

Session 1

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1 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
 2 MEDIA OWNERSHIP, TAMPA-ST. PETERSBURG
 3 FOURTH PUBLIC HEARING
 4 VOLUME I
 5 (Pages 1 - 196)



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DATE: Monday, April 30th, 2007

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TIME: 4:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.

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LOCATION: Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center
Louise Lykes Ferguson Hall
1010 North W. C. MacInnes Place
Tampa, Florida 33602

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MODERATOR: LOUIS SIGALOS, Federal
Communications Commission
Chief of The Consumer Affairs
and Outreach Division, Consumer
and Governmental Affairs Bureau

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REPORTED BY: Elida T. Hager, R. P. R.
Notary Public, State of
Florida at Large

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PROCEEDI NGS

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MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much for
being here, and wel come to the Federal
Communi cations Commi ssi on' s Fourth Publ ic
Heari ng on Medi a Ownersi p.

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First, I do want to thank the Tampa Bay
Performi ng Arts Center, who is so graci ousl y
hosti ng us today. And before we begi n wi th our
fi rst panel , we do have a few openi ng remarks.
And I' d l i ke to start by aski ng the mayor, who
I thi nk is here, Pam I ori o, to come and say a
few words before we move on.

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MAYOR IORIO: Thank you.

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Chairman Marti n and Members of the FCC
Commis si oners, I wel come you to the Ci ty Of
Tampa. I know you' ll have a great publ ic
heari ng.

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There are many members of the publ ic here
to speak and a very prestigi ous and respecte d

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20 panel from the media. And we welcome you to
21 our great city.

22 We're so pleased that you selected Tampa
23 as a venue to solicit public input on media
24 ownership. I wish you well as you go on into
25 the afternoon and on into the evening. Thanks

6

1 again for visiting our city. (Applause.)

2 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER COPPS: Good afternoon.

4 Thank you-all for welcoming us here to Tampa
5 this afternoon. Thank you, Madam Mayor, for
6 your cordial welcome.

7 As some of you know, I once lived in this
8 wonderful area. Actually, I'm a graduate of
9 Northeast High School in St. Petersburg.
10 (Applause.)

11 That was quite a few years ago, to be
12 sure. But the welcome we've gotten here shows
13 that Thomas Wolfe was really wrong. You can go
14 home again. And I am glad to be home again.

15 But tonight -- or today -- isn't about a
16 stroll down memory lane. It's really about our
17 future, yours and mine. And this meeting is
18 part of a remarkable grass-roots dialog that
19 began almost five years ago and which can
20 now -- if you and I do our jobs right -- help
21 us create a better media environment all across
22 this land of ours.

23 What we're here to do is to learn from
24 our two distinguished panels, but even more
25 importantly, from you in this audience, how you

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1 think this area's media is doing in serving
2 you, because media has a solemn obligation to
3 do that.

4 Because you own the airwaves -- you and
5 you alone. No business, no broadcaster, no
6 special interest owns an airwave in the United
7 States of America. (Applause.) They're yours.

8 The broadcasters do get the privilege of
9 using those airwaves, and in return for a
10 license they pledge to serve the public
11 interests, to bring you good local news,
12 information and entertainment, to bring you a
13 diversity of issues and cultures and viewpoints
14 and to provide entertainment that reflects your
15 diversity, interests and creative genius.

16 So I'll be looking here today to
17 understand your history and your experiences
18 and your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with
19 your current media environment.

20 Now, I know that the Tampa-St. Petersburg
21 area is one of a dramatically diminished number
22 of metropolitan areas that still has two major
23 and competing newspapers. Of course, this is a
24 huge and diverse area with many different
25 interests, and there's a lot here for even two

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1 newspapers to cover. And I'm interested to
2 learn if you think that this is one big area or
3 if it's more differentiated than that.

4 To me, competition in journalism is

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5 really coined of the realm. Recently I had the
6 privilege of appearing on a Columbia University
7 of Journalism school panel with one of my
8 heroes, Walter Cronkite.

9 He told us a little story that I -- it'll
10 take a minute but I think it merits telling
11 here. Because it gets to what competition in
12 journalism means; and that, of course, includes
13 broadcast journalism.

14 "My first job was with the Houston
15 Press," Cronkite told us, "and our competitor
16 was the Houston Chronicle. We each put out
17 several editions a day. And each time the
18 Chronicle put out a new edition, a copy boy ran
19 eight blocks to its loading dock to bring back
20 a copy, literally hot, or at least warm, off
21 the press.

22 My editor would then spread it out on his
23 desk to compare what they'd written with what
24 I'd written. And I can still hear him holler
25 out, 'Cronkite, the Chronicle spells this guy's

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1 name S-M-Y-T-H. We've got it S-M-I-T-H. Which
2 one is it?' Or 'The Chronicle says it was 1412
3 Westheimer Street. We say it was 1414. Who's
4 right?' "That kind of check" -- and this is
5 still Mr. Cronkite -- "that kind of check on
6 our work several times a day sure made us
7 better reporters.

8 But how many towns have that kind of
9 newspaper competition anymore? Most towns
10 today have only one newspaper. And the result

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11 is just what you'd expect. The accuracy in
12 this reporting isn't the same anymore."

13 Now imagine for a moment that either the
14 Times or the Tribune went away, and the
15 remaining paper, now a monopoly, also owned
16 eight radio stations, three television
17 stations, cable channels and the largest local
18 Internet site; what would happen to the quality
19 of your media then? What would happen to the
20 diversity of voices?

21 Right now Latinos and African-Americans
22 in Tampa comprise almost 50 percent of the
23 population. We need to be asking how local
24 coverage is meeting the needs of these and many
25 other diverse communities. My guess is we need

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1 to do a better job of it, a much better job.

2 You know, minorities are now nearly a
3 third of this country's population. But people
4 of color own just 3.2 percent of full-power
5 commercial television stations and only about
6 2 percent of all the broadcast assets.

