

09-57

EDOLPHUS "ED" TOWNS
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
10TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

ENERGY AND COMMERCE
HEALTH

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
THE INTERNET

COMMERCE, TRADE, AND
CONSUMER PROTECTION

GOVERNMENT REFORM
GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATION,
AND PROCUREMENT SUBCOMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin,

We are writing to follow up on our recent letter regarding the merger of XM Satellite Radio Holdings Inc. and Sirius Satellite Radio Inc. Over many years of service on the Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet, we have devoted considerable time and attention to the issue of diversity in the telecom and media sectors of our economy. We are pleased with much of the work we and our colleagues on the Subcommittee have accomplished over the years, such as the creation of the Telecommunications Development Fund, the implementation of the FCC's designated entity program, and various other initiatives to promote diversity in the telecom and media sectors.

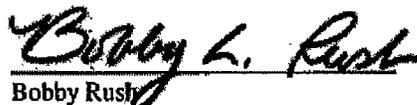
But we also believe much work remains to be done in this area. As you know from our discussions, we are particularly focused right now on the dearth of minority ownership in the media sector. This is a critical situation, and requires attention. In that regard, we recently learned that as part of XM's and Sirius' voluntary commitments, the combined company will agree to provide under long-term leases eight channels on the combined system (four on each system) to minority owners. With these channels, minorities will have a voice heard by the companies' nearly 20 million subscribers. This is in addition to the significant minority programming and numerous non-commercial and foreign-language programming that the combined company will also provide.

This unprecedented proposal is an important and realistic effort to address the dearth of minority ownership, and, if successful, could be a creative model toward resolving this significant problem in the long term. Moreover, this proposal specifically addresses our diversity-related concerns with this merger, and we applaud the companies for their innovative efforts to address a critical issue. Approval of the merger with this minority ownership commitment would significantly aid the cause of minority ownership in the United States. Accordingly, we urge you and your fellow commissioners to grant the merger expeditiously.

Sincerely,



Edolphus "Ed" Towns
Member of Congress



Bobby Rush
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Michael J. Copps
The Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein
The Honorable Deborah Taylor Tate
The Honorable Robert M. McDowell

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