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TOWN HALL MEETING ON THE FUTURE OF MEDIA

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ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

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DECEMBER 9, 2004

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LARRY OSNES: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. It's my pleasure to welcome you to this forum this evening. I'm Larry Osnes, the President of Hamline University and it's quite appropriate that this kind of event take place on a university campus where there is no question that is out of order on a university campus. [*applause*] And in fact, if we tried to say that there was such a question, students would overrule us in a minute and they would be right. [*applause*] It's also appropriate that this event take place tonight on the Hamline University campus. This old university is this year 150 years old, the oldest university in Minnesota and it was committed from the very beginning to follow truth wherever it leads. That's our objective this evening. The issue of the role of the media in our society is a very important one and one which I am sure we will see later in this hour on which persons have very strong and very diverse views. I hasten to add that the appropriateness of this being held on this campus relates to one other principle that we hold dear on this campus, and that is one of civility and ethics. Personal attacks are out of bounds on this campus. Any ideas are subject to debate and are debated every day from morning until night. But the way we treat each other in a civil manner is a high, high value. Tonight, I have the pleasure of introducing Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein and Senior Legal Advisor to Commissioner Michael Copps, Jordan Goldstein. I regret to say that Commissioner Copps is suffering from a severe back injury and was advised by his doctor against travel, but his senior staffer Mr. Goldstein will read the commissioner's statement and listen to the public comment, and Commissioner Copps will watch the tapes of this forum. Commissioner Adelstein was sworn in as a member of the Federal Communications Commission in 2002 and sworn in for a new five-year term on December 6, 2004. [*applause*] Before joining the FCC, Mr. Adelstein served for fifteen years as a staff member in the United States Senate. For the last seven years he was a senior legislative aide to United States Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, where he advised Senator Daschle on telecommunications, financial services, transportation, and other key issues. Previously he served as professional staff member to Senate Special Committee on Aging Chairman David Pryor and as a legislative assistant to Senator Don Riegle. Prior to his service in the Senate, Mr. Adelstein held a number of academic positions, including teaching fellow in the Department of History at Harvard, teaching assistant in the Department of History at Stanford, and communications consultant to the Stanford University Graduate School of Business. Mr. Adelstein received a BA with distinction in political science from Stanford and a MA in history from Stanford, studied at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, and is a graduate of Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass. Mr. Goldstein is the Senior Legal Advisor to Commissioner Michael Copps, whom as I said is unable to be here with us this evening. Mr. Goldstein also served as competition and universal service legal advisor and as legal advisor to Commissioner Susan Ness, legal counsel to the chief of the Common Carrier Bureau, and as an attorney in the policy and program planning division of the Common Carrier Bureau. He is also an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University. Tonight's hearing will be moderated by George Latimer, one of the country's leading authorities on urban issues. Mayor Latimer served the city of St. Paul from 1976 to 1990, and later served as Dean of Hamline University's School of Law. Mayor Latimer has a special interest in

public/private partnerships that encourage growth and development of affordable housing, and served as Special Advisor to Secretary Henry Cisneros at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mayor Latimer received his BA from St. Michael's, and the LLB from Columbia University's Law School, and now teaches urban studies at McAllister College. I'm pleased to welcome him to the podium tonight, our good friend and wonderful citizen, George Latimer. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you President Osnes, and good evening everyone. It's a wonderful night for democracy. Driving here into the hard rain, I ran into a traffic jam. That's how many of you are crowding in here and also in the adjacent beautiful, new facility the Klas Fieldhouse. Let me lay out what we hope to do today. We're gonna hear from two panels. The first panel will deal with local news and information and I will introduce each panelist in turn. Your program describes the panelist's background. And the second panel, after just a small transition, will deal with media diversity, and following that, and each panelist will be presenting for approximately five minutes, and following both panels we will be taking public testimony and I'm going to give you the instructions which are really more like an invitation in a town meeting fashion. There is the adjacent field house. A number of our citizens will be in the field house, watching these proceedings. In either case, after the panels, there will be an opportunity for every single citizen who is here or in the Klas Fieldhouse who wishes to speak, will speak. And after the panels there will be a short break, about fifteen minutes. That should be from around 9 until about 9:15, then the rest of the program will be devoted to hearing from all the people who wish to speak. Everyone will have the opportunity to give a two-minute public testimony, which will be entered into the public record. To sign up to give this testimony, clipboards will be distributed in both the Klas Center and the Sundin Hall at the beginning of the first panel, and there should be some being distributed even now. You may also sign up to give testimony in the lobby of the Sundin Hall. We will collect these sheets during the first presentation and Liz Nordling, the public testimony moderator, will read names randomly from the Klas Center and ten from Sundin Hall. Please line up behind the microphones when your name is read. People in the Klas Center can look for volunteers with orange badges for an escort to Sundin Hall. Please remember to keep your comments please to two minutes in order to ensure that everyone has a chance to give testimony. Our first panelist to present will be Colleen Aho, the Executive Director of Television and Radio Artists, AFTRA, Twin Cities local. Ms. Aho. [*applause*]

COLLEEN AHO: I would like to thank Commissioner Copps [inaudible], Hamline University for the opportunity to…

GEORGE LATIMER: May I interrupt, Colleen? The reason they chose the great Mayor of St. Paul to moderate is he's always so orderly. He just forgot one thing, and that is I was supposed to introduce Commissioner Adelstein

to give his remarks. But other than that small flaw, it is probably obvious to you now that I do now practice before the FCC [*laughter*], one of the reasons I was chosen. Commissioner Adelstein, thank you so much. [*applause*]

JONATHAN ADELSTEIN: Well, thank you Mr. Mayor, you're welcome to practice before us anytime, and no offense from here. We'd love to hear from you. As a matter of fact, I came here to hear from you and just want to share a few thoughts first, if I could. I want to welcome everyone here, such a great crowd, such a good group that came out. I'm from right next door, as was noted from South Dakota. And it's so good, such a breath of fresh air, to get outside the beltway and to hear from you people today. After all, decisions that we make really affect you and the real wisdom on these issues doesn't lie inside the beltway; it lies out here with you and I think we get in the most trouble at the FCC when we don't listen to you. And we have. I listened, but some people didn't and they seem to have gotten themselves in a little bit of trouble. The good mayor noticed that hard rain is falling out there and it reminded me of words of the bad of Minnesota, Bob Dylan, who said "a hard rain's gonna fall," and that certainly is what's going to happen if we don't listen to what the people have to say about their media and if we think that somehow we know better in Washington what's in the public interest than what the public themselves think. [*applause*] I do want to express how truly sorry I am that Commissioner Copps couldn't be here. He's been such a great soldier in this battle and we've fought side by side for the truth. I'm so glad that Jordan Goldstein could make it here and he's gonna share Commissioner Copp's words, but Commissioner Copps really does want to hear this. The last thing he asked me was "make sure you let me know as soon as you can what happened out there," and I will do that. It was really Commissioner Copps and I who are growing tired of waiting for the FCC to do another hearing. We said we were going to do a series of public hearings and we just couldn't get this next one scheduled, so we said "we're ready to go. Let's go to Minneapolis/St. Paul," and invited all of our colleagues to join us. Now, sadly they did not choose to come, but that doesn't stop us. We need to get out, we need to hear from you, and we're gonna continue our road show with or without our colleagues. And our strong thanks go out to Hamline University for making this possible and to President Osnes for his nice comments and introducing this and sharing the facilities here. We have a terrific group of panelists. We're gonna hear from some of the great experts and some real wisdom again here from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, groups like Free Press that helped us organize this and done a lot of grassroots work. Some of you heard about it from them. We have a lot of Twin Cities representatives from state, local and federal governments here tonight. It's a special pleasure to have a former commissioner of the FCC here whose gonna be here, Nick Johnson, who is quite a legend and inspiration for me. As I was on the way over here I noted that there was an actual article written in a law review about him, saying "what made him do what he did to defy all of those huge corporations and fight for the public?" It's a sad commentary that somebody has to write an article about why would one guy do that. Why didn't everybody do that? And what an inspiration he is to all of us who do put the public first and who don't think that the FCC should be a captured regulatory agency, but instead should be your agency and fight on your behalf every step of

the way. [*applause*] It's really important that you came out here tonight because our democracy obviously has a lot of work to do, and this is really a workshop on democracy. We're just starting this long battle over the future of what Americans see, hear and read. It's just the beginning because we managed together to put all the bad decisions that were made by the FCC on ice in the federal courts. And what's at stake here is the public airwaves that you own and whether or not you can maintain control of them. I want to just for a moment review how we got here. Some of you know this story, but to make it clear I just want to review that on June 2, 2003, a date that will live in infamy in the history of the FCC, my colleagues voted over my dissent and that of Commissioner Copps, for the most sweeping and destructive rollback of consumer protection rules in the history of American broadcasting. We felt at the time something like lone voices in the wilderness. We'd gone out to communities like this, and we talked to people. We wanted to hear what the people had to say and everywhere we went we heard the same message, that people were concerned about letting big media companies get even bigger. We went to city halls and churches and meeting rooms like this one, universities. We heard thousands upon thousands of people complain about what they viewed as the poor state of the media today, and the harms that would occur to them from further media consolidation. And we really, I think, learned a lot from that. Unlike hearing the parade of lobbyists that come through Washington talking about great it would be for everybody if you could just let us get a little bigger, we heard from people, and people after all are the best judge. I mean, people are the ones that watch television, listen to the radio. They know what they are talking about. This isn't something that's alien to them. And people helped me understand the magnitude of these issues, and the real outpouring that we heard made a real difference. Some people asked me as I was coming out here, "well, does it really matter? You're just a minority commissioner and you were in the dissent. These people come out here and you can just get rolled over, couldn't you?" I said, "no, it does make a difference." Not only am I positing it makes a difference, I have proof it makes a difference, because when the court ruled last summer and overturned virtually everything that the FCC did, put it all on ice, they actually said in their decision that these field hearings had occurred. They noted that in their decision. They said the FCC had only held one official hearing (in Richmond, Virginia) but the court actually noted out that two Commissioners, Commissioner Copps and I, had held an additional thirteen public hearings across the country, using our own office resources, and I think that's proof positive of how valuable forums like tonight's can be. [*applause*] Now, as we went across the country, you might be shocked to learn that only a few media outlets actually covered what we were doing. [*laughter*] Could there be a conflict of interest there? I don't know. The lack of press coverage we saw in city after city made it difficult for us to make people aware of these changes that were coming up, but the word spread, and as the word spread that this was about to happen, it didn't surprise me that there was outrage, widespread outrage we heard all over the country. Hundreds of thousands of emails started pouring into the FCC. People started thinking about what this meant for them. They started thinking about the time when they felt that the media did a better job of covering news in a less sensational way, a more balanced way. People told us that they remember that there'd been more in-depth coverage of local,

civic, public affairs, and they understood what was happening. And they intuitively grasped that the loss of diversity that consolidation brings really hurts them. And they saw that few resources were being dedicated to what they wanted and they saw that there was something of a homogenization in programming. That's what we heard from people consistently across the country, but in each community we heard specifics. We heard very interesting stories, and already today from some of the people in Minnesota I heard specifics about concerns that are happening here in this community. And people were wondering why there wasn't more accountability. So, we were flooded at the FCC with 3,000,000 postcards and faxes and emails. We'd never seen the likes of it at any time in our history. And nearly everyone pleaded for the FCC to stop more media consolidation. But there were maybe a few that said, "let's allow for more consolidation". Can you guess who those were from? [*laughter*] But the discontent did ring out from every aspect of the political spectrum, all across it, from liberal to conservative, right-wing to left-wing, and virtually everybody in between, Republican and Democrat felt that it was a bad idea to allow further media concentration. Now, as it was noted by the president, I spent fifteen years working on Capital Hill, but I've rarely seen an issue where public opinion was so one-sided and so strong. It touches a raw nerve apparently for a lot of people here. And for some reason my colleagues completely missed this. And maybe it was because they didn't come out here and really talk to people the way that we did. And what a difference a year can make, when you look back at where we were then. We're here tonight mainly because people like you spoke out, because of your voices, and because of people just like you all across the country, in such great numbers, those voices gave us power on the FCC to speak for you. You thrust this issue into the forefront of American policymaking, and that's where it remains today. They can no longer hide this thing or think they can somehow sweep this under the rug, or that you aren't gonna notice. *We'll just do this big proceeding and we'll get it over with and they'll be mad for a little while then they'll forget*. I think that was the attitude, and that's not what happened. That's not why we're here. That's not why this room is full today, and there's people in the overflow room. I think people still care about this as much or more, and better yet, people are more educated, they're more involved, they're more active, and they're more organized. And that is a huge tribute to all of you. And we've come a long way. I mean, I remember the day after we made this decision or two or three days afterwards, we were called up to Congress, and overwhelming bipartisan concern on the Senate Commerce Committee, and one of my colleagues said, "oh, the courts made me do it. Oh, Congress made me do it". And here was Congress excoriating him as he was saying this. And then the courts have overturned him, and there's no excuse left. And because of the rising tide of public concern, we really were able to do what we needed to do. The Senate voted 99-1 to put the rules on ice. Bipartisan vote. Now, one of the rollbacks actually became law. And all this happened while the courts were considering this and putting the whole situation where it belongs, which is back at the FCC to be redone. The court told us to start from scratch. And that really was one of the most important decisions in the history of American broadcasting, if not the most important decision. And we don't know yet whether the FCC is going to appeal that decision, along with the Justice Department. We certainly

shouldn't. We should go back and do it right and not try to overturn a court that finally told us loudly and clearly that the FCC's primary concern is to protect the public. What a sad commentary it would be if we said that wasn't a good decision, that we should go back and reverse it. I'll oppose that. I think everybody should oppose that, and you should let everybody know you oppose that, if that's the way you feel. Now this court faulted the FCC for using hypothetical, inconsistent reasoning that didn't reflect what was really happening in the media markets across the country. And that's just why we're out here to hear from you, because we want to hear really what's going on in the media markets around the country. What's happening here? It's just something that we need to get at on a very individualized basis. We're gonna hear specifics tonight from our panelists too, and you look at the local and public affairs coverage how pitifully little is actually done. A 2000 study that Ken Goldstein helped put together with Marty Kaplan and others found that combined TV coverage of all campaigns in the 2000 election was just 74 seconds per night. That's for all elections: I mean, local, federal, state, from the dog catcher to the President of the United States, United States Senators. In 2002 their study found that only 44% of news broadcasted any campaign coverage at all. Only a third had a candidate speaking and for an average of only twelve seconds. I've been around a lot of politicians, especially in the Senate, and I've never seen any of them get their position out in twelve seconds. [*laughter*] People do hear a lot from paid political advertising, a lot of it negative. No wonder people don't go out and vote. I mean, when I talk about this being an issue for democracy, it's palpable. I mean, people are sick and tired of these negative ads. They don't hear what's really going on, and this year we hear experienced broadcasters are threatening to use their federal licenses to promote their own political viewpoint. Now, it's just not right and we are going to make sure that broadcasters are held accountable, that they serve the public interest, and not what they see as their own bottom line ahead of all else. I've yet to see an infomercial that really helps the people. I mean you look at more statistics: civic and public affairs programming swept off the dial. One study showed that community public affairs programming accounts for less than one-half of 1% of all local TV programming nationwide. But paid infomercials account for 14%. With all those infomercials I worry that we maybe tight abs, but we're getting a flabby democracy. [*applause*] What broadcasting is really supposed to be all about is localism, covering what really matters to local communities. It's a social compact that broadcasters have with their community. They get the license, and in return they serve the community. And there's a lot of good broadcasters, some here in the Twin Cities who are doing a good job and they're deeply committed to the community. They're rooted in the community, and we have so many here tonight. For example, I was so pleased that Hubbard could come, Robert Hubbard, and his dad Stanley is here. They're legends in this community. Their participation will really contribute to tonight's forum, and really help us have a good dialogue. Broadcasters that do a good job and stay rooted in their local community deserve to be commended. I'd like to see all broadcasters maintain the highest possible standards of localism. And we need to hold their feet to the fire. Just because a few broadcasters are doing a good job doesn't mean that others can get away with not doing what is their obligation. So, tonight is for me to learn about what is happening here. I want to

learn and I want my colleagues to learn from what you say about how well broadcasters are meeting their responsibilities to serve the public interest right here in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Are they really responsive to the needs of your local communities? I wonder if they're providing avenues for local self-expression to artists and musicians we hear in the music hall. And do artists and musicians feel that they're able to get their own creative juices onto the airwaves here? I mean Bob Dylan got his start here. Gosh knows who else is in some of these universities whose got that kind of talent they're brimming over the top with, and if they don't get heard on the radio, how are we ever gonna hear them? How are they ever gonna get heard elsewhere? Radio always used to have the role of having a place that fomented new artists. You'd hear it in local community. You'd hear Motown starts in Detroit and it spreads nationwide. Elvis gets his start in local radio stations down in Tennessee. I wonder if some modern Elvis doesn't just throw down his guitar in disgust because he can't get played on the radio. He can't get his start. And what the ethnically rich melting pot you have here, this growing ethnic community? Are they getting their voices heard on the media? We have representatives tonight of the Hispanic and Native American communities here to share their perspectives and I'm really looking forward to hearing that. In my native South Dakota we held a hearing in Rapid City and we heard a lot of concern about the way that Native Americans were portrayed in the media, and in each community we go to we hear different things. You know, we hear in Washington state about musicians who can't get on the radio. You hear in the Southwest about the treatment of Hispanics. Everywhere we go we hear about the treatment of minorities, but it's special and unique stories we hear fro each community, and I really am looking forward to what's happening here tonight, the good things and the things that need work. We really need to more at the FCC, I think, to promote broadcasters doing everything they can. As Nick Johnson knows, many of the requirements for broadcasters to operate in the public interest have been eroded or eliminated. I remember reading on the way out here, he was saying that in his day there was virtually nothing, but now we look back on it as the golden age of broadcasting. And even back then it was nothing, even those minimal, virtually nothing requirements have been eliminated as too burdensome. Yet you all rely on these local broadcasters for the news, weather, information in such a critical role that they play in making democracy function at its best, giving you the information that you need to make decisions that are critical to the future of your community and our country. And as all this is happening we see that broadcasters are making a transition to digital. We want to make sure that as their television stations can expand to five or six channels that they have public interest obligations that go along with them, that they expand along with the expansion of opportunities for them. And we're in the middle of these big proceedings, and we need to hear help, we need to hear from you about the digital transition, and whether you think we need to put requirements on broadcasters as they multiply their opportunities to serve the public in return. And we're in the middle of license renewals for radio and television. Those licenses only come up for renewal every eight years. In Nick Johnson's day they came up every three years, but somehow broadcasters said, "oh, let's do it every eight years", and Congress agreed. So we've got to take that very seriously when it does happen, and that's happening in Minnesota very soon. Radio

licenses here expire April 1, 2005, and TV licenses expire one year later, April 1, 2006. So, they just filed their renewal materials and formal comments can be submitted to the FCC until 30 days before expiration. We also accept informal comments on how radio and TV licenses are performing, so you don't have to go through the elaborate process of the big formal legal filings. Let us know how you think they're doing. You know, if they're doing good things we want to hear that; if they should be doing more, we want to hear that. That's the best way for you to hold local broadcasters accountable. Again I just want to thank everyone who is here tonight on behalf of myself and Commissioner Copps. Hearing from you is what it's all about, so I'm not going to belabor that, but I just want to say that we have a new opportunity now. This court actually gave us a new chance to reclaim the airwaves. We have to redo everything we did in the media ownership rules, and it's a second opportunity to get it right. But it's gonna take a lot of hard work from each of us. I know some of you here in this room have organized and fought, and you think *jeez, we gotta keep going*. And you do have to keep going, because this fight is just underway, and we need you to be with us every step of the way because now is the time to stand up for your airwaves. You've won so much, but unless we can turn that court decision into real rules that protect the public, it's not gonna amount to anything. So we gotta stay encouraged. I know that you can make a difference because you already have. So keep fighting and thank you so much for being here this evening. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Jordan Goldstein is Senior Advisor to Commissioner Copps, and he will now present Commissioner Copps' remarks. [*applause*]

JORDAN GOLDSTEIN: Thank you and again let me express Commissioner Copps' regret that he couldn't be here this evening. As you heard, he had a back injury and he's gonna be undergoing some minor, thankfully, surgery tomorrow morning, so he couldn't make the trip out here. But he would have liked to have been here, especially since both Commissioner Copps and I are from just down the road in Wisconsin, and we always look for a good chance to get back to the Upper Midwest and talk about important issues. So, I want to just read some of Commissioner Copps' remarks to you. "Thank you to everyone who worked to make this night happen. Thank you to Hamline University for hosting us, and thank you to the good citizens of Minnesota and neighboring areas who have come here to talk about an issue of surpassing importance to our country. Tonight we continue a truly remarkable grassroots dialogue about the future of our media. Over the past year we have seen cascading national concern over what many Americans see as truly disturbing trends in our nation's media. As we approach our topic this evening, let's remind ourselves that it is all of us who own the airwaves and that corporations are given the privilege of using this public asset and to profit from that use in exchange from their commitment to serve the public interest, and to serve their local communities. I'm pleased that tonight we will hear from members of this community, including local broadcasters with roots in their communities. We need to recognize and reaffirm the proud heritage of local broadcasters, the majority of whom are committed to serving their communities in the

public interest. My concern is that the increasing media concentration being allowed by the FCC threatens the very survival of these local broadcasters. We've heard time and again from local independent broadcasters that consolidation has had a direct and detrimental impact. Some tell us the answer is to rely more and more on marketplace forces as a guarantor of the public interest. These people trust that the public interest will somehow magically trump the urge to build power and profit, and that localism and diversity will somehow survive and thrive. I don't think we can afford to rely on magic here. Concerned parents, creative artists, religious leaders, civil rights activists, labor organizations, young people, old people, broadcasters and many, many others from all over the country have stood up in never-before seen numbers to reclaim their airwaves and to call on those who entrusted to use those airwaves to serve the public interest. These citizens are asking how many, or perhaps more accurately, how few companies should control America's TV, radio, newspapers, and even the internet. For what purposes are stations granted licenses? And how does the public interest fare in a consolidated environment? Will we still be able to get real local news and clashing points of view so that we can make up our own minds on the issues of the day? And how do we assure quality TV and music, instead of so-often being fed a diet of pre-canned and nationalized fare aimed primarily at selling products? I don't think I exaggerate at all in saying the issue is whether a few large conglomerates will be ceded content control over our music, entertainment and information, gatekeeper control over the civil dialogue of our country, and veto power over the majority of what we and our families watch, hear and read. The people's representative in Congress answered these citizens call. The US Senate has voted to overturn the FCC decision in its entirety. And over 200 members of the House of Representatives have asked the House leadership for permission to vote on the same resolution. So far they've been denied that vote. The court responded too. As Commissioner Adelstein pointed out, last June the Third Circuit ruled that the FCC's media concentration plan was legally and procedurally flawed. So we have now heard from the court, the Congress, and the American people that the FCC got it wrong when it tried to unleash even more consolidation. It should be clear that we need to reassess our approach and start protecting the people's interest in the people's airwaves. But let me point out that it's no slam dunk this will happen. While it's good news these rules have to be reconsidered, look who is going to be doing the reconsidering: the same folks who brought you these rules in the first place. So an entirely plausible outcome of all this could be rules every bit as bad as the ones sent back to us. If we stand by and do nothing, or if we just mouth the platitudes and do only perfunctory things, that's the way things will be. But I don't think it has to be that way. In fact, I believe we now have an opportunity, perhaps the best opportunity this country has had in a generation to do something about media ownership and media concentration and media opportunity and media democracy, and to make sure the people's airwaves serve the people's interests. Now is the time for rededication of our efforts. Whatever you do, don't permit yourself the luxury of sitting back. Don't accept anyone's counsel of caution or assurances [*unintelligible*] assurances as promise of being settled sometime later on. It needs to be fixed now, and if it's not fixed now the consolidation genie will be out of the bottle with an energy the likes of which we have never seen.

Let me mention one last area that merits attention in our effort to increase localism, competition and diversity, and that's low-power FM. These community-based stations are licensed to local organizations, and they are already helping in significant ways to meet the needs of underrepresented communities. Low power benefits recording artists by providing more outlets for airplay, especially on a local and regional level. It provides community coverage in often strikingly successful ways. In sum, we have a lot of challenges ahead. So we come to the Twin Cities this evening to talk directly with members of this community and this region, and to tap your local expertise to get a look both broad and deep at what is happening here. As we near the start of a new year, let me tell you my mood: I'm encouraged. I'm enthused. Yes, powerful economic forces that favor consolidation are out there, and they are converging with worrisome regulatory policies that pave the way. But I believe these forces can be still be countered. There are millions of citizens who want, deserve, and are demanding action on how their airwaves are going to be used to serve the public interest. They want to settle this issue of who is going to control our media and for what purposes, and they want to settle it in favor of airwaves of, by and for the people of this great country. Let's help these good folks bring media democracy to America. Thank you. [*applause*]

JORDAN GOLDSTEIN: Before we turn to our panelists, I want to recognize two other people. First is Alana Petersen from Congressman James Oberstar's office.