7 Could that be why maybe minority
8 interests and issues don't get covered very
9 well?

10 Could it be this is why minorities are so
11 often caricatured and stereotyped in news
12 stories?

13 Our media have an obligation to reflect
14 this country's diversity. They have an
15 obligation to nourish this country's diversity.

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16 And it's a job that is not getting done.

17 (Appl ause.)

18 Take the elderly. We don't usually think
19 of our seniors as a minority group. But talk
20 about a group being disadvantaged,
21 disenfranchised by big national media. These
22 are folks who treasure news about the
23 communities that they live in, who value news,
24 and actually go out and vote.

11 25 And I'm joining those senior ranks now,

1 and I know firsthand something is missing and
2 something has been taken away.

3 Getting back for a moment to the world I
4 asked you to imagine, where there are few
5 corporate giants owning all the major outlets;
6 that's exactly the world that former FCC
7 Chairman Michael Powell envisioned three years
8 ago, when he rammed new rules through the
9 Commission to loosen the few remaining
10 controls we have against further
11 consolidation.

12 What he didn't expect was that three
13 million people would contact the FCC to voice
14 their outrage. Congress joined in, and then
15 the U.S. Court of Appeals decided those rules
16 are badly flawed and sent them back to us --
17 to us here.

18 Lesson Number 1: Citizen in action can
19 still make a difference and even carry the day
20 provided, it's passionate, organized and
21 determined (Appl ause.)

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Lesson Two: With the FCC having all these rules teed up again in front of us, the need for citizen vigilance is just as urgent. But there's a difference this time. We can

1 aim higher now than three years ago. We don't need to play just defense. We can start playing offense.

4 We cannot only defeat bad new rules, although we still must do that, but now we're in a position to revisit some of the bad old ones that got us into this mess in the first place (Applause.)

9 A VOICE: Yeah. That's right.

10 COMMISSIONER COPPS: And we can go on from there to restore meaningful public interest responsibilities to our broadcast media.

14 For starters, let's go back to an honest-to-goodness licensing system that doesn't grant slam-dunk renewals but stops to ask if a license holder is really doing its job of serving the public interests (Applause.)

19 COMMISSIONER COPPS: All license holders have to do now is basically send in a postcard. And that's it. And let's do this license renewal every three years, the way it used to be, and not every eight years, like it is now.

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(Applause.)

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1 Let's also put what stations are doing to
2 actually meet their public interests
3 obligations up on the web, so citizens can know
4 how their airwaves are being used.

5 And then let's make sure that all this
6 new digital capacity we're giving broadcasters
7 return something positive for our communities
8 and local talent and civic-issues coverage.
9 (Applause.)

10 If your local broadcasters can multicast
11 half a dozen program streams, is it too much to
12 expect that some good portion of that be used
13 to enhance localism and diversity?

14 So these are the kinds of things that we
15 all need to be talking about. And I'll bet
16 there are some other ideas out here in this
17 audience, too.

18 Let me conclude with a brief thank you to
19 the many representatives of the community that
20 are here today, representatives from the Latino
21 and African-American and other communities, all
22 kinds of community-based public interest
23 groups, labor unions, seniors who have been
24 disadvantaged and disenfranchised by excessive
25 consolidation, consumers and broadcasters, too.

14

1 I am always happy when broadcasters do
2 come out and participate in dialogues like
3 this. I only ask my broadcaster friends to
4 focus today on the issues at hand. We want to
5 learn about how you're using the airwaves to
6 enhance the public interests. And many of them

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7 indeed are.

8 But unfortunately -- and I want to say
9 this carefully -- at a recent hearing like
10 this, most of the broadcaster presentations
11 focussed on how they let their celebrities take
12 time off to support worthwhile charities and
13 how the stations donated to these charities.

14 Now, I love those charities. So don't
15 misinterpret what I'm saying. Our country has
16 a long proud history of corporate charitable
17 giving. But that's not the issue for our
18 attention here today. So I urge them to focus
19 on the matters of localism and diversity and
20 competition that's reflected in how the
21 airwaves are used. (Applause.)

22 I'm sure there are other groups I've
23 unintentionally forgotten to thank. But I'm
24 glad all of you are here. Most of you are
25 from Tampa-St. Petersburg. But I know others

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1 have come from across the state to this only
2 hearing the FCC will be holding in Florida.
3 Personally, I wish we had more such events so
4 people wouldn't have to travel so far.

5 This issue of media consolidation has
6 been my top priority since I joined the FCC six
7 years ago. I know there are many critically
8 important issues troubling America right now,
9 issues of peace and war, finding and keeping
10 good jobs, making sure families have health
11 insurance, educating our kids, creating equal

12 opportunity.

13 And for individual members of this
14 audience, one of those issues may trump all of
15 the others. But here's my message to you:

16 Even if media consolidation is not your
17 number one issue, it ought to be your second
18 most important. And that's because all of
19 those other issues you care about are
20 increasingly funnelled through the filter of
21 big media.

22 Well, if you're happy with how your
23 number one issue is being presented and
24 discussed as they come through that funnel,
25 fine, you don't have to listen to a thing I'm

16

1 saying.

2 But if you think that that big issue
3 might just benefit from a little more diversity
4 of viewpoint and a little more competition,
5 then you need to get involved. And there's no
6 litmus test to getting involved. You could be
7 conservative or liberal, Democratic or
8 Republican, red state or blue state.

9 So I thank you-all for being here, and I
10 look forward to hearing from you. This is an
11 issue that I have seen take root all across
12 this broad and diverse land of ours. It's an
13 issue, really, of democracy. I like to call it
14 "Media Democracy." I like the ring of that,
15 don't you?

16 A VOICE: You bet.

17 (Applause.)

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18 COMMISSIONER COPPS: Thank you.

