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13 Ironically, the most viable vehicle to
14 promote localism, diversity and opportunity in
15 television already exists; in fact, it is a
16 licensed service of the FCC, and our company a
17 wonderful example of its true potential, LPTV
18 Class A television stations.

19 It is the only broadcast service required
20 by law to provide local programming. It
21 already has the most women and minority owners,
22 and it almost -- it is almost entirely a local
23 and community-based service.

24 Unfortunately, despite these attributes,
25 the Congress and the Commission have never

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1 fully embraced or supported this service;
2 consequently, it has struggled to reach its
3 potential, due in large part to the fact that
4 Class A stations have no must-carry rights in a
5 television world increasingly and
6 overwhelmingly dominated by cable and satellite
7 subscription services.

8 I am hopeful that as the Commission
9 reviews its television ownership rules, it will
10 explore and embrace LPTV Class A service as a
11 unique platform to effectively increase
12 localism, diversity of voice and minority and
13 female ownership in the television industry.

14 The conditions for this support already
15 exist; a local-content requirement, a limited
16 number of stations for market, a licensed
17 service designed for small business and
18 compliance with all existing television

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19 regulatory requirements.

20 Finally, to allow this service to survive
21 and effectively compete, Congress and the FCC
22 should require cable and satellite services to
23 carry Class A primary signal on the local
24 broadcast digital tier, a condition easily
25 filled in a digital world.

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1 I trust the Commission will use the
2 proposed ruling-making as an opportunity to
3 address the inequities that exist with our
4 public airwaves; no lip service, but real
5 meaningful policies and regulations that create
6 a level playing field for all sectors of our
7 society to participate and compete in our
8 industry. Thank you. (Applause.)

9 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Gordon.

10 Mr. Jim Johnson.

11 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you,
12 Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, thank you for
13 the opportunity to address you here today.

14 I believe the Internet represents the
15 future of the media. More and more people are
16 getting their news online, and surveys have
17 shown that the number of sources for the news
18 is growing.

19 Online advertising is growing faster than
20 any other medium. And it's growing by almost
21 the same proportion as print advertising is
22 declining.

23 According to the Project for Excellence

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24 in Journalism, eight percent of Americans -- of
25 online Americans -- have written some form of a

1 blog. While 51 million Americans subscribe to
2 newspapers, 57 million Americans have read or
3 do read blogs. That's 39 percent of all online
4 adults.

5 The numbers show the trend continuing to
6 grow and online alternatives gaining wider and
7 wider acceptance; however, there's one very
8 important note to consider.

9 Online news sites generating the most
10 traffic are those owned by large media
11 corporations which have the power and finances
12 to publish a significant amount of content.

13 My own site, which narrowly focuses on
14 Florida politics sees the number of visitors in
15 one week that TBO.com gets in less than one
16 hour. At the same time, I personally post, in
17 one week, the same number of stories TBO.com
18 posts in less than one hour.

19 Content drives traffic. And large media
20 corporations have more content. The best hope
21 that citizen journalists have to compete with
22 large media corporations is hyper-local news
23 sites. These websites offer news more
24 localized than even a local newspaper could
25 ever offer; moreover, some might even argue the

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1 newsworthiness of such hyper-local news, so
2 large media corporations simply don't devote
3 resources to it.

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4 This provides an opportunity for
5 communities to produce local news that did not
6 exist even five years.

7 So where are we today?

8 As you have heard and will hear from
9 others, changing the rules on media ownership
10 will have a negative impact on local news
11 coverage. The larger media corporations can
12 grow, the less local news will be generated.
13 At the same time, not changing the local -- the
14 rules on media ownership will have a negative
15 impact on local news coverage.

16 Newspapers, and to some extent,
17 television and radio are seeing a declining
18 audience resulting in declining advertising
19 dollars. It's a downward spiral that will
20 never be reversed.

21 One of these effects is the -- in the --
22 of the audience shift and local -- is a
23 reduction in local news, which is already being
24 seen as the newsrooms across the country
25 downsize.

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1 Now, if you can't change the rules
2 because local coverage will suffer, and you
3 have to change the rules because local coverage
4 is starting to suffer, what do you do?
5 I think you have to find a middle ground.
6 If you change the rules, then put a greater
7 impetus on large media corporations to serve
8 the public interests.

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9 If you allow broadcast companies to buy
10 newspapers, require that they provide more
11 resources for local and hyper-local news.

