

519 empire. Elliot Spitzer thoroughly investigated payola here in New York State...thank
520 you...and we were cleared of it. I think it is unfair to paint everyone with the same brush.
521 I think there are plenty of opportunities to improve resources. I think there is plenty of
522 opportunity to improve the coverage. But I will tell you that I have worked for small
523 independent radio people and I have worked now for the largest pure play radio
524 company in America and I think we operate better today than we did 15 years ago with a
525 lot more resources. And I think that regardless of the size of the company, whether it is a
526 big corporation or an independent, you may get bad services. I think there are small
527 independent people that don't represent things fairly either so I just want to get that point
528 across. Thank you.

529 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. *(Applause)*Go ahead.

530 [JOHANNES SAYRE] Good evening. My name is Johannes Sayre. I am from Kingston,
531 New York. I want to thank Congressman Hinchey, Commissioner Copps, Re-media and
532 everyone involved in arranging this public hearing for giving us the opportunity to
533 exercise our right as citizens to control our nation. American industries, among them the
534 computer industry in which I work are currently undergoing extensive consolidation
535 forced on them by their own short-term profiteering and by an unrealistic climate in
536 American society which demands high productivity at minimal cost. Many are
537 approaching near monopoly single supplier conditions. Markets are a natural
538 phenomenon as their champions tell us and nature shows us that monopolies fail.
539 Biological mono-culture stagnate as genetic diversity fades and become defective and
540 inbred. Physics shows us that accumulations of power ultimately collapse in on
541 themselves and cannot sustain their own existence. In the economic realm, monopolies
542 fail to deliver consumer choice, sustainable pricing, diversity and resilience of supply,
543 product quality and innovation, and ultimately fail to serve the people and the national
544 interest. The American public cannot play its role of owner of a democratic society,

545 culture and nation if its people are not able to reason about the direction they want the
546 nation to take. This reasoning depends both on capability which the American people
547 have, and information which they currently do not. When we turn to most commercial
548 media sources we need to hunt for content with depth, objectivity and pertinence. What
549 we find instead is a diet of homogenized pablum with a little product differentiation
550 among suppliers and an abundance of exortations to spend money on consumer goods
551 and a frequent odor of serving the agenda of some political or economic grouping. I'll
552 wrap it up. These conditions deny us the basic tools we need to control our country and
553 instead provide us with a whole market of dictatorship namely enforced artificial unity.
554 Government, social structures and business ultimately exist only to serve the interests of
555 the people or as President Lincoln put it so beautifully, of, by, for. Tonight we command
556 you, the FCC, as the arm of government responsible for ensuring our interests are
557 served by the media to implement of, by, for in this venue and stop a trend driven by
558 putative economic necessity and advantage which may produce short term monetary
559 return for some but will produce well-known degenerative effects for the people. Thank
560 you for your consideration.

561 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. I apologize if I mispronounced your name. Can I just take a
562 second to call David Belden, Herbert Sweet, Robert Gardon and Bill McCabe. Go ahead.

563 [FRED SILVERMAN] Um. My name is Fred Silverman. I want to thank you, particularly
564 Commissioner Copps, I know you have really taken this fight wonderfully for us and I
565 thank you very much. Okay, my name is Fred Silverman, I have been a documentary
566 filmmaker for over 20 years. My work has appeared on many broadcasts and cable
567 networks. I am here to address the impact that deregulation is having on my colleagues
568 and myself. From 1977 to 1979 I worked at the Office of Communications at the United
569 Church of Christ. At the time, Charles Ferris headed the FCC. He was one of the earliest
570 proponents of deregulation. He believed it would foster diversity and assist the new

571 cable industry, another burgeoning technology. What he failed to realize is that
572 technology does not foster diversity. It is economics and politics that surround that
573 technology that will foster the diversity. His deregulation had the unexpected situation
574 where it allowed existing companies to control much if not all of the new technologies
575 thereby squelching any true diversity or innovation. 25 years later in this consolidation
576 has decimated my profession. Independent producers and independent voices are rarely
577 heard in today's media landscape. Consolidation has resulted in paying less for their
578 programs and budgets are a fraction of what they were only ten years ago. Our incomes
579 as independent producers are barely enough to survive on. We are being replaced by
580 factories. Media sweatshops that can produce hundreds of hours of programming by
581 exploiting interns and college students. These programs are not independent voices but
582 homogenized product that fits well into the corporate landscape. When documentaries
583 and other fact-based programs are done on the cheap, the results can be quite
584 misleading. The funds that are needed to check the accuracy of material is simply not
585 there. When the History Channel or Discovery presents a fact-based program, the facts
586 are not always accurate. The images used are often false. This is not a malicious effort
587 to mislead but simply a matter of the new economics and a total lack of accountability.

588 [ANDI NOVICK] Could I just ask you to sum up please?

589 [FRED SILVERMAN] I am sorry. I would ask you to do what you can please to try to roll
590 back, not only stop deregulation but roll back the provisions of the 1996 act. We are
591 seeing far too many examples of demagoguery and lies that are created as truth. Where
592 self serving corporate agendas are now the new norm on our airwaves. Without honest
593 diversity and a free flow of ideas, I believe there can be no democracy. Thank you.

