

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 7, 2007

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

Dear Chairman Martin:

We are strongly opposed to a proposed new rule that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued November 13th that would allow a newspaper to own a broadcast station in all media markets.

We are particularly concerned that the FCC would permit greater media consolidation while it has failed to address the growing crisis of broadcast ownership by women. Today, women make up 51 percent of the U.S. population but own just five percent of all local TV stations and six percent of all radio stations, according to recent studies conducted by the non-profit group Free Press. The studies also found that the FCC does not know how many women own broadcast stations in the United States. Meanwhile, media consolidation has continued to negatively impact the ability of female entrepreneurs and businesswomen to raise the necessary capital to purchase stations.

The FCC's proposed rule would further reduce the number of opportunities for women to become broadcast owners. It would drive up prices for all the new stations that would become available for newspapers to purchase, increasing pressure on the few existing female owners to sell their stations, and making it more difficult for aspiring female purchasers to buy stations. It also contains a legal loophole that would allow for cross-ownership and further media consolidation in markets outside of the top 20. We believe it would be irresponsible for the FCC to allow greater consolidation when it has not addressed the issue of female ownership.

The issue of female ownership is too critical for the FCC to ignore. For this reason, we urge the FCC to create an independent task force to conduct an accurate count on the number of female owned stations, to examine the impact of the FCC's rule changes on female ownership, and to craft solutions to resolve the disparity. Further, until the independent task force has had an opportunity to evaluate these issues, the FCC should not vote on changes to our nation's ownership rule.

Sincerely,



Louise Slaughter
Member of Congress



Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

Lois Capps

Lois Capps
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke

Yvette Clarke
Member of Congress

Susan D. Davis

Susan Davis
Member of Congress

Anna Eshoo

Anna Eshoo
Member of Congress

Stephanie Tubbs Jones

Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Nita M. Lowey

Nita Lowey
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Linda Sanchez

Linda Sanchez
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Hilda Solis

Hilda Solis
Member of Congress

Diane E. Watson

Diane Watson
Member of Congress

Lynn Woolsey

Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress