

MB 10-336

**Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515**

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MAR 26 2010

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

February 4, 2010

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

We are writing to express our opposition to Comcast Corporation's acquisition of NBC Universal. If this deal is approved, it would further consolidate a U.S. media industry that is already controlled by a handful of corporate conglomerates. Localism, diversity, and competition in today's media, all of which are severely weak, would be nearly lost. At a time when it is critically important for the public to be able to access independent sources of information, we believe this acquisition should not go forward and urge you to reject it when it comes before the Federal Communications Commission.

Over the last twenty years, the U.S. media industry has experienced massive consolidation. Today, five companies own the broadcast networks, 90 percent of the top 50 cable networks, produce three-quarters of all prime time programming, and control 70 percent of the prime time television market share. These same companies own the nation's most popular newspapers and networks also own over 85 percent of the top twenty internet news sites. There has also been a severe decline in the number of minority owned broadcast stations. In 2007, minorities owned just 3.2 percent of the U.S. television stations and 7 percent of the nation's full power radio stations, despite making up more than 34 percent of the population.

If Comcast's acquisition of NBC Universal is allowed to proceed, the company would control content production and content distribution at an unprecedented level. A Comcast-NBC conglomerate would own the nation's largest cable system, one of the nation's largest networks, 27 broadcast television stations, 14 national cable channels, seven production studios, and several of the fast growing internet properties.

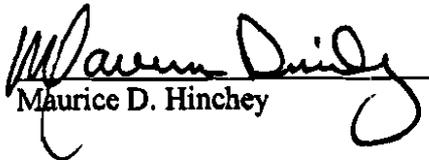
This widened control over the public's access to information would have extremely negative consequences. Comcast would be in a powerful position to advance its networks and its programming at the expense of others because it will control the cable system most people use to watch television, as well as numerous additional television broadcast stations. And it would further limit the public's access to independent sources of information, which is absolutely essential to a well-functioning democracy.

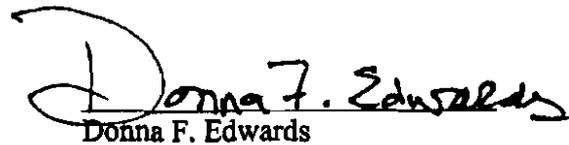
The Supreme Court, on numerous occasions, has upheld the right of the commission and of the Congress to establish media protections, acknowledging that a monopolization of ideas is antithetical to our democracy. In 1945, the Court declared that, "the widest

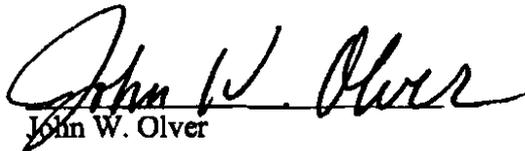
possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public, that a free press is a condition of a free society." In 1969, the Supreme Court stated, "It is the purpose of the First Amendment to preserve an uninhibited marketplace of ideas in which truth will ultimately prevail, rather than to countenance monopolization of that market, whether it be by the Government itself or a private licensee."

The debate over the direction of media in America is one of the most, if not the most, critical issues we face today. There is no issue more central to the future of a properly functioning democracy than how Americans receive information. We hope you will reject this acquisition and, instead, take steps to reduce the consolidation of the U.S. media industry.

Sincerely,

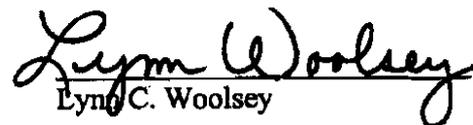

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