ALANA PETERSEN: I'm just gonna read a short statement. I'm not gonna be able to do it in twelve seconds, but I'll do my best. Thank you for attending the forum today and I regret I am unable to participate in this important discussion. I commend the Commissioners for holding this forum on a timely issue: the concentration of media ownership. I'm very pleased the Commissioners have given Minnesotans the opportunity to voice their opinion about media consolidation. I encourage you to offer your comments and suggestions on how the FCC can develop protections that provide citizens with viewpoints for a diversity of news sources and enhance the marketplace of ideas. As a representative of Minnesota's 8th Congressional District, the largest district west of the Mississippi River, I am troubled about the lack of diversity of ownership among media outlets, particularly as it affects rural areas. The vision of the Telecommunications Act, which Congress passed in 1996, was clear: to promote competition, eliminate unnecessary regulations, and secure for Americans the benefits of greater choice, increased innovation, and lower prices. However, since the passage of the 1996 Act, there have many incident of unforeseen consolidation among various media organizations. I am very concerned about the effect of the corporate mergers have on rural customers because consolidation and cross-ownership of media outlets could cause consumers to lose benefits they currently enjoy through market competition between rival companies. Congress gave the FCC the responsibility of ensuring that telecommunications and broadcast mergers serve the public interest. However, I opposed the decision of the FCC in June of 2003 to relax the media ownership rules, because that ruling did not comply with the goals of competition, diversity, and localism. I believe that cross-ownership reduces the number

of independent voices in the community, especially in small markets with only a small number of voices. Further, I fear the merged companies which faces less competition for local news service will reduce the total amount of resources going to produce local news. I co-sponsored two bills in the 108th Congress to reverse the FCC's rules changes regarding media ownership, and I will continue this work in the 109th Congress to ensure that consumers have access to media outlets that reflect the diversity of our nation. I look forward to hearing about the testimony of the panelists, as well as the public comments on this important issue. Thanks from Congressman Oberstar. [*applause*]

JORDAN GOLDSTEIN: And finally, before we turn it back over to Mayor Latimer, we also want to recognize Illa Jong, who is here from Senator Mark Dayton's office, who will be listening to your comments as well on behalf of the Senator. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER : Thank you for your wisdom just to wave and not to speak. [*laughter*] We'll pick up some time. Now our first panelist will in fact be Colleen Aho, Executive Director, American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, AFTRA, Twin Cities local. [*applause*]

COLLEEN AHO: Again, I want to thank you [*unintelligible*] to participate in this important public dialogue. I'm here as a representative of AFTRA, and AFTRA represents [*unintelligible*] disc jockeys, performers, [*unintelligible*] recording artists and other broadcast professionals who work in the television and radio industry. That also makes me a representative of labor here tonight [*applause*]… [*unintelligible*] … a diverse community in its own rights. There's many compelling stories that are often overlooked by corporate media or reduced to stereotypes about strikes. I'd like to talk about a couple of things, giving a global overview tonight. First, I'd like to tell you some important things about the impact of media consolidation on working media professionals. AFTRA and our sister media union, the Newspaper Guild, the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians, and the Writers Guild East recently commissioned a survey of our members, frontline media workers who are producers, writers, editors, reporters, anchors, artists, and technical employees in the print, TV, radio, and internet industries. Their responses give you a good sense of how the current atmosphere of consolidated media ownership has impacted their jobs and our industry. First of all the survey found that fully a quarter of those surveyed were either working as freelance, daily hire or temporary workers, reflecting the growing marginalization of jobs in the industry. And I can tell you on a local level it's a key concern in union station contracts to preserve viable permanent staff professional positions in the industry, rather than seeing these turn into temp jobs. Nearly eight out of ten cited a lowering of journalism standards, and they identified too much emphasis on the bottom line as the most serious problem facing the industry. [*applause*] Other top concerns were the influence of ratings or circulation on coverage and programming, a loss of credibility with the public,

declining quality of community coverage, incomplete reporting and errors, and too little focus on complex issues. A clear majority of those surveyed said understaffing and lack of time and resources to do a professional job are trends that threaten quality news reporting today. More than half said employee morale had worsened at their news organization within the past two years. 69% believe that corporate owners have too much influence over news coverage. They cited the following changes in local news coverage due to the bottom-line emphasis. 62% reported a growth in entertainment coverage at the expense of hard news. 56% saw increased coverage of the weather and scandals. 47% noted more crime coverage by their news outlets in recent years. 37% said there was decreased coverage of local government matters. With regard to the future, they forecast negative trends due to further media consolidation. 86% said there will be less diversity of viewpoints in local news. 78% feared a general continuing decline of news quality. 86% thought control of news and programming will be concentrated in too-few corporate hands. 79% predicted growing corporate bias in the news. 72% predicted less local community coverage. And seven out of ten of the journalists rejected the argument made by media owners that the negative impact of consolidation is offset by the growth of cable TV news channels and the internet. More than half of the survey participants had been directly affected by media deals in the last five years, due to the mergers and buyouts among the print, broadcast entertainment and internet giants. 20% said they had been laid off themselves. 76% new colleagues and coworkers who had lost their jobs due to the downsizing. So in other words there were a lot of minuses and no plusses found in a survey of our own media workers. The other issue I wanted to comment on was some comments from AFTRA, the American Federation of Musicians following a bit on what Commissioner Adelstein talked about, and localism. Localism hearings are terrific. They allow for a rare public discussion about the traditional regulatory values of diversity, competition and localism. But there can be no discussion of how to promote localism in broadcasting without acknowledging the patterns of consolidated ownership throughout the country. The market forces created by the overwhelmingly consolidated broadcast media industry today don’t promote localism, where local communities can rely upon their local TV and radio stations to deliver local news and create opportunities for local artists, and other forms of self-expression. Instead, the market forces driving the broadcast industry today promote centralized, homogenized, and uniform programming that is conceptualized and operated without the participation of those who live in the local communities. Briefly, five key problems that AFTRA and the Musicians Union have documented, followed briefly by five recommendations from our unions to the FCC. Number 1: The widespread loss of genuine local news coverage. The number of radio and TV stations providing original local news programming has dropped precipitously in the last few years. AFTRA has seen our news personnel downsized, and news operations eliminated in market after market. The group owners now dominating the industry find it cheaper to replace distinct news operations in different stations with a single news crew that can produce broadcasts over several outlets, or simply, purchase a news product from a subcontractor or an outside vendor. In other words, local news operations are sacrificed. Number 2: The virtual elimination of public affairs programming in local communities.

This was touched on earlier. Ever since the Commission's relaxation of station public service requirements in the mid-1990s, with no clear regulatory requirement for radio and TV stations to provide community-responsive programming, you basically have noncompliance. 3: The domination of centralized programming masquerading as local programming. Through such group owner innovations as voice tracking in radio, central casting in television, and radio stations' use of national or regional playlists. Voice tracking is a technology used by Clear Channel, the largest group owner of radio stations in the US, whereby live and local broadcasts are replaced with air shifts prerecorded in remote locations. It has evolved into a crass form of cost-cutting that simply eliminates live local broadcasts. It has resulted in the loss of hundreds of disc jockey and announcer jobs at stations nationwide. In many communities entire stations are programmed completely with voice track or automated material, with no local personnel at all. There's no local flavor, no local input, no local jobs, no local coverage, and no local connection. But Clear Channel deceives local audiences into thinking that they are listening to live and local radio by using cheat sheets for remote announcers to refer to local places, events, and pronunciations. On the TV side, Sinclair Broadcasting recently introduced a new form of local programming replacement, called central casting. Similar to voice tracking, Sinclair tapes a generic program in Maryland, masquerades the on-air talent as a local news team, and then broadcasts it to many of its 62 stations in 39 markets nationwide. For the abdication by broadcast stations of their historic role in discovering and promoting local talent, national or regional playlists are a uniform list of songs mandated by station group owners to be played on local radio stations. These playlists are compiled and maintained by corporate management and consultants with minimal input or participation by local station staff or local communities. Use of these playlists deprive local stations of the ability to discover and promote new local artists who then do not have the opportunity to gain airplay or wider exposure. The result is diminished diversity in the types of music heard on the radio and a loss of community response of music radio programming. And five, the destructive pay for play business practices that shut local artists out of airplay and deprive audiences of locally emerging artists. Ultimately squelching innovation in American music. Recording artists are experiencing at least three types of pay for play practices that are well known and wide spread nationwide. First, sound recording artists are unable to have a record played on a local station unless they pay a so called independent promoter to promote their records to specific stations. Second, artists are pressured to perform free or discounted concerts at events sponsored by station owners or risk the loss of airplay. Third, artists are pressured to hire concert promoters associated with the licensees. This type of market control for the compensatory benefit of a broadcast licensee is payola by any definition. This situation also results in local community preference and artistic merit not being the criteria for the selection of music broadcast by licensees. A result contrary to interests of local communities, devastating to the careers of artists and ultimately destructive to the development of American music. All of these problems illustrate the fact that there is a crisis in our industry and we believe the way to address it is regulatory reform. AFTRA and the AFFM have called upon the FCC to respond in five ways. One, the commission must adopt rules to require stations to provide

programming responsive to the needs of the particular communities where the stations are located. Two, the commission must adopt rules to deal specifically with the new destructive payola practices controlling the radio and music industries today. Three, the commission must adopt a meaningful and effective license renewal process with local community input that systematically evaluates how a station has served the public interest. Four, the commission must encourage the development of low power FM radio which can preserve more diverse options for artists and the public. And five, the commission must consider the threat to localism inherent in its loosened media ownership rules, and reverse its misguided effort to permit even more ownership consolidation. Of course there aren't many opportunities right now for rule changes that could put the consolidation genie back in the bottle, but events like this forum tonight are important steps toward both informing and engaging the public, the owners of the airwaves, and toward building a meaningful media reform movement community by community. No one can afford to be passive on this issue. Media workers must be involved, not only because it affects our jobs, but because how news and information is controlled ultimately defines the very nature of our democracy itself. Thank you. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you very much. Thank you Ms. Aho. Our next. Thank you. Our next presenter will be Professor Ken Goldstein of [*Comment from audience member -unintelligible*] Yes. [*Comment from audience member- unintelligible*] Thank you for your help. It's a good idea, but I know how spontaneous it was so please Professor Ken Goldstein don't say [*unintelligible*] to provoke applause. [*laughter*] But, but inform us thank you.

KEN GOLDSTEIN: My name is Ken Goldstein. I am a professor of political science in the University of Wisconsin- U Madison. [*Comment from audience member- unintelligible*] Professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. I am also Director of the University of Wisconsin Advertising Project and the University of Wisconsin News Lab. In the remarks that we've already heard, in the remarks that have swirled around this debate in the last couple years, in the remarks that are certainly to come, we are going to hear a lot of causal claims, we are going to hear a lot of empirical claims. The truth is- and I'm a political scientist, I'm a geeky researcher- we have very little data on either side to make many of the causal claims that people on both sides of this argument are making. So one of the things that I want to just say in my very, very brief comments tonight is we desperately need more data. Commissioner Adelstein very, very nicely talked about some studies that I've been involved in. The University of Wisconsin has provided data for Marty Kaplan at the University of Southern California Annenberg School about exactly what local news has been doing. In 2002, for eight weeks we captured local news on a representative national sample from the top 50 markets of 144 stations. In this election, in the 2004 election- and we will be putting out a report next week- we gathered data from 50 stations in 11 markets. We looked at every single local news broadcast in these eleven markets- both Spanish language and English Language- plus we looked at all prime time programming, or all programming going on in prime time to

see what sorts of other political or public service programs that stations were doing. The data are not going to be much different than what we found in 2002. Very competitive presidential race this year around and the data are going to show that where there was coverage, most of that coverage focused on the national race, on the presidential race. There are also serious questions, and actually this may not have been a good place to have this forum, because the Twin Cities actually have very, very good local news and has had a tradition of very, very good, very good local news. [*laughter*]That sort of things also delays. [*laughter*] And I'm glad to see that we have lots of social scientists here who have done all of the research. [*laughter*] The, the [*comment from member of the audience- unintelligible*] There are many empirical questions here. There are many empirical questions here and the problem is not only the quantity of local news coverage, but the quality of local news coverage. One of my expertise is on campaign in elections, and on survey research, and on polling. With the amount of polling being done in elections and with the strong focus that local news has on strategy and the horse race, the coverage of polling- which was a major component of local news coverage in 2000, in 2002, in 2004- was simply malpractice. It did not provide people with any sort of real understanding about the state of the race if they truly felt that the state of the race and the horse race was the main thing to cover. What we also so in many of these battleground markets, was fairly green young reporters. Not their fault, given very little training, very little guidance by their stations, by their owners suddenly thrust into an environment where they were being- frankly- manipulated by both sides of the campaign. Last point: I'll have a small disagreement here with Commissioner Adelstein. Negative advertising, which everyone complains about, all of the academic evidence actually shows that negative advertising, advertising in general, negative advertising in particular has more information and certainly more information than is on news coverage. Now that's perhaps a comment on news coverage. And that negative advertising is more likely to inform, more likely to stimulate, more likely to engage, and more likely to mobilize voters than news coverage of politics. So again, let me reiterate what I was saying before. Many of you are deeply passionate about this issue- I sense. [*laughter*] Many of you are going to make claims, many people on the other side are going to make claims. We desperately need more empirical evidence if we are going to be making such big decisions. Thank you. [Applause]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you. Thank you very much. Robert Hubbard is the Vice President of Hubbard Broadcasting and President of Hubbard Television. Rob.

ROBERT HUBBARD: Thank you. [*unintelligible*] Thank you Commissioners for having me here tonight. [*unintelligible*] in the Twin Cities. I think my mike is not on. No. Is it on now? There we go. We're the only local media company in the Twin Cities and we also operate television stations outside of the Twin Cities in Duluth, Minnesota, Rochester/Austin, Minnesota, Albany, New York, Rochester, New York, and Albuquerque, New Mexico. In order to cover some of those areas in Minnesota and New Mexico, we also have satellite stations,

which are high powered peer stations. We've got a long history in broadcasting and it's interesting to – and I know I will probably not make points here, but we take a little different position in terms of the public airwaves. My grandfather in 1923 took something that was worthless, that nobody knew how to do anything with and built something that I believe was very powerful, positive force in our community. And although we believe and we operate with the huge commitment to our communities and a huge belief in our responsibilities to our commitment, we truly believe that it's really no different than a farmer who tills soil that used to belong to the government, than a business or a building that is built someplace, that we operate in the public good, we operate in the public need. But in essence, the one thing I think that I probably disagree with most that I've heard tonight is this idea of public airwaves. Without people like my grandfather and other people in every station, in every broadcast station in America, somebody risked something. In the case of my family, both when we started radio, then again when we started television, risked everything. Again when we started US satellite broadcasting to bring direct broadcasting to this nation, we risked everything we had in order to bring a service from something in where there was nothing. But that said, we do believe in operating in the public need and necessity and convenience. This market place has big competitors. Gannet is here, they are obviously very large. Viacom owns CBS this year. Fox owns stations here. Sinclair owned a station here. So in that regard, you know, we're a little guy and here in this market, we are a local broadcaster. We've lived here, I've lived here my whole life, my family lives here, I've raised my kids here. But in our other markets, we provide an opportunity for our general managers to do the same thing, and we expect and in fact require them to operate for their communities and we often have discussions- obviously as any business or any group has- about what's the best thing and in almost all areas there's never a right or wrong answer. But at the end of the day, we run all of our stations- or try to run them to the best extent possible- from the perspective of that local community. Some of the things that we do, and here in the Twin Cities for those of you who aren't familiar- we operate radio stations, but we also have two television stations: KCP Channel 5, which is the ABC affiliate and KSTC Channel 45, which is a true independent, has no national affiliation of any kind. And we do, we do, do things fairly aggressively in terms of effort, and I know we don't often get agreement, but that's what we're doing and if you look at the call-in sheets and emails that we get everyday no matter what story we do, no matter who we put on the air, no matter what public service effort we begin, we get different view points: some of which are positive in regards to what we do, and some of which are negative. And no matter what issue we put out there, we will get those comments and they will always be divergent, so that any one group of people or any one audience is never representative of the entire community. And I think it's important that we always keep that in mind, that there are always at least two sides and usually many more to any issue. But we offer free time for candidates, for example, here in the Twin Cities- where we operate and we provide service- some our service area touches all eight Minnesota Congressional districts. We offer 21 candidates free time- two minutes each- at our stations. We do this at all our stations, not just here. And an interesting thing is, and we offer it in good times. We offered it to 21 candidates for office. Only 15 actually

took us up on it, so interesting, and we get a lot of heat for not offering free time as an industry, and I can tell you that when politicians are given free time and forced to be accountable without being able to control the agenda, they often don't want to take advantage of it. And that goes on both sides of the aisles as well and isn't limited to one political party. We ran, we took that free time and on KSTC Channel 45 we ran it at five o'clock the Saturday before the election- so a very good time period. On KSTP, we ran that program and it turned out it was of those 15 people, it was a little over 30 minutes. And we ran it at 10:35 immediately following the news the Thursday night prior to the election. We reran it on our digital channels. We also offered debates, we actually conducted or ran nine different debates here in the Twin Cities and we played them at least, at least once and most of them replayed multiple times in prime time between the two stations. We had one debate that we ran on KSTP and obviously an affiliated station, both the economics and the contractual relationships make it harder to find time, but we did run a 6th District which we determined was gonna be the most hotly contested race here in Minnesota in prime time on Channel 5. The others were run on prime time on Channel 45 and we've replayed all of those on our digital service as well. We do four and a half hours everyday Monday through Friday of local news. We do one and a half hours of local news on the weekends and we do do public affairs: we have a regularly scheduled public affair program. If no one's ever watched it, I encourage you to watch it. I encourage you to watch anything we have. But we have a show called "At Issue," where we deal primarily with local issues and we replay that on both of our stations. It's always fresh, it's always current. It's an original every week. We play it on Sunday mornings. [*applause*] Thank you. And I can tell you that this is, this is something, that we are a business, and everything has to be offset to some extent by the realities of running a business. And, and, coverage costs money, and in order to do a show like that, you know we don't make money on that show, it's quite costly for us to do that show, but we do it. We also do a show every week 10:35 on Saturday nights called "On the Road," where we go around to Minnesota and other areas and we look at unique individuals, unique opportunities, unique events that are going on in our community, which is in the case of Minneapolis/St. Paul television station, is almost the entire state of Minnesota is our coverage area and considered our local community. We do quarterly town hall specials. We do quarterly weather specials. We do breaking news and weather, obviously, as most news television stations do. We do high school sport shows for, you know, sports, in particular high school sports is a big event to people. And we also do a wide assortment of professional sports activities as well. In particular, on Channel 45, we do have opportunities, and we do have a number of locally produced shows where people have sometimes had a show that they've produced and sometimes come to us with an idea and we've helped figure out how to get that show produced. And, so, I think in summary I'd just like to say that it's important to remember that just because a station isn't owned locally, doesn't mean it can't be run locally. And also, these are businesses, no different than any other businesses. Everything that we do, everything that anybody does, requires money. So, when we look at all issues, we have to keep in mind that there is both a commercial side to it and a public service side, and if ever the balance is swung too far in one direction, then everybody will lose. Thank you. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you Rob. Bob Bundgaard is president KLO, KLKS FM, and more importantly he is the Mayor of Breezy Point, Minnesota.

BOB BUNDGAARD: Commissioner Adelstein and Mr. Goldstein, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you this evening. As my old friend, Mayor George Latimer, so good to see you and see you well. I must let you know that before I moved up to Breezy Point, which is where I'm from, I toiled even here in the cement city with WWTC, during its all news and news talk days, back in the 70's, and after that WGGY. The good mayor and I spent many hours, many occasions in which we talked about things of importance to your city. It's so good to see you again, sir, good to see you well. My town is Breezy Point and thank you for allowing me talk about my town and what we do. Love radio or I wouldn't be up here today. What Rob said, we're like Rob's station, except smaller, a lot smaller. [*laughter*] Mine too is a family-run operation. My father, Allen Gay, who worked at WCCO for many years, and WCBS before that, started the operation in 1984, and, in fact, at the time that he did this, I was working at Dale Weber's station, WBGY Minneapolis, and I went to Dale, who I respect immensely, and I said [*unintelligible*] and Dale insisted, "Hey, you'll make a little money up there and beyond that you'll have a really god time," and Dale was exactly right. Alka Pass is located in the pine and lake country, about three hours to the north, if you don't know where that is. We're in the Brainerd Lakes area, that's where we are, known for fishing holes, but truth be told, we probably have more golf holes now than that. We are a rural area. We're a recreation area, and in many ways I think the kind of stations that you rue having lost are like ours. And to Professor Goldstein, I would tell you that we do local news every hour on the hour from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m., immediately following CNN news. So we've got a blend of both national and local that we do. We have a news director that we've hired and we'd like to keep him 24 hours, but for some reason he won't do that. [*laughter*] What I'd like to talk to you about more than localism really is relevant, because I personally I believe that localism is fine, but if what you do isn't relevant, than people aren't going to pay attention to your product. And nobody is served by that. So I'd really like to talk about that. In today's media environment we're a singly owned radio station. Okay? We are a one stand-alone station, referred to as a C2. We've got 50,000 watts we broadcast, and I am in a highly, highly consolidated market. And so I want to tell you how it is that we survive in that. Do we survive, and can we move forward? To me, relevance for my listeners means a mix of compelling local and national programming, covering the lakes area, while keeping it in touch with the rest of the world. On the entertainment front, which is part of what makes us relevant, music from Frank, Ray, and Celine is relevant to my listeners. We appeal to folks who are 50 and over. Also, we have a healthy dose of local news, weather, and public affairs programming, which we do right in morning drive time. A year ago at this time I wouldn't have been here; you'd have found me up to my ankles in snow on a mild December evening in Pequat Lakes, Minnesota, covering live a candlelight vigil for Dru Sjodin, a name I think most of you recognize. She was our

sweetheart from Pequat Lakes who was abducted, a student in North Dakota. She was abducted from a North Dakota shopping center. As most of you know, sadly her body was found in a Minnesota ditch last spring following thousands of volunteer hours. We carried that live. My news director, for a lack of a better word, was MC of that event. We were fully involved in that. We won an award for it. I wish we hadn't, but I believe that that's part of the obligation that we have to serve our community, just this morning. I want to talk to you about the mundane, because really it's not the awards, I think, that make you a great radio station or how you serve your public, but rather those things that you do day in and day out- the mundane. Just this morning I was interviewing a registered nurse [*unintelligible*], talking about the flu season and whether folks over 50 ought to get inoculated. Relevant? Yesterday it was the area Fishery Supervisor for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on ice conditions. Some parts of the lakes are six inches of ice; some of them are wide open. Come January, we will interview state senators and representatives doing the legislative updates we do twice a week. And quite frankly one of the reasons why I do it is because I like it. It's fun. It's stimulating. It's relevant. And particularly from the kind of interviews that I had with Mayor Latimer, it works. People are interested in that. We do it. It works as part of our programming. I have no opposition to offering free air tie to politicians. In fact, I had a standing offer for a Congressman. I'm not gonna tell you who he is, but I can tell you he rides a bicycle a lot, and he could call more often. I love talking to him. I wish he'd do that. I do insist on a Q&A format, however, question and answer, from a qualified interview. Anything else, I believe, would just be a promotion of the partisan line, and quite honestly, I don't think would be all that relevant to my listeners. Question and answer. Something I said? [*laughter*] Local music is also relevant for m listeners. My listeners each summer we bring in the Skol Club, a group of local musicians who play ethnic tunes from Scandinavia, Poland, and Germany on the radio, live on our radio. We have them for half an hour, 45 minutes, as long as we can keep them. We get a healthy dose of squeeze box, fiddle and bass. This year we also heard from college students from Sweden, who brought their talents to us. They're not local, but they sure were fun to here, and we carried them live. National events can be equally relevant to our community. When 9/11 occurred, the focus had to shift from our backyard. Not local, but it was relevant. The same could be said about what's happening in Iraq even as we speak. You see the world with technologies like satellite radio, stand-alone radios, stations like mine have to work even harder to be relevant and to be profitable. Those two companies –XM and Sirius- together have a monopoly on pay radio and its 100 plus channel platform. Talk about media consolidation. And I would caution the FCC against letting those giants begin offering their idea of local content. That's going to hurt not only the city folks, but I believe us local folks as well. To be honest, I was not a great fan of the 96 telecom. I was not. And today I live in an extremely consolidated market place. My one station versus a group of six within my city grade. In other words, where my signal is the strongest. Yet, this year we're rated number two in our marketplace. The previous two, we were number one. And from a profit stand point, we have had our biggest year ever, that, we're enjoying right now. How can I be critical of my big neighbor? They just raised $96,000 in a weekend telethon to end child abuse. Relevant. We get along. If a county

emergency occurs, we have an arrangement in which the authorities call his operation and then they in turn call us no matter what the time of day so that we can inform the public about what's going on: fertilizer spills, gasoline truck tips over, serious accidents, that sort of thing. We work together. So Commissioners, if you see fit to establish new localism rules, we'll continue to be doing this anyways. It's what we do, we enjoy it. And I understand, there are close to 800 low power radio stations pending at the commission right now with the license to [*unintelligible*], KLX will continue providing these services to Breezy Point. We're happy to see LP FM join us. In fact, these stations could provide important supplemental services to some parts of the country, but by no means should you or Congress change the interference rules. Ultimately Commissioners, regardless of what happens in Washington, KLX will keep serving our [*unintelligible*] country community, because it makes us relevant to our listeners and in today's media world, we can not afford to become irrelevant or unprofitable. So thanks for listening, and I'd be more than happy to answer any questions. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you Bob. Thank you very much. Our final panelist is Al Christopherson, head of the Minnesota Farm Bureau. Al.