19 MR. SIGALOS: Mr. Adelstein.

20 COMMISSIONER ADELSTEIN: Well, thank you.
21 It's great to be here in Tampa Bay. And I
22 appreciate the welcome from Mayor Iorio and
23 what a great group of panelists we have here
24 today and, of course, most importantly, all of
25 you for taking the time to come out.

17

1 All the many organizations that help let
2 you know about it, thank you--all so much.
3 'Cause it's really all about hearing from you
4 and finding out what's happening here in Tampa
5 Bay.

6 What is going right now with the media,
7 what you think could be done better, how the
8 decisions we make affect you. Because nobody
9 knows better than you.

10 You're the best jury, you're the real
11 experts and the people out there in this
12 community, you listen to the radio, you watch
13 TV, you read the newspapers. That's what we
14 want to hear about.

15 I'm especially interested in hearing
16 about how different communities feel about how
17 their issues are treated; for example,
18 Commission Copps talks about seniors, how older
19 seniors feel their issues are being handled in
20 the media.

21 You have a large Hispanic population
22 here, issues of concern to -- to the way you're

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18 23 being treated in ways that you consider to be
24 sensitive to -- to the real issues with respect
25 to responsiveness. I just want to know, are

1 you happy with the media that you have here in
2 Tampa Bay today.

3 A VOICE: No, I'm not.

4 COMMISSIONER ADELSTEIN: Well, that's --
5 we want to hear more detail. If it's yes,
6 that's good too. But you -- it's amazing what
7 you can say two minutes.

8 We've gone across the country and heard
9 such incredible eloquent people in such a
10 short period of time. And I know it's
11 constricted, but we're going to stay here to
12 listen to each and every one of you until
13 you're done.

14 (Applause.)

15 And Tampa's not just a little media
16 market. This is one of the biggest markets in
17 the country and one of the biggest -- not the
18 biggest -- but the first biggest in Florida.

19 And just like in other cities, large and
20 small, across the United States, it seems from
21 the studies that I've seen that a handful of
22 companies dominate Tampa Bay TV and radio.

19 23 Studies show that in television, two
24 media companies control half of the total
25 revenue. In radio, three companies own almost

1 half of all commercial radio stations in the
2 Tampa market and control nearly 90 percent of

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3 the revenue.

4 Only four companies control 73 percent of
5 Tampa's local news market; and one of those
6 companies alone controls a third of the market.
7 As alarming as these numbers are, Tampa's one
8 of the better markets in the country, if you
9 can imagine that, in today's -- based on
10 today's very concentrated standards.

11 You're one of the few markets in the
12 country, as Commission Copps mentioned, that
13 has two big viable home newspapers. There's
14 also a great study (sic) here on Cox ownership.
15 I'd like to hear your views on how well the
16 joint ownership of a newspaper and a television
17 station is going here.

18 It's our job to implement your rights to
19 diversity. That's what the rules tell us to
20 do. That's what the law tells us to do. The
21 Supreme Court has told us that you have the
22 right to receive and share in diversity of news
23 -- of news and information, music.

24 And our ownership rules are supposed to
25 promote competition, localism and diversity,

20

1 not just preserve the bare minimum. And what
2 better way to find out whether the media's
3 fulfilling your expectations than to come here
4 and talk to you about how well the media's
5 doing.

6 We shouldn't say that we certainly know
7 better inside the beltway than you do about

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8 what's in your interests. And the law says the
9 public interest -- that's what we're here to
10 serve, the public interests, not the interests
11 of the media giants that we oversee.

12 (Applause.)

13 And whatever disagreements you might hear
14 today about the rules, certainly there should
15 be no disagreement that this issue is really
16 about our democracy. And fundamental to that
17 is the "Uninhibited marketplace of ideas," as
18 the Supreme Court called it.

19 And by controlling the information you
20 receive, you really see how it impacts your
21 culture, the politics, the ideas that get
22 exchanged here. And the airwaves do belong to
23 you. And you're the ones that came out to
24 reclaim them here tonight. I'm so glad you
25 did.

21

1 The Supreme Court expressed your right to
2 receive suitable access to social, aesthetic,
3 moral and other ideas and experiences. I'm
4 quoting now from the Court. Now, everywhere
5 you go, there's a profound impact by media
6 consolidation, not just here in Tampa.

7 Nationally, you see, five media
8 conglomerates control 80 percent of the
9 prime-time market.

10 And our last attempt by -- as a
11 Commission, in 2003, to modify the rules
12 would've only made the situation worse; rather
13 than only 73 percent of the Tampa market local

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14 news, the top firms would've likely increased
15 their share to 85 percent.

16 Fortunately, three million people
17 contacted the FCC, from the far left to the far
18 right and virtually everybody in between, to
19 say that's the wrong direction to go. And in
20 2004, the Federal Court agreed that sentiment,
21 sending the rules back to us to start from
22 scratch.

23 They said we failed to consider how the
24 proposed rules would affect minority and women
25 ownership, failed to consider the impact on

22

1 competition and localism. I couldn't agree
2 more. So I hope that this time around, with
3 your help and your input here tonight, that we
4 can get these media ownership rules right.

5 I hope -- promote minority ownership,
6 promote the public interest and diversity. And
7 I fully realize we're going to hear a good
8 debate tonight about how the media landscape
9 had been evolving and how our rules should keep
10 pace with the times.

11 But it's too easy just to say, "Oh, they
12 can get on the Internet" or -- or "We need to
13 own more outlets."

14 Repurposing one local newspaper story on
15 radio and TV doesn't do a lot for the quality
16 of journalism, it doesn't do anything for
17 diversity, and I don't think it helps localism
18 a bit; and it can harm the small business

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19 competitors.

20 It's more difficult to diversify, be
21 innovative, become competitive on new news
22 media platforms. But that's what we need to
23 see media doing, rather than simply try to
24 gobble up more and more local outlets.