12 If you allow companies to buy more radio
13 stations and televisions (sic) within a market,
14 require a minimum of HD and digital programming
15 on those news stations to be locally produced
16 and locally oriented.

17 Finally, make it easier for low-powered
18 community radio and/or television stations to
19 operate. If media companies who still produce
20 the bulk of online content are not strictly
21 required to provide local news, then the amount
22 of local news online will decrease.

23 Simply pointing to the Internet as proof
24 of competition will not be enough in the
25 foreseeable future. There are not enough local

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1 content providers, and the audience is not yet
2 comfortable finding those that do exist.

3 In the end, while I recognize some action
4 may be taken, I strongly urge you to temper any
5 action you take with the recognition of the
6 need for greater oversight on those companies
7 who move beyond the current limits. It is
8 still better to do nothing than to change the
9 rules without oversight. Thank you.

10 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

11 Mr. Klinenberg.

12 MR. KLINENBERG: Thank you.

13 I'm an associate professor at New York
14 University. And I spent the past five years

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15 studying how FCC rule changes allowing more
16 concentration have affected diversity and
17 competition and localism in our nation's media
18 system.

19 And that said, I wish the Commission
20 would solicit, formally, research from all
21 social scientists and not just the economists.
22 Because there's a lot that they can't tell you.

23 My testimony today will focus on the
24 issue of cross-ownership -- (Applause.) I
25 didn't know that many people didn't like

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1 economists. (Laughter & Applause.)

2 The FCC originally passed the ban in 1975
3 to ensure that citizens have access to a wide
4 range of viewpoints on local issues and to
5 prevent any single media company from having an
6 undue influence deciding which perspectives and
7 positions get an airing and which do not.

8 Your predecessors believed that diversity
9 in ownership promotes competition, that it
10 creates opportunities for small independent
11 media companies, including those owned by women
12 and people of color, that it provides outlets
13 for minority perspectives in creative
14 programming, and that it promotes local content
15 that's not only vital to democracy but also
16 makes our hometown feel like home.

17 In 1975 broadcast television stations and
18 newspapers were the two most popular sources of
19 local news. And today, despite all the new

20 media we have, they still are.

21 The companies calling for repeal make two
22 core complaints. The first is that they say
23 the ban is no longer necessary because new
24 media provides consumers with diverse
25 perspectives. And "Second," they say,

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1 "Newspaper companies today need profits,
2 They're losing money," they say, "They need
3 profits so that their television stations can
4 subsidize journalistic operations."

5 Yet, overall, nationally speaking, the
6 record gives us real reason to pause and be
7 skeptical.

8 Consider the Tribune Company in my
9 hometown, Chicago. Before the U.S. Senate
10 Commerce Committee, Tribune's former president
11 of publishing assured officials that with new
12 media offerings, there is no risk of one voice
13 dominating the marketplace with ideas.

14 But that's hard to square with what
15 Tribune's current president and CEO recently
16 told investors in a shareholder meeting.
17 Before them he said, "In Chicago, Tribune's
18 newspapers, television stations, websites,
19 magazines and radio stations reach 6.4 million
20 people." That's 90 percent of the market.

21 So let me ask you. Which of
22 Tribune's two stories are we as citizens, or
23 you as commissioners, to believe?

24 And if the Tribune CEO is being honest
25 with his shareholders, is this not exactly the

1 kind of market domination that is dangerous for
2 democracy, the very condition that the
3 cross-ownership ban is designed to prevent?

4 (Applause.)

5 Today some newspaper companies say that
6 cross-ownership will serve the public
7 interests by promoting more and better local
8 journalism.

9 But, again, consider Tribune. In LA,
10 where it owns the LA Times and KTLA TV,
11 Tribune has a limited -- eliminated about
12 one-quarter of the newspaper editorial staff.
13 That's about 300 people -- (inaudible comments
14 from the audience) -- since establishing its
15 cross-ownership arrangement (Applause.)

16 In New York, where I live, Tribune owns
17 Newsday and CW11. It's cut about one-third of
18 the Newsday editorial staff in the past three
19 years. And the story is similar in Chicago and
20 in Hartford.

21 I know none of this will surprise you
22 here in Tampa. Media General recently
23 announced plans to eliminate 70 staffers, while
24 also focussing on hyper-local contents. And
25 doing hyper-local content sounds great, but it

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1 also begs the question: How can a news
2 organization cut 70 people and then do more
3 local journalism? (Applause.)