AL CHRISTOPHERSON: Thank you. My name is Al Christopherson. I produce corn, soybeans, and raise hogs near Pennock, Minnesota on the west central part of the state. I am President of the Minnesota Farm Bureau in my other life and I am also board member for the American Farm Bureau Federation. And I really sincerely thank you for the opportunity to express some of our concerns and thoughts regarding local news and media diversity as it relates to my industry of agriculture. We certainly want to continue this dialogue on how the commission can best insure that broadcasters fulfill their obligation to serve their communities of license. That's pretty important. On behalf of farmers across Minnesota, we encourage all radio and television stations to maintain and improve their agricultural services. It might sound like self serving, but bear with me. Instead of maintaining or improving their agricultural services, some radio stations are eliminating or curtailing farm news. According to figures supplied by the National Association of [*unintelligible*] Broadcasters, the number of on air broadcasters in that association has declined to 136 from 225 since 1998. That's consolidation. In the last year, two 50,000 watt radio stations, WCCO Minneapolis and WGN Chicago, cut their farm programming. After 80 years of reporting farm news WCCO dropped agriculture altogether and that gives me the opportunity to find out what happened on the latest segment of the "Survivor" show and who survived and a little bit about "Desperate Housewives". [*laughter*] The WGN Noon Show which consisted of a weekday farm report and agribusiness show was reduced from 45 minutes to just brief market updates. What concerns me about all of this is that these stations messages were not only important in providing information to farmers, but even more importantly to the consumers in that particular market. And their agricultural information provided consumers with agricultural facts, so that these consumers could make some informed decisions- whether it be at the grocery store, at a community function, or in the voting

booth. This trend is disturbing, but certainly not inexplicable. A review of the problem identified several factors. In the late 1990s, large ownership groups acquired hundreds of, hundreds of radio licenses following changes in the media ownership rules as we have heard this evening. National farm advertising has dropped by 45% in the last 5 years. Local farm advertising declined even more than that. The decline can be attributed to: a weaker farm economy, a consolidation of farm industry companies, and fewer new product offerings especially in the crop protection area. There are signs, however, that the agribusiness climate is getting better because of a stronger farm economy. Newspaper accounts of the changes at WGN and WCCO and other radio stations noted the decline in advertising dollars. Now station managers and program directors were also quoted as saying they felt a need for programming that appealed to a wider audience and they believed that farmers could get the same information elsewhere. That perhaps is correct, however, again I reiterate the fact that that was a double-edged sword. Part of that information was something that consumers wanted to know, [*unintelligible*] consumers wanted to hear, and in many cases that was their only link to agriculture- that which provides the food and the fiber that they are utilizing on a daily basis. Anecdotal and quantitative research shows in many areas of the country farm radio remains a valued, used, useful source of information for producers. Now, example: shortly after the WGN radio station there in Chicago announced it was ending the Noon Show, the discovery of a BSE-infected cow in the United States became news. WGN Farm Director, Oren Samelson, was on the air repeatedly throughout the broadcast day explaining to consumers what this meant to them. That's pretty important stuff. A summary of the problem is this: the decline in advertising dollars to support farm radio has made it very vulnerable. Unless station managers and owners have a strong commitment to their rural audiences, the drop in revenue is a convenient excuse to remove farm programming. As a result, broadcasters are not serving the interests and the needs of their rural communities. In most, in recent years, most farm broadcasters that tried to broaden their appeal to a consumer audience and to the growing number of people who are moving to semi-rural areas to enjoy a rural lifestyle. And we in the Farm Bureau hope that whatever actions are taken to improve levels of community service by radio include the needs of rural audiences, especially farmers who depend on local news, weather and markets and consumers who need to have the opportunity to learn the facts about the industry that surrounds them everyday. While an urban listener may have many stations to choose from on an AM or FM and can find the format that suits his or her interests, that is not the case in rural communities. There are fewer stations and those that exist may be part of the same ownership group, and as pointed out earlier, the 50,000 watt stations that once were important to rural listeners, are now, some of them are abandoning those listeners. In conclusion, Minnesota Farm Bureau recognizes the market forces affecting radio and the role they play in the decline in farm broadcasting. However, this does not negate the fact that many stations have a rural audience that is no longer being adequately served. If the FCC proceeds in some manner to encourage more community responsive programming, Minnesota Farm Bureau strongly urges the FCC to include farm programming in that initiative. Thank you. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you sir. I'd like to thank the entire panel. Please. We will. I don't know if everyone knows this, but the weather and the traffic jam meant that the panelists started quite late and I must say that you did a great job in a brief period of time. I thank this panel and I invite the second panel to come up while I'm about to make the next announcement. I should tell you that Commissioner Adelstein committed himself to hearing from every member of the public who appeared here beginning at 9:15 tonight, and I'll repeat the public announcement about how we'll proceed with that. But because of his commitment to hear from everyone in addition to the panelists, he suggested to me that we withhold the Commissioner's response at this stage to the panelists so that we can get on and stay on course and I think that's very important for the public testimony. Let me repeat what I said at the beginning of the panel again for anyone who might have arrived late. After this second panel, there will be a short break. I am suggesting now without any encouragement from anyone, that the break be a very short one permitting the public testimony to begin in a timely manner. So we'll aim to get there for the public testimony by 9:15, which means this panel will do its' best to complete its' presentations in that period of time, giving us time for a short break. Everyone will have an opportunity to give a two minute public testimony which will be entered into the public record. To sign up to give this testimony, clipboards are now being handed out, both here in Sundin Hall and also in the Klas Center at the. You may also sign up if you've not already done so to give testimony in the lobby of Sundin Hall. We will collect these sheets and Liz Nordling, the public testimony moderator, will read names randomly from the Klas Center and then from Sundin Hall. Please line up behind the microphones when your name is read. People on the Klas Center, in the Klas Center can look for volunteers who will escort them here to Sundin Hall. People in the Klas Centers should look for volunteers with orange badges for an escort. Please remember to keep your comments to two minutes. It's going to be exciting to hear all of the people speak before the evening ends. Now I want to thank before this panel begins, again Joe Pecheque of the Hamline University sociology department, President Osnes, and Hamline for sponsoring this. Now, our first panelist for the conversation on media diversity will be Nicholas Johnson, a professor University of Iowa, College of Law and a former Commissioner of the FCC. Commissioner Johnson, welcome.

NICHOLAS JOHNSON: Thank you. [*applause*] And I want to thank Commissioner Adelstein and Commissioner Copps. I'm so proud of them and what they're doing here is in the great tradition of American democracy, and I used to comment in Washington how sad it was that we would have newspaper headlines: "Public official serves public interest". I said: "Why should that be news?" And yet it is and they're carrying on in that tradition and I appreciate it and Jordan being here to fill in for Commissioner Copps who I got a message from today about his back and I understand the operation much more than I did before. I, as a, as a law professor, I am used to speaking for entire semesters at a time. [*laughter*] And, and so the notion that I explained to George, you know I've been writing about this stuff for 40 years and it's all up on my webpage. And he said: "I think you could summarize it

in five minutes." [*laughter*] Now that my critics have been saying that for years, but I didn't really expect it from him. So the most valuable thing that I can tell you tonight, out of this, these decades of experience is my website address, because you can get everything's free, entire books in full text, 400 dissenting opinions at a time when I thought the FCC could never get worse, and as the Commissioner said we now look back upon that as the golden age of responsible FCC regulation. Seven years of writing dissenting opinions and articles and all kinds of stuff. And it's just my name, Nicholas Johnson like right here. All one word. www.nicholasjohnson.org. I've never successfully got anything that was a com, and so I thought I should be an org. [*laughter*] I don't really have time to tell you anything at all tonight except for my website, but, when you go there, you will see the text prepared for delivery this evening which I'm not delivering. And you should feel free to applaud throughout it as you read it. [*laughter*] But I am going to give you one bit of historical perspective, since that's what I called the talk that you're never going to hear. And that is, a quote from a young Congressman back in 1926, three years after Stan's father and Rob Hubbard's grandfather started that station. In his first term, what was to be twenty some years of distinguished service to the United States House of Representatives, Congress was trying to figure out what this mysterious box was called radio and nobody had a clue how it operated and they certainly didn't anticipate FM and communication satellites, and hundreds of millions of dollars being raised to buy television time in presidential campaigns. But, what they did understand was the threat that ownership concentration offered this country and I want you to listen to these words from Congressman Luther Johnson of Texas, no relation, that's what I always say Lyndon Johnson, no relation: "American thought and American politics will be largely at the mercy of those who operate these stations." 1926. "For publicity is the most powerful weapon that can be wielded at a republic and when such a weapon is placed in the hands of one, or a single selfish group as permitted to either tacitly or otherwise acquire ownership and dominate these broadcasting stations throughout the country, then woe be to those who would dare to differ with them. It will be impossible to compete with them in reaching the ears of the American people." A sentiment which I repeated some four years later in an article in the Atlantic monthly- which they still have up on their website actually, I'm quite flattered- where the subhead was an FCC Commissioner's warning. In my last sentence is the last bit of warning that I leave with you and hopefully within my five minutes, which is: "If we are unwilling to discuss this issue fully today, we may find ourselves discussing none that matter very much tomorrow." Thank you. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Unbelievable, five minutes.

NICHOLAS JOHNSON: Was it really?

GEORGE LATIMER: On the button.

NICHOLAS JOHNSON: Oh, thank you George. Well you told me it could all be summarized in five minutes.

GEORGE LATIMER: But I didn't expect…

NICHOLAS JOHNSON: www.nicholas.johnson.org [*laughter*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Our second panelist is Janice Lane Ewart, Executive Director, KFAI. Thank you for coming. [*applause*]

JANICE LANE-EWART: Good evening to the Commissioners and the representative of Commissioner Copps. My name is Janice Lane-Ewart. I'm representing KFAI Fresh Air Radio. I'm also representing the twelve stations in the state of Minnesota that have come together to represent independent public radio, and also my community as a cultural activist. I wish to address the critical need for localism in the media, and equal and open access to the media, print, electronic, and broadcast. I will give a brief overview of KFAI Fresh Air Radio, just as a means of providing one example of localism in the media, and representation of underserved communities. I will briefly speak about the communities served, the challenges facing continued service to such communities, and a few practical changes or solutions to the stated challenges. KFAI is a volunteer-based community radio station that broadcasts information, arts, and entertainment programming for an audience of diverse racial, social, and economic backgrounds. In the process, KFAI helps to increase understanding among peoples and communities while fostering the values of democracy and social justice. KFAI's primary goals are to provide an alterative voice to other stations where many communities are underrepresented, to fill the void left in music and news radio by more traditional broadcasters, to provide equal and open access to the airwaves, and to train and empower community members to use radio broadcasting to enhance their lives. KFAI specializes in on-air programming which is 95% local programming, and the station broadcasts 90 programs, including those spoken in 13 languages, including French, Spanish, Amharic, Blue and White Mung, Cambodian, Eritrean, Aromo, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Hindi, Somali, and Filipino. Many of the communities served are recent or newly arrived immigrants who are part of an oral tradition, which makes the need for radio even more vital as they are in the process of transitioning from the familiar to the new. KFAI also broadcasts public affairs and 30 minutes of nightly news broadcasts produced solely by our news director, and voluntary reporters, interns, hosts, and engineers. With a primary focus on local news from communities and neighborhoods seldom featured on commercial broadcasting, KFAI's news department has been repeatedly recognized by various sources or the quality of its news reporting and or the localism that is featured on such reports. KFAI is currently faced with several challenges for promoting greater localism in the media, and representing communities currently served by our two frequencies in the Twin Cities. KFAI's current 125 watts allows us to reach listeners within a 20-25 mile

radius. In order to provide greater service to listeners who have expressed a need and desire for alternative viewpoints, expressions of cultures, and concerns delivered in their own native voices, KFAI has applied for another frequency. Unfortunately, our applications for additional frequencies have been frozen by the FCC over the past two years. With this option unavailable to KFAI, our second option would be the opportunity to purchase another station or frequency in order to expand our service. This option, however, is also compounded by the fact that the availability of noncommercial stations is currently not open to us, and the exorbitant cost of purchasing a commercial station which is estimated to be anywhere from two to fifteen million dollars is also not available to us. Practical solutions to the challenges described would be for the FCC to release the freeze on frequency applications, open the spectrum to allow for more frequencies for noncommercial stations, and to expand low power FM radio service. Such solutions would be beneficial to KFAI and empower communities to begin their own locally owned radio stations. Of course this solution is only practical if it also done in conjunction with a ban on ownership of additional frequencies by commercial entities and noncommercial entities who currently own three or more stations within the same state. [*applause*] At a recent workshop, I listened to potential testimony from ten to fifteen individuals with some of the following concerns: the presence of rampant censorship and the need for a free speech form within print and broadcast media; the need for more educational programming on public television, not cable, after 6:00 p.m.; the need for radio aimed at bilingual teenagers; a reallocation of public resources such that commercial stations would be required to pay for the use of additional frequencies on the spectrum; the need for more than one major daily newspaper in Minneapolis and St. Paul, especially given the populations not adequately served by these two newspapers [*applause*]; the lack of coverage for issues most relevant to the general public interest as opposed to the interests of the wealthy, advertisers, or dominant populations; the glorification of traditional or party candidates in the media with little or no coverage given to lesser known candidates, or representatives from non-traditional parties; and lastly, [*applause*] the recent loss of an 82-year old community radio station to an entity with ownership of eight or more stations within the state of Minnesota. [*applause*] In closing, I wish I could report that the participants at this workshop also shared with me solutions to each of these very demanding challenges. I believe it would be safe to say that this community highly values open and equal access to all forms of public media. The opportunity for the FCC to create policies and regulations that also exemplify these values- the values of open and equal access to all forms of public media- will be available within the drafting of the 2005 Telecommunications Act or the media ownership rules. On behalf of public radio community in the Twin Cities and across the state of Minnesota, I strongly urge the Commission to consider all testimony given this evening. Even though you are speaking to those who are converted, there are three Commissioners who are not here tonight who still need conversion. [*applause*] [*laughter*] Please do not leave this community parched for free speech, democracy, and equal representation in the media. Thank you very much for your time. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you. Thank you very much. Lorena Duarte is the editor of *La Prensa de Minnesota*. Thank you. [*applause*]

LORENA DUARTE: Good evening. Buenas noches. Who here speaks Spanish? Pues entonces estones es para ti, ustedes. Esta pensando que tal vez debiría certo mi commentarios en español. Para que la gente pudieren tender como se siente las communidades que no se oyen normalmente. So that's how minority communities feel. [*laughter*] [*applause*] It's very nice to be here. I've been on many different panels about media and diversity. It's very gratifying to be on one with such a diverse and powerful audience. *La Prensa de Minnesota* was started fourteen yeas ago by my father, Mario Duarte. At the time there was no independent newspaper for the Latino community. Now there's several and the Latino community has grown. But what brings me here tonight is just my general concern over how that community is portrayed, and how minority communities are portrayed in general. Who here has head of the Dru Sjodin case? So who here knows the name Alphonso Rodriquez? Right. So who here can give me the name of another Latino that's been prominent in the news in the last year in Minnesota? So who here has heard the Che Van case? So who here can give me the name of another Mung person who has prominent in the news in Minnesota in the last year? That's better. I guess we gotta catch up with the Mung brothers and sisters. [*laughter*] Alright. So, my goal here, since I only have five minutes, is not to preach to the converted, but just to touch on a couple of points. Minority communities, I think, are subject to the same standards, quote unquote, as other communities as far as big media goes. Sensationalism sells. Whatever is sexy gets put on TV, and whatever scares you to death gets put on the front page. The problem for minority communities is that we don't have the other side of the coin. Diversity in ethnicity also does not equal diversity in thought. And just because you have brown faces on your television screen or portrayed in your newspaper doesn't mean that the opinions are in any way different than majority culture. So my message to the FCC is I would ask that you go back to the three unconverted Commissioners and really stand up and say that the new rules must give minority communities and minority opinions a fair chance against the multimillion dollar lobbyists of big media. Thank you. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. Sarah Nelson is the Assistant News Director of KUOM, University of Minnesota. Ms. Nelson.

SARAH NELSON: Thank you. First of all I'd like to tell you a little bit about myself. My name is Sarah Nelson, and I am the Assistant News Director at Radio K, KUOM FM, the student-run radio station at the University of Minnesota. I graduated from the University of Minnesota in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in journalism, with a public relations emphasis. Two years later, I found myself looking for a new career and I returned to the U to take courses in broadcast journalism. I soon discovered that Radio K had a volunteer news department. At that time,

Radio K had limited resources for news. Although it is part of the U's College of Continuing Education, it relies heavily on non-university funding, including grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, underwriting from local business and communities, and listener contributions. Radio K at the time also lacked a professional new coach for the news department, due to budget limitations. In late December of last year, I learned that the Minnesota Broadcasters Association had reached an agreement with Radio K to use its facilities to produce a weekly, 30-minute public affairs radio show called Access Minnesota. The goal was to create a show using Radio K student, staff and volunteers to assist with the production and eventually produce on-air content. The Minnesota Broadcasters Association was working in collaboration with the university's College of Liberal Arts to produce the show, and the MBA agreed to fund a part-time news coach, which was a faculty member from the journalism school. At Radio K the professional staff at the station functions primarily as coaches for the student, staff, and volunteers, providing feedback and critiquing their on-air work. The addition of the news coach was a tremendous to Radio K's news efforts. Early this year I began to volunteer on the Access Minnesota production team and was also hired as an intern at the Minnesota Broadcasters Association. In June of this year, I also joined the paid Radio K student staff as Assistant News Director. Since its inception in late 2003, Access Minnesota's network of stations has grown to over 35 statewide. Access Minnesota focuses on issues of importance to local communities, and invites as guests politicians and community leaders, authors, and university faculty. The program tackles both local and national issues, but strives to always bring a local connection to all of the topics discussed. The opportunity to work on a high-quality, professional public affairs program like Access Minnesota rarely presents itself to a college student, and I am grateful to the MBA for the opportunity and the commercial and noncommercial stations statewide that carry the program. Access Minnesota affiliates include noncommercial stations such as Radio K, to single stations owned by independent operators, to stations such as KJZI, here in the Twin Cities owned by Clear Channel. It's highly unusual for college students to have an opportunity to produce content for a program that's heard in a major market, as well as a larger statewide network. I should also take a few moments to talk about the unique programming that Radio K offers its listeners. Our format is an eclectic mix of independent rock, with a heavy emphasis on local music, offering airplay to artists who are not typically head on mainstream radio. Radio K is an outlet for local music encompassing a variety of genres, including rap, hip hop, metal, and punk. Among stations in the Twin Cities market, Radio K is truly unique. Its 5,000 watt signal brings this eclectic programming to more than half the state of Minnesota, and its streamed audio has spawned an international Radio K following. The partnership that the state's commercial and noncommercial broadcasters have created with Radio K and the university greatly benefits the Minnesota community. First, it provides listeners statewide with a high-quality weekly public affairs program, that uses local guests and experts who dissect a wide range of relevant, timely and often controversial issues. Second, it provides the university students with a unique opportunity to produce professional quality programming and gain experience on a major market station, as well as the larger state network. And finally, it provides educational resources, such as a part-time news

coach as well as the direction and instruction from the MBA. I am proud to be associated with this effort and I am grateful for the opportunity to share this experience with you this evening. Thank you. [*applause*]

GEORGE LATIMER: Our final panelist… Thank you very much. Our final panelist from the diversity panel is Laura Waterman Whitstock from the Seneca Nation, President of Maghese Communications and author. Welcome. [*applause*]

LAURA WATERMAN WHITSTOCK: Since we have five minutes, which is not a very long time, I thought I would give you a little piece of history and then give you an example of, right now 2004, an issue that is very important to all of us. Maghese was born 27 years ago. We were in a twin, and this was our other twin. We shared a one-room office in the basement of a school, and one went off to become a radio entity, and we went off to become independent producers. We used the KUOM studios for almost ten years, and we produced First Person radio and distributed that to 50 stations, primarily on reservations and in Indian communities. We don't do that so much anymore. We occasionally will do a special or a documentary, but primarily we train students, and we look for partners to broaden the vision of communications across Indian country, and I especially want to thank Commissioner Adelstein for his kind comments about Indian country. And that brings me to precisely where we are today. Maghese Communications has joined up with Indian organizations and tribes in five other states to develop a native media and technology network. Now we use the word network- it's a very big word- and we are actually a very weak network because we're just starting out. But we know that we can't wait any longer for the regulations to turn our way, for the opportunities to come around the corner, because the contraction of media is growing all the time. And so we have tribes across the United States that have interest in this area as owners. We do not have, for example, an American Indian channel. You're not likely to see any of that on cable or on network, and the year after year drumbeat of special audiences, special content, and special tastes therefore marginalize the program, just is not going to work for us anymore. We have to gain control and we have to take that ourselves. [*applause*] So let me tell you just a little story. I know the Commissioners are very, very familiar with this. Not too long ago, News Corp. purchased Direct TV. So you have a media conglomerate purchasing a major distribution system. What News Corp. agreed to do, therefore, via the Fox Entertainment Group, was to create more diversity opportunities in the industry. Now that sounds good. But we shouldn't wait for one large conglomerate to buy another conglomerate in order to have diversity in the workplace where media exists, because it is everywhere. It is local in our communities. It is regional in our state networks and affiliates, and it's national. And the closing down of media is very bad news for all of us because diversity just doesn't mean people of color, glbt, women; it is really all of us. We are diversity, everybody in this audience. And whenever there is a movement to make that a smaller and smaller place, not only in terms of access, but as Commissioner Copps said, the architecture too. So you've got both things that are under attack right now, and it's a very, very dangerous

situation for all of us to be in. Unfortunately, and I have about a quarter inch here of paper that I drew off the internet at 4:00 this morning. And this is just a sliver of what's available out there, in terms of information about the FCC, independent organizations that are working to clarify, people taking sides on the Supreme Court case, people lobbying Congress in terms of, you know, what next steps might be coming along, various procedural efforts such as the decision to postpone the vote until next year on a very critical point. All of those things are arcane. They're difficult to understand, but they are there, and if there's one thing I could tell all of you tonight, that is hop on the internet, go to Nicholas Johnson [*laughter*], but also go to the Center for Digital Democracy. Go to any number of URLs. Just Google your way through and educate yourself on the issues because all have a tremendous amount to lose if we otherwise. Thank you very much.

GEORGE LATIMER: Thank you very much, Laura. And this panel fulfilled every wish, including a richly diverse view of the universe. Thank you so much. Thanks to the panel. [*applause*] Oh, oh. As a matter of fact, thank goodness I have the help I have. A couple of announcements you'll be interested in hearing. After this part of the program completes, Liz Nordling in fact will join me here and will announce the first ten public participant commentators who have been chosen at random. And then now, Mr. Goldstein will make a few announcements and Commissioner Adelstein has written me a nifty little note which I like a lot. He says he has a couple of questions that he'd like to put, and I like that approach. Mr. Adelstein, please.

COMMISSIONER ADELSTEIN: I'm gonna start with a couple of questions so we can make it continuous with the panel. I'm really glad we had a panel on diversity here. One of the things we've learned at the FCC, our statistics show that minority ownership of media outlets is at an all-time low, the lowest level since we've ever started keeping these statistics. And the only way we can really regulate, given that we've given up on almost all forms of regulation of broadcasters, is through the ownership rules. I'm curious about your views on this panel about how well minority interests, in particular, are treated in the Twin Cities media, and how different is the treatment of minorities by media that is actually owned by the minority groups themselves versus that in the mainstream media in this community.

NICHOLAS JOHNSON: That would be you, I believe.

JANICE LANE EWART: I'm imagining we're all passing the mic because our presence here is probably very indicative of the lack of ownership by communities in color in print, electronic and broadcast media. The opportunity to expand the spectrum to communities of color could probably be best used if the, as I said earlier, if the opportunity for opening the spectrum were something that some creative way was found to do that, as well as the opportunity particularly here in the Twin Cities where there's been a growing movement for low power radio

and television service. I would also like to add that there are opportunities within existing commercial media for there to be greater interaction with communities of color and instead of providing coverage when there are challenges, or more often when there are less than positive news coverage, that they provide opportunity for training of communities of color to take on the responsibility of providing coverage from first person voice, as well as making sure that coverage is monitored throughout the year that include accomplishments and achievements.

LAURA WATERMAN WHITSTOCK: Actually I think there are two levels of issues. One of those is getting together the partnerships that can do the buy. That's one piece that's difficult, and I think some tribes are coming to a greater recognition that they have a better economic position to contemplate that. So I think there's probably an education curve. On the other hand, you have the case of Telemundo. You have a successful ownership that then gets co-opted and taken over by, you know, one of the larger conglomerates. So there's, it's just a cautionary tale, but I certainly am optimistic that more is gonna happen. What could happen to help it? I really don't know because the marketplace is so swung in the direction of the laissez faire that, you know, it's almost difficult to contemplate how that might happen, but I'm hopeful.

LORENA DUARTE: If I can just really briefly, the reason that I asked the audience about Alphonso Rodriguez is that he is the man whose been accused of killing this girl Dru Sjodin in northern Minnesota and it's gotten huge coverage. And I think it's just indicative of what I was talking about during my presentation about sensationalism and, you know, the big story and whatever, oooh, you know, is what's gonna be on the front page and what gets the most amount of coverage. I mean, as far as, you know it's funny that you just mentioned Telemundo. I don't really like Telemundo, you know what I mean? I mean it has a lot of the same kind of things. So I think that greater diversity and focusing on localism helps just kind of, it helps basically bring it back to local communities and reflecting what truly local communities are like, and that's what minority owners are really good at doing. You know, my father always says, "look, bad things happen, but good things happen too all the time". Yes, we're gonna show our needs. We're gonna show our problems and our challenges, but we're gonna show our assets. You know what I mean, like the things we're doing positively and well, and so as far as minority ownership, I think there's inherent sensitivity there. There's inherent understanding there, and, heck, if we can get more, great. I mean, but the question is how, and how to wrest that control from conglomerates some.

NICHOLAS JOHNSON: May I make a point about some underlying concepts? We haven't really explored, and we're not going to explore them right this minute, but just to identify them, that you recognize that we're talking about ownership. Ownership is incredibly important for all the reasons we've been talking about. But there are a couple of other issues that make it orders of magnitude more important than you would otherwise think.

Understand the distinction between matters of grace and matters of right. When you write a letter to the editor, the newspaper may, as a matter of grace, publish it. When you call in to a talk show, the station may, as a matter of grace, put you on the air. You have zero legal right. You can go down to the newspaper, put your money on the counter. They can say, "let me see your copy. We ain't gonna run it". And there's nothing you can do about it. The Supreme Court of the United States has made repeatedly clear with regard to every medium: radio, television, cable, St. Patrick's Day parades, billing envelopes from Pacific Gas & Electric. With the First Amendment right to speak goes the First Amendment right to censor everybody else in the country. You have no First Amendment rights. Start off with that understanding. So that's why- And nor do journalists. I mean, the only people who have the First Amendment right are the owners. And that's why one of the things you'll read on the Website is, "you want free speech, go buy yourself a station". Right. And the other thing you need to understand is that when we blend content and conduit, when the person who is doing the distributing also owns the content, you've got very serious problems, and I would simply note by way of historic example again: When AT&T owned everything, all the phones, the switching stations, long distance, Western Electric- the whole thing from start to finish- there were no ACLU complaints about First Amendment. Why was that? Isn't that interesting? We had one owner. Talk about company. And yet, we had free speech, didn't we? Because the law, the regulations, the social expectation, the culture within AT&T involved two fundamental propositions: Anybody who wanted a phone could get one, and get it immediately, and they had to put in a new switching station, if necessary, to provide it to you. And number two, once you got it, you could say anything you wanted to over the phone. Everybody had a legally enforceable right of access. It was not a matter of grace. And everybody could say whatever they wanted to say. FBI, CIA, somebody else may come after you, but AT&T wouldn't do it. [*laughter*] Right? AT&T wouldn't do it, unlike today's Sinclair, and Clear Channel, and so forth. OK, end of sermon. [*laughter*] [*applause*]

JORDAN GOLDSTEIN: Before we break I just want to make two quick announcements. First is that we're also fortunate to have another Congressional representative with us. Mahomud Waderay, if you could stand, is with us from Senator Norm Coleman's office, and is taking your views back to the Senator. And the second announcement before we break is, as you formulate your thoughts for what you are going to say during the public comments period, there's one rule of the FCC that we have to let you know about. One of the issues that is going on now in Minnesota has to do with several specific transfers of licenses, some up in Duluth, some down with a station in St. Olaf that is being transferred. And just to put it into perspective: that decision was made without either the input of Commissioner Adelstein or Commissioner Copps. They didn't have a say in that decision. They actually weren't told about that decision before it was made by the staff. But under the FCC rules, as you make your comments, we want to hear your comments about general issues or about, is there too much consolidation? Should stations be able to buy stations, or not? But we can't discuss the specific transactions at stake, because under FCC rules we're just not allow to discuss the specific adjudication. So if you could limit to the general

comments about how someone got too many stations, are stations getting too big? What should we be doing about that? But not on the specific transaction, that'd be very helpful. So with that, we should probably take a couple minute break…

GEORGE LATIMER: Not quite a break. Commissioner and panelists, thank you, you wee just wonderful. [*applause*] I now turn the… Yes, all of you, thank you. I now turn the microphone over. You will now have a sense of order and decorum that's going to take over, because I'm getting out of here, and Liz Nordling, the public testimony moderator, will take over. Liz, it's all yours. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. If you haven't already signed up to give public testimony, you may sign up in the lobby of Sundin Hall, and there's also clipboards going around. I am going to call the first ten names. I ask that you come here and stand behind the two microphones. If you are in the Klas Center, go to someone who has an orange ID and they will escort you over here. We will take a very short break, let's say five minutes, and then we're going to start with the public testimonies. So will the following people please come forth: Chris Spotted Eagle, Jake Lawrence, Judy Bjork, Barbara Murdoch, Witt Seeasosco, Paul Ryan, Carrie Ann Johnson, Christian Schmidt, Angela Gerend, Kim Kopischke, and Jenny Hansen. Let's start in five minutes. By my watch that will be 9:25.

