding of the importance of this issue, we would like to provide some background on our experiences as African American broadcasters. Each of us have been small owners of broadcast properties and/or programming companies and have found the opportunity to contribute to the communities where we serve rewarding. Mr. Glover owns a television broadcast station in Portland, Maine and three others in Puerto Rico and St. Croix, and is interested in acquiring additional properties—a venture that is financially tenable only with a multicast must-carry provision in digital television. Mr. Oxendine was a major broadcast television owner of stations that were competitive under a must-carry structure and he has remained active in the media business with his minority focused financial media investment company. He is interested in the possibilities that multicast must-carry may have for promoting his re-entry and other minorities initial entry into the broadcast industry which would only be possible as a participant in a multicast must-carry structure. Finally, Mr. Wayner is Co-Founder and CEO of Alliance TRACE Media, an urban market network focusing on local ethnic lifestyles. After approaching U.S. cable companies, Mr. Wayner was denied carriage unless he was willing to sell ownership control of his company to a cable operator. Unwilling to surrender editorial and creative control, he was successful in finding distribution in 85 countries in Europe, Asia and Africa, without surrendering control of his company. He would like to launch TRACE in the U.S., an undertaking that is feasible only with a multicast must-carry provision in digital television.

Multicast must-carry was included in the 1992 Cable Act to ensure a diversity of ideas and opinions were made available on this nation's airwaves. Now, as our country

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prepares for the digital television revolution and the next generation of viewers, the same principal applies. In a digital environment, multicast must-carry is necessary to maintain a place for independent broadcast stations that air programming representative of a cross-section of our nation. Small stations can only compete, and be economically viable, in the digital television environment if they are guaranteed carriage of their multicast signals, because the large network broadcasters are already striking deals with cable for the carriage of their multicast channels and cable is developing more of its own programming which receives preferred and favorable carriage on its systems. Consequently, since small and independent broadcasters lack the leverage to negotiate similar carriage, a digital multicast must-carry mandate is necessary to preserve the proportionate cable to broadcast carriage ratio that was successful under analog.

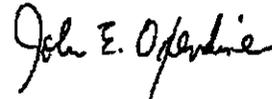
Therefore, in order to ensure continued opportunities for independent, and minority-owned, voices in the television media landscape, we urge you to vote in the affirmative for a multicast must-carry provision. We thank you for your time and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



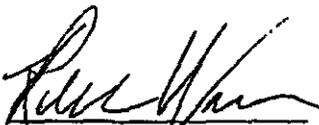
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Charles Glover  
CEO  
Fox 23 WPFO, Portland Maine



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John E. Oxendine  
Blackstar Communications



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Richard Wayner  
CEO  
Alliance TRACE Media

Cc: Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein  
Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate  
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell

*Heather*  
*Alan*

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**FAX COVER SHEET**

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