23 25 And sometimes media companies have been

1 slow to grasp this changing landscape. And,
2 frankly, it's wrong to play the blame game on
3 the media-ownership rules that are intended to
4 serve the public interests as the reason for
5 the failure to develop profitable business
6 models on new platforms. I'm glad that these
7 companies are trying to create new and more
8 dynamic online presences. But they have more
9 work ahead of them.

10 And the fact of the matter is that
11 broadcasting, along with newspapers, still
12 dominates the media today. Study after study
13 shows that broadcasting and newspapers are the
14 dominant source of local news and information.

15 And the broadcast industry still
16 produces, disseminates, locally controls news,
17 information and entertainment programs that
18 most inform, the debate, the discourse and the
19 free exchange of ideas in this country and this
20 democracy.

21 Local news websites don't provide a
22 viable source for competition, unless they're
23 owned by these major outlets. When you look
24 at, where do you go to when you go to the

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24 25 Internet, you go to the local newspaper.com or
1 your local TV station.com. And a study that
2 was done by Free Press of the market here in
3 Tampa bears that out.

4 It found that independent websites in
5 Tampa don't produce nearly enough original news
6 to attract enough audience or generate enough
7 revenue to compete effectively with the
8 traditional news media outlets and websites.

9 As a matter of fact, the studies show
10 that only 3 percent of the stories on
11 independent Tampa-focused websites contained
12 original reporting of any kind on hard news
13 topics, such as crime or education or what's
14 happening in local government.

15 And you know that from your own personal
16 experience. There's not a lot of news there.
17 I know people are trying. But the fact is,
18 you've got to go to the newspaper. That's
19 where the journalism is. People don't want to
20 be their own editors, they don't want to be
21 their reporters. They expect the journalists
22 to do that for them.

23 And that's happening nationwide. Just
24 last week I was reading in the Wall Street
25 Journal, an NBC Wall Street Journal poll found

25
1 that despite all the efforts taken by political
2 campaigns to try to get their message across on
3 the Internet, only 2 percent of those polls

4 said that they get most of their 2008 news from
5 blogs or candidate websites.

6 Our job is to promote the public
7 interest, not the interests of these media
8 giants we oversee. And we've always done that
9 by promoting diversity, localism and preventing
10 underconcentrations of power in the media
11 industry.

12 I'm saying we need to continue that
13 tradition that has been so long held by the
14 FCC. You deserve what the law already
15 requires, programming that serves the unique
16 needs of your local communities.

17 So before drafting any media-ownership
18 rules, we wanted to hear from you. We wanted
19 to come right here to Tampa and find out what
20 you have to say. So we came here to hear from
21 you.

22 So I'm going to sit down and be quiet and
23 listen, 'cause I'm anxious to hear what you
24 have to say. Thank you for coming out this
25 evening or afternoon.

26

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. SIGALOS: Commissioner Tate.

3 COMMISSIONER TATE: Mr. Chairman, and
4 thank you to the Mayor, so much, for hosting
5 us here at this beautiful Performing Arts
6 Center and being here in the beautiful Tampa
7 Bay Area.

8 And I'll be brief and just say that we
9 are all thrilled to be here in Florida and in

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10 one of the most thriving technology centers in
11 the whole state as well as the largest media
12 centers of the state.

13 I am one of the new commissioners. And,
14 so, this is the first time that I've had the
15 opportunity to be part of the hearings going
16 around the country. And I'm looking forward to
17 hearing from you-all, as my colleague said,
18 about both the good and the bad.

19 This is one of those interesting areas
20 where both the Tampa Tribune and the
21 commonly-owned WFLA is one of the 40
22 grandfathered newspaper broadcast combinations
23 in the country.

24 And, so, it does provide us a very unique
25 opportunity to see how that's worked and see

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1 how the combinations have a positive or a
2 negative impact.

3 I do want to also thank our staff. They
4 go on the road with us, and they make all of
5 these meetings go well and easily. And I
6 appreciate all of their hard work.

7 I continue to consider the issues that
8 are raised throughout our media-ownership
9 proceedings with an open and inquiring mind.

10 And it's especially important that we do
11 take into consideration those of you-all who
12 represent minority communities, and especially
13 the "I Generation," those -- those of you who
14 are like my children, who've been raised on the

15 Internet, so that we hear how you receive your
16 news information and entertainment anywhere,
17 anytime.

18 The rules that we create and craft will
19 be the rules that are with us for a long period
20 of time. So I'll move forward. A thank you to
21 the panel here and our second panel as well.

22 And I looking forward, especially, to
23 hearing from those of you who've come to speak
24 on media ownership in your communities. Thank
25 you.

28

1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. SIGALOS: Mr. McDowell.

4 COMMISSIONER MCDOWELL: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman, and thank you for hosting us
6 here in Tampa-St. Pete, the 12th largest media
7 market in the country, home of the Buccaneers.

8 And being native of the Washington, D. C.,
9 area, with the performance of our football team
10 last year, I feel your pain. But you had a
11 great draft yesterday, so hope springs eternal.
12 Best of luck to you-all. I know things are
13 going to be great for you.

14 In our three prior hearings on broadcast
15 ownership in Los Angeles, California,
16 Nashville, Tennessee, and Harri sburg,
17 Pennsylvani a, we heard the perspectives of
18 musici ans, broadcasters, reporters, actors,
19 wri ters, professors, and hundreds of ci ti zens,
20 who are the true owners of the ai rwaves.

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21 I look forward to hearing from you this
22 evening about how our ownership rules affect
23 you as viewers, listeners, business people and
24 members of this terrific Community.

29 25 The debate over broadcast ownership

1 concerns the vitality of our democracy and the
2 appropriate balance among competitive
3 efficiencies, diversity of voices and local
4 focus.