[voices in crowd during break]

LIZ NORDLING: [*unintelligible*] excellent. Here's what we're going to do. Seated on the stage is a timekeeper. You will have up to two minutes to speak. They will hold up a yellow sign- a green sign that says 30 seconds, a yellow sign that says fifteen seconds, and a red sign that says stop. When the red sign goes up, either you stop or I will stop you, because we want to hear as many people as possible in as little time as possible, and quite frankly, if you can't make your point in two minutes, you must not have a point to make. We will start now with the first person, Chris Spotted Eagle. Where are the Commissioners? I saw them in the back of the hall. There's, okay…

CHRIS SPOTTED EAGLE: Okay? Can you all hear? [*shouts of "yeah"*] Alright. [*unintelligible*]

LIZ NORDLING: You want me to make an announcement? Mr. Adelstein… taking a well-needed break. When you get to the mic, would you just please state your name and give your testimony.

CHRIS SPOTTED EAGLE: I'm Chris Spotted Eagle, a member of the American Indian community. I'm also a board member of the ACLU of Minnesota, and on the steering committee of the Minnesota National Lawyers

Guild. I also have a program on KFAI on Sundays called Indian Uprising. Tune in. [*applause*] There are cultural, social, and political differences the way people of color and American Indian communities operate other tan the dominant society. The Twin Cities area has one of the largest populations of American Indians, Mung, Tibetans, Somali, and other non-white ethnic groups. Ordinary people in our communities are not generally knowledgeable of the actual social, political, and economic impact electronic mass media has on us. We are not mainstream, yet we watch commercial television and listen to the radio like others. Certainly race and social class are factors as to what is or is not programmed over the airwaves. What we do get unfortunately is programming that seduces us to be consumers. It drives up our personal debts. I'm sure some of you can relate to that. News broadcasts are not much better. And we mostly get entertainment that ultimately serves to pacify, thereby reducing our interest in serious social and political issues. It is despicable, degrading, and paternalistic to subjugate us with mainstream marketing propaganda. Don't get me wrong: I'm not for government control. We do not get sufficient information over the airwaves necessary to improve our quality of life as human beings. We don get enough information that is uplifting and liberating. Consequently, we may negate our own ability to actualize our hopes and dreams, to participate fully as free men and women. To those who say "just turn off the tube", they are terribly naïve. What we want is the broadcasters to be legally obligated to serve or communities, to give us free tie on our public airwaves again. We want and require the practical tools…

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

CHRIS SPOTTED EAGLE: … materials and information to strengthen our communities, to satisfy our own broadcast needs.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you very much. Our next speaker, please. Our next speaker. Who is in line next? It doesn't matter if it's in the order I called your name.

BARBARA MURDOCH: [*microphone trouble*] Okay, my name is Barbara Murdoch. I'm from St. Paul. I'm here because the constitution guarantees the freedom of the press as necessary to a free society and a free people. This morning my husband noted that the Founders today would include all of the communication channels, all the public media. In light of that, it seems clear to me that corporate-controlled media, media consolidation under business interests, can lead to tyranny as surely as government-controlled media can do. I see symptoms of that kind of tyranny. I see gate-keeping by the big guys: Fox News, Sinclair, Clear Channel. I see shaping of our perceptions, of both the problems in society and what can solve them- shopping. I see that, in fact, they perpetuate some of these, some of these channels perpetuate lies. Polls show that people who watch Fox News mainly believe that weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq and that Saddam Hussein worked with bin Laden.

I'm also troubled by the level of violence in our media, and I'm troubled by what's called "hate radio". It worries me a great deal much more than nudity on television, because it seems to me that this way lies Bosnia. That's not what I want to see. What we need instead. We need quality news coverage. We need to hear from our politicians on prime time, Q&A interviews, debates, no ads. And we need news coverage from all of our local communities. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Next speaker. Our next speaker, please. I should have an equal number of people lined up at this other microphone.

PAUL RYAN: Good evening. My name is Paul Ryan. I'm the vice chair of the Burnsville-Egan Telecommunication Commission. Thank you for this, this is very nice. And I'd like to say hi to everyone in the overflow seating. I miss you guys. [*laughter*] Big crowd tonight. This is great. We talked about local programming and everybody should know and probably does know, there's a lot of local TV stations. It's your public access TV stations and a lot of communities have them. During the election time that's come up, there's been a lot of great issues that have been covered on community television, public access stations, and my brief comments are that I hope that the FCC will continue to champion public access television stations. I think they are a great asset to all the communities. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Next speaker, identify yourself please.

WITT SEEASOSCO: Hello, my name is Witt Seeasosco. I work with the Walker Art Center. Thank you for letting me speak tonight. This summer I worked with the Walker Art Center Teen Art's Council, it's a group of teenagers that come into the museum every week and they create programs for other teenagers. They identified a lot of, a lot of projects that they wanted to do, but one that stuck out was this project called "Radio Revolt." It was a direct response to media consolidation and, and the things that have been going on as far as like them not being able to buy tickets, because it's a Clear Channel event. Or not seeing themselves in the news or not hearing their music. When they started, they looked at the legalities involved and what they could do as unlicensed individuals, and what they came up with was Part 15 transmitters. This summer, over five months, the Walker held workshops to teach over 500 people how to operate these Part 15 transmitters, and we built over 500 this summer and it concluded in a conference, and also a public action. It was a really great response. There was over 50 businesses and individuals operating on one frequency, 97.7 FM, all along University Avenue, and it was a beautiful display of the diversity that radio could possibly hold. These micro radio stations don't transmit very far, but they really, aside from wattage, they held way more power. They held the power of voices. We heard everything from a Mung pop station to underground hip hop to conversations about minorities in the radio by Nee Hung at Asian

American Press. So basically, I started off working at the Walker Art Center and I didn't really know all that much about radio or media, and now, not that it… t has really changed the way I think about it and I know that there's a lot of people involved. And I know that there's a lot of people that want change, and what I hear the most is they want expanded low power FM, and open and equal access to all media, not only radio. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you very much. Next speaker please.

CARRIE ANN JOHNSON: Hi, my name is Carrie Ann Johnson, and I figure you're going to hear a lot of general testimony and I want to just give a couple of my own personal experiences that have… I'm just so mad, and so sad at the same time. I don't know whether to cry or scream at all of the… I am from Minneapolis. However when I was 21 I moved out to Seattle, and I was present during the WTO protests, where we shut tem down for one day. [*applause*] And at that event, during that event, which believe me I was very young at the time and I still am, and it opened my eyes politically to what's going on and to the fact that we can be turned into a third world nation in two seconds. Being tear gassed and pepper sprayed, having done absolutely nothing wrong. At the end of it, I saw a bunch of people get hauled away into the yellow school busses, and simultaneously watching national journalists reporting on this. And I watched a man reporting for one of the big three- I don't know which, I'm not gonna say if I did- but one of the big three directly, and not that we don't know this is happening, directly lie. Directly bold face lie as to what had just happened. He said that these people had just become violent. I mean, was there. I was watching it happen. I walked up and I called him on it, and I walked up to the van and I said to him, "how can you lie regarding this?" And he said "because I have a family and three kids, and if you think it's just me, it goes all the way to the top," and he said he was taught this in journalism school. I want to really quick get in, there's a company out there called Boston Ventures. They own billboards. They own recording studios. They own the newspapers. They own cable TV. They own the Start Enquirer, everything. They have profits that record, that go from 30% to 60% of a profit margin, and this is our media. I think that our media, anything that [*unintelligible*] to media needs to be public information. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Next speaker please. Our next speaker please. Next speaker? [*unintelligible audience* question] If I called your name. Alright, here's more names: Michael Hicks, Jim Beatty, James Burks, Greg Merritt, Steven Nelson, David Moluik, David List, Kevin O'Brian, Dianne O'Brian, and Doug Kane. Please line up behind the microphone so I know how many people I have and if I need to call more names. Next speaker please.

MICHAEL HICKS: Hello, I'm Mike Hicks and I live in Minneapolis. I have to say that, okay, can you hear me now? [*laughter*] Alright, sorry. My name is Mike Hicks and I live in Minneapolis. I have to say that I'm very

pleased to find that there are small radio stations such as KUOM and KFAI that do such great work in the community, but I'm very disappointed that they are restricted to such low power and they must compete in a… With KUOM, for instance, is on the AM dial, which is just very hard for… I mean, just a psychological barrier for young people like me. Just to turn over to the AM dial is very difficult. [*laughter*] And they have a FM transmitter hat operates at night when they're subject to clear cannel restrictions, that operates at eight watts out in the western suburbs. I just think that's really a sad thing. Now, some people did bring up public access television on cable. It would be really nice if there was public access transmitter on top of the IDS tower. We have MTV2 up there; I don't know why. We have Home Shopping Network and other things. It would be… Minneapolis, I believe, has one of the lowest subscriberships for cable in the country, which is very odd, but maybe we like our local television. Maybe not. Some people don't like it so much. But if some of the money for cable access or cable television could go into just a single transmitter for the community, that carried some of that public access television, that would be a great improvement. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Next speaker on this side please. Ma'am.

DIANNE O'BRIAN: Hello. I'm Dianne O'Brian and I'm the Communications Director for the Minnesota AFL-CIO. We represent a thousand local unions with about 400,000 members. And during my career I've seen Minnesota's mainstream print and broadcast media change significantly. We have about half as many reporters as we had fifteen years ago, and that dwindling number of reporters simply cannot cover the growing amount of news that we have to offer in our state. That's a real loss to working people who want to see the issues in their lives covered fairly by our media. Here are a few specifics. Union members make up about 20% of Minnesota's workforce, but there isn't a single labor reporter or single labor analyst on local TV or radio, and there are few left in local print media. Our local TV and radio stations broadcast business news, not labor news. That means that most news is told from an employer's perspective, not an employee's perspective. The stock market is news every day. The job market is news once a month, and market basket news is evidently a thing of the past. The Dow Jones report from Wall Street is available every day, but the Doug Jones report from Main Street is still just a glimmer in Jim Hightower's eye. Lifestyle reporters have yet to discover the labor family lifestyle, a lifestyle that gives union members better working conditions and 20% higher incomes than their non-union peers. Minnesota is made up of working families. We want good schools for our kids, good health care for our families, good jobs and a secure retirement for ourselves, and it's tougher than ever to see ourselves in local media. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Next speaker please.

JIM BEATTY: Thank you. My name is Jim Beatty and I'm Bluerith, Minnesota and I'd like to thank Commissioner Adelstein and Mr. Goldstein for coming to St. Paul to hear us all talk. I am here to tell my personal story about how media conglomeration has affected my business and hindered my company's ability to offer competitive multi-channel video service in one community we serve. I work for a company called Bevcom. We're a small, rural, independent telephone company in southern Minnesota, and we're in the process of rolling out video service or telephone lines to one community that we serve, New Prague. And I think I've found that media conglomeration has created difficulties for our company in obtaining re-transmission consent and video content from such large companies, such as Viacom, NBC/Universal, and now Disney/ESPN. They require that we carry many of the channels that they offer, even though we can't afford to offer them based on our pricing for our service, and in particular I found that, in the area of re-transmission consent, one channel owned by Sinclair Broadcast Group has demanded financial compensation for us to carry their channel, even though no other local broadcast station in the Twin City area has so required. And if we were to pay them, we would be required to pay Mr. Hubbard's station as well, because our agreement with Mr. Hubbard's station is that if we pay one, we have to pay another. So, I would just like to encourage the FCC to address the issues of re-transmission consent and content, and the effect that media conglomerations had on that. These large companies can really hammer on us little guys, and we're trying to build a business case and it's very difficult for us to do. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you very much. Next speaker please.

DAVID MOLUIK: I'm David Moulik, a resident of Minneapolis. I have worked professionally in broadcasting since 1967. That included the founding of KAXE in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, the first successful community-based, noncommercial radio station in a rural area. In the 1980s, the FCC shifter to an emphasis on marketplace factors in setting policy. This seems to be based on an abstract model which does not correspond with reality. In the case of radio ownership, the true marketplace is constrained by two major factors- scarcity of resources and a high cost of entry. In this market there are no vacant channels available for new stations. Thus, the only way to enter the market is by purchasing an existing one. This scarcity of resources led to tremendous inflation in market value of licenses, creating a formidable barrier to entry. Ownership is now limited to those who martial large quantities of capital, creating a marketplace of Wall Street, rather than Main Street. Another issue that concerns many of us is the growth of large nonprofit licensees of noncommercial stations that have set up their organizations with no public accountability whatsoever, commercial ventures on the side that support them financially so that they are not even subject to constraint by their own listeners, in terms of listener support contributions. It seems to me the result of all of this has been the decline of most American radio broadcasting into mediocrity. A conglomerate that's primarily concerned with this quarter's profit margin is not likely to address itself to important issues of community concern. Policies which encourage diversity and localism would

be far more effective than reliance on the financial markets to form a broadcasting system that truly serves the public. Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*] Next speaker please.

JAMES BURKS: Hi, I'm James Burks from Minneapolis. Thank you sirs for coming and allowing us to talk. I'd like to address the so-called diversity of opinion that we are assured exists by the media giants. And it's a national issue, but I would like to relate it from a personal struggle. As we approached the rush to war, we were told that we were getting all the story that there was to get. I believe as an informed citizen I must be exposed to the vast array of alternative ideas. During the rush to war, I had trouble finding people in print or other media who expressed the ideas that I felt, which was war was not justified, and the so-called facts were not facts at all. FAIR, a media watchdog group, did a study after the war had begun of all the major media outlets, and their coverage of the issues leading up to the war. What they found was that 10-20% at max. of all major media outlets gave voice to those who oppose the war, and that's a liberal reading. That's giving the benefit of the doubt to major media outlets. So what I want to know is, how are we being served by getting a diversity of opinions, when such a low percentage in such a major issue is being given to us? Instead, what passes for analysis is this side says this, this side says that, very little opinion on the part of the interviewer as to whether it is true or not. That's what I'd like to know.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*] Next speaker please.

DOUG KANE: My name is Doug Kane, and I try awful hard not to accept the messages that are sent across my public airwaves, and work hard to, you know, create something positive, and I think I live in a dual society where I have a… live in a hopeful community, and peaceful community, that's fighting and aware of the changes that need to be implemented, I guess. I work at a community radio station, KFAI. You've head some people speak from that as well. I've been doing that for over 25 years, playing international music, informing myself of foreign cultures, trying to broaden my own humanity, and work also in cable television. So I've seen and worked in local communities, putting on programming from different ethnic communities, and I see from their points of view the lack of representation, and I see disenfranchisement going on over and over, echoing across the Twin Cities and across the nation. Just a schism being formed, black and blue states, you know, from one side to the other. This is a terrible thing that the media has done, how negative. I feel like we've lost power sine the 70's and 80's. You know, all of the sudden Reagan's a hero [*laughter*], and, you know, what happened to all the reality television, the Oliver North hearings, everything else? I mean, we've got a United States of Amnesia that does not remember. [*applause*] You know, from one minute to the next, how many atrocities we've committed. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me call the next ten names and please come and line up behind the microphones: Beth Van Dam, Mark Steenfox, Paul Wendell, Bill McGoffey, Dale Strand, Jennifer Liebenahl, Steven Carlton, Greg Rood, Susie Jeffrey, and Sam Morrison. Next speaker please.

GREG MERRIT: Thank you. My name is Greg Merritt. I'm a citizen of Blane, Minnesota. I'm active volunteer member at KFIA FM in the Twin Cities. I speak here only for myself. My views are not necessarily those of the station, the underwriters or the staff. [*laughter*] I'm speaking in support of media deconsolidation and an opening of the public spectrum to independent low power FM radio. My experience includes over 20 years in the telecommunications industry, where in the 1990's I was a US West compliance manager for the civil enforcement consent order project. That project was more or less a corporate plea bargain following repeated violations of the cross-subsidy rules established by the MFJ, the Modified Final Judgment of the Telecommunications Act of 1938. As you know, the MFJ established the rules for the deregulation of AT&T and the Bell system. In my opinion, the company followed the letter rather than the spirit of the cross-subsidy rules. They did this in order to gain an advantage over the competition. Big companies want economies of scale, so they gobble up the competition, and make up their own rules a la Enron, WorldCom and Tyco. Deregulation of monopoly without competition has not helped the consumer in the industries of telecommunications, the airlines, or the media. Media consolidation equals fewer voices, equals a weakening of the kind of political discourse that formed this country. Don't let America follow the Italian model, where a corporation controls the media outlets, next the CEO becomes Commander in Chief, followed by incomplete news reporting and stifled information flow, which becomes tools to manipulate the will of the people. Do not let Fox merge with Clear Channel. [*applause*] Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Next speaker please.

STEVEN NELSON: My name is Steve Nelson. I'm from Minneapolis. There was a comment Mr. Adelstein made in the last… panel when you were asking about, well, regulation is out, and I'm afraid that is a terrible thing. I mean, we, the power that Doug was talking about in the 60's and 70's came from the media that we had back then. There were only three big stations television-wise. But they covered things like Harvest of Shame that got things going for the farm workers. We had coverage of Appalachia that got the war on poverty going. We had passage of Medicaid because the coverage of the medical condition of people in this country. In the 70's people woke up after the civil rights movement and started working on their workplaces. They got OSHA. They got the EPA to work on the environment after Love Canal. In the 80's we worked on the Right to Know Act of what was going on in our communities. Unfortunately, in the 80's we also got Ronald Reagan, who decided that, gee, we were really picking on corporations all over the place, and that business was a good thing. And if business was a

good thing, government picking on business was a bad thing. And the message became: “Government is bad”. So we stopped regulating and we started to have te EPA taking te polluters out to lunch, asking how we could work with you. You know, the same thing started unfortunately with the FCC. Instead of regulating these industries, we’ve started getting into bed with them. And what we need in this country is an informed, knowledgeable questioning citizenry, to get out to the polls, to make solid decisions. What we’re winding up with, with the situation we’ve got now, are unquestioning consumers ready to buy whatever they’re trying to sell us. [*applause*] Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Next speaker please at this microphone. Next speaker please.

SAM MORRISON: Hi. My name is Sam. Thanks for coming. I’m gonna brief because I just have a couple little things to say. One is in response to Professor Goldstein who was here from the University of Wisconsin, saying that in his view, from his research, negative ads do actually do a certain amount to inform and incite. From what I’ve seen, that may be the case, but I think negative ads are much more likely to reach beyond the truth, what we know is the truth, and it’s hard to get an objective view on what the truth is about a candidate, or whatever it may be sometimes. Just as an example, I’ll give you, locally, Patty Wederling, who is a State Senate candidate, her opponent, who beat her, the incumbent, Mark Kennedy, ran a couple of ads really just vilifying her, especially regarding her ties to MoveOn, a progressive organization that’s done a lot of organizing over the internet, calling them a liberal fringe, or maybe even lunatic fringe organization. What? Extremists, thank you. This is one of those things that, you know, that’s qualitative; it’s not quantitative. It’s, you know, for me or you to say that’s the truth, or it isn’t. But in any case, it’s a smear. It’s going to lead people to a misunderstanding of te facts, and what I would like to see, if negative ads are gonna keep continuing, there are relatively objective organizations that do fact checking, fact checking on the media. If that kind of fact checking can get a more prominent role from the FCC, making sure that content that people are swallowing and believing has basis in fact, we’ll be a better informed society. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Next speaker please at this microphone.

KEVIN O’BRIAN: Hi. My name is Kevin O’Brian. I’m a union member and I work for a local non-profit involved in alternative media. I’d like to pose four questions. What does the grand corporate have that we need? Before the great media conglomeration, there was great journalism, great arts, and great sports. We knew the names of those that produced it, and sometimes we’d met them face to face and shook their hands. I’ve not seen how technology’s improved Hemingway’s works, how the media giants have brought Pinabouche’s work to us, or Xenon Dance Company’s out to the people who couldn’t normally see it, or have made a sports event mean more

than a parent seeing their own child perform in a game. Great budgets, massive assets, and astronomical resources are not make good art, good journalism, or good moments in sports. It is people making connections with one another, and that is what produces creative, diligent, and passionate journalists and artists. Secondly, how could media conglomerates improve the diversity of our programming? Which of the five owners of the major media companies is Somali, Southeast Asian, or South African? Which one of them has been pregnant? Which one of them has had an abortion? Which one of them is in a wheelchair? Which one of them wonders if he'll be able to pay his rent at the end of the month? And which one saw LaTina Boyle shot on the corner of Bloomington and Naybus Friday at 3:30. or celebrated Cinco de Mayo on that same street? Tell me how these five older white males have come to have the experience and the wisdom to provide us with our diverse marketplace of ideas. Thirdly, how can large media companies do a better job at local programming than we do ourselves? In a perfect world, they could give us full control of our programming, but I see that there is mistaken logic in giving us our various forms of control to media conglomerates, only to have them take the control back from us. And, we can create our own great programming and jobs in our own communities. Further, finally, considering the incredible income made by the media companies off of campaign ads and the death of the Fairness Doctrine, what if I want to run for office next year? Who's gonna give me millions of dollars to do that? [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Since I have no one lined up at this microphone here, I'm going to read the next five names: Faheen Hakim, Kay Peltier, Lee Herrick, Arlene Freed, Robert Davis. Yes sir, you're next.

BILL MCGOY: I'm Bill McGoy from Minneapolis. I'm concerned primarily with the fact too scandalous that large, commercial, private organizations can be the gatekeepers to our election system, to the candidates, and to the issues discussed. Two personal perspectives. I'm a member of a landlord group in Minneapolis, somewhat politically underrepresented. We have a cable TV show, which is basically a free speech forum, and I saw three years ago its power in influencing the Minneapolis city elections. Practically everybody we favored got elected, and the people we opposed got defeated, and this was on the basis of a free speech forum. Public opinion and expression is so parched in Minneapolis that even a modest show like this can have an impact. My second testimony is experience running for the US Senate with the Independence Party, got 8,000 votes, and then running for President in the Democratic primary in Louisiana, got 3,100 votes. My experiences to run this kind of a candidate as a marginal candidate, you have to go to the newspapers, and you can to it that way. You can get some votes by going to small towns. But your real bonanza is if you can get on radio somehow, or get on television. In Minnesota's case I was on an interview show with Minnesota Public Radio, which probably helped; in Louisiana, with the Nacatesh station, got more votes there. In other words, a little bit of freedom goes a long way. I think it can be effective if you'd open up some more bands for just plain free speech at a basic level, maybe low power radio and that sort of thing.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you very much. [*applause*] Ma'am, you're next.

SUSIE JEFFREY: I'm Susie Jeffrey from Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1995 I was in Sofia, Bulgaria with a group of women from 42 nations, as a citizen diplomat delegation on the way to the United Nations conference in Beijing. And we met with women from the former Yugoslavia there in Bulgaria. We couldn't go in to the former Yugoslavia. Over and over again the women from the various sides from Yugoslavia talked about how destructive the years of hate radio was. Hate media was the fuel for the Yugoslavian self-destruction. The only media content in the United States that I have heard discussed broadly was Howard Stern, and Janet Jackson and the breast fetish. [*laughter*] Meanwhile the public airwaves are filled with crude xenophobia. Arabs and Muslims are being treated the way Japanese-Americans were treated in the 1940s. Are we so dumbed down in America today that we can not remember our mistakes of just one generation ago? Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Thank you.

BETH VAN DAM: Hi. I'm Beth Van Dam and I'm an employee of Minneapolis College of Art and Design, and artist, music and culture enthusiast and collaborator with Radio MCAG currently available for public consumption at radio.mcag.edu. Today, I express my disenchantment with the ways the media and the legal channels that exist to utilize it fail to meet the standards of democracy calls for. In representing Radio MCAG, I want to make clear how frustrating it is to consider legal use of the radio waves as a potential means or opportunity for consolidating and strengthening our community and the college. Radio is clearly an effective medium for communication to a community, yet low power FM licensing restrictions remain about as difficult as they possibly could be. Until the day the FCC and the NAB recognize that LPFM does not pose a threat, and here I cite the Mida report of interference with big broadcast radio. Long live the pirates wherever they may be who forge ahead anyway. [*applause*] Fighting the good fight for our public airwaves. Secondly, I'm in total opposition to the way that corporations like Clear Channel are allowed to operate and continue their domination of local media markets, be they: radio waves, billboards, concert venues, or theatres. Most currently the Hennepin Theatre Trust is a target of their exploits. Artists and performers who provide the contents in all the realms they exploit are being silenced, locked out of venues, and radio programming for making the choice not to support the monopolization. They should have an equal voice. These creative people are the ones who bring life and spirit to our culture. Under the current system, Clear Channel has the veto power over what voices become heard, and this is wrong. The public who technically owns the airwaves should be able to decide. Open up LPFM licensing and witness the inevitable positive change in local communities where a democratic representation of the people can

exist. Mr. Copps and Mr. Adelstein I thank you for your work and for your efforts to hear the diverse voices of the public. I hope the information you gather will help create positive changes in the FCC structuring. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Next, sir.