594 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you.

595 [JOAN GRISHMAN] Joan Grishman from Hyde Park here. About six years ago an
596 attempt to hijack a radio station culminated in the lockout of the station manager and the

727 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. Fred, hold it one second. Let me call up Diane Nash and
728 Marjorie Leopold and I am sorry I can't read this, someone Ross from Blue Haven, New
729 York? No that's the organization. Oh, you're Blue Wave. Great. OK. From New Jersey.
730 And Ann Rea also from the same organization. Okay, just come on up and Fred, its your
731 turn.

732 [FRED NAGEL] My name is Fred Nagel from the Duchess Greens. Several years ago
733 the Greens and the student groups at Bard and Vassar hosted a woman writer who had
734 just returned from the west bank in Gaza. We offered a local paper the Gazette
735 Advertiser, an interview with the writer and a young reporter was assigned the story. The
736 reporter had heard very little about the suffering of the Palestinian people and the writer
737 patiently explained it to him. The checkpoints, she said, kept the people from going to
738 their jobs, if you lived in Red Hook and to wait half a day to go to Rhinebeck or if your
739 wife was expecting or you were trying to get to the Rhinebeck hospital. He later told me
740 it was the best story he had ever done but the story didn't come out next week. The
741 reporter referred me to the head editor, not of the Gazette, but of all the local weeklies in
742 Duchess County that had been brought up by the Kingston Freeman, itself owned by a
743 national chain. I was told this editor that the reporter should have attended the one of the
744 colleges, the writer's college presentations. I reminded him that the Gazette is full of
745 interviews each week, why was this story different. He finally admitted that the
746 newspaper didn't do stories like this. In his words, too many people get upset. It was a
747 guideline that all the papers followed that were owned by the Daily Freeman. Now if the
748 Gazette was locally owned and managed the story would have probably been on the
749 front page. With the consolidation of the newspaper ownership locally meant that the
750 story about occupied Palestine was never seen. Like the national media stories about
751 ethnic cleansing and targeted assassinations in the occupied Palestine are simply off-
752 limits. All this in a nation that extols freedom of the press. Thank you.

753 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you.

754 [AZIZA ANDERSON] My name is Aziza Anderson and I am a senior at FDR High
755 School. I feel the media portrays women as a piece of property and as sluts and whores
756 and we are supposed to show our body in order to get somewhere in life and males,
757 especially males of minorities as to be people who are supposed to be gangsters and
758 either basketball player and that's the only thing we are supposed to look forward to. I
759 believe that if we showed more people going to college more, making that more of
760 interest in the community, that more people would do it because obviously the media
761 does sway how we run our lives like... I just think it would be more...would be better. To
762 have more influential people come to our community and actually speak and tell about
763 their experiences and things. It would probably help out a lot of the kids around here.
764 Thank you.

765 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you so much for speaking among so many adults. I am really
766 proud of you. *(Applause)*

767 [SUZI CASS] Hi. My name is Suzi Cass. I am from Montclair, New Jersey. I am sorry
768 about the spelling of my name. We came a long way tonight and I just want to tell you
769 something in case you think that local media is better in a metropolitan area, Montclair,
770 New Jersey is part of the New York metropolitan area and let me disabuse you of that
771 right away. The best way to get on the news is to die and to die gruesomely. But short of
772 that after 9/11 lots of people asked us how we responded to 9/11. I personally took my
773 distress and became part of a political grassroots organization called Blue Wave. There
774 are 500 of us. I want to give you an example of the news coverage in our area. In 2005
775 during the gubernatorial campaign, stem cell became a very important issue. Our group
776 because we want to build bridges between people and we want to foster understanding
777 decided to host a stem cell forum. We advertised it very very widely. We had stellar
778 speakers. We had the head of Columbia University Medical School, we had the head of

779 the Bioethics Institute at Columbia University, we had Jonathan Alter who is an editor at
780 Newsweek. No one picked up the story. No one covered it. Effectively if no one covers
781 the news, it does not happen. This turned out be a seminal issue in that gubernatorial
782 election. John Corzine was elected. We decided to fund 2 ads on our own and finally got
783 our message out because it was the only way that we could be heard. Thank you.

784 [ANDI NOVICK] Thanks for driving so far. Give me one second because I've got to line
785 everybody up. Robin Syden, Margaret Haines, Joel Tyner and Lou Sebesta

786 [ANN REA] Hi. My name is Ann Rea. I am also from Montclair, New Jersey. We do not
787 get much local coverage and I think this story is of interest to our neighbors in New York
788 because in 2005 we wanted to oversee the purchase of voting machines. And so we
789 made many presentations to the freeholders of Essex County who were in charge of
790 buying these machines. They paid absolutely no attention to our research and
791 proceeded to buy the Sequoia Advantage machine. This machine has not turned out to
792 work very well and it was a very interesting story which I won't go into right now, but it
793 got absolutely no broadcast coverage, only about 5 newspaper articles and most people
794 in New Jersey were unaware of the machines that our government bought. I think we
795 need better local news media so that we can understand what our local governments are
796 doing. Thanks. (Applause).

