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October 29, 2007

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc. supports FCC Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein's call for the creation of an independent minority broadcast ownership task force that examines policies to increase minority ownership. The UNITY Board of Directors unanimously approved a resolution supporting this call in keeping with its mission and vision of a more representative media force.

UNITY is comprised of four national associations: the Asian American Journalists Association, National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Hispanic Journalists and the Native American Journalists Association. Representing a constituency of more than 10,000 diverse media professionals, UNITY is fully vested in ensuring that minorities are well represented in all aspects of the media, including ownership.

Free Press recently conducted studies on minority ownership of radio and television stations, and found that while people of color make up 35 percent of the U.S. population, they own only 8 percent of local radio stations and 3 percent of local television stations. In addition, Free Press' studies showed the dichotomy between media ownership and other industries in the United States – other industries are much closer to parity when it comes to minority ownership.


UNITY is not the only organization that considers the lack of minority broadcast ownership a priority. Our alliance partners, including the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, as well as Senators Barack Obama (D-IL) and John Kerry (D-MA) have all called for the creation of a task force so we can begin to address the disproportionate level of minority ownership.

The FCC has the unique opportunity to lead the media industry by reforming broadcast ownership regulations to increase the overall level of ownership diversity. UNITY encourages the FCC in doing so, to keep with the spirit of *Prometheus v. FCC*, of which UNITY was a petitioner.

It is especially important that the lack of diverse ownership is addressed, because fair coverage starts from the top down. As the coverage of communities of color is not representative of our nation's population, we cannot adequately address this problem without having the leadership in place at the ownership level – the very people who make the decisions of what is aired. Once the ownership levels are at a representative level of the nation's demographics, it can be inferred that the coverage will follow in suit.

Once again, UNITY is calling on the FCC to take a stand and create an independent task force to address the absence of minority ownership in broadcast outlets. It is imperative that this be a priority to the FCC so that we can move towards a fuller and more complete representation of the United States' diverse population in broadcast ownership and coverage of communities of color.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Onica N. Makwakwa". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Onica N. Makwakwa  
Executive Director