GREG ROOD: Yes. Greg Rood, Minneapolis, Minnesota. I, independent producer, video events, and also ham-radio operator, and dealing with various regulations in that area, and active in that. I go along with Beth's statement about the radio interference issue, that's highly exaggerated effects favor the C2 or larger stations. We need to look into this in more detail so we can have a causal claim to refute this. Also, the broadband and issues connected with our faster internet services, if they were to privatize, how dangerous that would be because we just realized in the last election how much it's brought people together. And if they could control that, they have us by and far. Also, though. [*laughter*] The low power digital stations must be not beholden to the larger host stations as happened with public access allocations in the past like cable television. We need to make sure, thirdly, to win these fights, we need to use causal claims that Ken Goldstein talked about, even though he was heckled. I feel that this is important for us to look at, so that we can make a claim. However, from a qualitative, interview and collaboration with existing local radio stations and not a statistical presentation. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

MARK FOX: Hi, I'm Mark Fox from Minneapolis, as cofounder of Radio MCAG, a growing LPFM project. I have come here tonight to demand that the FCC recognize the growing movement of localized media. It's been. It's been. I've been weaned in a world where mass media has shaped my life as significantly as a parent or teacher would. As a citizen, I have been educated to, as to the need of the food [*sic*] exchange of diverse opinions as a fundamental aspect of democracy. Unfortunately, the mass media are not serving us in this end. They are not serving the public interest. It is no surprise, because their interests is in commerce and not culture predominantly, and while I do not believe that regulation alone is the solution, I do believe that action will insure that we do not have a further stagnating mediascape, allowed through the narrowing by consolidation. My recommendation is to increase power to the people and give them a chance to reestablish the democratic principles that were constitutionally protected at the inception of this country. I wouldn't be so audacious as to deem commercial interests or profit as wrong in broadcast media. I insist, or I believe that the commercial interests have a stranglehold on the media resources. And it is absurd to claim that profit motivated businesses is all that we need in our mediascape. There's plenty of other options. Give a voice to the people who are invested in broadcast media as a tool for exchange of democratic, entertainment, cultural, social, and informational content that is relevant to their communities. At a bare minimum, I would say that 51% of the media should be given to the

people. Not commercial entities [*unintelligible*] have the motive to help people, they are interested in money. Basically, I want to make a statement that Ted Turner recently echoed in a recent op-ed, where he said that "We'll give the little guy a chance." [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Go ahead.

FAHEEN HAKIM: Hi, my name is Faheen Hakim and I'm from Minneapolis. The media here sucks. [*applause*] I am, have been a woman of color and a Muslim all my life, so I don't need academic research. General xenophobia before September 11th, converted to corporate media stereotypes that have become anti-Muslim and anti-Arab. Media portrayed Muslims, especially women, as being ignorant, unintelligent, and just plain wrong and if you don't know what I'm talking about, you should talk to someone who's Muslim. And if you don't know anyone who's Muslim, it's time for you to make some friends. [*applause*] There have been some great misuse of the words in Arabic. For example, if I had a nickel for every time somebody asked me: "What does Jihad mean? Does it mean a holy war?," I would have enough money to buy Hubbard Broadcasting System. [*laughter*] And in addition, I can't claim the word radical. I am part of a very radical organization and if the FCC staff can guess that, they win a prize. [*laughter*] There is also a horrible mispronunciation of words, nobody knows what I'm talking about "Iraq" or "Baghdad", which is "Iraq" and "Baghdad." And then, probably the most important to me is that there is a such a lack of coverage of the gross violations of Palestinian's human lives, and that is just so wrong. [*applause*] As a result of it, as a result of it, I've done my best to reject corporate media and am proud to say I do not own a television. And I get most of my news from indymedia.org and Cafe Eye Pacifica News Radio. And the indymedia.org has helped me a lot, because I saw a picture of, way before corporate media caught on to it, of some human rights violations in Iraq where men were stripping around naked Iraqi soldiers with Ali Baba written on their chests by U.S. soldiers. I wrote a letter to Narm Poma with the pictures still waiting for a response. It's really unfortunate that not enough Muslims are here, and not enough Muslims are able to say "Did you guess yet?" The girl scouts of greater Minneapolis. [*applause*] In 1931, when it first started, it was considered a radical organization. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Sir.

PAUL WENDELL: My name is Paul and I also represent Radio MCAG through the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Instead of reiterating complaints about media consolidation and corporate giants and all these other things [*unintelligible*], I would like to make note of something that brings me joy. There's not much that I really look forward to on the radio or TV or newspapers, but one exception exists. And that is the station run by McAllister College which I have very little opportunity to listen. Not more than seven minutes a day, and I spend

a lot of time in my car, unfortunately, and I can only pick up McAllister's radio station in a very small limited spot. It's broadcasting range is limited by comparison, but I make efforts to listen it whenever I am traveling. I'm picking, I'm picking on this station because it's ridiculous that such a good source of content is limited by a small broadcast area. The broadcast fights with Minnesota Public Radio's broadcasts, which comes all the way out of Rochester. That's like, a two hour drive from here. I'd like to see more radio stations follow McAllister's example and more incentives from the FCC for community radio station start ups. MPR, as pleasant as it is, already has enough radio stations hogging our airwaves and they really don't need anymore. [*applause*] Our educational institutions are full of people who are motivated to bring exciting and diverse content to our airwaves. And, this content definitely applies to local communities. In all things media, the public and the FCC must acknowledge the efforts of these groups by following their lead. Maintaining a positive outlook will result in positive outcomes. And a lot of complainers and not enough actively making change. If people see positive changes happening in Minneapolis, this good vibe will absolutely spread to other cities. That's why I want to see growth and growth upon the foundation that LPFM provides, so please take these thoughts into consideration. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Ma'am.

ARLENE FREED: My name is Arlene Freed. I live here in Minneapolis, and I thank you for being here to hear about the abomination of consolidation. And as I read through my little story, the story itself is fairly complex, and the way I'm gonna read it through will make it sound rather simplistic. But two minutes is all I have. So I apologize for the fact that it's going to sound rather simple. As a park lover and user who, with many others, has serious concerns about the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board's lack of transparency and accountability, I have attended almost all of the Park Board meetings since the flawed and controversial hiring of the interim superintendent last December. When significant Park Board issues were on the agenda this past year, I would call the media to alert them. The *Star Tribune* responded. Public radio responded. The Southwest Journal responded. But I could not interest KSDP, KERR, KNSP or WCCO TV in covering the budget cuts or the public interviews for finalists for permanent superintendent. All four stations failed to respond. Consequently, the local viewing public was cut right out of the information loop. All four stations abdicated their responsibility to their constituencies. Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*] Let me call the next five names: Christopher True, Bjorn Johnson, Hadi Kazemi, Helen Ellen Becker, Pete Rhodes. Line up behind the microphone please. Okay, sir.

ROBERT DAVID: My name is Robert David. Before it sailed to Minnesota Public Radio, I was a long time listener of WCAL FM- a radio service of St. Olaf College in Northfield Minnesota. Like many classical music

enthusiasts, I depend to a large extent on radio announcements for upcoming concerts and arts events. In the past WCAL has been my primary source for such information. Since November 21, 2004, when WCAL went off the airwaves, unfortunately, I've not been able to get anything remotely comparable to the breadth and quality of coverage that WCAL used to offer. Consequently, I personally feel cut off from my arts community. As I see it, part of the problem is MPR's program stream [*unintelligible*] classical 24, which is a 24 by 7 service, aired on nearly 300 stations throughout the U.S. But, when MPR listeners do get information about an upcoming concert event, invariably the announcement is a promotion for a musician or group affiliated with MPR. Instead of offering an unbiased public service for a local community, MPR has chosen to use the airtime to enrich itself. To an almost complete extent on the FM dial, our tiny world of classical music exists in the realm we know as public radio, or listener supported radio. Therefore, we can voice our concerns to MPR about arts' coverage, as I have done, but to no avail. In the questionable act of media consolidation, we have not only lost a great community asset in WCAL, but we have also lost even the hope of ever having an alternative to MPR. To see the market drive the creation of a wide, viable competitive classical musical station, the great local arts' coverage on the FM dial. The total domination of MPR in our region will prevent it. Commissioner Copps, Commissioner Adelstein, Mr. Goldstein, I believe this story can have a much better ending, one in which the public interest would be very well served. What are we to do? Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

KAY PELTIER: My name is Kay Peltier and I come to the microphone this evening wearing two hats. [*laughter*] The first hat I wear is that of a WCAL listener, so I would just say ditto to everything that the previous gentleman said. [*applause*] And it was this entire issue that sensitized me to the problem of media consolidation. In the recent action, that, in which the FCC allowed the transfer of this license, I believe that they abandoned their duty as a watchdog and functioned merely as a rubber stamp for the request by a media empire. There were many letters written to them that as far as we know fell on deaf ears. All right. [*laughter*] The second hat I wear is that of a grandmother of three children, under the age of five and I wonder, I worry indeed, what will the radio and TV airwaves look like when these children are adults? Will there still be stations that reflect the diversity that the country was founded on? Will my grandchildren hear news stories or view points that the media conglomerates select? In today's paper, there was an essay by the president of the Minnesota Broadcasters Association, and it was really a very clever smoke screen. He pointed out the variety of non-classical music formats now available in the Twin Cities, but wearing my grandmother hat, I must tell you that we need to be concerned with news and media as well as music. It's the duty of the FCC to preserve a voice for independence by halting and even reversing media consolidation. Thanks. [*applause*]

BUREN JOHNSON: I'm Buren Johnson and I would first of all like to thank Commissioner Copps and Commissioner Adelstein for taking the time to listen to what the true owners of the airwaves, the American Public, have to say. If America is truly a democracy, then we need to recognize that every individual in this room tonight, their voices are just as important as the voice of Rupert Murdoch. And, I'm not just here to ask you to stop further consolidation, I am asking you to break up the existing conglomerates. [*applause*] Since it is also… Since the Telecommunications Deregulation Act of 1996, Clear Channel Communications has grown from 40 stations to over 1200 stations. We the people never authorized this takeover and we [*unintelligible*] people ask you to stop this takeover. We also ask you to open up the airwaves to low power radio to allow all of us to have a voice in the media. If the media conglomerates really want deregulation, then why are they pushing to keep the regulation on low power radio? In reality, the only regulations that we see the corporations trying to get rid of are the regulations that protect a public interest. We can not allow this to stand. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

DALE STRAND: I am Dale Strand from Minneapolis, previously Bloomington, and I heartily agree with the last speaker at this microphone, however, most of the talk tonight has been about programming and what you hear the people are listening to around the state or in the Twin Cities. Also, I'd like to talk about the people behind the scenes. Only one of the panelists talked about being at a station, working at a station, at the University of Minnesota. And I want to talk about, when I started at WCAL, and worked for nothing, and I learned about it and went to the University of Wisconsin and immediately applied for a job at the Wisconsin Broadcasting Service, and was given a job starting Saturday night immediately, and I worked there behind the scenes and watched that network grow, which had already preceded the Minnesota network. And many of the people that are at school can work at a station at very little pay, and learn things about the station, learn the technical aspects of equipment, learn the policy, the rules, what the FCC has allowed and hasn't allowed, and many of the things that are really hidden behind what you hear on the radio. And it all makes for good reception, good programming, and let the others take care of the programming. We've heard plenty of talk about that, but I'm sure it'll be handled properly. And since programming has been the majority of the talk tonight, we'll leave it at that, and the technical part is the part that I will push. Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*] Let me call the next five names please: Rachel Beal, Stan Feldman, Betsy Allis, Leah Utne, David Shimkey.

HADI KAZEMI: Hello, my name is Hadi Kazemi and I'm a U of M student in, from St. Paul. I appreciate the chance to share my opinions on several media issues here. I support low power AM and FM with free and easy

licensing, the opening of more unlicensed spectrum below 2.4 gigahertz, and recorbit free and DRM free digital rights management free, digital radio and TV, for time shifting recording and fair use reasons. I support the prohibition of taxes and [*unintelligible*] the breakup of payola agreements, and the reduction of spectrum license period, and the reduction of spectrum license periods to three years. I support the mandatory unbundling of communications services as currently offered by the cable and phone giants, because right now I can't buy cable and phone from different companies without paying extra. Public TV and radio should be expanded and election coverage at all levels should be useful and informative. Finally, there should be no restrictions imposed on municipalities that prevent them from providing communications and data services to residents, as recently happened in Pennsylvania. Doing this would help in ensuring the affordability and availability of broadband access, something vital to an informed public and a healthy democracy today. I'm opposed to local and regional media monopolies, and believe that entire consolidation limits should be imposed on the industry. The costs of entry must be lowered and scarcity eliminated so you don't need a million dollars to get started. In my opinion these changes will help return control of the radio spectrum to the public to which it belongs. Thank you. And postscript, I think it'd be great if these discussions and proceedings were made fully available online somewhere. Thank you. [Applause]

LIZ NORDLING: Since I have no one at this mic I will call some more names: Joan Mallery, Howard Cling, Kurt Proud, Joanne Vannal, Reed Irinall. Sir.

PETE ROSE: Hello. My name is Pete Rose, I felt like I was in the place of the Price Is Right when you called my name, I felt good about coming down. I'm the owner of a cable radio station, we've been around for 21 years on the Comcast and Time Warner cable systems and, Commissioner Adelstein you, it's called by the way WRNB and our website is blackmusicamerica.com. So visit. But you asked earlier, how are people or diversity being treated here in the Twin Cities. Well, I represent an underserved community that has been here for some four hundred years, so my question is that I want to say to the public that in the words of Tina Turner, what has the FCC done for us lately? Why should we be concerned about how the FCC will consider what we're doing at this point, I think that it's important for us as a free society to begin to take action on what can be done, and not stand around and wait for the FCC individuals, although I appreciate you being here tonight, I think that it's up to us to step up to the plate and begin to make actions, to make change. We're standing here, we're talking, we're asking, we're begging. I started my station 21 years ago and I [*unintelligible*] like the words of James Brown, I didn't ask anybody to give me nothing. I just opened up the door and I got it myself. And I will continue to do that, and I will continue to stand up, and I applaud you folks for being here tonight and I say to you, stand up yourselves as well. And go beyond the FCC and let's see what we can do, we're talking with our representatives and marching and moving forth on making the changes ourselves. [*applause*]

HOWARD CLING: Hi, I'm Howard Cling I'm with the Labor Education Service at the University of Minnesota, and I thought I'd just, reminiscent of the woman earlier that talked about Seattle, I thought I'd give another example of how I think the media is currently under serving people of Minnesota and in the country. Many community voices, experiences, knowledge, points of view, and identity are crowded out with our media, including the voices of labor and working people. A year ago, Miami, the Free Trade Area of the Americas negotiations, where they were deciding on the rules of the economy, rules that will affect every one of us, rules decided in an undemocratic fashion. Given the centrality to our lives, trade issues like the FTAA are woefully under-covered and biased toward the corporate media. [*applause*] 15,000 people protested the content and the undemocratic process of the FTAA in Miami a year ago. They, we, were met by a police force of 3,500 police in full body armor, armed with clubs, tazers, projectiles, pepper spray and tear gas. And they used them. The civil rights of many people in town for the protests were severely violated the entire week. People were searched, detained, arrested and harassed, all illegally. While martial law existed in a major American city, the top stories on national news were Michael Jackson's arrest and the anniversary of JFK's assassination. [*applause*] The police state in Miami, the issues surrounding the FTAA, the large protests against its process and proposals never made local television news outside the Miami area itself, and were only briefly mentioned on national cable and network news. Only National Public Radio included news of anti-FTAA activities and about the massive police presence. Virtually no local newspapers carried any story at all, most major papers of record barely reported on the Miami events. Only those of… oops stop. OK, Well you get the idea. [*applause*] [*unintelligible audience comment*]

LIZ NORDLING: Could you identify yourself please ma'am? Could you identify yourself?

[*unintelligible*] …two hours prime time every night of the major channel stations, that would be fine, get two hours for the people every night on the major stations, or get us a government, a peoples government channel, not the government in Washington. These would have to be something that had no advertising, none at all. No mention of God, and [*applause*] because you never get anywhere, not that I'm against people practicing their faith, but you never get anywhere, no political parties are mentioned unless you're having a debate with political parties. Because again, that just causes lack of focus. And no anti-solidarity people on the stations. Yes to community organizing, yes to US political history classes, especially for our children, our children are not learning our history in school, teachers will get fired if they teach our real history of the United States, we need to have this done on these free accessible channels, so that what children know before we go, they go to war, and they are children going to war, what its all about. They don't know what it's about right now, they are totally, you know, oblivious to it all. These channels would talk about what the communities are doing with the homeless in

their area, universal healthcare in their area, living wages in their area, social security in their area, education in their area, small farmers, the reason we don't have farm stations any more, or so much, are because of… corporate farms have taken it over. And if you want to know how to organize…

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you ma'am.

SPEAKER: the TV stations,

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you ma'am, ma'am.

SPEAKER: This I got to say, talk to Maria here from Venezuela because Venezuela did it.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*]

SPEAKER: I'm [*unintelligible*] I'm a student here at Hamline. First of all, we appreciate that you've come out tonight to talk about media consolidation. What I'm concerned about, the fact that according to the freepress.net, there have been 2,500 free vacations given out to FCC employees, by media corporations and associations. [*applause*] It seems a clear conflict of interest to be taking gifts of monetary value from the very companies which the FCC regulates. That's it.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you [*applause*] Let me call the next five names: Bruce Cochran, Bill Selcker, Allen Brookings Browne, Chuck Prentice, Jeffrey Dahl. Sir?

KURT PROUD: Kurt Proud, Short View, Minnesota. I want to thank you for coming here tonight and thank you for being patient. I want to speak to the aspect of media consideration that deals with news and information. I want the FCC, just like the public, to make an informed decision. And I was intrigued with Professor Goldstein's comment concerning research and data. And I'm not certain that emotional arguments have convinced, or will convince the other three Commissioners that perhaps we have enough media consolidation. So I suggest we consider a recent scope of research and pursue that act to hopefully convince the other Commissioners that perhaps we have enough media consolidation. I have concerns about truthfulness, I have concern about fact checking, I think those are the most important things that we should ensure that our news and information contains. Empirically I think that we have enough consolidation, I'm concerned that the cost to enter the market is not something that anybody can just do. And, I'd like to see the research. I'd like to see no change until we've had

a reasoned consideration of all of these consolidation issues. And, I'd like us to consider one of the golden rules, and that golden rule is: "Those with the gold rule." [*laughter*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Since I have no one at this mic, I'm going to call some more names. Christopher Thompson, Douglas Alchin, Matt Nedosi, Rick Weller, Michael Simbelman, Margaret Hersht, Charles Underwood, Samantha Smart. Ma'am.

JOANNE VANNAL: Thank you. My name is Joanne Vannal and I'm President of the Board of Directors of KFAI. As you've already heard, KFAI is a local community radio station that broadcasts programming in thirteen languages. These are mainly news and community affairs programs all produced by volunteers for their own immigrant and minority communities. I think it is important for the Commissioners to recognize that this programming represents only some of the diversity of our country. There are thousands of people here and millions throughout the U.S. whose voices would not be heard if it were not for the efforts of local community media like KFAI. We need to ensure that all of this can be heard, and that won't happen with the highly concentrated, competitive, homogenous, commercial atmosphere that is now part of the FCC ruling. Diversity is a vital part of our democracy, and it must be protected and encouraged to grow. We are hopeful that the FCC will be open to assisting in that task. Thank you. [*applause*]

DOUGLAS ALCHIN: [*unintelligible*] Hi. I'm a historian of science. Douglas Alchin. In class last night, I taught my students about WIG history. That's biased or selective accounts of the past that aim to provide an apparent inevitability to and thereby justify current politics. Historians like to deal with particulars, so here's one case. In a press release barely three weeks, Minnesota Public Radio stated that it purchased WCAL from St. Olaf College in an attempt to save the frequency for public service programming. This statement is WIG history. It omits and thereby hides the fact that the station's license was not for sale before MPR made an unsolicited offer for it in the fall of 2003. It omits and thereby hides previous attempts to acquire the station by MPR viewed as its' competitor. And, that MPR sold another station January 2004 sacrificing a parallel opportunity for public service programming. It omits and thereby hides the lack of public input or accountability in MPR's decision making, while it touts the phrase "Public Service." It does not report MPR's for-profit affiliate Greenspring Company which channels money to MPR, thus giving it more market power, than a, like a commercial station. The WIG history's bias exposes the politics involved, which in FCC staff judgment, recently dismissed. Are my media needs being served? No. Not when a radio network appealing to public service uses its economic power outside public participation and democracy, to eclipse the independent voice of a noncommercial radio station. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: [*unintelligible*]

LIA AMIM: Lia Amim. I'm going to speak very quickly. I just want to say that I was following what happened with, [*answers question*], and I want to say that I was following what happened with the Sinclair documentary and it is appalling to me that in this point in American history, a company which has partisan leanings, which clearly donated its lobbying efforts towards the Republican Party, whose CEO and President supported George Bush, can put on a false documentary that's poised to show to 24% of American households. And to me that kind of power is frightening. And that's what media consolidation means to me. And it's scary. That's all. [*applause*]

KARL NOISE: Hello, my name is Karl Noise. I'm from Minneapolis, and I'm also a volunteer at First Avenue Music Club. Now if you want to learn about the evils of Clear Channel, go talk to the guys at First Avenue Music Club in downtown Minneapolis. [*applause*] I'm also a student in public opinion voice 767 at the University of Minnesota. If you want talk about media and politics, talk to Professor Algerback here. He knows, maybe he might know too much. [*laughter*] But, third, I'd like to start off with local television news is a joke. Channel 4, 5, 9, 11 is a joke. [*applause*] They're jokes. It's infotainment. The other night, I go on and I watch television, I'd watch television news for the first time in two years, and I get stories on: SUVs, underwater in California, puppies, Christmas lights, Christmas lights, and the holy-dazzle parade. When they do get to a serious story like crime rates, they show unrelated black men being arrested. [*applause*] Now, Mr. Hubbard said that their business is no different than any other business. But they are different, they are different, they have a duty to inform us. Not to patronize us. They have a duty to give us news, and not entertainment. It's our media. It's our media. Not theirs. Thank you. [*applause*]

SAMANTHA SMART: I'm Samantha Smart and I'm part of Speak Out Sisters. This country may have been temporarily saved from experiencing John Poindexter's menacing program of Total Information Awareness, part of the Defense Department, which would have placed video cameras hidden at public locations with face-recognition software, instituted monitoring of our phone calls, emails, prescriptions, and purchases. And recruited mail-carriers, truck drivers, and the neighbor next door to spy on us. Already the FBI can clandestinely peak into our library files and obtain information from booksellers on what we're reading. Big Brother is watching and listening. What corporate consolidation and ownership of the media means is "Total Information Control." When Clear Channel makes a deal with Fox News to only broadcast what Fox deems news, then its' millions of listeners are only getting Fox's perverted perspectives. When GE, manufacturer of military armaments, expands its' TV networks, their prime interest is expanding their profits by selling war, death, and destruction. [*applause*] These media giants are white, male elites who care nothing for the poor, for women, for peoples of color, except as potential consumers of endless and useless material goods. And as sheep that can be prodded in any direction they so choose. Total Information Awareness and Total Information Control are partners, scheming to rule our minds.

If the airwaves are not liberated as a natural, and national resource for the masses of people to use and enjoy without being brainwashed by massive media monsters and their thirst for power and profit, then we edge closer and closer to a fascist state. Free and independent media is essential to our humanity. It's the mandate of the FCC to rule in favor of the public interest and not the corporate. Thank you. [*applause*]

CHRISTOPHER THOMPSON: Okay, my name is Chris Thompson. In 1981, I took a course at the university about nuclear war, nuclear weapons, the arms race, what we can do, what we have, what the Russians have, etc… It was in the middle of the Cold War. A lot of us in the know, after that course, doubted the survival of the human species beyond the year 2000. Anyway, I used to talk on, about nuclear [*unintelligible*] on local radio stations. Small town radios, about fifteen of them from Brainerd to Aken, to North Field, to Fairville, to Cloquet, etc… I can't do that anymore. Because, there's no longer a law that requires radio stations to devote some of their time, you know, like a half hour a day maybe to public affairs. And it seems to me that, it's obvious to me that America is not as American as it used to be when we had these public affairs discussions on the airwaves.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*]

CHARLES UNDERWOOD: My name is Charles Underwood. I live in Minneapolis. I'm a kindergarten teacher here in the St. Paul public schools. [*applause*] I grew up in, thank you. I grew up in northeast Kansas. [*applause*] During the… No, whoa. [*laughter*] During the '50s. The Cold War. And I can remember over the years reading weekly readers and junior scholastics about the dearth of information in the Soviet Union during that time. We learned a lot about propaganda techniques through those magazines that we had from time to time. We learned about the heroism of people who made projects like Radio Free Europe to try to blast through the blocked frequencies, in order to get real information to those people. As an adult, I have met a number of people who grew up under those circumstances and I'm asked them, like my friend Boycol from Bulgaria: "How did you get your news? How did you really find out what was truly going on?" And the answer, in a short form, is: "It was really hard work." The sad situation is right now, our situations have been reversed. [*applause*] The media in the United States is sometimes titillating, but it's almost rarely, or it's almost never informative. The peoples of the world are amazed at how little the citizens of the United States know with their vast material wealth and tremendous technological advancements. And we're now in a number of situations which are leading us into great, long-term peril. If we have a bland and controlled and corporate media, and if we have no control over it, I'm very much afraid that we are destined for exactly the same situation that happened in the Soviet Union.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*]

MICHAEL SIMBELMAN: Good evening. My name is Mike Simbelman and I'm formerly general manger of several radio stations here in the Twin Cities and owned one in Indiana. I had two sons in the broadcast business up until recently. One became an attorney, I guess he got smart and got out. I, I used to run radio stations, where we had to ascertain the needs of the community. But you the FCC said that isn't necessary anymore. I used to be in the business that nobody could own more than 14 radio stations in the United States. But you the Federal Communications Commission have let companies grow to ridiculous ends. 1100 radio station. Do you realize that if I was against the president of the United States or the vice president of the United States, and I didn't want him elected and I owned 1100 radio stations, the power I would have? I don't think the Federal Communications Commission was thinking when they permitted these things to happen. I don't think they intended this to happen, I think they have to unweave what's happened. They have to get back to a dozen radio stations owned by one owner. [*applause*] They have to get back. They have to get back to one television station per market. After all, we control, they control media that's owned by the public. Not them. And you've permitted this to happen. It's the FCC's fault. As a last moment, I'd like to add that the subject of BPL is going to ruin a lot of communications. Can BPL be broadcast over power line for digital. And that one move is going to permit interfering signals of ham-radio, interfering signals of aircraft, interfering signals of the military. I think you permitted a very serious thing and I think you're going to have to unweave that one too. Thank you very much. [*applause*]

RICK WELLER: Hello. My name is Rick Weller. I'm from Minneapolis and I'd like to thank the gentlemen from Washington to come out here and listen to all the diverse opinions and hopefully they can come away with something less than total confusion from tonight's proceedings. I'm a media consumer. I currently have no connections to any media producers. But in the 1970s, I held a FCC radio telephone license. I learned about the seven words you would never want to hear out of a speaker while you were signed onto the log. Whether they were used as a verb or an adjective. [*laughter*] The vertical integration of media companies to me is a bad thing and tonight's testimony here has indicated that others, are also seeing or being victims of that vertical integration. As a corollary, I'd like to say that once I was pulled over for speeding in a 35 mile an hour zone. When I explained to the officer that I was almost to a 55 mile an hour zone, he corrected me and said that I wasn't there yet. So I'd like to know why certain media companies have been allowed to exceed the speed limit. [*laughter*] And also, one other thing is, democracy requires an informed electorate. Turning the knob off will not work. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me call some more names first please sir. Katie Amenson, Anton Crane, Sarah Clause, Harriet Wilson, Ron Gerber, David Keyes, Steve Gall, and Owen Michelson. Now. [*Long pause*]

[*Background talking*]

JEFFERY DAHL: My name is Jeffery Dahl. I am a producer of a cable access show called "The Angry Canadian." I'm not Canadian. I always have to explain this. I'm not Canadian. It's just kind of a symbolic thing. If you're curious, ask me later, I'll explain the whole thing. [*laughter*] Okay, this show was created as a means of expressing opinions, especially those opinions aren't commonly heard. I hope to do this in an entertaining way, but also, the most important thing was getting out the information. Without cable access, I and many others wouldn't have this opportunity. Don't think that what we're talking about tonight is solely a mass media thing. I found out and I found out and it concerns me to read articles about some cable access stations that are being threatened with corporate take-over, a corporate interest. When I read a story about a station in Austin Texas which is facing that very threat, this is something I become very worried about. And I even see influence in the Twin Cities where I've heard about cable access centers that are trying to be diminished rather than expanding public access. It just, it amazes and offends me that I, or anyone, should have to explain that public access is access for the public. Now, I've been so influenced by what's been happening that I'm creating a new show that is a media watchdog show that will come forth next year and please dogguts@hotmail.com. Contact me and let me know if you have anything to contribute to this, cuz I'm very committed to this. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you sir.