4 In my research, I've also learned that

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5 cross-ownership exacts other more insidious
6 toll, on newspaper reporting in particular.
7 When media companies converge operations,
8 managers urge or even require staffers to spend
9 less time reporting and more time on
10 television.

11 And in Tampa and in Chicago I met
12 journalists who said that doing TV spots means
13 writing short scripts, putting on makeup,
14 taping, editing, taking off the makeup. And
15 that can take up to a quarter of one's day,
16 costing time they need to produce quality news.

17 I heard related concerns with
18 cross-ownership. Journalists can be rewarded
19 or even retained for being telegenic. With
20 cross-ownership plum assignments can go to
21 multitaskers, not necessarily to the best
22 reporters.

23 With cross-ownership, citizens are
24 exposed to fewer perspectives than when TV
25 stations and newspapers are separately owned.

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1 So now we have to ask: Who is going to benefit
2 from cross-ownership?

3 From my view, it's not journalists, it's
4 not citizens, it's not cities, it's not
5 communities; it's just a few corporations which
6 will become even more profitable than they
7 already are. (Applause.)

8 I'm going to ask for a few seconds just
9 because of the -- the blocks (sic) here. I
10 want to emphasize that I mean more profitable.
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11 We all know that newspapers stock values
12 are sagging. We all know that circulation is
13 lagging. There's no question that newspaper
14 managers are under great pressure to deal with
15 those problems.

16 But we need to acknowledge that typical
17 newspaper chains are getting profit margins
18 around 20 percent. That's three times the norm
19 in the Fortune 500 companies. The problem
20 they're facing comes from investment bankers
21 and organized its shareholders, who aren't
22 satisfied with that, not with --

23 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. SIGALOS: Mr. Manteiga.

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1 MR. MANTEIGA: Thank you for the
2 opportunity to speak before this commission.

3 My name's Patrick Manteiga. I'm the
4 publisher of La Gaceta. I represent an
5 endangered species -- (Applause) -- in our
6 modern age of communications, the family-owned
7 small newspaper.

8 La Gaceta was founded by my grandfather
9 Vitoriano Manteiga, in 1922, here in Tampa.
10 And we continue to publish today in three
11 languages, Spanish, English and Italian. Our
12 goal is to inform, promote and serve the Latin
13 community.

14 I feel there's a real danger in allowing
15 cross-ownership of a major daily newspaper and

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16 television stations in the same market and
17 unrestricted ownership of radio and television
18 stations.

19 I have witnessed that these and similar
20 relationships are used to silence competition
21 with business practices that are unfair and, in
22 the end, detrimental to the market they serve.

23 The Tribune, under Media General's
24 ownership, closed its afternoon daily in the
25 early '80s after it became apparent that the

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1 market forces -- that market forces made it
2 more than difficult for anyone to start up an
3 afternoon daily. This action removed one voice
4 from our community.

5 A decade later, Media General bought up a
6 group of local weeklies called "Sun-Belt
7 Publishing." When they were first purchased,
8 Media General and the Tampa Tribune promised
9 the public that these weeklies would remain
10 independent from the Tribune.

11 But over the years the major dailies
12 slowly incorporated these weeklies into
13 becoming a section of the Tampa Tribune. These
14 weeklies carry the Tribune logo on the front
15 page and are inserted in the Tribune.

16 They no longer have an independent
17 editorial voice focussed on the local
18 communities they serve. Plant City, Sun City,
19 Brandon and other communities have lost their
20 voice.

21 The Tribune is now using its size in

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22 relationship with its television station to
23 gain an unfair advantage in niche markets. My
24 newspaper now faces competition from Centro, a
25 Spanish-language publication started by the

1 Tribune a year ago.

2 I would welcome competition from other
3 Spanish newspapers; in fact, there've been
4 several independent startups over the past few
5 years. Head-to-head competition can make us
6 try harder, work smarter, and in the end make a
7 better product.

8 But in this case I am not competing
9 against Centro. I am competing against Media
10 General, the Tampa Tribune, WFLA-TV and
11 TBO.com. Centro ads are being inserted by the
12 -- sold by the Tribune, and in many cases are
13 part of the package that basically gives away
14 advertising in Centro if a client buys ads in
15 the Tribune or its affiliates.

