

Diversity of ownership remains an issue today. The FCC's own data show that women own fewer than 7 percent of television stations and racial and ethnic minorities own just 3.4 percent of television stations and 8 percent of commercial FM radio broadcast stations. The FCC's new rules would harm efforts to promote diversity in media ownership.

Chairman Genachowski has learned from his predecessor's failure. This time around, there have been no public meetings outside of Washington and just a handful of "workshops." But we know who he did hear from. On Nov. 28, 2012, News Corp. lobbyists said they visited the FCC and "urged the commission to eliminate the newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership rule." With a weaker rule, News Corp. owner Rupert Murdoch could add the Los Angeles Times and Chicago Tribune to a media empire which already includes Fox broadcasting, Fox News, The Wall Street Journal, the New York Post, and many other media properties. Do Americans really want so much of their news coming through the filter of moguls like Murdoch?

I asked Genachowski to delay a vote by six months and hold public hearings, like his predecessor did, to solicit public input. He rejected my request. Despite opposition from many of my colleagues in Congress, more than 40 public-interest and civil-rights groups, and hundreds of thousands of Americans who have signed a petition just in the last few weeks, the FCC is set to approve Genachowski's proposal to gut cross-ownership rules.