ALLEN RICKENSBROWN: Hopefully I can have your forbearance over the Orwellian travesty where we at this meeting. [*unintelligible comment from moderator*] I'm sorry.

LIZ NORDLING: Could you identify yourself first please.

ALLEN RICKENSBROWN: Yes ma'am, thank you. My name is Allen Rickensbrown. I live in Minneapolis and I'm proud of the programming that's been going on with MPR. Especially Garrison Kiellor's "Prairie Home Companion." It's a hallmark of broadcasting excellence. Likewise, Michael Barone's "Pipe Dreams." I'm dismayed by the attempt here to restrict what we see in an area directly connected to the FCC and to the First Amendment that we could not discuss things that were happening in the radio world. I intend to so do. "Pipe Dreams" is marvelous, I am dismayed that the stealthy zeal of the recent WCAL takeover and its' exquisitely modern, confidentiality of the James Boys knocking off the Northfield bank. [*laughter*] In 1838. And, MPR's reverse Robin Hood deal in financing downtown St. Paul. As broadcasting moved from the birth of radio to the afterbirth of [*unintelligible*] consolidation, I think so. Consolidation holds great charm for Wall Street. In 1920s, there were something like 450 automobile manufacturers. Now, three: General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler remain. There were 22,982 banks. Now fewer than 221. Similarly, thousands of village stores have been taken

into darkness by Wal-Mart. The difference between the commercial takeover and the intellectual take over has escaped the notice of the FCC. The FCC is not protecting the public interest. If they're not, just who's minding the FCC store? Wal-Mart? Democracies don't always have their freedoms taken away by some external military force. Instead, they give their freedoms away politically correct piece by politically correct piece. And consolidation is even more.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you sir. Thank you very much. [*applause*]

RON GERBER: Thank you for your patience tonight. I'm Ron Gerber. I too work for KFAI here in town. I just wanted to talk to you a little bit about tonight about my situation and how I feel about radio in general. I've been in radio for eighteen years, and that's a long time. I had hair back when I started. If you talk to any old grizzled radio vet, you'll get the same kind of stories, and I just wanted to tell you mine. Back when I was eight, nine, ten, something like that, growing up in New York City, I had a little AM radio that I kept hidden from my parents that I used to keep under my pillow at night. And while I had WABC and WNBC in New York and some of the great top 40 radio stations, I got such a jolt out of listening to CKLW in Detroit. Or WLS in Chicago. Or some other big Clear Channel radio stations from all over the country. Back when clear channel meant something other than money. [*laughter*] This little spark, this, this certain thing I couldn't describe, but something I couldn't find in New York. I had to find out what was going on in Detroit. What was going on in Chicago. What was going on in whatever else I could pick up that night, depending on whether it was raining or not. Local hits. Some overnight DJ who was crazy and I had to tune in to find out just what he was doing. These things aren't around anymore. Local hits, not with the consolidated play lists that you get and Clear Channel mandating what you play from the top on all 1,200 stations. Overnight guys? Not when you've got automation and the robot running the radio station or voice-tracking or nothing. I'm afraid that radio hardcore people like me won't be around anymore. I don't see anybody tuning in to see what Chicago is doing when it sounds just like Minneapolis. Or Fargo, Washington, DC. It all sounds the same at this point. I worry about the future of radio, because it's all about money. And there won't be anymore like me, eighteen years from now. Thanks. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

STEVE GALL: Hello. I'm Steve Gall, I'm a local musician here in Minneapolis and I guess, I'm going to make this brief and it's very much focused on my small world here. In the community that we have, it's a really rich artistic community, musical community, but the opportunity to get that music out has been cut off. In a sense, by consolidation. The avenues for local musicians to get their music out are now restricted to MPR and luckily we have KFAI here, because without them most of us wouldn't get heard. For emerging artists, they're the only

source. So, what I would say is, we need more access for these small stations to get going, whether, I don't know what low power FM is, but it sounds good and people here seem to like it, but whatever you can do I guess. In a nutshell, it's the homogenization of content, content being provided by a few suppliers, whether it be for news or music. It's not a good thing. We need the diversity, we need to hear the voices, and thank you very much for coming. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

DAVID KEYES: Hi. My name is Dave Keyes. I live in little Canada. I want to talk about, to talk with you tonight about something really arcane. Section 295 of the FCC's 2002 bi-annual regulatory review. Now before I lose the audience, please bare with me for a second. This is real simple. In this section 295, the FCC reached the conclusion that commercial and noncommercial radio stations compete with each other. Now, I don't know where this came from. So I decided to take a look at and I went on the website and it seems very clear that this conclusion came from trying to count stations related to the commission's local ownership rule. Clearly, this was done from the perspective of commercial broadcasters. The notion that commercial and noncommercial radio stations compete with one another is just so counter-intuitive. Their purposes are different, their architecture is different. One relies on advertising; the other relies on listener-supporters and members. The two are mutually exclusive. Now, what does this mean? Is this just some thing that shows up in the wash in a report that dies? Unfortunately, not. This, this, this conclusion by the FCC was used as the central justification to permit a license transfer from one entity to another of a public radio station. And make no mistake about it gentlemen, Minnesota Public Radio is the, is the public radio equivalent of Clear Channel. [*applause*] Now this transfer won't be approved for another six days, the 15th of December. It's the bottom of the ninth guys, we need a pinch-hitter. All classical music lovers need you to pinch-hit for us. Please reread this section from the perspective of noncommercial radio and noncommercial radio listeners. If there's any doubt in your mind that this is the correct conclusion, I beg you to step in and delay this transfer until the full ramifications of this transfer are known. Please don't let the music die. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

SARAH CLAUSE: My name is Sarah Clause and I'm from Minneapolis. I tutor high school students after school and I thank you for this opportunity to be heard. When the founding fathers wrote the constitution only white, male landowners could vote, and obviously we've made some progress since then. [*laughter*] But the thing that they realize that was not a mistake was that there is a connection between an informed electorate and a healthy democracy. [*applause*] That is absolutely as relevant today as it was then, and today the bulk of our electorate is

ill-informed. The fact that a few months before November's election 4 of the country still believed that thee was a connection between Saddam Hussein and the 9/11 attacks proves that something is wrong. Much of the blame goes to TV station whose concern is not to inform the public but to make money and protect their own interests. And what I would like to see is return to the Fairness Doctrine which was repealed in 1987 [*applause*] which requires that both sides of an issue be represented, rather than no concern for that. Today people are dying because the electorate is ill-informed. Media fairness, diversity of opinions, diversity of voices literally is a matter of life and death. [*applause*]

MICHAEL KUKTA: Thank you for being here tonight. Thank you for all of you who are still here. My name is Michael Kukta. I'm from the Trades and Labor Assembly, a coalition of labor unions in St. Paul. As we all know, as we've heard tonight, broadcast media are supposed to operate in the public interest. Part of operating in the public interest means informing citizens about issues that directly affect their lives. I raise an issue tonight in which Twin Cities TV stations fail to do that. The issue is overtime pay. In August the Labor Department changed the rules that determined which American workers are eligible for overtime pay and which are not. Before these new rules took effect, TV stations had 18 months to report on the changes. They did virtually nothing. For people who receive overtime pay, it means an average of $161 a week extra on their paycheck. For most of us, that's real money. These new rules take that money away and TV stations ignored it. It wasn't like the information wasn't out there. There were several studies on the impact of the rules. There were votes in Congress trying to block the rules. Public radio covered the issues. Newspapers and wire services covered the issue. Some of their stories were not very accurate, but at least they put the issue out there. Despite this, of the four major commercial TV stations in the Twin Cities, in eighteen months these stations carried a total of only two stories, and both stations waited until the very last day. At that point, it's too late for citizens to do anything about it. Why didn't they cover the story? Maybe it's because they preferred the hype and network reality show, rather than report on actual reality. Maybe it's because the TV stations themselves benefit. After all, reporters and editors are among those who lose overtime pay under these rules. Whatever the reason, ignoring the story, or ignoring it until it's too late, is negligent. It is not acting in the public interest. It's violating the public interest. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me call some more names: Dean Alger, Warren Gore, Louise Bouda, John Foude, Sarah Ford, Leslie Powell, Greg Boon, Adam Bonner

[*unintelligible*]: I am the acting conference minister for the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ [*applause*]. Perhaps you've heard of us. We've been in the news this past week. As one part of the national identity campaign, my denomination recently created a 30-second television ad intended to offer a word of welcome to the hundreds of thousands of people disaffected from organized religion in this country. Our ad

features many different people approaching a church. Some are turned away; some allowed to enter. The ad then says no matter who you are, no matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome. The ad was run last spring in six test market areas without incident, including on a number of CBS and NBC affiliates. Last week, two days before our ad was scheduled to have a national rollout, CBS and NBC turned us down. Why? NBC said, "too controversial". CBS said, and I quote, "Because this commercial touches on the exclusion of gay couples and other minority groups, and the fact that the executive branch has recently proposed a constitutional amendment to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman, this spot is unacceptable for broadcast on the networks," it said. Friends, among the people who were shown approaching the church were two men. If you don't blink your eyes, you might see that they are holding their hands. Hardly a ringing endorsement. Members of the United Church of Christ have had a hard time following the logic that extends a word of welcome is that controversial. It is easy to be suspicious. We wonder just what is going on here. Rather than encouraging diversity, this rejection represents a narrow view of what constitutes moral values. It is unconscionable censorship. The stakes are much higher here than the fate of a 30-second ad by one religious body in this country. [*applause*]

GREG BOON: I'm Greg Boon and I'm a volunteer for a community center in Burnsville called The Garage. And recently we did a show. We're also a music venue, and City Pages named us the Number 1 all-ages venue in the Twin Cities last year. Recently we did a homelessness benefit and awareness show called "The Great American Sleepout". It was on National Homelessness Awareness Weekend. And we sent a press release to every media that we could think of in this city. We sent one to Disney's KQRS, Disney's 93X, and also MPR The only reply we ever got was KQRS, and May Young and Dave Campbell, we love them, they agreed to put us on the Homegrown show. But I was thinking: it's ridiculous that the only time you can get on the radio to promote a local music show for a local venue, supporting homeless people in this city, is on Sunday night from midnight until 2:00, which means I had to get a tape so that my parents could listen to it, and my relatives… My uncle is a good mentor of May Young's, so that they could listen to it, 'cause it was on too late, and they couldn't stay up for it. All we hear in this city is what the corporate media wants us to hear. The only music we ever hear is the local music that Disney wants us to hear, and what Clear Channel wants us to hear. And I should add that all the comments that I'm saying are my opinions and not the city of Burnsville's. [*laughter*] So I encourage all of you to accept the standards. They're in a book that is edited by the great Joseph Peschek, a teacher here at Hamline, particularly the article entitled "It's the Media Stupid", by Robert McChesney and Nichols, in his latest book, [*applause*] Voices of Dissent. Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*]

JOHN FOUDE: My name's John Foude. Thank you, Commissioners for holding this. It's very important that you hear it and are staying connected with the grassroots, and I would also like to thank Stan Hubbard for being here. I'm with them, but I really respect you for showing up. There's been a lot of talk about how consolidation keeps information that the citizen needs away. Commercial television tells us what we want to see, but doesn't tell us what we need to know as citizens. It reminds me of what Kelly Lawson says. Kelly is the founder of *Adbusters* magazine, and he said that "I grew up behind the iron curtain, and there I learned that you couldn't say anything against the government, and I come to North America and I realize you can't say anything against the sponsor. Clearly a good mix, we need a good mix of public and private, and it's a very dear cause to me because I make the most public show on television. I make a show called "Mental Engineering". *The New York Times* said if ever a show screamed noncommercial television, it's this one. We screen television commercials without permission. We deconstruct them featuring academics and occasionally a comedian. We talk about how they're trying to influence us, and what their specific design says both to us and about us. And we can't get funded. We just can't get any money for this show. I know you guys don't hold the purse strings, but this is basically for the audience, it's not PBS's fault either. PBS's annual production subsidy from the federal government is less than NBC spends in one hour. There is no public television in this country, but we're gonna keep making shows, and after a long and painful hiatus, we're gonna be on 200 PBS stations after the first of the year. Our motto is "Move the decimal". We used to make it for 10% of the cost of real TV. Now, we're making it for 1% of the cost of real TV, 'cause we're making them at cable access. My plea to you is please preserve cable access. They're trying to choke it off, and it is truly public television. Thank you. [*applause*]

ADAM BONNER: Hi, I'm Adam Bonner and I'm from Minneapolis. How do we measure effective media? The question is simple: Can everybody tell their story? Stories are the bread and butter of democracy. We cannot practice informed government if we don't know the stories of people's lives. Social progress happens when stories are told that were previously untold. Catherine Hall Jamison is right. It wasn't eloquent words that made the civil rights movement; it was eloquent media. It was when every American could see the newspaper and see children attacked by dogs in Selma. It was when redline suburbia and soup line cities could see where four little girls had been blown up in Birmingham. We hear so much about America being divided: red states and blue states, pro-life and pro-choice, pro-troops or anti-war. Politicians give concession speeches and talk about healing division. But this is bogus, because it's not talking about division. It's talking about estrangement. It's talking about polarization. These have nothing to do with division. They're caused by intolerance. Estrangement is caused by an agenda that wants to integrate ideas and not engage ideas. Estrangement is caused by journalism that is more concerned with sound bites than with sound truth. This is why we must oppose media consolidation. Democracy needs division. Democracy requires that we embrace divided ideas of aptitude, entitlement, work, creation, policy, kinship, beauty, and intelligence. America needs every story because Audre Lorde was right.

Advocating the mere tolerance of difference is a total denial of the creative function of difference in our lives. America needs every story because Martin Luther King, Jr. was right. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality. The FCC can help build this America. Our posterity will live in this America…

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you sir.

ADAM BONNER: … and tonight we speed up the day when every person is a broadcaster and every story will can be told. [*applause*]

SARAH FORD: Hi. My name is Sarah Ford, and I'm from St. Paul. Commissioner Adelstein, you asked us how media consolidation affects us, and there are of course, as you hear, hundreds of important and disturbing and too often silenced responses to that. And thank you for asking and thank you for listening to all of us. One important response to that question is that media consolidation greatly diminishes our ability to live up to our responsibility as citizens of the only superpower on the globe. The decisions of our government affect the lives of nearly every person and species on this planet, and our system can only work with an informed citizenry. And yet the news media we rely on for information about that world and our country's role in shaping it leaves us misinformed, under-informed, and often directly lied to. When five media conglomerates own almost all of what passes for news, when those conglomerates are so closely tied to the federal government, as to reuse to air almost anything that would contradict its practices, when those conglomerates are desperately competing for advertising revenue, and so sell us only news that makes us feel comfortable, so that we'll continue to believe that buying a Lexus and Scott Petersen's guilt or innocence is more important than knowing how many Iraqi citizens are dead or how many US soldiers are lying in hospital beds with massive head injuries and new amputations, or how many US corporations are benefiting and how from our foreign policy. When those five conglomerates create a media environment so very antithetical to the diversity of this democracy, then it cannot be said and it must not believed that we have a free press. That this ideal has been eroded so completely is an outrage that should have all Americans Samantha Henning, demanding change. That this ideal is still celebrated and held up to be real by the very conglomerates that have abolished it and by federal government is one of the greatest tragedies and abuses of power on the face of the contemporary global landscape. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me call some more names: Ronald Griffith, John Toodle, Dori Ulmann, Patrick Invine, Lowell Bloodford, Samantha Henningsen, Theresa Knekne, Nancy Doyle, Michael Griifin. Sir.

TIM KRAMER: I'm Tim Kramer from Minneapolis. I'm a volunteer at the local radio station, KFAI. I'm very proud to have that here in Minneapolis/St. Paul. Thank you to all Twin Citians and further travelers for showing

up here tonight and expressing your views. And thank you Commissioners for hearing our voices. My comments will focus on the fundamental role that media plays in our society, that it plays in regulating the function that the FCC has today, and going forward, in regulating the media, will have effects that will last for many, many years. It's an issue of being fair versus being equal. Fair, being just and conscientious; equal, being similar and alike. Let me draw an analogy for you. Currently there's a lot of trial balloons being floated about a flat tax proposal. While this treat all taxpayers the same on an equal basis, it is hardly fair when you think about the morality of our progressive tax system. How does this relate to radio? We the listening public require fair treatment. Equal treatment of the profit motive and the public good is inherently unjust. The concentration of media in the hands of too many is corrupting the public discourse, and distilling ideas down to sound bites and talking points. Local independent television stations, both public and private, need the FCC to treat the public good as a higher priority, a higher morality, and only then may fairness be realized. I support ownership limits that rein in corporate greed, and I support local ownership and low power FM. Thank you. [*applause*]

LOUISE BOUDA: I'm Louise Bouda. In Minneapolis I started the Well Mind Association in 1994, and thank you for the opportunity to speak. This is a civil and human rights issue. Health is aright. It's not a privilege. We mean health and not just the right to treatment. We want health treatment that works and that benefits us, enables us to get back living a full life. But in health care we're not allowed to choose. We are only given the most expensive, least effective health care available. Some people want the most expensive health care. Let them have it. We want to choose what we want and that will not make the problem worse. But because the corporations have control over the media and the people don't have the opportunity to hear about less expensive health care- I'm talking about holistic integrative health cares. We should have the chance to make our own choices. We have given a monopoly to corporatized medicine whose experts explain that the only way to help people is to destroy them. The county, the government would spend much less money if they let people choose, and pay the total cost of interactive health cares. Recovery is possible from what is labeled "mental illness." That's in quotes. Canada had a 90% recovery rate with ortho-molecular medicine 30 years ago. The Quakers in Pennsylvania had a 70% recovery rate, and a 25% recovery rate for those who have been ill more than a year. There are no laboratory tests or other objective criteria for making psychiatric diagnoses. These are decided by the opinions and beliefs of the people on the committee. On the other hand, we know how to recover people. We have done it. It's not just an idea. Thank you.

THERESA KNEKNE: Hi. My name is Theresa Knekne. I'm going to speak to you from two perspectives, first from an activist perspective. I feel, and I think many of us in this room, in this country feel that we are headed straight into the face of totalitarianism. [*applause*] And the media and the FCC are at least partially responsible for this, but you also have a chance to change it. Case in point: 2004 elections, thousands of cases of intimidation

and fraud around this country, and nobody knows this. Nobody knows that there is a lawsuit in Ohio. Why? Because there is a gag rule in all major media to not talk about it from the top down. [*applause*] They're covering the Ukraine's fraud and not our own. [*applause*] We need action. We are a people of action. We need long-term systemic change. I am not comfortable letting the FCC's agenda dictate what this country does, and that's what's happening. We need answers and we need actions. Maybe we need to revoke the licenses of ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, and CNN until there are policies [*applause*] in place that reflect the public's needs. Second is from a perspective of being a professor of media studies in the Virginia Commonwealth University for four years. I taught, you know, after a semester of teaching students about media, media consolidation, and its role in US foreign policy, many times I had kids in my office crying because they felt like they had been lied to and that our country has abandoned them. Thank you.

DEAN ALGER: Greetings. My name is Dean Alger of St. Paul. I'm also the author of a book called Mega Media, which deals this very subject. This first thing that I want to say is as much for the audience as for the FCC, although this Supreme Court, this essence of the Supreme Court decision, has been quoted by the FCC, Michael Powell, among others, but he does not seem to believe it. This is a Supreme Court case a little while ago, some years ago by, written by Hugo Black, the majority opinion. "The First Amendment rests on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public." Interesting words, "from diverse and antagonistic sources". Antagonistic is an unusual word there, isn't it? What it means is that for a democracy to have a true marketplace of ideas we must have fundamentally independent sources, not just different divisions of the same general conglomerate, but fundamentally independent sources that will challenge one another in the media. Let me give you a specific example from the Twin Cities area quickly. I also am trained as a political scientist and I've done studies of the media, including how TV news and others have covered the election. In 2000, with a couple of colleagues, I did such a study. I arranged for it, and talked to the *Star Tribune*, and they actually published a major story on it. My concern is this: this is about cross-media ownership. If, for example, when the *Star Tribune*, was up for sale a few years ago, had Gannett bought it, with Gannett also owning a TV station in the area, would we have seen that kind of a story? My point then is that cross-media ownership is very dangerous and I appreciate Commissioner Adelstein and Mr. Copps and the rest of the staff coming here to listen to all of this and I appreciate your leadership in trying to draw people in and deal with this issue. [*applause*] It's of monumental importance to the American democracy. Thank you. [*applause*]

MICHAEL GRIFFIN: My name is Michael Griffin. I'm from St. Paul, Minnesota, thank you very much gentlemen for being here. I also teach media study classes. I've taught for 20 years at the University of Minnesota and McAllister Collage and I've had thousands of students in my various media studies classes, one of which is

called media institutions, and I think I've discovered something in teaching those classes that to me, at least, is proof of the fact that our media system has failed us. And that is that, the majority of, the overwhelming majority, of very bright and generally very well informed students that come into my classes, are completely and totally unaware of the structure and operation of media institutions in our country. So obviously, no one is finding out from the media themselves what is going on in the media or what's happening with the media. They're unaware, almost all the students, are unaware of the fact that Disney and Clear Channel, for instance, own two thirds of the FM dial in the Twin Cities. Almost all of them are completely unaware of even the existence of cable public access TV. How can people use cable public access TV if they don't even know about it? And why is it they're not finding out about it, because other media outlets are not telling them that these things exist, they're not letting them know about it. I think that all of this will only change if there's a, a reemphasis on facilitating and providing a wider range of visible, high quality, local choices of both print broadcast and cable media. I think we need to have, not only a robust range of public and community radio and media, but also we need local ownership of commercial media. Because local ownership leads to local sponsorship, and local sponsorship to smaller scale gives more attention to local communities and also to unserved and underserved communities, the kinds of things that large national advertisers never will. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me call some more names, line up over here please: Rob Rafn, Katherine Doore, Ray Tracoma, Dave Has, Beth Van Dam, RUTH SILTEY, Mzhdy McMillan, Mulkey Hussain, and Luke Maredy. Sir.

PATRICK IVINE: Thank you both for listening, apparently other Commissioners need to listen. My name is Patrick Invine, I'm from the University of Minnesota. No one here questions the devastating reality of homogeneity, of all forms of media in this country. We know that it is a tool, a tool to fight against democracy in this country. How do you calm a population the size of the US, in the face of atrocity, in hypocrisy, the likes of which I've never seen before in my entire life? How do you silence all opposition despite overwhelming number, evidenced here, somewhat tonight? How do you keep ignorance of international issues so high that anyone, let alone a small majority of the country believe that there is any connection whatsoever between Saddam Hussain and the attacks of September 11? How? The five corporations controlling 70% of all forms of media know how. The question now, is, how can the FCC, the only agency capable of dismantling this power, allow this to continue? We know the consolidation is about control. We are growing more, and more, angry. If you allow this to continue, how much longer do you think we the people will allow you to continue? Thanks. [*applause*]

SAMANTHA HENNINGSEN: My name is Samantha Henningsen, and I live here in St. Paul, and I'm a staff person at the Hamline University, I work in the office of service learning and volunteerism. And I'd just like to point out that part of the mission of Hamline University is to develop, to develop compassionate citizens out of

it's students. And I have been fortunate enough to work with very motivated, dedicated students, citizens, human service professionals, who are dedicated to making change in the community. A recent event, just like the gentleman from Burnsville who was trying to organize a benefit concert, we held a University wide, along with other schools, a summit on homelessness, to discuss Governor Pawlenty's plan on homelessness. And we did all the press releases, three rounds of phone calls, all this stuff. The Catholic Spirit showed up and we were very grateful, but the point that I want to get across is that, as is witnessed here tonight, there's a lot of emotion, and there's a lot of anger and sadness and lack of feeling in control. And there are things happening in the community to change the vitality, and the health, and the sustainability of the community, but how can we, how do we know, how do we find out about that if it is top down, huge conglomerates that aren't interested in the community. So I'd just like to point that out and thank you for your time. And hope your not glazed over by now.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you [*applause*]

LOWELL LUDFORD: My name is, good evening, my name is Lowell Ludford from St. Anthony. The current FCC policy toward media concentration is now playing out in the Twin City radio market, where you at the FCC have allowed media giant Minnesota Public Radio to become a monopoly in the high end music segment by acquiring it's only competition. Allowing a single media giant to monopolize one segment of radio programming in any given large metro area is not good public policy, and should not be condoned. Your first obligation, of course, is to serve the public, not to broadcast industry. And you can start by changing your attitude toward the public and public opinion. For example, in the MPR case, you at the FCC threw out a public complaint and petition as without merit. It may be that public response does not always fit neatly within the FCC's legalized format, but it is the height of bureaucratic arrogance to assert that public opinion is without merit. The number of Commissioners here tonight reflect the view of the FCC toward public opinion. Furthermore, to the extent the FCC has taken punitive action against indecent radio programming, it should at least support, and encourage, the decent and enriching programming found at the high end of the radio broadcasting curve. [*applause*] But you are punishing that too, by supporting this type of media consolidation. Your position that commercial and noncommercial radio stations compete against each other for both listeners and programming and therefore hands off, is an easy and convenient out for you and the FCC staff to minimize you administrative workload, but hardly in the public interest. This is the unfortunate kind of policy that has perpetuated the vast wasteland of broadcasting, that FCC chairman Newton Minnow, be-cried 40 years ago in a memorable speech…

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you

LOWELL LUDFORD: …that we remember today. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me call some more names, and if I massacre your name please forgive me: Phoenix Jackson, Fong Hu, Michael Cutchnea, Tom Ladgewski, Gordon Doreen, Wendy Wild, Richard Deckerts. Ma'am.