797 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you for driving so far.

798 [MARGARET YANCO HAINES] Hi, my name is Margaret Yanco Haines and I am from
799 Garrison, New York and I am executive director of Mid Hudson for Verified Voting and
800 the organizer of Phillipstown for Democracy, a local grassroots group in Western
801 Putnam County. I am going to follow on the theme of the prior speakers. One frustration
802 I have had with mainstream media is that we as citizen activists, the things we do and
803 the things we try to get covered by the media are often characterized as partisan even
804 when they are not and therefore not worthy of coverage. Too often partisan in this

805 context means that the view is not shared by those who own the media outlet. A primary
806 example is the current controversy in New York over the choice of voting machines to be
807 used in our future elections. I got involved in this issue right after the November 2004
808 election. But not because of anything I heard in the media. In fact at the time, if the issue
809 was covered at all the mainstream media focused entirely on praising modern electronic
810 voting systems as a solution to all our problems and the word of the private electronic
811 voting machine manufacturers was taken as gospel by the media reporting the story.
812 The need to ensure that we are both able to vote and to have our votes accurately
813 counted, the most basic right of our citizens was generally not considered newsworthy
814 and has been severely under-reported or not reported at all even in the face of easily
815 obtainable information that these are serious issues. We live in a very dangerous society
816 where for example the underreporting and dismissal of minor glitches such as 18,000
817 lost votes for Congress in Sarasota, Florida and an election that involved a difference of
818 around 300 votes is this is totally unacceptable. When media doesn't believe that it
819 should commit to public awareness about basic issues of citizenship, we need a change.
820 The further consolidation of the media will only make the media less responsive to the
821 community concerns, the genie we were talking about and make it almost impossible for
822 the FCC to impose such responsiveness. We must not act now to save the fourth branch
823 of our democracy, the press.

824 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. Joel give me one second. Can I call up JP Ferraro, Irwin
825 Sperber, Andi Weiss Bartzak, Edmund Haffmans and Thomas Bregman. Thanks.

826 (Applause)

827 [JOEL TYNER] My name is...

828 [ANDI NOVICK] You're done Joel that is enough time. (Laughter).

829 [JOEL TYNER] Darn it. I am Joel Tyner. A County Legislator for Clinton and Rhinebeck
830 for the last six years. I have hosted a call-in talk show Sunday nights on WVKR 91.3 FM

831 called the Real Majority Project and Andi I wanted to thank you, Maurice and John, Mr.
832 Copps and everybody for being a part of this I really appreciate it. Um. No weapons of
833 mass destruction in Iraq. No al-Qaeda connection. The fact that middle class people
834 here in New York State pay twice the state and local taxes as a percentage of income
835 that millionaires pay. The fact that there's a 1000 people right here in New York State
836 every year who die because they don't have health insurance and how single payer
837 could take care of that and save money for everybody. The fact that our own county
838 health department is well aware of serious MTBE contamination in 8 towns across
839 Dutchess County this year, meanwhile, the head of the health department says don't
840 worry about MTBE. The fact I have repeatedly put this out to the media in press releases
841 and they don't want to care about it. The fact that the American Lung Associate in New
842 York State has rated the Dutchess County air quality an F for the last six years. The fact
843 that corporations outspend unions 10 to 1 in Albany and they outspend unions 10 to 1 in
844 Washington but we always see stories in the media about these big powerful unions but
845 never about the truth about how corporations outspend unions that much. And how 70%
846 of us October 2000 Zogby poll, 70% of us want clean money, clean elections, campaign
847 finance reform to get the big money out of politics. I wanted to let you know that just a
848 few hours ago on the 6th floor of the County office building, I drafted a resolution,
849 hopefully Bill McCabe and Diane Nash are going to help me get this passed, it's a
850 memorialization asking for the Dutchess County legislature to send a message to the
851 Federal Communications Commission to not weaken the protections on media
852 ownerships and also to endorse Representative Maurice Hinchey's Media Ownership
853 Reform Act of 2006. Its pretty much word for word right off your website Andi at
854 remedia.org. And you will be happy to know that I have 300 copies of that particular
855 resolution at my chair.

856 [ANDI NOVICK] You went over but that was really important that last thing you said.

857 [JOEL TYNER] I just want to say one more thing. For ten years I have been trying to
858 start a local newspaper here in Dutchess County and finally there are bunch of people
859 that are interested. I urge you all to join us Sunday, December 3 at 7 o'clock at the Ever
860 Ready Diner. Let's start a local newspaper that's going to tell the truth.

861 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

862 [LOU SEBESTA] I'm Lou Sebesta. I'm an urban forester for the New York State and I
863 serve the communities in the public here in the mid to lower Hudson Valley.

864 Consolidation of media does not serve the truth nor does it serve the public interest or
865 democracy. Rather it puts us all in a straight jacket. Without independence and true
866 diversity in media ownership we cannot truly be free to exercise our human rights.