16 Competing against an opponent who has
17 unlimited resources, and in this case is
18 willing to take a -- take a loss here, is from
19 our perspective, unfair.

20 This kind of competition is meant to put
21 us and all of other independent Spanish
22 newspapers out of business by cutting off our
23 revenue and separating us from our community.

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24 One of the tactics is to offer nonprofit
25 events support from Media General's TV and

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1 newspaper, if the event gives exclusivity to
2 Centro. You can see this is almost impossible
3 to compete against.

4 what makes the situation worse is that
5 Centro does not offer an independent political
6 editorial. While the Tribune works to silence
7 us, they do not want to use their newspaper as
8 a voice for the Hispanic community. Centro
9 does not endorse candidates, does not fight for
10 fairness, takes positions, contrary to the
11 Tribune.

12 The Latin community needs nurturing and
13 help. It needs an advocate. The Tribune only
14 wants our money. They are not just silencing
15 us; they're silencing the Latin community.

16 The same thing is happening at Spanish
17 radio. CBS has opened a Spanish FM station
18 that is hurting locally-owned AM stations.
19 It's using its many English stations here to
20 market and sell its Spanish one.

21 The local AM so far has done an admirable
22 job of community programming. CBS has not
23 matched their involvement and probably never
24 will. It's just money to corporations like
25 Media General and CBS.

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1 when CBS started La Nueva in this market,
2 for the first few days no one at the
3 all-Spanish stations spoke Spanish. It's
4 kind'a hard to serve the community when you
5 can't understand what they're saying.

6 (Applause.)

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7 The FCC wants our airwaves --
8 (Applause) -- the FCC wants our airwaves to be
9 used responsibly. And I'm sure, while you
10 don't regulate print, you hope for the same for
11 that media. Local ownership is really the only
12 way to guarantee responsibility.

13 When it's your family's name on the door,
14 you act responsibly. When you meet those you
15 serve at school and at church, at the grocery
16 store, you act responsibly.

17 The problem with letting the media get
18 bigger than it is now, is that ownership is
19 further removed from the community, so they
20 care less, they are harder to reach, and in the
21 end community advocacy, responsible journalism
22 and commitment to diversity comes secondary to
23 making a buck.

24 For years we fought for the Latin
25 community, because the Tribune wouldn't. Now

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1 that our numbers are greater, they want a piece
2 of the pie, but they won't share the
3 responsibility.

4 Please don't make my job any tougher than
5 it is. Cap the size of big media before they
6 use their size to extinguish the minority
7 voice. (Applause.)

8 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Manteiga.
9 Mr. Roberts.

10 MR. ROBERTS: Good afternoon,
11 Mr. Chairman and Commissioners of the Federal

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18 your assistance. Of all the federal agencies
19 and departments, you were the shining light
20 during a very difficult time.

21 I know this personally, 'cause I've been
22 at the Florida EOC during every landfall of
23 every hurricane since Andrew and at the cities
24 of the impact within 24 hours. This includes
25 Hurricane Katrina, where I arrived on the

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1 Mississippi coast the next day with other
2 Florida First Responders.

3 When the path of hurricane start toward
4 Florida or other states, the TV and radio
5 stations go full-time with news to warn their
6 communities. After landfall, usually, large
7 areas are without electric power. Radio truly
8 becomes the lifeline to their community.

9 In our state, radio and TV stations have
10 already established partnerships to reach the
11 people. TV usually has more resources for
12 news, weather and emergency information. So in
13 those cases, the local TV signals and audio
14 track are carried on multiple local radio
15 stations to reach the residents in the impacted
16 area.

17 We know that these partnerships have
18 saved lives during the time around landfall and
19 immediately following hurricanes. And they
20 have been the only communication to the people
21 for several days thereafter.

22 In 2004 we did use EAS when Hurricane

23 Charley made a sharp right-hand turn. It's the
24 first time we'd ever used the EAS during a
25 hurricane, because we always thought we knew

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1 they were coming.

2 When Max Mayfield called and asked our
3 governor to immediately alert all the residents
4 of Ft. Myers and Punta Gorda that their area
5 was going to be hit, the EAS message was sent
6 out within minutes in both English and Spanish,
7 and all the local stations carried it.

8 This change of course with Hurricane
9 Charley would not have been known by most of
10 the residents if they had not had an effective
11 and reliable EAS system in that area.