5 I've learned quickly, being a new
6 commissioner along with Commissioner Tate --
7 not around for the last debate on this. But
8 I've learned quickly that this debate elicits
9 the opinions and passions of people from all
10 walks of life, from all over America.

11 And we need the firsthand knowledge that
12 only you can provide about the sources you rely
13 upon for news, information and entertainment,
14 so that we can analyze today's media
15 marketplace and determine if our rules should
16 change, and if so, how.

17 To our panel and our audience members,
18 thank you for being here today and for
19 participating in our hearing, which is really
20 your hearing. And I will very much value your
21 input.

22 And without further adieu, because I want
23 to leave more time to hear from you-all than
24 for you to hear from me, I'll pass it along.
25 Thank you.

30

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1 (Applause.)

2 CHAIRMAN MARTIN: Good afternoon
3 everyone. And thank you, to Tampa, for
4 hosting us.

5 Actually, my father-in-law lives here in
6 Tampa, and so we -- my family and I -- visit
7 here frequently. And he's not very shy about
8 complaining to us -- to me -- about the media
9 and FCC policies. So if that's any indication,
10 I'm sure it'll be a lively debate here tonight.

11 The -- as you've heard from all of the
12 Commissioners, this is our fourth in a series
13 of six media-ownership hearings we'll be
14 holding. And I want to thank you-all for
15 participating and joining us tonight.

16 This is a -- this is really a critical
17 and important process, and it couldn't be
18 accomplished without hearing from you and your
19 active participation.

20 When we've had the previous hearings,
21 both in Los Angeles and in Nashville and
22 Harrisburg, we've had a lively -- we've had a
23 lively debate, and I anticipate that we will,
24 as well, tonight.

25 And so I, again, want to thank you-all

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1 for your public input. And that's going to be
2 so critical as it goes forward. However, the
3 decisions that we are going to make about
4 ownership are very difficult, and they are as
5 difficult as they are critical.

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6 And the media touches on almost every
7 aspects of our lives. We're certainly
8 dependent upon it for our news, our
9 information, our entertainment. And, indeed,
10 it's the opportunity to express diverse
11 viewpoints that lies, really, at the heart of
12 our democracy.

13 Indeed, the Commission has three core
14 goals that are intended to further, with our
15 media ownership rules, both competition,
16 diversity and localism.

17 And I think it's going to be critical,
18 through our review in our ownership rules, that
19 we work to develop a record, with hearings,
20 like the one we're having today and through the
21 written-comment process, on which we can inform
22 our decision making on how all three of those
23 goals are impacted by our rules.

24 And with that, I am particularly pleased
25 that we're holding a hearing here in Tampa, not
32

1 only because of my personal connections, but
2 because it does have some unique
3 characteristics. It is the twelfth largest
4 media market, as Commissioner McDowell referred
5 to it.

6 It has 14 TV stations, a 24-hour cable
7 news channel, numerous radio stations,
8 numerous -- several daily newspapers and weekly
9 newspapers.

10 But there's a particular interest in this

11 market, because it is the home of one of the
12 grandfathered newspaper broadcast
13 cross-ownership stations, so that there is --
14 this is the home of Media General's Tampa
15 Tribune and the television station WFLA.

16 But, in general, our rules prohibit a
17 company from owning a daily newspaper and
18 television station in the same market. But
19 the -- but the Third Circuit, in reviewing our
20 rules recently, concluded that the Commission
21 was correct, that the ban on the newspapers and
22 broadcast being owned in the same market would
23 no longer justify the complete prohibition.

24 It sent it back to the Commission for us
25 to try to determine what should be the rules on

33

1 this -- on this issue and what kind of market
2 should those -- should there be cross-ownership
3 that's allowed and what kind of market there
4 shouldn't be.

5 So I think it's particularly important
6 for us to hear from the public on this issue
7 today, so that we can -- we can hear about the
8 effect that cross-ownership has had in this
9 market and on -- and on the -- on all of you,
10 both the good and the bad. And what -- very
11 anxious to -- and that'll be very important for
12 us going forward.

13 So I think it is critical that we end up
14 hearing your thoughts and insights on this
15 subject, in general, and particularly on
16 that -- on that rule today.

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17 Now, before -- before, we get going --
18 and I do want to be brief, as well -- but in
19 part because the -- I will only correct one
20 thing today that one of the other commissions
21 said.

22 Commissioner Adelstein said we would stay
23 in this room until everyone got a chance to be
24 heard. They actually will kick us out of the
25 room sometime between 11:00 and midnight. We

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1 will have a place, to make sure that if
2 everyone hasn't a chance to be heard that
3 everyone will get an opportunity to
4 participate. But there may be a time when
5 they'll kick us out of this room. So I -- so I
6 can't promise that.

7 So -- but at this point, let me move --
8 turn it over to our moderator, who will be
9 moderating us. And we'll be going on to the
10 first panel. And I want to thank you, again,
11 all for participating today. (Applause.)

12 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
13 Commissioners.

14 As we move to our first panel discussion,
15 I want to briefly review the ground rules.
16 Panelists, each of you will have a five minutes
17 for your presentation. I'll strictly enforce
18 the five-minute time limit in order to ensure
19 that we follow our agenda as closely as
20 possible.

21 We start a few minutes late, so it's even

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22 more important. We want to provide as much
23 time as possible for the public-comment
24 discussion period.

35

25 Members of audience, please listen

1 respectfully to the panelists, even if you
2 disagree with the views that they express. I
3 know that the issues we're discussing today
4 arouse a lot of passion, but for this hearing
5 to run smoothly and be successful we need to
6 maintain basic decorum and avoid any
7 unnecessary interruptions. And we thank you
8 for that.