867 Critical issues of public interest and views contrary to the status quo in the public and
868 powerful private interests can easily be buried away from the light of day. The air space
869 around us belongs to the public and should not be sold off at least to the highest private
870 financial bidders who do not serve the truth. I want to say that I am speaking as a private
871 citizen of Beacon and of Binghamton my home town, not the state by the way. They
872 serve their own private interests. We cannot allow the dictatorship of the dollars take
873 over our nation. More monopolization of the media will only jeopardize our democracy
874 further. The small and local independent media ownership is a breath of fresh air and
875 allows us diversity of views to be aired and allows us to debate the issues and come to
876 consensus on the truth and achieve a good public policy. Local news gets buried.

877 Remember that tanker car, I think it was a railroad tanker car spewing chlorine. The local
878 people didn't know about it because it isn't...Clear Channels owned the thing. We
879 cannot make informed decisions individually or collectively if the information we have is
880 controlled. I've had enough of the mass media hype, spin doctoring, vapid sound bytes,
881 highlighting of trivia, all OJ, all the time, all anything all the time. Remember Bill Clinton
882 toying with his intern. Why would we try to impeach Bill Clinton and why don't we

883 impeach George Bush for lying us into this disastrous war and jeopardizing our security
884 rather than enhancing it, our reputation among peoples around the world and killing
885 thousands and thousands of people. I want...

886 [ANDI NOVICK] Can you wrap it up?

887 [LOU SEBESTA] ...to hear the truth about our environment, the health care, national
888 debt, social security, education, our jobs, hunger and why we can't choose the majority
889 of our political leaders who want to work for world peace by diplomacy and
890 communication and not by war and I am not including you Maurice and John. I have high
891 hopes for you. Thank you.

892 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

893 [JP FERRARO] Hi. My name is JP Ferraro from WHBW Radio. I want to thank you
894 Commissioner Copsps and Congressman Hinchey and Congressman-elect John Hall.
895 When I was a kid you were allowed to own 8 radio stations for FM, AM and TV. And you
896 were allowed to mix and match but you could not overlap coverage in any one service.
897 Of course, now we know we have radio factories. We have quite a few right in our area
898 where you can have as many as fourteen radio stations in one place. One thing I would
899 say above all else the consolidation of media, the events that led up to the
900 Telecommunications Act of 1996 otherwise known as the Clear Channel Creation Act,
901 have done nothing to help the American public to foster the diversity of opinion or help
902 our democracy along its way and we truly need more local ownership. When I was a kid
903 people like me were in the majority of broadcast owners and now we are the absolute
904 minority. And I can say this as probably being the last person in this area whose name
905 appears on the license to a broadcast station. (Applause) And that's not good. I would
906 just urge everyone to do what they could to reverse this. Take it back, it's a bad road,
907 stop, turn around, go back. One little note. My station has four local newscasts per day.
908 The programming is 100% produced locally. And if you want to hear Bix Beiderbecke or

909 Sidney Bechet or Louis Armstrong, since we have been talking about jazz, WHBW 950

910 AM. Thanks.

911 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

912 [IRWIN SPERBER] Good evening everybody. First of all I want to mention how delighted

913 I am to hear so many thoughtful comments from the...the panelists as well as the

914 audience. And my name is Irwin Sperber. I'm from the Sociology Department at SUNY

915 New Paltz with comments that are my own and not at all sponsored or representative of

916 whoever at SUNY New Paltz might want to or not want to identify with what I am about

917 to say. Okay. This is just a brief retrospect and I hope you will give me indulgence for it

918 for a couple of seconds. That I was a graduate student in the early 1960's and extremely

919 naive about the ways of our society because I was largely kind of a creature or victim of

920 the extreme cultural standardization and the anti-Communism that was widely put in the

921 national media during the 50's. And all I can say is that the concentration of ownership

922 over the radio and TV as well as the newspaper industries have led to the emergence of

923 a kind of corporate thought police in the form of outfits like Fox News and Cumulus and

924 that has to be put to a stop. And I think one of the ways to ensure this is to maximize the

925 prospects for independent stations to thrive and likewise to call a halt to this growing

926 concentration of monolithic nation-wide stations that not only standardize the news but

927 establish a tremendous amount of cultural mediocrity so destructive of a democratic

928 society. Thank you.

929 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause) Wait one second. Let me just call the next group

930 of people. Gary Kenton, John Carney, Rick Fellington, Jo Ann Myers, David Shufelt and

931 Tim Moore. Thanks.

932 [ANDI WEISS BARTZAK] My name is Andi Weiss Bartzak. I am a resident of Gardner in

933 Ulster County. Last night I went to see the documentary Shut Up and Sing at the

934 Rosendale Theatre about the Dixie Chicks, who after one of them made a comment

935 were banned their music was banned from quite a few radio stations that were owned by
936 one corporation. We have one or I can hear one local radio station where I am on the
937 west side of the river. The other ones are owned, are chains. There's no place to send
938 news of local activities. I'm an activist around here. Both newspapers I subscribe to, one
939 a daily and one a weekly, because they cover where I live, they're both part of chains.
940 And maybe that's why I no longer see as I remember as a child, there would be big
941 headlines, "Primary Day Go Out to Vote" "Election Day Go Out to Vote". I don't see that
942 anymore in the newspaper. I called up the Daily Freeman after the primary and said you
943 know you didn't have it on the front page to remind us. Why? And I think its because,
944 they're chains. They don't have to care. I think newspapers and radio stations should not
945 be profit centers for big corporations but should be locally owned. And I think they should
946 be...you know TV stations should not be run by other businesses. Newspapers should
947 not be run by other businesses because as other people have said, this is a vital part of
948 our democracy. It shouldn't be just a business.