12 Today you are with us in our largest
13 media market, Tampa-St. Petersburg. It's a
14 diverse market with a substantial
15 senior-citizen population, a strong historic
16 Hispanic community, a viable and respected
17 Black community and a strong business community
18 on both sides of the Bay.

19 The owners of broadcast stations in this
20 market and across Florida have found the
21 programming and formats that work for them.
22 But more importantly, they meet the needs of
23 these diverse groups.

24 Let me say, as president of the Florida
25 Broadcasters, I am most proud of the efforts

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1 broadcasters have taken on to serve their
2 community, not only with Hurricane Preparedness
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3 but also Amber Alerts, support of local
4 charities, education on such things as drug
5 abuse, spouse and child abuse, underage
6 drinking, helping groups like the American
7 Heart Association American Cancer, homeless
8 campaigns and helping our National Guard in
9 Florida recruit people to join, as well as many
10 other worthwhile projects.

11 The current ownership rules, as they are
12 represented in Florida, have worked well for
13 our citizens in the broadcast community. The
14 cross-ownership of the Tampa Tribune and WFLA
15 has not created an unfair advantage for them.

16 You only have to look at the strong and
17 viable competitors, such as the St. Pete Times,
18 the other local TV and radio stations and many
19 smaller daily, weekly papers and the multiple
20 Internet sites that are serving Tampa Bay.

21 Florida has also seen the importance of
22 TV duopoly in serving the community. Today
23 with the multiple sources of news, information
24 and entertainment, TV duopolies often allow the
25 combined operation the opportunity to utilize

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1 their resources to serve their communities in a
2 more viable and economical way.

3 I believe the current radio ownership
4 rules have worked well for the local
5 communities. Because they have allowed
6 broadcasters to become economically stronger
7 and to better serve their community.

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8 In closing, today broadcasters face
9 growing competition from cable, Internet,
10 newspapers, satellite TV, satellite radio, cell
11 phones and even iPods. The digital waves will
12 only increase competition and sources of
13 information to the public.

14 No other industry serves their community
15 as well as TV and radio. They raise funds for
16 worthy causes. They are the backbone of the
17 EAS and Amber, and they are the primary source
18 of information for residents on news, weather,
19 and most important, they are the lifeline
20 during disasters.

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Roberts.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. ROBERTS: Broadcasters take their
24 responsibilities seriously. Thank you.

25 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

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1 Mr. Rowbotham.

2 MR. ROWBOTHAM: Good afternoon. I'm Art
3 Rowbotham, President of Hall Communications
4 and General Manager of WONN, WPCV, WLKF and
5 WWRZ in -- Radio in Lakeland Florida. I've
6 been the manager there for 24 years.

7 Lakeland's a town of about 90,000 people
8 located in the Tampa Bay PMA, just east of
9 Tampa. Thirty-seven radio stations are listed
10 in the latest Arbitron Ratings for the
11 Lakeland-Winter Haven Metro Survey Area.

12 Hall Communications was founded in 1964
13 by the late Robert M. Hall, based in Lakeland

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14 now, and it also operates in four other markets
15 in the northeastern United States.

16 My wife, partner and principle owner of
17 Hall Communications, Bonnie Hall Rowbotham, who
18 is in the audience today, is carrying on the
19 traditions of localism and community service of
20 her father. She joins in these comments. And
21 we thank the Commission for allowing us to
22 share our thoughts with you.

23 Our stations are committed to localism
24 and serving our communities. All program
25 decision are made locally. We donate tens of

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1 thousands of dollars of free airtime yearly to
2 charities and nonprofits. 97 Country WPCV,
3 through its radiothons, has raised a total of
4 \$869,000 over the last four years for
5 St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

6 We cosponsored fundraising drives and
7 events for thousands of promotional
8 announcements for charities, such as Citrus
9 Center Boys Clubs, American Cancer Society, Big
10 Brothers and Big Sisters, and many more.

11 We donate thousands of dollars more of
12 free airtime annually to nonprofits, such as
13 the Imperial Symphony Orchestra, the Polk
14 Theatre and the Pied Piper Theatre.

15 On top of all that, a total of about
16 25,000 minutes of locally-produced public
17 service announcements and programming are aired
18 on -- each year on our stations.