KATHERINE DOORE: Thank you. My name is Katherine Doore, I'm from the great part of north east Minneapolis. [*applause*] And I speak for myself tonight, not from the organizations or my employer. I thank you Commissioners, cops, and Adelstein for coming here tonight, and also the previous persons, the elected officials, and their representatives and distinguished panelists, who came here tonight to give of your time and attention to our voices and opinions. Also thank you to the League of Women Voters for being our minders. We, the good people of the state of Minnesota, are very proud to call our state the *la tuall du nord*, The Star of the North. We care deeply about, and take seriously, and support whole heartedly, what we value most, our free speech and other rights, our civic life, our ethnic diversity, our cultural and educational institutions, our unique corporate conscience, and our communal spirit of can do. But in order to have a good vibrant and functioning democracy, in order to have a strong society that works for all of us, in order to have well educated and engaged citizens, we need to have honest, open and responsive media. We deserve better than what we have now, which is a sorry state of affairs. Currently, the corporate monopolies and Wall Street interests, allied with partisan political groups, control the print and air, operating to filter the news in order to do only, in order to influence public opinion. I am only one person who can do so much and only have two minutes of this forum, but we the people can do much more through our public institutions and our government. There are three things we can do; first of all, contact our elected officials and Congress, the US house, to reverse the decision of June of '03 on the consolidation. Second to make our voices heard to the FCC, as tonight, and last to be engaged and involved. Thank you. Thanks for listening. [*applause*]

PHOENIX JACKSON: Thank you Commissioners, Hamline University cosponsors for having this forum, my name is Phoenix Jackson and I've worked as the operations director at KFAI radio for the past two and a half years. In that position I've seen and heard some remarkable things. I've seen several hundred people stand in the rain for three hours to hear hosts of news programs that we carry, speak about the dangers of media consolidation. I've seen sullen teenagers of immigrant families brighten when I tell them where I work because, they listen with their parents to broadcasts in languages they've spoken their entire lives. I've fielded calls from artists desperate to get their songs played, and I've been at peace protests of 10,000 plus people, only to have commercial media inaccurately report the event as a Wellstone memorial. [*applause*] when asked, what do you like about KFAI, some of our listeners said, and I quote, "I would be very poor without KFAI, and feel ignorant and stupid", "Gives you perspective on politics and the nation not heard on corporate radio", "diversity of music and commitment to community opportunity for regular folks to do radio", "not the same old crap from corporate

radio", and "radio the way it should be". That's just a small sliver sirs. Commissioners, I've spent two and a half years in community radio, and it's led me to the not surprising conclusion that many Americans are starving for diversity of opinion and entertainment, and rely on public radio and television to bring that to them, but they shouldn't have to rely solely on us. If the current trend of mergers and acquisitions continue, we will be in a true media monopoly, and the diversity that is considered healthy in the market place, in interpersonal relationships, and even nutrition, will be lost. It's an awesome responsibility that we have, and we intent to bring the people the richness in broadcast that they deserve, it would be great if we could have some help. Thank you. [*applause*]

RUTH SILTEY: Good evening. My name is Ruth Siltey and I represent at least 5,400 of the 100,000 listeners of an MPR station who were recently deprived of their choice in public radio. I've listened to public radio my entire life including during my childhood days in Pierpont, South Dakota. Commissioner Adelstein and I know that South Dakota public broadcasting covers the entire state and owns up to 95% of the public airwaves. This monopoly clearly serves the public need, and is big by rural standards, due to absolute public necessity, because no one else is there to provide those services. This is not the case in Minnesota, where our independent public radio stations are struggling to maintain the FCC's self described priorities of protecting localism, independence and diversity in the media against a monolithic, and some would argue monopolistic, statewide public radio network. I ask the FCC to carefully examine the activities of public radio expansion in comparison to commercial radio expansion. There is really no difference, except that as public broadcasters, some networks are not subject to the same FCC regulations as commercial broadcasting, and because of this they are allowed to continue on a path of unregulated empire building. Who wins? A public radio network. Who loses? The public. There is no question as to where the FCC's priorities should be. Thousands of Minnesotans are pleading with the FCC to protect and maintain localism, independence, and diversity in public broadcasting. I implore the FCC to pay attention to this issue, and serve the public interest by preventing media consolidation in public radio. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me call some more names to this microphone please: Eric Digra, Marybeth Johnson, Tim Kramer, Robert Rhodle, Eli Stornich, Sheldon Giddes, Carl Noy, Dale Swenson, Cheryl Nelson, and Michael Conner. Sir.

GORDON DORING: I'm Gordon Doring. I reside in Louisdale, Minnesota, and first of all I want to thank Commissioner Adelstein and Mr. Goldstein for coming here tonight and providing this opportunity, and for listening to us rather patiently. I'm speaking as an ordinary citizen radio listener. But a radio listener who listens all day, every day. And I'm unable to find a single benefit to this community which results from the recent transfer of the license from one of the oldest radio stations in this part of the country into the interior of the one of the largest radio systems, public radio systems in both cases. The disappearance of that benefits no one. I appeal

to you to look closely at this license transfer and consider whether in fact this accomplishes anything for anyone. And to use Commissioner Adelstein's words, the transaction was done quietly in a back room, without the possibility of input from citizens. My fear is that another one of my great loves, the jazz station, KBEM, may also disappear one day into [*applause*] the interior of this public radio system, which is already too large. Thank you for your time. [*applause*]

SHELDON GIDDES: My name is Sheldon Giddes. I recently videotaped a couple of presentations by a group called the Itasca Project. I don't know if anybody in the room knows what the Itasca Project- maybe Mr. Hubbard, probably over there knows about it, right? Sure. Me and Mr. Hubbard- the only people in the whole room who know the Itasca Project. That's pretty amazing, isn't it? The Itasca Project claims to be a group of so-called leading CEOs in the state of Minnesota, also claims to have the support of both the mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and the Governor of the State of Minnesota, also the President of the University of Minnesota. The Itasca Project is proposing a fifteen-year, ten billion dollar road construction project as a solution to our traffic congestion problem. You know, I think it's pretty amazing that most of the people in the state have never heard about the Itasca Project. I mean that's a ten billion dollar project. You've got the mayor of both cities. You've got the governor. You got the President of the University of Minnesota. You got Mr. Hubbard and his buddies, you know, talking about spending ten billion dollars of your money, and nobody knows about it. You know, how can that be? I think that the commercialization of the media is maybe a more important issue than the concentration of media ownership. I agree with… I thought it was really interesting what Nicholas Johnson said about AT&T. I mean, you know, we had free speech back then. There was regulation, right? The commercial media are not in the business of serving the public interest, convenience and necessity. That's not what they do. The commercial media sell audiences to advertisers [*applause*], rather than providing information that's necessary to make informed decisions. They provide whatever mindless, lowest common denominator garbage viewers will tolerate. People who want to know more about the Itasca Project, it's at mnartist.org. Type in "vested interest" in the search box, and you can look at my work. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. I'm having a hard time keeping people at this mic. Call some more names: Diane Steen Henderly, Dennis Dylan, Mark Navitsky, Steve Lenius, Dan Nichol, Jane Powers, Phil Heldren. Ma'am.

WENDY WILD: Thank you. I notice… My name is Wendy Wild. [*applause*] That's a radio name. I used to be a disc jockey. Thank you. Now I'm a talk show host because I got tired of saying "here's another song" and I realized there was more to life. And there's so much I want to tell you guys. Thank you so much for being here. I still have my 3rd Class license from 1978 when I was seventeen years old, and studied for months to pass the test, and it's still on my wall. To the Hubbards who are over here, we need to commend them. They're here and they're

listening to us. I don't see Clear Channel here. They're local owners and they're listening, and that's important. I'm representing the new local owners of AM 950. Tomorrow you are all welcome to join me on my show. We open the phones. You can call, if you can get in. We'll take you on the air. We don't screen our calls. A few years back, President Clinton was being impeached. I was working for a 50,000 watt powerhouse licensed to the city of Minneapolis. If there's any area in the state of Minnesota that's liberal, would anybody question Minneapolis is it? So, I'm working on a station licensed to Minneapolis. Every other talk show host I heard on all of the 41 stations that are licensed to the Twin Cities were either kind of in the middle or strongly for impeachment of President Clinton, and I was filling in on a prime time show, which is what I did. That was my job. I was the fill-in person, number one on the list. I was always called up, and I got on the air and I said, "okay, everybody else is saying this, but I have to stop and ask you, wait a minute, shouldn't these FBI agents be doing something else besides chasing our elected President around, looking for dirt that hey can't find? Don't they have something better to do? And I also asked the question: Is this what our Congress should be doing, creating a three-ring circus for all the nation to be laughing at us? The phones lit up. We had like ten studio lines. Every business line. The general manager, who never said hello to me in the hall, I don't think he knew who I was, sat by the producer ready to cut me off at any moment. After my show, I was hauled into my boss' office. The program director told me there's no room for liberals in radio. I essentially- they didn't fire me- they just stopped scheduling me. I finally have my career back. Thank you. I'm one of the few. Thank you so much. We need voices. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

STEVE LENIS: My name is Steve Lenis. I live in Golden Valley, Minnesota. Commissioners, thank you for this forum. Three things I have learned over the years about media consolidation. Number one, as media companies get bigger, the programming get dumber. [*laughter*] Number two, concentrated media means fewer voices and less diversity. And number three, as media gets more concentrated, it listens less and less, and becomes less accountable to its audience. I became sensitized to this years ago when I became involved in an organization called Viewers for Quality Television. The aim of Viewers for Quality Television was to give a voice to viewers who cared about the quality of the shows they watched, but didn't have a Nielsen box on their television set. The motto of Viewers for Quality Television was: "A voice and a choice". Viewers for Quality Television was necessary because the decisions of commercial media companies are not driven by what's best for the audience. Instead, programming decisions are driven by what's best for their shareholders and their advertisers. The need for high ratings limits risk-taking, diversity, and quality and results in lowest common denominator programming. Public broadcasting because it is not driven by ratings, is supposed to be able to offer higher quality and more diverse programming because it is supported by its audience, and is therefore accountable to that audience, but even that, we are seeing, is not always assured. Let me ad my voice to the howls of outrage this evening over the

sale of WCAL. WCAL offered much programming that was and is available nowhere else on the dial, and it's programming that Minnesota Public Radio said that it has no interest in perpetuating. So, the sale will result in less programming diversity and, in my opinion, lowest common denominator programming. And neither the seller nor the buyer are acting terribly accountable to a hundred thousand or more dedicated listeners. I am here this evening to voice my concern about this loss of programming, diversity, choice, quality and accountability to you Commissioners who have the power to do something about it. I hope you do. Thank you very much. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

RICHARD LEDASHARE: Good evening, or good morning. I'm Richard Ledashare, a staffer at TPT, Twin Cities Public Television, and a media activist with Robert McChesney's Free Press and other organizations. Although I'm using TPT as an example, I'm not speaking for TPT, but for democratic media, without which a democratic society cannot exist. This important forum will be broadcast by SPNN, St. Paul's public cable access channel, and a shorter version will be broadcast by TPT's Channel 17, which, by over-the-air cable and satellite transmission can be received in much of Minnesota and western Wisconsin. As you know, or perhaps should know, there is a federal mandate that over-the-air public stations like Channel 17, and commercial stations like WCCL's analog Channel 4, be replaced as early as 2006 by digital channels. If that replacement were in effect today, only a small fraction of the people who can view this forum on Channel 17 could view it on digital Channel 16. Why? There is no federal mandate that local digital stations be carried by commercial cable and satellite services. So we must have a federal mandate from cable and satellite carriage, and we have federal and even state subsidies for lower-income viewers to purchase digital receivers. Otherwise digital broadcast democracy in our nation will die. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

DAN MICHAEL: I'm Dan Michael, and I'm the state President of the AFL-CIO Retiree Council, and roughly speaking there are as many retiree AFL-CIO members as there are active. That is about 400,000. The Minnesota State Retiree Council has a weekly one-hour cable show called Our Voices of Experience, which is broadcast metro-wide at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesdays on cable Channel 6. In addition, it is shown throughout the state on local community access. And our audience consists of retirees, and our message consists of a discussion of topics of interest to our retirees, such as the recent change in prescription drug care and Medicare, vital aging, labor history, social security, and other subjects. We have local media access now. We have to pay a substantial fee to be on the metro-wide access, although on the local community we pay no fee. I have two concerns I wish to ring to your attention. Number one, as technology is changing rapidly, what will become of our local access? As a corollary,

will there still be room in broadcasting for local programming in an era of increase conglomeration? Secondly, why are our public airwaves for sale? We have a sizeable portion of the public and the number of retirees is increasing significantly. Why do we have to pay, why does the public have to pay in our metro-wide coverage? Why does our audience have to pay in order to even here us? So the State Retiree Council continues to monitor the activities of the FCC and other government agencies and to fully inform our members. I thank you kindly for not only coming here, but for staying there. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

MARK NAVITSKY: Hi. I commend everyone else for the long night, especially Commissioner Adelstein and Counselor Goldstein, and Mr. Koppis. You guys are the good guys. We love to have you here, but you need to get back to Washington and kick some butt. [*applause*] Well if nicholasjohnson.org was still here… Oh, my name is Mark Navitsky, a concerned citizen and member of the Independence Party. And if nicholasjohnson.org was still here, is he… [*laughter*] He made a reference, a guy Abbot Joseph Liebling once said, "Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one". It's easy to understand how journalism either can be democracy's best friend or its worst enemy. The news here hopefully gets reported as being accurate, reliable, and objective. Hopefully a little less frivolous. We need straight news. Because ultimately that news becomes the reality that reaches the people. The realities we face today should be sounding alarms. Democracy is not long for society, when the citizen access to fundamental rights and freedoms continue to be rescinded, and offered up as a commodity, simply based only on economic principles. Already, too much of what and the way things get reported, and perhaps most importantly, what's not reported, place our democracy and society at great risk. The founding fathers knew what they were doing when they decided that the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights should be laws abridging no freedom of speech or freedom of the press. It's maintaining that accountability of checks and balances. They knew that our democracy couldn't survive this ill-informed public. And the bottom line is this: Can we trust media giants, operating specifically on commercial, big business principles and protections, to demonstrate a concern for such a sacred trust? Can they be trusted to adequately serve the best needs of society, rather than ratings, profit, and market share? [*applause*]

DENNIS DYLAN: My name is Dennis Dylan. I speak to the sale of WCAL to Minnesota Public Radio. I'm a longtime supporter of both MPR and St. Olaf's WCAL. This market has successfully supported two different classical music services for 40 years. WCAL has maintained a financially viable service for 82 years. In the late 1980's WCAL sought a new tower location to broadcast throughout the metro area. MPR objected to CAL's application despite no chance of signal interference. FCC approved the application and CAL members raised funds to pay for the tower. On May 31 this year St. Olaf seized all direct financial support of the station. Listeners

responded and CAL ended the fiscal year in the black. When St. Olaf announced the sale of WCAL, it had unilaterally sold an asset held in the public trust, a breach of fiduciary duty to CAL's financial supporters. St. Olaf deliberately excluded all CAL stakeholders from knowledge in the process, in spite of the fact that the vast majority of CAL's financial support came from millions of listener and taxpayer dollars. Operating in virtual secrecy, St. Olaf did not follow federal open meeting law stipulations, as required by the CPB. It refused to entertain a superior proposal offered by the Save WCAL organization, stonewalling and hindering its ability to communicate with CAL members and supporters, raising concerns that private agreement had been reached with MPR, and that they had not run a full, open-bid process. Save WCAL raised these issues by filing an FCC petition to deny. The staff ignored many issues raised there, issuing a preliminary finding in favor of the transfer. Upon receipt, St. Olaf and MPR prematurely finalized the sale on November 19. The 30 day review period ends on December 15. Now the reality is that all public band hundred kilowatt signals locally are consolidated with MPR. The public is a significant loser in this. Our market is already experiencing the loss of a nationally recognized, independent radio voice. [*applause*] The commission should revisit this. Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. Let me call some more names first. Sir, let me call some more names first: Palmer Van Beest, Bruce McKenzie, David McMayhill, Dale Shultz, Frenchie Lunning, Neil Clark, Michelle Shaver, Gedally Neovich, Janet Rogue. Sir.

PHIL HELDREN: It's official: I'll be the last speaker of this day. My name is Phil Heldren and I'm here to speak on behalf of WCAL. I've written the Commissioners of the FCC on three occasions, first in August of 2004 to ask that the FCC examine carefully the sale of WCAL to Minnesota Public Radio, a transaction that was arranged in secrecy, in violation of the open meeting requirements of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Second, in September of 2004 in support of WCALS's petition to deny transfer the license, and third, in October of 2004 when this forum was announced, urging the FCC to defer any decision until this gathering could take place. Despite that, on November 15, Peter H. Boyle, Chief Audio Division, Media Bureau, issued document 1800 B3PHD, granting the request to transfer the license for the last 100,000 watt noncommercial radio station in Minnesota not already owned by MPR to MPR. Once preliminary FCC approval was given, St. Olaf and MPR rushed to complete their transaction, which was closed five days later on Friday, November 19. And on Sunday evening, November 10, November 21 at 10:00 p.m. WCAL as we knew it ceased to exist. Concentration of the public radio market in Minnesota is now nearly complete. In a January 1987 article, the *Star Tribune* was already to MPR as an empire with twelve stations. Today it is. You own the airwaves. That's a quote. Yet when St. Olaf College and Minnesota Public Radio were already to complete the transfer of WCAL, we the owners of the airwaves were left on the sidelines. I continue to vigorously oppose the consolidation of independent public

voices into a large corporation, with a name that says “Public”, and ambitions that scream “private”. I challenge you to put some teeth behind the phrase, “You own the airwaves”. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

JANE POWERS: Hi. My name is Jane Powers and I’m a sculptor insulation artist. Last weekend I was attending the Art and Commitment Conference at the University of Minnesota. An artist friend came up to me and asked, “Why am I still handing out political information and alert action fliers?” Now that the election was over. I was shocked, but replied that “yes, election day had passed, but the issue of investigating probable election fraud and irregularities was very current”. As we talked it was clear she had virtually no knowledge of serious contentions behind the recount filings and court cases being brought forward with regard to the November 2 election. If I were relying on mainstream newspaper and broadcast networks, I also would be in the dark. I go to the independent media and internet for diverse and in-depth news analysis, and to find out which stories are not, for the most part, being covered by the US mainstream media. Omission of stories is a form of bias and distortion that I find dangerous, especially in a country that touts itself to be a model of democracy. Along with admission, is the problem of distortion in reporting. To quote from Amy Goodman, speaking yesterday on her Democracy Now show, which thanks to independent KFAI and MTN, is available here. She said, “an April 2004 poll by the Program of International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland found that almost half of the American public still believed Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction contend that the increasing consolidation resulting in mega cross-media corporate ownership that have an inordinate ability to direct and dictate what is available as news and culture is the root cause. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Let me read some more names: Lindsay Volschlager, Beth Ann Borokovich, Jeff Stratke, Joann Krueger, Tom Kay, Michael Garvey, Mike Mizurkowitz, Winston Taylor, Mukthar Taker, Thomas Eland. Ma’am.

DIANE STEEN HENDERLY: My name is Diane Steen Henderly, and I walked over from the overflow area so I might have missed a comment. But I haven’t head one yet about the fact that all of this is going to be rolled into legislation. I’m speaking to the due process of that. I was horrified back in ’96 when the main discussion and vote on that telecommunications bill was held in August when most Americans were on vacation, and was held on a weekend night, like Friday night or something like that, when even people that are still working were doing other things. And then the vote was held after midnight, so very few people even on CSPAN or whatever were able to see that, and hold people accountable. So I hope you will insist that when this comes to the legislation and all that that it’s held during the workday months before August, and during the week and not after midnight, so that

people can be aware of what's going on. And that all gave the appearance of hoodwinking, and I don't us to be hoodwinked again as a public, with this very important legislation. And I want to briefly mention another hoodwinking thing. We do finally have a liberal station now that, Air America 950 AM, and it's so great to have that diversity on the political spectrum. And today I heard Senator Conrad say that in the next ten years, we moms and pops working in the lower classes are gonna be spending 2.4 million in Social Security payroll taxes, and the next ten years, if those tax cuts are made permanent, that's 2.5 million that those Social Security payments are going to be directly from our pocket to the wealthy. And I think rush to consolidation is to propagandize us or play down the negatives. [*applause*]

PALMER VAN BEEST: I'm Palmer Van Beest from St. Paul. And first of all I'd like to thank you for holding this two-day forum. I read in an article [*laughter*] in the *Star Tribune* that your colleagues said that your gallivanting around the country was a waste of time and was not important. Obviously you filled two rooms tonight. So thank you for being here. Thank you for caring. [*applause*] Thank you for listening. After listening to many of my neighbors, I feel somewhat chagrined to have written such a petty letter, complaining. We've head a lot of complaints tonight. I'm going to add mine anyway. I appreciate you caring enough. It's a huge issue, what's happening with our media in this country. It's a huge issue. And go back and tell those other three morons that it is. [*laughter*] And for me, the thing that's touched me most recently is CBS's and NBC's refusal to air the ad from the United Church of Christ. I mean, I've been assaulted with crap during this election. That swift boat stuff made me sick. I couldn't hit the remote fast enough to change channels. It's okay to air garbage like that on television. To air an ad that indicates that people are being excluded from churches, which they are. Look at what happened to Senator Kerry and the Catholic Church, case in point. And I'm not saying all Catholic Churches would have excluded him. But some churches do exclude people. This ad, there's nothing controversial in that ad at all. And the reason it's been pushed away by CBS in particular, is because of this country's homophobia that's being exhibited by our leader. We can't have that stuff controlling our airwaves. Thank you gentlemen.

JOEL SUNSA: My name is Joel Sunsa. I just want to thank the Commissioners for being here today and making yourselves directly available to us. I'd also like to just personally thank other people that I've heard who have said so many eloquent things. I'll try not to repeat, but I do think that I could possibly add a couple of things. Some people have talked about the misinformation that people had about Saddam Hussein and weapons of mass destruction. Maybe one pertinent fact related to that is that 75 – 80% of Bush voters thought that Saddam Hussein had WMD and thought that Saddam Hussein was behind the al Qaeda attacks. So, as one person said, this really is a matter of life and death. I don't think it's necessarily that these people are not intelligent people, and I don't even think it's necessarily that these people don't want to know the truth. I think they're not being told the truth.

I'd also like to just say, as a classical musician, that if you could intervene on behalf of WCAL that would be great. WCAL is a vastly superior station in terms of what it plays to 99 ½ and I did grow up listening to it. If I had to listen to the other station, which plays just a lot of classical Muzak, I would go crazy, speaking as a classical musician. Even I would have trouble with that, so, thanks for your time.