949 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

950 [EDMUND HAFFMANS] Well, hi everyone. I really appreciate this opportunity in having
951 all these excellent people working on our behalf, especially Commissioner Copps. Good
952 cop! Yeah, I am a member of two groups; several actually would clash: Caribbean Latin
953 American Support Project and Solar Works. And, you can travel to any country in the
954 world, and I know the name Chavez was mentioned by our representatives of the
955 Hispanic community. Hugo Chavez, does everybody remember him? He gave a
956 speech at the UN, and the only thing he said was that he smelled the sulfur from Bush
957 having been there. Well, that's what all our media told us about that, just to push the
958 buttons. But, he actually gave a speech that got him one of the longest applauses ever
959 in that body, and we didn't get to hear about it. You just go to any country, Venezuela –
960 I was there, and I saw that the newsstands had like fifteen to twenty newspapers on

961 them; and a lot of them were very critical of Chavez. Even the Soviet Union. I had the
962 chance to go there in 1985 on a tour and see the TV. I didn't understand a word of
963 Russian, not a bunch of cheerleaders dancing on the Chevrolets, but actual news. The
964 people *[recording cut off but begins again at the start of this speaker's testimony]*
965 [MALE SPEAKER] Well, hi everyone. I really appreciate this opportunity in having all
966 these excellent working on our behalf, especially Commissioner Copps. Good cop!
967 Yeah, I am a member of two groups; several actually would clash: Carribean Latin
968 American Support Project and Solar Works. And, you can travel to any country in the
969 world, and I know the name Chavez was mentioned by our representatives of the
970 Hispanic community. Hugo Chavez, everybody remember him? He gave a speech at
971 the UN, and the only thing he said was that he smelled the sulfur from Bush having been
972 there. Well, that's all our media told us about that, just to push the buttons. But, he
973 actually gave a speech that got him one of the longest applauds ever in that body, and
974 we didn't get to hear about it. You just go to any country, Venezuela – I was there, and I
975 saw that the newsstands had like fifteen to twenty newspapers on them; and a lot of
976 them were very critical of Chavez. Even the Soviet Union. I had the chance to go there
977 in 1985 on a tour and see the TV. I didn't understand a word of Russian, not a bunch of
978 cheerleaders dancing on the Chevrolets, but actual news. The people in the Soviet
979 Union I met knew about the MOVE bombings in Philadelphia, which happened around
980 that time, but people here didn't even know. This country, people do not know what is
981 going on thanks to our media and, you know, you say "Oh, there's a free press if you can
982 afford to own one." People have not been able to even buy ads on our corporate media.
983 The Dixie Chicks film that was just mentioned, an ad about that NBC would not run.
984 Okay. Meanwhile we have –
985 [ANDI NOVICK] can you sum it up now, thanks. Get to your conclusion.
986 [MALE SPEAKER] Okay. The VNRs – the video news releases -- disguised as news.

987 It's all a big commercial. It's time, folks, to wake up and smell the sulfur. A billion watts
988 of "why witness news" will not set us free. *Laughter and applause ...*

989 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you.

990 [GARY KENTON] My name is Gary Kenton. I am an educator, and I do, I co-host a
991 local radio show on college radio, WVKR at Vassar. I wanted to address my remarks to
992 those of the FCC and elsewhere who would allow greater consolidation of the media. I
993 believe that you and the corporate interests who is bidding your doing believe the
994 greater control over media translates into greater profits. In the short run, I think you are
995 certainly correct. In the long run, I maintain democracy is good for business, and I think
996 history has borne that out. When you stifle local and diverse voices, you not only get a
997 monoculture, but a top-heavy economy. I disagree with the late Milton Friedman about
998 almost everything he said but the one thing that he understood is that open markets only
999 work in an open society. An open society can only thrive with an open and diverse
1000 media. When you go in the other direction, you end up with fascism. *(Applause)*

1001 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. *(Applause)*

1002

1003 [JOHN CARNEY] My name is John Carney. I am in media relations, and I just had a
1004 quick thing to say that consolidation of all these media conglomerates who have taken
1005 things over have killed live radio locally. Radio can save lives in the event of an
1006 emergency. If there is an emergency, the greatest example is WQRZ FM in Hancock,
1007 Mississippi. There was a guy there who had a low frequency FM radio station. He kept
1008 on right there at Ground Zero, and he gave people instructions on where to get water,
1009 where to get food and just to let them know that life was going on because when you
1010 lose all your electricity you can still have a radio. You can have one in your car. Some
1011 people have batteries. You can even have those little gremlins you wind up. I use that
1012 occasionally when I lose electricity over in the Catskills. So, the one thing I think is very

1013 important to keep in mind is that we do need that live, local radio as much as possible in
1014 order to save lives in the case of an emergency. Thank you. *Applause*

1015 [ANDI NOVICK] Just give me one second. I'm gonna call a few more people: Karen
1016 Charman, Mike Kulla, Orel Fayher, Linda Burlough and Cara DeVito.

