

I am writing to express my strong disapproval of former FCC Chairman Michael Powell's efforts to bury studies that found media consolidation to be harmful to local news reporting. No decision should be made on ownership until a full and independent investigation of this cover-up is completed.

The FCC can't simply hide data from the public and push through new rules that unleash further consolidation of local news outlets. Localism and diversity are the cornerstones of a democratic media system; we cannot afford to compromise them in any way.

The FCC should allow no relaxation or elimination of the public interest limits on media ownership without first weighing all of the evidence and hearing out widespread public concern about the problems of consolidation.

Limits on media consolidation have been a bulwark against the concentration of economic power in the marketplace of ideas -- a critical part of balancing the public service mission of the media with their private profit motive. Our democracy requires the free flow of local information from a broad range of diverse voices.

Media consolidation has already led to declines in local and minority ownership as well as the homogenization of content in radio and television. Allowing further concentration of local media markets, will only worsen the problems we already have.

The FCC should stand firm with the public against further concentration of media ownership in the hands of the few. A vote against media consolidation is a vote for democracy.