JEFF STRAIGHT: Thank you. I'm Jeff Straight from Eden Prairie. It's clear to all of us that the FCC needs to have its teeth restored, and it's gonna come from people like this talking to our Congressmen and Senators and to the FCC that's gonna make it work. I cut my teeth in broadcasting in the late '70s at University Community Video, which is one of the nation's first grassroots community-oriented television services. It operated out of the U of M. I've also worked at Channel 2 and Channel 5, and it's just wonderful to see the Hubbards here. I think they, of all the commercial stations in the Twin Cities, they run the most responsible public affairs and news-oriented programming around. And it's difficult for them. They're a medium-sized company, and they fought the giants, and we need them around, and I'm proud to be in the same community that they are. I also may be the only person in this room who has worked for a Rupert Murdoch station. This was in New York. I've also worked at WNET in New York, and WGBH in Boston, and I am concerned about media consolidation. When I returned to the Midwest from the East Coast, I got to reconnect with a lot of the people I had met in broadcasting, many radio people throughout Minnesota. I have been alarmed and stunned at the consolidation, especially of public radio in this state, of a large, very respectful, somewhat responsible organization that has been predatory on smaller license holders. I'm primarily concerned too about their news product. They run most of the high quality in this state. Is it now open to people who need access to it? I have my doubts. I think we have to be careful. Thank you very much. [*applause*]

BRUCE MCKENZIE: Hi. My name is Bruce McKenzie, and I, like may here tonight have come because I'm concerned about the quality of my democracy. We're here to try to give you a sense of what the populous thinks and for you to then act upon that, and though we're quite a diverse group here tonight, many different viewpoints, religions, ethics backgrounds, some religious, some not. One faith that none of us have that has crept into the FCC along the lines of a religious almost assumption, that none of the rest of us share, is the belief that the marketplace is the force which should determine the control of media. None of us believe that. I've listened to all testimony tonight and none of us believe that mythology. We believe that the voices of democracy should not be governed by who has the most money to buy and control and filter influence. Much as we believe that our votes should be equal, and counted by the way. [*laughter*] So I've been here tonight hugging like a child with its blanket something that is very dear to me, and that is George Orwell's 1984 [*applause*] and I would suggest that the Commissioners might want to grab the book. Not necessarily the Commissioners here today, the other Commissioners, and give thoughtful consideration to the wisdom that was spoken in there. Another option might

be to read E. F. Schumacher's Small is Beautiful, Economics as if People Mattered, [*applause*] as a good antidote this usurpation of the government's adoption of a religion that the people don't share. Thank you. [*applause*]

WINSTON TAYLOR: Thank you for being here and listening tonight. My name is Winston Taylor. I'm a classical musician and music teacher, with a strong belief and knowledge of the power of music to transform people. And as such, I have been as of November 21, in a kind of mourning. That was the day that WCAL, one of the great classical music stations in the country left the air. This was the culmination of a Greek tragedy played out in the Minnesota heartland, in which the FCC as uncaring gods allowed a few misguided, highly flawed human beings who happened to e leaders of two great institutions, to make a tragic mistake. In this tragedy, the principles of Minnesota Nice were supplanted by Minnesota Devious. And the immediate hapless victim was a station of surpassing beauty and virtue, whose grace and creativity we will probably never see here again. The FCC not only allowed this to happen, if the tone and content of the four-page letter approving the sale are an accurate indicator of the current FCC point of view, then the FCC has in fact become a cause of trends it was designed to forestall. In effect, foxes guarding the henhouse. Our treasure is now sold and gone, maybe forever, unless the FCC does an eleventh hour reconsideration of its errors. Two great institutions, one a college, the other a radio network, have been misled, perhaps like our country. One, because its leaders felt financial panic which caused them to act pennywise and pound foolish; the other, because its leaders were desperate for more radio power. MPR might now be renamed by adding three vowels to its name: ERE. That is, to name it Empire Radio. And St. Olaf might put a vertical slash through the beginning of its name. Then we could say, that unlike big tragedy, these two institutions and the FCC, yes, that they are now governed by non-cosmic forces. That is, power and money. [*applause*]

JOANNE KRIEGER: I'm Joanne Krieger. When the clipboard passed I didn't know that I was signing up to speak. So I feel obligated to say at least something. [*laughter*] And it might not be worth my time or yours. But I am concerned about the radical religious right that's entered into the Republican Party, and I do wonder how much of that influence has entered into the fourth estate, and I can't help but think that there is some of that in this, and that really is a concern to me. These people will do anything for their ends, and it is not a representation of the Christianity that I knew, and I am very afraid of this, and I am not sure what it is going to take for us to move these people back into place. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: [*unintelligible*] If there is anyone else who wishes to speak and hasn't yet spoken, please line up, instead of me calling the last, I think I've got about 20 names left.

MUKTHA TAKUR: My name is Muktha Takur. I live in Oakdale, Minnesota and I'm here to talk on the basis of a couple of things that I do. One of the things that I do, I'm a DJ at KFAI. All the hits of Bombay on this side of town. You're listening to Sanghan, the best musical program on this side of town. I also do Gitmala TV on public TV, that is actually done, and it's just very rare for people like me to come and attend these types of things. Media interests are not serving my community and I want to see the FCC change the manner in which concentration is heading to make allowance for the growing population of minorities in Minnesota and the United States. Specifically, the following options are offered, and you heard a lot of them. I'm not going to go through them, and I'm not going to go through them because I'm a bureaucrat myself and I do often do exactly what you are doing on the transportation front, and I have heard of the Itasca group. And I've done lots of very, very controversial projects, and I can share with you that in no project, however controversial I've done, I've heard the volume of negative or anti-concentration media attitude that you've heard today. The absolute, almost 100% of the people that you've heard here today have basically said that they hate concentration of media. While I've been successful in my own in obtaining airtime, both for TV, as well as for radio, it was public access channel that has actually done it, I just want to say that there are many minority community members that are not as successful. Note the comment by a rejection letter received by me to my proposal to MPR, a local broadcaster. And I've given a copy to your staff. To be totally candid, we have no interest in adding an Indian program. Blunt, straight to the point. This world is more globalized than ever before. We will be more so than ever before, so it's important for Americans to be aware of the multitude of opinions. Thank you. [*applause*]

GEDALLY NEOVICH: Hi. My name is Gedally Neovich, and I'm with Slavic Community Center, providing services for Russian-speaking Minnesotans. I'm Jew and every Friday I attend Temple [*unintelligible*] in St. Paul. And school bus bringing somewhere around 30 senior citizens probably 30 minutes before service. Most of them don't speak English or Hebrew. In fact, some of them even not Jew. Most of them not observing any religion. So, what they doing in my temple? Why they coming to worship what they don't understand language and tradition? And sitting silently for a couple hours because this is only one time, only one opportunity for them to socialize with the same people what they know, or what they can socialize. And this only case study of the obstacles to immigrants face in the United States because poor commercial media outlets and government licenses. By definition the United States is melt pot of culture, religion, and races. Based on this fact, it is not negotiable right to provide education, communication, and media outlet for issues in each community. Obviously there are other events and opportunity that exist within the state of Minnesota, where all of the Russians can congregate and socialize. [*unintelligible*] Thank you. [*applause*]

MORELO SANGELES: My name is Morelo Sangeles. I am from Venezuela, and [*unintelligible*] two areas. The first is a fact that United States government, this government, and the most powerful media help to put away

today my government, my President Chavez. [*applause*] It's a fact now that was involved, and the media, the most powerful media know that information but never give the truth to the world. I wanted to give the message for them, and now I just want to tell you, my friends, I just want to invite you to learn about the Venezuelan experience. We don't waste time talking with governments represented. We understand that the information is not fundamental human rights. 30% of the media now in my country are alternative media, are popular media. We have been working with grassroots communities because we understand that media democratization is more than participation. When people, when you see an indigenous without shoes making a program, producing a program, that is really the significance of democratization of the media. And you have here, I admire you. I admire the United States people because you have a lot of patience. Maybe that is why you call us underdeveloped countries or, I don't know, ignorant people, because we don't have patience. We believe in popular power. Thank you. [*applause*]

LEE HERICK: I'm Lee Herick from New Brighton. One of the most egregious consequences of a media lacking independence and diversity is no better exemplified than by the war in Iraq, whose beginning were overseen by a mainstream of embedded journalists and reporters offering consistently unreliable, inaccurate, skewed information for which even *The New York Times* found itself apologizing in May 2004. The discourse of a healthy democracy has been traditionally protected by regulations guaranteeing those with the most money do not monopolize public airwaves and print media, the very regulations the FCC has begun to eradicate. In this environment of eradication, I testify to falsified anti-war protest numbers, protests I attended in St. Paul and in Washington D.C. Dropped zeros: 5,000 become 500. 100,000 become 10,000. I testify to never run letters, essays, and commentary by a media exposing itself as disinterested in women's voices. I testify to an absence of scholarly dissent and a creation of a media culture in which critical thinking and questioning are condemned. The FCC must safeguard regulation and reject the implicit notion of recent years that a diverse and independent media is unhealthy, and that only the wealthy extreme or conservative media be guaranteed media control and representation. Please recall how in 1935, Minnesota's own Sinclair Lewis published a story titled It Can't Happen Here, addressing the then-rise of fascism in the United States. In it, an editor observes the candidacy of a fascist who wins the presidential election, gains control of Congress and the Supreme Court, and turns the United States into a totalitarian state. I would like to think if this ever came to happen in a country, there would be a media free enough and independent enough to truthfully report it. Thank you. [*applause*]

JOHN SLADE: Hello. My name is John Slade. I live in St. Paul. I am a co-founder of both Twin Cities branch of the Indymedia network and the Counterpropaganda Coalition, one of the groups that is sponsoring this event. And after these last two speakers, I do want to say thank you very much for being here. I'm glad you're here, but I too am going to direct many of my comments to all of us. Look at us. Five hours. There's still a hundred of us here. I

mean with all due respect to these gentlemen who get paid to do this kind of job, we care about this. And I think we're very close to a shift, a major shift in politics and how things are going on here. Inside the beltway, I've heard plenty of stories of how bad it is and how you can get to believing things. And there's a couple of things that people believe and I want to give you that little boost. First off, corporations are not people. [*applause*] The First Amendment is not a reason to increase their size, and I know they've filed lawsuits against that. Second, money is not speech. And it's been said again and again here that we don't want our speech to be covered totally by money. Content is important, and we know that. The Counterpropaganda Coalition works to counter corporate media bias and also to produce and promote alternative media because I think we have to do them both. We have to work with our allies here, and we have to work with each other. That's why we want your ideas at a organizing meeting, Saturday, December 18, from 10:00 a.m. to noon, at the Bryant Square Rec Center. And for more information you can contact counterprop.org, is our website, or take a look at twincities.indymedia.org. Thank you, all of you. Thank you gentlemen. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

MORGAN HERSCH: My name is Morgan Hersch of Illinois. I'd like to begin by commending our commentator, Elizabeth Nordling. I don't know if you have a stool back there, but it appears you've been standing for over three hours. You must have joints of steel. You deserve a round of applause. [*applause*] I'd like to address the national broadcast limit. The Communications Act of the 1930s establishes a 25%- that is to say any broadcast network can only reach 25% of the TV households in America. The Telecommunications Act of 1996, which established the biennial review which created the June 2 proposed rulemaking, established the limit, increased the limit rather, to 35%. During the time between the June 2 rules and when it was taken to the Third Appellate Court as the Prometheus Radio Project vs. the FCC, the Telecommunications Act was amended so that the limit would be raised to 39% and be afterwards insulated from the FCC, so that the FCC can no longer regulate it. So now it belongs to the Congress. So we address the FCC. I advise everyone to go out tomorrow and talk to your Congressman. I have two suggestions for you. I know you've heard a lot, but it's just two more. Next time you do one of these, put a little bucket out front asking for a $1 donation. I'm sure the money, with the money you raise, you can lobby the other Commissioners in the same way [*laughter*] that the broadcast companies do. You can take them out every Friday for pizza and beer. I guarantee you'll have great results. And the second one, I hope you obtain a tape of what's been going on here tonight and what's been going on at every other forum you've held, so the next time Chairman Powell says in front of Congress- I think he's quoted as saying that he did not know who the June 2 rulemaking would hurt. Just show him this tape and say, "everyone here". Thank you very much. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

CHRISTOPHER LOCKE: Hi. My name is Christopher Locke. I'm the creator of a counterpropaganda t-shirt project that I call Contemplate T-shirts. This is one of my t-shirts. It says "Liberate the Media". I think that's a good idea. Let's liberate the media, folks. Free speech is nothing without a venue, or in the case of mass communication, access to the microphone. Right now corporations who have a great interest in the maintenance of the status quo and in enlarging their spheres of influence and wealth have the loudest voice. It reaches the most minds in the public out of any voice in society, more even than the government's voice. The corporate is shouting to Americans that they should exercise their free speech and participate in democracy primarily by consuming material goods, that is by voting with their dollars. There is very little room for ordinary people who work, who need affordable health care, who want to get all the facts before their country goes to war to participate in mass communication, that is to create media, versus consuming it. Because of this, ordinary people cannot participate well in the marketplace of ideas, and basically policy and legislation are formed without their interests in mind due to that fact. We have lots of major crises in our time right now, like needless was and looming environmental catastrophe spiraling out of control. It doesn't have to be this way, but it will continue to be this way as long as corporations control our society without effective governmental checks that balance the public interest against corporate profits. Can we trust commercial media to tell us everything about nuclear power plants and their risks, when these broadcasters are in some cases owned by nuclear power manufacturers, like GE and Westinghouse, owners of NBC and CBS respectively? These companies are also manufacturers of weapons of mass destruction, as has already been mentioned tonight. Can we trust their coverage of the buildup to war given this? How about a law preventing a news organization from being owned by a war profiteering company? And, let's see, what else do I got here? Additionally… Oh, is it over? [*laughter*] That went quick. [*applause*]

DIGLEY WILLARD: I'm Digley Willard from St. Paul. I'd like to say that it appears to me that the FCC has missed a fundamental aspect, a fundamental foundation of democracy. From what I can see, the FCC is very vigorous in protecting the rights of station owner corporations to free speech. The FCC has missed the most crucial part of free speech. It only acts as the foundation for democracy if everybody has that right, and that is not how it works. In the internet that's how it works. It doesn't bother me that Rush Limbaugh has a website, because if I get upset enough about that, I can register pointyheadedliberal.com and put out my own opinions to anybody who wants to access them. It doesn't bother me that *St. Paul Pioneer Press* has political bents that I don't like, because if I get upset enough by that, I can go down to Kinko's, copy off my own newsletter and try to get people to read it. But when Rush Limbaugh talks on the radio, I cannot go out, slap a radio antenna on my garage, and start broadcasting Radio Free Miriam Park. That's the problem as I see it. Radio and TV owners do not have a right of free speech. They have something much more dangerous. Five corporations now have a dominant right of

exclusive speech in this country, and in this country when we give people exclusive rights, we expect that they will have some responsibilities. They will discharge some serious responsibilities with them, and that isn't happening. I think the ideal way to counter this is to make it so anybody can go out and get their own radio or TV station. Anybody can run cable to anybody else's house that's dumb enough to give them permission, and broadcast their own radio, cable, TV, whatever they want. The next best thing is to make sure this right of exclusive speech is spread to as many people as possible. Get as many low power FM, anything else, a lot more people here have said things that I don't know about, that there's a lot of ways to do that. And finally, when people abuse their exclusive rights, take them away and give them to people who will use them properly. [*applause*] Thank you very much. And finally, I'm amazed. You guys have an awesome attention span. I'm amazed you're still here. You said you were going to listen to everybody and you meant it. I applaud you. [*applause*]

MICHAEL KABLIN: Hello. My name is Michael Kablin. I am one of the other cofounders of the Counterpropaganda Coalition. I'm a member of the newly formed protest the corporate media group called the FCC: Fight Corporate Control. [*laughter*] I am also- brand new group- I'm also very proud to say I was very active in the David Carr for President campaign, and I am delighted and honored to say that despite the sounds of the corporate media, we are having a recount in Ohio. We just got the call today. We're going out on Monday for the recall. [*applause*] How has the corporate media failed us on the local level? How can we count the ways? I'm gonna start by just talking about Wendy Newheimer. Wendy Newheimer is a young lady that lives in St. Louis Park, here in Minnesota. Her brother, Staff Sergeant Patrick Newheimer, went and fought in the Gulf War in '91. While he was there, he got sick, actually came back to the United States and died from Leukemia in 1995. At that time, the local corporate media outlets, the local corporate media did an interview with Wendy. Wendy was very clear, very specific. Wendy believed completely, like many of us do, that the reason that Patrick Newheimer died from leukemia is because of his exposure to depleted uranium weaponry made here in Minnesota. And yet that night what showed in the local corporate media outlet was Wendy crying, and then local corporate media outlet talking about how, "well, we do know that Saddam Hussein has lots of nasty chemical weapons out in the desert." The nonexistent chemical weapons that they were still talking about then and now. The corporate media, we can no longer trust the corporate media. Our democracy is being stolen. There is a brutal and immoral racist war being fought in Iraq, and it is indirectly in part responsible because of the corporate media on a local and national level. Thank you. [*applause*]

KEVIN MALLEY: Hello. Thank you. My name is Kevin Malley. I teach high school English. Fellows, thank you very much. I don't believe that is possible or likely that the giant media corporations will be broken up. It seems to me that if they're not feeding us garbage, somebody else will. My thought is to educate the populace that the

reason we have a media problem in the first place is because people are consuming the trash that they're giving us. And I believe Phoenix mentioned nutrition and nutritional aspects of information, and if we consume information and that becomes a part of who we are, perhaps media organizations ought to be responsible for telling us who they are owned by. For example, we could put a nutritional label on the bottom of their television screen that says it owned by so and so and this is where their news is coming from. That I think is a good first step. Thank you very much. [*applause*]

TONY PERLCOTT: Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Tony Perlcott. I'm with Crawford Corporate Responsibility, a local grassroots group. I just had a couple of brief comments. As a citizen I'm deeply troubled at the state of our putative democracy, and the genuinely contested discourse it depends on. It should be plain as day as to how degenerate a monoculture it's become under de facto corporate media monopolization, and it would be plain as day if we were not so captive to television McNews *dis-infotainment* and corporate perception management. I just want to propose a thought experiment based on recent events. You may have heard about the Texas state legislature, which a number of the Democratic representatives there just could no longer tolerate Republican hubris and power grabbing to acquire more seats with Tom Delay's help. And they left the state in something that was at least partially a publicity stunt. And I'm wondering just what would it be like in a world where the last two FCC Commissioners with a conscience were to depart Washington D.C. and deprive the FCC of its quorum to do its corporate status quo business. [*applause*]

TIM CAMERON: Hello. My name is Tim Cameron. I'm from Minneapolis. We base a lot of our democracy and ideal upon ancient Greece. It was said that the city should be no larger than the distance from which a cry could be heard from that city's wall. The central space is mistranslated. The Agira is called a marketplace, but it was actually a public space where there was more than just commerce and finance. There was public speech, and ritual and ceremony. It comes from a word which means to speak in public, *Agireawoe.* And speaking to the gentlemen who aren't hear today, if you think that we're translating that ideal into a formula that works, you either don't care or you don't understand. And if you don't think that you need to be here with these two gentlemen who are gracious enough to come, then you don't care or you don't understand. [*applause*] I understand that there will be a competition for a new way to tickle the disaster fetish that we have at hand, and by deregulating to allow fewer to own more, you make a race to the lowest common denominator all but inevitable. So we have a media that treats Bush and whatever administration as royalty, and media consolidation has already gone too far. We need to go backwards, not forwards. Numerous sources means more room for more information and more expression. I agree with this gentleman. Flirting with the appearance of locality should be legal. Stations with broadcasts originating from outside a given locality should legally be compelled to declare that broadcast's origin. One nation with liberty and justice for all. Thank you.

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you. [*applause*]

CARLA MAGNUSON: My name is Carla Magnuson. I am representing the Minnesota chapter of the National Lawyers Guild. I decided four years ago to go to law school because I was doing unlicensed, also known as pirate radio. [*applause*] And I thought that, it being illegal and all, that going to law school might actually do me some good. Now I've done some research and it turns out that I've wasted four years of my life because a legal argument cannot be made to do pirate radio because the FCC is given the expertise, and the FCC is allowed to make decisions to that would be unconstitutional otherwise. Now I'd heard that a local musician had never head of low power FM. The reason he's never heard of low power FM is because the National Association of Broadcasters and NPR to pass the Radio Broadcasters Preservation Act, preventing low power from showing up in places like Minneapolis. Now, third adjacent channels… second adjacent channels we should allow low power FM, because 100 watts simply cannot compete with 50,000 watts. A pirate radio broadcaster from Austin, Texas said that a 100 watt station with a 50,000 watt station the way a jackrabbit competes with an eighteen wheeler. Now, we've urged you to go back and convert your colleagues. You only have to convert one, just one, and you've got the majority. Thank you very much. [*applause*]

JIM FENINO: I'm Jim Fenino. I'm from Stillwater and I want to thank the Commissioners for this opportunity to testify. I have just two points. The first one is a little story from one of my coworkers who couldn't be here tonight. He traveled to India to visit his relatives a couple of weeks ago, and while he was there, he had a chance to listen to a BBC program and to some European cable news programs. He said that he heard news about election fraud and other irregularities, not in the Ukraine, but in the United States. And what he heard was much more in-depth information and a lot more of it than when he came back to Minnesota and listened to the local news. He also that the news about the Iraq war was much different than what he hears in the United States. He was shocked at little real information is being made available to US citizens by our media. His story tells me that I am not getting all the news. The other point that I want to make is for a number of years I've worked as an environmental scientist, and I am constantly fed information that gives indications of a degrading environment. And this information- I never see it in the local news or national news. The only way people would get this is to read obscure scientific journals. As a government agency, when we have public information centers, the news media never come to hear what we have to say about these things. The public just isn't learning about the environmental degradation that's occurring here in Minnesota, much less around the world. Thank you. [*applause*]

STEVEN ISSEMINGER: Thank you for coming to the Twin Cities. I really appreciate it. We need free access for all political candidates.

LIZ NORDLING: Could you identify yourself please?

STEVEN ISSEMINGER: I'm sorry, Steven Isseminger from Minneapolis. In 2002 one local corporate TV station had one debate between the candidates running for governor in this state. It lasted for one hour. That's 40 minutes of debate after commercial interruption. In 2004 one local corporate TV station brought in 8.4 million dollars in political advertising. We need to open this system up. All political candidates need free access, in prime time, to local TV. We need low power FM. The only interference is from those that wish to perpetuate the monopoly. They asked for a study in 2003. There's not interference. It is not significant. I want my low power FM now. Since the public interest obligation is clearly not meeting the public's needs, the corporate consumer media that has made billions of dollars in profits should properly fund a genuine independent public media. No underwriting. No fundraising drives. Properly funded. That's merely fifteen billion dollars a year. That's nothing. We spend 1.5 million a day on the war machine. Certainly our democracy is worth it. Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Thank you.

CHAD HENDRICKS: I guess I get to be the last speaker of the evening. First of all, my name's Chad Hendricks. I'm originally from South Minneapolis. I represent several organizations here this evening. But my concern is, number one, is we talk about, you know, we're talking about media and, you know, the conglomerates, you know, trying to dominate most of the media, which is of course a big issue, but on a local level, not really concerned with what the FCC is doing, but for the individuals that are here. Number one of my concern is the negative images that we have on our local news when it comes to people of color. Number one, especially for African American males, they do a wonderful job making myself and other individuals likes myself, you know, stigmatized as monsters or gang bangers or drug dealers. Last summer a little girl in North was shot in their home and the first they said was it was gang-related or it was a drug deal that went bad, and obviously the Governor stepped up because he was already in hot water because of the budget cuts. But yet he found money to get state troopers to patrol over North, as if it was an issue. But if you talk to the people who lived over North, it was a completely different picture. You know, there neighborhood isn't always infested with drugs or gangs, but you deal with issues with Courtney Williams, you know, the local news doesn't cover the story, and talk about the real gang over North which is the north side police department. [*applause*] So, therefore the biases that are pretty much portrayed by the local media is my concern. And so on order for us to take a stand, we need to boycott them, so every time we feel that justice isn't being served, we need to write or call in or just show up to these so-called news stations, and make sure our voices are heard. Thank you. [*applause*]

BILL FELDMAN: One more. Bill Feldman. I'm against the consolidation of media, and anymore, especially by newspapers as well as television and radio stations. But I'm also concerned with the spectrum of high definition and the ability to get multiple channels on that spectrum. Is it possible- we've heard a lot of input tonight about public access to media. Is it possible to use those in exchange for the actual purchase of that spectrum, to use one of those stations that is available to compression? That will be five or six stations available to these broadcasters. So would it be possible for those stations to be used for public access? Thank you. [*applause*]

LIZ NORDLING: Does anyone else wish to speak? Our Commissioners would like to speak. First of all, I'd like to thank our three timers. [*applause*] And I'll give the last word to our Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER ADELSTEIN: Well good morning everyone. [*laughter*] This may be a new record. We've been pretty late, but I think this might be a new one here, showing the level of interest herein the Twin Cities. I sure want to thank everybody. First of all every one of you has been here. I think we should just keep going and stay up for breakfast together. [*laughter*] They used to do that in San Francisco in the '60s. [*laughter*] You've been so eloquent. I just ant to thank everybody who's made this possible: Hamline University; we had some great panelists, moderators; thank you for being on your feet so long to the end here; Free Press and the other local organizations that helped organize this; of course, the League of Women Voters you are a part of, you helped make this possible; and the timers, as you said, the students and volunteers who brought this all together. It took a lot of people to make this possible. I think it was really worth it. No doubt in my mind it was worth it because it was such a profound experience for me and I think for everybody that was here to hear how articulate people here, how thoughtful they are, and apparently how united. I don't know if we've seen recently just 100% against media consolidation. We saw that in some hearings, but more recently we've had people come and speak up on behalf of good things broadcasters are doing in the community. We heard some of that, but maybe it was an organized effort, and they didn't organize here, so nobody showed up on that side. So it was a pretty overwhelming case that was made. I do sure appreciate the Hubbards staying here until the end and hearing this through. I think it's an example of your commitment to the community. [*applause*] And maybe that says something about local ownership. I mean, here's the local owners [*applause*]. Since we don't do [*unintelligible*] anymore this is our new and very twisted version of it, I suppose. But it's a way of hearing what people are saying and you're hearing something, a lot of frustration, we're hearing tonight. Issues apparently aren't being covered to the satisfaction of people here is what I'm hearing. Now, is this a self-selecting group? I sometimes go back and my colleagues we've heard about tonight say "oh, it's just a self-selecting group" or "you're biased". Well this was open to anyone that wanted to come. I was on the radio to 80,000 people today saying "come down", "I want to hear either side". I was in the newspaper this morning saying "come here. We want to hear whatever you have to say", and nobody came here to say "let's let big media get even bigger". So maybe that's a message. And this is a

message I assure you I will carry back to my colleagues. I'll tell them all about it, and I think that if they insist in pushing consolidation, they do so at their own peril. I think they'll hear about this in droves around the country and you've told us tonight that you're informed, you're organized, and you're ready. Please stay that way. We heard from Bill Moyers one of the most profound speeches I've ever heard, speaking about the sacrifices that have been made by generations of Americans to protect their liberty. We understand that protect our liberty and protect our freedoms is a constant struggle, and our people have died over the generations for that right. And we need to take up that cause here. Each generation has got its own fights. Some are tougher than others. The greatest generation they called it thought World War II was a lot tougher struggle than this one. Whatever sacrifices we have to make in this battle to fight for media democracy are much less than the battles that have taken place over the years than by Americans who sacrificed to protect our liberty. So it's a fight that we must win in the names of all those who fought to protect our democracy and freedom, and it's a fight that we can win if we do it together. And tonight, those of you who are still here, we're doing together. We're going to keep fighting together, and thank you so much for being here and participating. And good night. [*applause*] One last comment: We want to all send our wishes and prayers for Commissioner Copps to have a successful surgery tomorrow, and everything goes beautifully for him, and I'm hopeful it will. Thank you all.

JORDAN GOLDSTEIN: And I just like to on our behalf, Commissioner Copps' behalf, to thank all of you have been here so late, who've stayed late, those of you who have been here to speak, to listen, to learn from your neighbors, and I guess the one thought I'd leave you with is one that Commissioner Adelstein spoke about is: Don't let the discussion end here tonight. You've spoken a lot about your hopes and goals for the future of the media. If we're gonna reach those goals it's going to be because you leave here and continue substantial dialog with your friends, your colleagues, with your neighbors, with your family. So we hope you'll stay involved. We hope you'll continue the dialog, and with that, it's fairly late or early, and we should close this.

COMMISSIONER ADELSTEIN: Good morning.