1017 [RICK FELTINGTON] Hi. First of all, thank you guys for listening. I mean leadership
1018 that listens is really important, and it is nice to see. My main point is that I am wondering
1019 maybe there could be some legislation that would allocate funding towards creating
1020 community media centers. I think a little bit of leadership could possibly go a long way
1021 because there is still a lot of opportunities in terms of the Internet that other kind of radio
1022 and things like that. My name is Rick Feltington, and I am from Middletown, New York. I
1023 am a filmmaker. I also produce a TV show called *Illusion Shift!* that I put on public
1024 access and the Internet. In trying to make these productions work, I realize that there
1025 were these things called community media centers, and they help you if you have one in
1026 your area. You can get like a camera or editing equipment and therefore you can put
1027 your voice out, and I found out how these are funded, and they are usually funded
1028 through the contract between say Time Warner or whoever is the Time Warner in that
1029 area and the municipality. They are done in negotiations; but I guess the short way to
1030 say this is: can there be some higher legislation so that we can ensure that every
1031 community has a community media center? Thanks.

1032 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. Just give me one second. Someone just passed me a
1033 note. I want to remind you, if you want to submit more testimony or if you don't feel like
1034 testifying tonight or you have more to say after you leave here, know that you have until
1035 December 21. You can go on ReMedia.org to submit testimony, you can go on
1036 StopbigMedia.com. There is opportunity until December 21st. Thanks. Go ahead, sorry.

1037 [TIM MOORE] Hi. I am Tim Moore. I am a recording artist, songwriter, music publisher.
1038 I was a label mate with you, John. Congratulations. Go down there. I hope it's the

1039 greatest gig you ever played. I want to put in a word for net neutrality. Until big media is
1040 busted up, the Internet is our surrogate, independent media. It's local and diverse, and
1041 net neutrality needs to be vigorously defended. The main argument I have about it is
1042 you pay your phone bill, you get to talk and you get to listen. The same should be true
1043 for looking at other people's content and broadcasting your own. It should work like the
1044 phone system always worked. It should be a national conversation and an international
1045 conversation. Mr. Copps, I really want to thank you for all the writing you have done on
1046 public interest. I have some thoughts about that. In a news-as-entertainment
1047 environment, you can successfully distract people from taking interest in the public
1048 interest. And, that's what's happening. We've got tabloid media that is playing to the
1049 reptilian brain. And, when you've got somebody who has invested in that, you've got
1050 media that's invested in that, it's very hard to figure out who is going to teach children
1051 and adults how to be in a – to be citizens in a democracy in a democratic republic.
1052 We've got Judge Judy and Jerry Springer teaching us about justice, we've got Sesame
1053 Street teaching us about the letters and numbers. Who actually teaches the rights and
1054 responsibilities that everyone needs to know to participate in a democratic republic?
1055 The last thing I need to say is bills need to state the results they promise to deliver. That
1056 includes especially concerning diversity, innovation and increased competition, which
1057 the 1996 bill all promised. And if they don't deliver what they promise, they need to be
1058 revisited and held to these promises. *(Applause)*

1059 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. *(Applause)*

1060 [KAREN CHARMAN] Hi. My name is Karen Charman. I am an independent
1061 investigative journalist. I am also with the Shandaken Democrat Club and since August
1062 '04 we've been running a documentary screening series at the Boiceville Inn and so
1063 anybody who wants to go to that please let me know. Give me your email. Anyway, a
1064 very, very heartfelt thanks to Maurice and also to Commissioner Copps for the incredible

1065 work that you have done on our behalf. Thank you so much. Mass media is our shared
1066 reality and as such to have a small group of incredibly powerful and very diversely
1067 invested corporations with lots and lots of interests is incredibly dangerous as we all
1068 know. I mean I'm not telling you guys anything that you don't know. We have seen the
1069 result of a virtually unfettered corporate media over the last several years with the rise
1070 and legitimation of the Bush administration. Two stolen elections. They never should
1071 have been legitimized to begin with. Let's see. One thing that I wanted to mention is
1072 that the public interest as enshrined in the Communications Act of 1934 has been
1073 obliterated. Political coverage now before elections, most of it consists of advertising
1074 that the stations actually make profit off of. And, at the same time, they have reduced
1075 their coverage so that citizens have very little idea of the actual races and the
1076 candidates. That is a direct threat obviously. Let's see.

1077 [ANDI NOVICK] Make this one good.

1078 [KAREN CHARMIN] Okay. Oh, just very quickly. We need to obviously reinstate the
1079 Fairness Doctrine, the equal time clause, get rid of the postcard license renewal of
1080 broadcast stations. That's absolutely crucial and I can't really read the rest of my notes,
1081 but anyway... Thank you. *Applause*

1082 [ANDI NOVICK] let me just call out... this is the lastDennis Karius, Jason
1083 Cook; J.P. Podgorski, Bennet Weiss, Brian Keeler and Barbara Sweet. *[unintelligible]* ...
1084 So, those people come up and

1085 [CAROL DEVITO] My name is Carol DeVito. I work as an editor and producer of NBC
1086 Nightly News and network nightly news in New York City for eighteen years and a few
1087 years ago I was a *[unintelligible]* journalist at *[unintelligible]* University where twelve
1088 international journalists and American journalists spent an academic year probing the
1089 role of the press and the democratic society. All twelve American journalists chafed at
1090 the ever-growing corporate ownership of the press and how it dictates what is covered in

1091 newspapers and on television. I would like to have on the record a conversation I had
1092 with a senior producer for Dateline. I had proposed an idea, a story idea on a heavily
1093 researched story about the problems of foster care in the Los Angeles system. Her
1094 response to my proposal was that Andy Lack, the then president of NBC news doesn't
1095 care about Black and Latin children. He doesn't care about issues, issue-oriented
1096 stories, and I find her candid admission horrifying. The commercial networks were given
1097 the use of the airwaves on the condition that they provide fair and balanced public affair
1098 programming as a service, as a public service. It is no secret that it's not happening
1099 because it doesn't benefit corporate owners or governmental spin of the news. I implore
1100 the FCC to do everything possible to demand the networks produce in-depth coverage
1101 of public issues or revoke their licenses to broadcast for breaking their commitment to
1102 the American people. Thank you.

1103 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

1104 [MIKE KULLA] My concern is the dumbing down, the stupification of the nation. My
1105 name is Mike Kulla, and I am in the mental health field. And, you can see why I am
1106 concerned about that because I like to get to the core of things. Fifty-eight years ago I
1107 was invited to a concert of Paul Robeson singing. Some of you, a few of you, remember
1108 there was violence in that concert and the next day I read the papers and I was
1109 absolutely astounded to find out the differences, vast differences, *The Herald Tribune*,
1110 *Daily Worker*, *New York Times*, *Daily News*, etc., etc. and the reportage of the event.
1111 That politicized me, that one thing. I was 19 years old or so at the time. When you turn
1112 on any major station, I hear a sanitized news bite presented in show biz style. For
1113 instance, cute Katie made big bucks for NBC. I remember that contributing to Bush's
1114 election was the whole question of who is more entertaining, GWB or John Kerry? And
1115 so what they had was a contest of who you'd rather have a beer with. That was the
1116 import of that.

1117 [ANDI NOVICK] Let me to ask you to find your most important point and conclude.

1118 [MIKE CULLA] Oh, yeah. Well, I am just rambling on, I know.

1119 [ANDI NOVICK] You can submit in writing.

1120 [MIKE CULLA] I just want to say very briefly that media taboos, you don't demonize
1121 icons and you don't ask for evidence. And the whole thing has got me upset. So, thank
1122 you.

1123 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

1124 [BENNETT WEISS] Hi. I'm Bennet Weiss, an independent activist from Newburg. And I
1125 want to talk just about the not just the consolidation of ownership of the airwaves in that
1126 media but something that's related to it that makes very important what you are doing to
1127 open up those airwaves. Which is the consolidation of ownership of the air itself. And
1128 here's what I mean by that. The most direct media we have is face-to-face
1129 communication and even that is being impacted by corporate ownership. The
1130 disappearance of Main Street means that the public square is now privately owned.
1131 When I go around as an independent activist trying to hand out flyers and leaflets and
1132 talk directly to people, I'm kicked off the property. I've just recently I was handing out
1133 information campaigning literature for some Congressman John something or other and
1134 somebody came over to me and reminded me that you can't do that here, this is private
1135 property and I was immediately made aware that I wasn't quite in the United States of
1136 America. I was in the sovereign kingdom of Wal-Mart at least with respect to my first
1137 Amendment rights. So as the public square disappears it becomes even more important
1138 that you guys open up that and just one last thing, I see I have 30 seconds left. A lot of
1139 people have been complaining that the media hasn't been serving their interests and you
1140 expect these fine gentlemen to do something about this and I hope they can and they
1141 are empowered to do so. But I think there aren't enough people taking direct action and
1142 by that I mean, not just writing letters to the editor but writing letters to the publisher

1143 demanding not for print but letting them know how you feel. And also if you are not
1144 getting coverage of your school board, your town council meetings on public access then
1145 go down there and insist on it. Take direct action not just representative action that we're
1146 hoping they'll provide.. Thanks.

