

Dear Chairman Martin and Commissioners:

As a supporter of the United Church of Christ's media advocacy efforts, I write to encourage you to stop large media companies from getting even bigger.

UCC has been active in promoting broadcaster's accountability to the public since the 1960s. But many of the gains of the 1960s are being lost because the FCC has allowed media companies to become too large, and to become unmoored from their local community.

The question of who owns the media is a question of justice. It is essential that the individuals owning media companies reflect the broad array of people in this country. If some viewpoints and stories are excluded from the media landscape, we are all poorer as a result. Our democracy requires the free flow of information from a broad range of diverse voices.

The question of who owns the media is a question of civic accountability. As someone who is active in my community, I am often dismayed at the scant coverage given to local political matters. School board decisions and city or town council decisions are rarely the topic of broadcast news. Yet, each year all citizens are asked to cast votes to select these local leaders. How can local elected officials represent their constituencies when citizens are inadequately informed by our media.

The question of who owns the media is a question of social responsibility. For example, children are often served poorly by the current media system. UCC has recently been instrumental in ensuring that a minimum of protection will be accorded to children who watch broadcast television. But more protection is needed. And studies show that a more consolidated media market serves children less well than a more diverse market.

As a person of faith, I take a strong interest in the world around me. I believe our media should serve our societal goals of justice, fairness, and community. I strongly urge you to hold the line on media consolidation and ensure that justice, fairness, and community

are the centerpiece of communication policy at the FCC.