9 Our panel today features Dan Bradley,
10 Media General's Vice President of News for
11 Broadcast; Bill Carey, General Manager of
12 WFTS-TV and Incoming President of the Florida
13 Association of Broadcasters; Robert Dardenne,
14 Associate Professor in Journalism and Media
15 Studies at the University of South
16 Florida-St. Petersburg; Steve Erlanger,
17 President of Hometown News; Ronald Gordon,
18 President of ZGS Broadcast Holdings; Jim
19 Johnson, Publisher of State of Sunshine, a
20 political blog covering the state of Florida;
21 Eric Klinenberg, Associate Professor of
22 Sociology at New York University; Patrick
23 Manteiga, Editor and Publisher of La Gaceta;
24 Pat Roberts, President of the Florida
25 Association of Broadcasters; Art Robotham,

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1 President of Hall Communications; and Steven
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2 Wilson, Investigative Journalist.

3 Mr. Bradley.

4 MR. BRADLEY: Thank you very much for
5 this opportunity, a unique opportunity to
6 address the Commission and this community.

7 I'm Dan Bradley, Vice President of News
8 for Media General's Broadcast Division. I work
9 closely with our stations, helping them
10 maintain high standards of journalism for the
11 communities they serve with local news that is
12 important, relevant and appropriately urgent.

13 While news director of WFLA, I was on the
14 team that laid the foundation for what we call
15 "Convergence," a melding of newspaper, TV and
16 online resources to produce strong journalism
17 and accelerating its delivery to the community.

18 Media General's news center in Tampa,
19 Florida, is the most advanced converged
20 laboratory in the nation and the only one in
21 which a news staff of a TV station, a newspaper
22 and an online operation are housed together
23 under one roof.

24 Besides the strong presence in
25 Tampa-St. Petersburg, Media General has similar

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1 convergence efforts underway in five other
2 markets. While each platform has its own
3 separate news staff that makes independent
4 final decisions about content, this convergence
5 laboratory features a multimedia desk, which is
6 continuously staffed by editors from all three

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7 media and facilitates the rapid exchange of
8 story ideas, news content and video images
9 among the three outlets.

10 Newspaper reporters write TV -- write
11 scripts for TV newscasts that appear on air.
12 TV reporters write stories for the newspaper.
13 Photographers carry digital cameras and create
14 both still and video images for all three
15 platforms.

16 The newspaper's 112-year archive is
17 easily accessible by all journalists,
18 regardless of platform, a very unique resource
19 for any TV newsroom. These convergence efforts
20 are award-winning and benefit the communities
21 they serve.

22 Here are three benefit from this
23 converged approach to local news, as I see it.

24 First, convergence allows WFLA to serve
25 community needs better in times of crisis.

1 Without a doubt, convergence has brought more
2 eyes, ears and feet to the street, meaning
3 WFLA, the Tribune and TBO.com are that much
4 more likely to learn of a breaking news
5 development and rush that information to the
6 community.

7 Utilizing all of these assets, we've been
8 able to ensure the best and most comprehensive
9 coverage of local weather emergencies, such as
10 a hurricane or a tornado.

11 Second, convergence helps move the story
12 forward in the most informative and complete

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13 way. One of the breakthroughs that makes
14 convergence possible is convincing our
15 journalists that a story does not belong to
16 them individually. No matter who gets the
17 lead, who breaks the story, the news belongs to
18 the community.

19 Because the Tribune has approximately six
20 times the number of reporters, many work in
21 specialized beats. WFLA through convergence
22 gains access to expertise far beyond what TV
23 stations' smaller news staff could cover alone.

24 The combined outlets join forces to
25 produce investigative reports and in-depth

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1 specials that tell stories in a multimedia
2 format.

3 These joint stories have exposed
4 corruption in public, private and nonprofit
5 organizations. Through collaboration and
6 publication on multiple platforms, these
7 stories reach many more people and have a
8 greater impact on improving life in the whole
9 community.

10 Third, convergence helped make WFLA the
11 political crossroads of the market. By
12 utilizing the resources of the Tribune, WFLA
13 has been able to provide much more detailed
14 information on candidates and issues than it
15 could've done alone.

16 The newsrooms share extensive polling
17 data and coordinate coverage of issues and

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18 candidate profiles. The newspaper's lead
19 political-beat reporter is a regular on-air
20 contributor to the TV newscasts.

21 WFLA has a strong record of being a
22 leader in local political coverage. It has an
23 ambitious free air-time policy for statewide
24 and federal candidates, aggressively stages and
25 airs debates and tests with accuracy -- and

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1 tests for accuracy in political campaign
2 advertising. WFLA does not participate or
3 broadcast in any way the positions of the
4 Tribune's editorial board.

5 Common ownership has been critical to
6 Media General's success in meeting community
7 needs. Since moving to the news center, more
8 local TV news has been added, and full-time TV
9 news staffing has not been reduced.

10 Results do not come easily. Without
11 common values, vision and mission that joint
12 ownership brings, these partnerships are doomed
13 to failure. The media landscape is littered
14 with failed attempts to create this
15 partnership. And in every case the common
16 theme is a lack of common ownership.

17 Media General is committed to the
18 communities that it serves and being a leader
19 in local news and information. Granting it the
20 right to maximize news delivery in a converged
21 manner will guarantee that residents of its
22 communities will be among the most informed in
23 all matters of civic discourse. Thank you very

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24 much.

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25 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Bradley.

1 Mr. Carey.

2 MR. CAREY: I'm the vice president and
3 general manager of WFTS, the ABC affiliate
4 here in Tampa. And I also serve as the
5 chairman-elect of the Florida Association of
6 Broadcasters.

7 On behalf of both organizations, we
8 welcome the Chairman, Commissioners and staff
9 of the FCC to Tampa.

10 Since the primary topic is ownership, let
11 me start by saying that FTS is one of ten
12 television stations that make up the Scripps
13 Television Group. Our corporate parent is the
14 E.W. Scripps Company based in Cincinnati, Ohio.