1147 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

1148 [JP PODGORSKI] Good evening. I'm J.P. Podgorski. I come from Voorheesville, New
1149 York. And I never thought that I would ever find myself saying this but George Bush,
1150 George W. Bush has probably been the biggest influence, my biggest educational
1151 influence. Because ever since his adventure in Iraq and his lust for terrorist blood and
1152 maybe even the blood of those who simply disagree with him I have learned that
1153 through, I have learned that...that many years I have spent in public schools was just a
1154 total waste of time. It was only through my total disgust with the way I felt the Bush
1155 administration has totally circumvented the Constitution as I had learned what it stood for
1156 that I have turned to alternative media. Being computer illiterate, I am limited to public
1157 radio, NPR and the like and WAMC in the Albany area and to WRPI local college station
1158 up in Troy. But thanks to the great shows on alternative or such as Alternative Radio
1159 Democracy Now and Free Speech Radio I have found the likes of Nome Chomsky,
1160 Howard Zinn and somebody as subversive as Ralph Nader and as unpatriotic as Scott
1161 Ritter. We need more...we need more like them. But WRPI is dying as a community
1162 voice because of a right wing cabal and very intellectual engineering students who have
1163 learned their civics from the mind-numbing drivel of commercial radio. Its staff has gone
1164 so far as to make a mockery of the community's desire for information. Thanks to
1165 George W not to President George W since he has never ever won a national election, I
1166 have been, I have been convinced that people as powerful as he and his corporate
1167 cronies must never assume monopolistic control over our media and only our standing
1168 up to them with the knowledge that we gain from alternative media and writers such as

1169 the alternative writers on alternative media can we have our democracy. I want to say
1170 we will not be silent and for I apologize to the people who speak German in this area,
1171 *Der Nicht [German phrase].*

1172 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

1173 [DENNIS KARIUS] Hi. My name is Dennis Karius and I am from XWRPI radio. I want to
1174 thank Andi Novick for getting this panel together, Congressman Hinchey, Commissioner
1175 Cops, Congressmen-elect Hall and the rest of the panel. I am really hoping this
1176 testimony tonight is going to help. I was one of a thousand New Yorkers who testified
1177 last year in opposition to the use of touch screen machines for processing our votes. In
1178 spite of that overwhelming 1000 to 1 testimony three-quarters of our decision-makers
1179 continue to favor those dreaded DREs. Even the regular meetings of our New York State
1180 Board of Elections spoke of those touch screen DREs as if they were the only game in
1181 town. So I am really hoping that this testimony has some track. Our...well we just
1182 experienced an election this month an election where the slimmest of margins resulted
1183 in the most dramatic of outcomes. Every single committee and subcommittee in the
1184 House and the Senate will change leadership from one party to another. We all know the
1185 value of Get Out the Vote campaigns but do we really, really realize how important it is
1186 that each of our voters are well informed. Thanks.

1187 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

1188 [BARBARA SWEET] Hi. Barbara Sweet and I am a resident of Hyde Park, a volunteer
1189 once a week next door at the FDR library. I am also a ham radio operator. WA2KCL.
1190 And you hear about us ham radio operators usually once in a while during disasters.
1191 Okay the electricity goes, loss of communication. The telephone system goes. People
1192 are going to be in trouble. The cell phone system goes. If the cable network goes, okay,
1193 there you lose Internet and a lot of the phone system too. But the hams, we can
1194 communicate both throughout the Hudson Valley, New York to Albany. And I can go

1195 next door in another room let's say and I can talk world wide on a station. Okay and I
1196 want to say Congressman Hinchey, Congressman Hall please help us with this. Okay
1197 Commissioner Copps, you've helped us guard these frequencies. We've had them for
1198 many, many years. We want to continue to keep them so that we will be able to have
1199 information at our fingertips about what's happening worldwide during disasters. The
1200 only problem I see is that we have no radio system to put it on. You've got to listen to our
1201 frequency and not many people have short-wave radios. Okay.

1202 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

1203 [ALEX LYNES] Hello, I am Alex Lynes. I'm from Ulster County. Thank you very much for
1204 having this forum. I think this issue is of utmost importance to all of us in our nation and
1205 in our world. We need to get the voice of each individual person out there so people can
1206 hear each other and what they are going through so we can discover how to solve the
1207 issues facing the nation today. There's a wealth of history, there's a wealth of
1208 experience, there's a wealth of knowledge in each of our hearts and minds that needs to
1209 be shared continuously and unfettered by any corporate agenda. There is a thing called
1210 low power FM. It gives you a ten mile radius signal. I think the rights of low powered FM
1211 need to be expanded to 20 or 30 miles which is the normal size of a commuter
1212 community such as this one and I think that the FCC window for filing applications for the
1213 low power FM radio stations needs to be reopened and have equal representation in
1214 terms of view points be accepted in a certain area. I hope this reopening of the filing
1215 window happens as soon as the new Congress can get its hands on this bill. Thank you.

1216 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause)

1217 [MALE VOICE] I'd like to thank the panel for the patience of listening to all of us
1218 speaking tonight and I am especially happy that I live in the district where Maurice
1219 Hinchey is my representative. I am very grateful of that. And I am very happy that Mr.
1220 Hall was elected for the Congress. I hope that this will result in good things for us. As a

1247 know you will help us and the environment. Thank you.

1248 [ANDI NOVICK] Thank you. (Applause) I am going to let any concluding remarks that

1249 you want to make and I am thrilled that so many people had so much to say. And just tell

1250 everyone there is a Media Reform Conference the Third Annual Media Reform

1251 Conference in Memphis in January. Find out about it at our website. It is a great place to

1252 learn more about this. Thank you.

1253