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19 We maintain a news and public affairs
20 staff. Our capable staff performed
21 extraordinarily well when confronted by
22 Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne in 2004.
23 During that weather emergency we maintained
24 local coverage simulcasts on all four of our
25 stations.

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1 We worked in partnership with Channel 8
2 WFLA, to give our listeners the best news and
3 weather resources when our stations were
4 literally the only lifeline of communication to
5 our communities.

6 We coordinated our efforts with the local
7 emergency operations center, where one of our
8 news team was based. We worked with the
9 Florida Association of Broadcasters and the Red
10 Cross.

11 Some of our stations were without power
12 for three weeks. But we stayed on the air,
13 thanks to having generators and backup
14 transmitters at all four of our tower sites.
15 One of our towers was surrounded by
16 floodwaters. An employee donated his fishing
17 boat so we could reach the tower to stay on the
18 air.

19 Our staff worked incredible hours, lived
20 at the stations, and after the storms passed,
21 they helped raise hurricane relief supplies of
22 food, blankets and other goods that were
23 desperately needed by the community.

24 These efforts to support our community
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25 are all examples of local free radio. What is

1 the secret of good local radio?

2 That secret is something we rarely
3 discuss. It's the elephant in the room that we
4 ignore. Good local radio requires people.
5 Local promotions, local news and local public
6 affairs require local personnel.

7 (Applause.)

8 They must be talented, productive --
9 (Applause) -- committed radio people. We have
10 plenty of those kind of people at Hall
11 Communications. But there's a catch. The
12 secret is that effective localism requires a
13 substantial financial investment.

14 Hall personnel are fairly compensated,
15 have great health and dental benefits, generous
16 retirement plans, substantial life insurance
17 and many other benefits. None of this would be
18 possible without consolidation of ownership.
19 By owning multiple stations in small markets,
20 we can spread the cost of localism over several
21 stations.

22 We ask the Commission to evaluate the
23 impact on small markets of regulatory changes
24 before they are made, so that small family
25 companies, like Hall, can continue to properly

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1 serve their local communities.

2 Again, we thank the members of the
3 Commission for allowing us to present our

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10 lightbulbs in Dayton, the principles are pretty
11 much the same as when you produce them at the
12 factory in Denver or Dallas.

13 But when you're serving a community,
14 Dayton is not Denver or Dallas. Yet, this is
15 how many big media organizations are operating
16 now. And the bigger they are, the more they
17 grow, the more they tend to lose their focus on
18 local public service and do whatever enhances
19 profit margins on return in investment.

20 Now, certainly, there's nothing wrong
21 with profit. And good journalism requires good
22 business. But from the inside, I've seen how
23 too often it runs counter to the public
24 interests.

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25 I've spent the last six years working in

1 Detroit, one of America's biggest and in many
2 ways most-troubled cities. CBS owns and
3 operates two of its 39 television stations
4 there. Its marketing motto: "CBS Detroit,
5 where no news is good news. Watch the
6 Hollywood Insider at 6:00 and Everybody Loves
7 Raymond at 11:00."

8 (Laughter & Applause.)

9 Can you best serve a troubled community
10 with no news broadcast on either station? Not
11 the Bill Bailey, Ed Morrow, Walter Cronkite CBS
12 where I once worked.

13 The number of different broadcasts voices
14 in a community also affects the diversity of

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15 coverage that viewers get, and media
16 concentration has led to a far more homogenized
17 approach to the news. Greater ownership and
18 more centralized control is not always in the
19 public interest.

20 Here in Tampa, at one of this market's
21 leading stations, decisions about which issues
22 to cover has been second-guessed and controlled
23 by the parent company 800 miles away. And I'm
24 not talking just about some corporate news
25 executive who directs decisions at some

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1 two-dozen stations this group owns in several
2 states, I'm talking about the corporate
3 marketing men deciding what viewers will and
4 will not see.

5 Now, why is this a problem? Because the
6 station's local management and its journalists
7 who live and work right here in Tampa -- the
8 people best able to judge what's in the best
9 interests of serving their own community --
10 those people are told that their news judgments
11 must meet a different criteria more than
12 important than what they know to be important
13 here.

14 And what's more important to the big
15 broadcaster? Choosing to report only what are
16 good marketing opportunities to promote the
17 television station's brand.

18 So when the Tampa news director sends
19 into the corporate headquarters the required
20 list of issues he intends to cover -- usually