15 We're a diverse and growing media
16 enterprise with proud heritage of more than 125
17 years in newspapers and serving local
18 communities. We have stayed viable, in part,
19 by establishing our footprint in new mediums as
20 technology and society evolve.

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21 Our company has witnessed, adapted and
22 endured the changes in the production and
23 delivery of news and information; newspapers to
24 radio, radio to television, television to
25 cable, and now all of us establishing our

1 brands in the online world; more choices, more
2 audiences served and more competition.

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3 The laws -- the law of survival is in
4 place. We're all fighting for a market share
5 that is finite. The common thread throughout
6 these changes is localism. Success is about
7 being relevant and investing at the local
8 level. And invest we do.

9 Millions of dollars are spent and are
10 being spent on weather forecasting equipment,
11 digital transmission conversion and
12 news-gathering hardware. The current seismic
13 change facing broadcasters -- and for the
14 newspaper industry as well -- is the prevalence
15 of broadband in the home.

16 Newspapers and television are more apt to
17 look at Internet partnerships than partnering
18 with each other. Remember the broadcast
19 ownerships rules were adopted long before
20 Google, Yahoo and You-Tube. Even the thought
21 of a 500-channel universe seems dated now.

22 With the Internet, each person, each
23 idea, can have its own channel and direct
24 pathway to the public.

25 But when severe weather strikes, the
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1 electric power goes out, so does the cable TV
2 and the computer in your home; it is the
3 broadcasters, radio and television, that rise
4 to the occasion and serve urgent news and
5 information for free and over the air.

6 When that power fails, a battery-operated
7 television will find our signal, and viewers
8 can stay connected to what's going on. Like

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9 other television stations in Tampa, we are in a
10 -- we work in an around-the-clock coverage mode
11 through four hurricanes between August and
12 September of 2004.

13 Two times those stations stayed on the
14 air for 48 hours, two other times for 60 hours.
15 Behind the scenes, our staff worked long
16 shifts, stayed at the stations, took a nap, and
17 then worked more hours.

18 Some suffered damage to their homes and
19 didn't get home to tend to their personal lives
20 for days, all because they take their craft and
21 their calling seriously.

22 Our sister station, also owned by
23 Scripps, WPTV, the NBC affiliate in West Palm
24 Beach, suffered severe damage to its roof
25 during Hurricane Francis in 2004. Rainwater

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1 flooded in and threatened their master control
2 room.

3 As water rose on the floor, quick
4 decisions had to be made. But through cool
5 leadership and resourcefulness, the station
6 solved its crisis and stayed on the air.

7 That was important, as WPTV is the
8 most-watched, most relied-upon station in West
9 Palm Beach, and in a time of crisis, all the
10 more so. They went beyond their job
11 description. In fact, each station in Florida
12 has more than its share of stories over the
13 last few hurricane seasons.

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14 Tim Jones is a photographer at our
15 station. During the height of one hurricane,
16 he stepped on debris while training his live
17 picture in on his reporter in the storm. A
18 nail penetrated his workbook and pierced his
19 foot.

20 He was live on the air, delivering
21 pictures of the hurricane as it made landfall.
22 For the next 20 minutes, he chose to stay
23 still. But he kept his live picture on his
24 reporter on the air. Twenty minutes went by
25 before he moved his foot. Tim Jones is an

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1 exemplary employee dedicated to his craft. It
2 is more than a job.

3 So long as our business keeps attracting
4 people who look at it as a calling, it won't
5 matter all that much who's running the place.
6 But that level of service and dedication,
7 beyond what an owner can ask of an employee,
8 will not by itself be enough to compete
9 effectively in the future.

10 Anyone with a computer can now compete to
11 serve the local audience. And for me this
12 point was brought home last year when I met an
13 aspiring journalist. He had jump-started his
14 career ambitions by building a local news
15 website. He was the general manager, news
16 director, anchor, reporter, writer and producer
17 of the website.

18 When I met him last year he was still
19 15 years old. He would ride his bicycle --

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20 still too young to have a driver's license --
21 to the scene of local news stories and post
22 stories complete with pictures and video on his
23 website magnet (sic.)

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24 And if you were to look at the website
25 you would think it belongs to a full-fledged

1 news organization. It's that impressive. He
2 sticks to local news; and for him, that's very
3 local, the blocks around his home. He's
4 surprisingly good and current with his
5 reporting. He serves his neighborhood well.

6 That's the future challenge to ownership
7 and to market share. And it's what we may look
8 like in the not-too-distant future. It's why
9 the debate about regulating broadcasters needs
10 to be framed in today's world. You can see the
11 evolution.

12 In the past a 15-year-old delivered the
13 news in the neighborhood by riding his bike
14 around and throwing a newspaper on your
15 doorstep. Today a 15-year-old is still in the
16 neighborhood, still riding a bicycle, but
17 publishes the news himself and delivers it to
18 your screen. Times change.

19 We welcome debate and public scrutiny.
20 We have much responsibility, and we do take it
21 seriously. We thank you for your hearing on
22 our stories in Tampa. And we'll be available
23 to work with you in the challenges we face in
24 the future. Thank you.

47 25

MR. SIGALOS: Mr. Carey.

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. SIGALOS: Mr. Dardenne.

3 MR. DARDENNE: Thank you. I'm Robert
4 Dardenne. I'm a former news reporter for both
5 big media and cross-owned media, and now I'm
6 an associate professor of journalism and media
7 studies at USF-St. Petersburg and a director
8 of Speak Up Tampa Bay, which manages public
9 access television in Tampa Bay and
10 Hillsborough County.

11 Our Tampa Bay media, already
12 concentrated, experience similar market
13 pressures we see everywhere. These rules will
14 further concentrate this market and increase
15 corporate profits. But will they benefit
16 citizens?

17 Economy of scale, certainly in news
18 content, shows little indication that it helps
19 people who use news nearly as much as it does
20 those who produce it. Merging media doesn't
21 elevate content as much as it streamlines
22 operation.

23 Efficiency is good economics and delivers
24 news faster. But with current technology, the
25 issues aren't always efficiency and speed as

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1 much as explanation, context, investigation,
2 analysis and relevance.

3 Each medium has its strengths; immediacy
4 of broadcast, intimacy of radio, images of

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5 television, opinion and perspective of the web
6 and detailed context and analysis of
7 newspapers.

8 Convergence doesn't enhance these
9 strengths so much as blend them, creating a
10 more average media product, replacing three or
11 four distinctive ones often with fewer
12 reporters.

13 We already know what can happen to
14 content in a corporate media environment; fewer
15 investigative reports, less varied
16 international news, less context and depth,
17 more amusement and entertainment, increasing
18 dependence on authority, officials and
19 government and cheap and easy opinion, and less
20 local news, five minutes of broadcast -- by
21 your own study -- but still a lot of crime and
22 car wrecks.

23 News media critics long ago noted that
24 local news suffered after chains bought local
25 media. That hasn't changed. The best local

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1 news media create and maintain community,
2 engage citizens through news and forums and
3 invigorates civic engagement.

4 And despite efforts of independent and
5 alternative media and a promising but basic
6 online journalism, most people still get most
7 of their news from mainstream news media.

8 (Applause.)

9 Competition makes local and other news

10 more vigorous. Diversity of ownership and
11 perspective makes it more comprehensive and
12 relevant to more people. Yet these rules
13 encourage a monolithic and expanded corporate
14 press that demonstrates preference for cheap
15 and generic content over viable news and
16 markets with further diminished competition.

17 Corporate news media and individual
18 journalists can and do produce excellent
19 journalism. Knight-Ridder, now McClatchy,
20 admirably uncovered the lead-up to the Iraq
21 War. We would've had a healthier, more robust
22 debate, if all mainstream media were as
23 responsible.

24 Critics amply demonstrate that coverage
25 of most other major media significantly

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1 promoted government viewpoints and restricted
2 access to other perspectives. This powerfully
3 illustrates the potentially disastrous weakness
4 of a dominant media willing to sacrifice
5 journalistic principles for economic gain,
6 image and government favor.

7 No matter -- (Applause) -- no matter --
8 no matter what we are, pro-war, anti-war,
9 liberal, conservative, Republican, Democrat,
10 who among us can say we want this kind of news
11 media?

12 Ideally, a press functions to help us be
13 better citizens and thinkers. It exposes us to
14 diverse perspectives. Then we form and
15 occasionally act on opinions we temper or

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16 fortify in discussion.

17 When FCC rules narrow the range of
18 viewpoints, and we are overfed Anna Nicole
19 Smith and starved for alternative perspectives
20 on the war, how can we become better citizens?

21 (Applause.)

22 We are asked not to think, but to
23 consume. News is not a typical commodity, to
24 be sold like toothpaste. The constitutional
25 protections afforded corporate and other news

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1 media come with significant obligations, mainly
2 to provide relevant, credible news in a
3 compelling enough manner to prosper and remain
4 financially independent.

5 Prettying up packaging and buying the
6 competition works for toothpaste, but it cannot
7 work for news that serves citizens. Allowing
8 corporations to control more media and own more
9 local media is a bad idea.

10 Commissioners should be considering
11 measures that lead to more competition and more
12 voices, not ones guaranteeing to stifle both.

13 Thank you. (Applause.)

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Dardenne.

15 We now go to Mr. Steve Erlanger.

16 MR. ERLANGER: Thank you. Tough act to
17 follow here.

18 I would like to also thank you for the
19 opportunity. My name's Steve Erlanger. I'm
20 the publisher, C.O.O. and founder of Hometown

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21 News.

22 We currently publish 18 separate local
23 community newspapers along the east coast of
24 Florida, covering approximately 250 miles north
25 of Palm Beach north to Ormond Beach.

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1 I would like to address the hazards of
2 cross-ownership and most of it from a personal
3 experience. I've been in the community
4 newspaper business for about 26 years. I have
5 lived in Ohio, Texas, California, New Jersey,
6 Pennsylvania and Florida.

7 I have seen the erosion of local news
8 coverage by major media in all parts of the
9 country. And this has been without the advent
10 of cross-ownership in most cases.
11 Cross-ownership will only further erode the
12 local independent voice of the community.

13 Back when I was growing up in
14 Springfield, Ohio, we had the Springfield Daily
15 News. It came out every day, and it was filled
16 with the daily Springfield news. Sometime ago
17 it was purchased by Cox, who at this time owned
18 the Dayton Daily News.

19 Today the Springfield Daily News is
20 filled with national, world, state and, of
21 course, Dayton news, but not much Springfield
22 news. And this is common in every state in the
23 country where major media companies come in and
24 purchase the local daily.

25 It is no secret that it is far cheaper to

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1 subscribe to the AP or UPI Wire Services or to
2 the metro news and local edition than it is to
3 hire local reporters to cover local, city or
4 county news.

5 In every market the Hometown News is
6 currently in, one of the reasons we have been
7 so successful in a short period of time is
8 because of the shortage of local news coverage
9 by the major media. Most large media do not
10 cover the local news anymore, at least not like
11 they used to, and definitely not like what the
12 public wants. (Applause.)

13 If the major media are allowed to own
14 multiple sources, there will be less and less
15 local news options available. Let me give you
16 a few examples we have dealt with in what I see
17 is one of the most damaging results of
18 cross-ownership.

19 If one company is allowed to own several
20 news advertising sources, their ability to
21 eliminate the competition, someone like us, is
22 great. If one company has a lock on a high
23 percentage of the local residents, then their
24 ability to control the advertising dollars by
25 coercion and threats is magnified. And without

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1 advertising dollars, smaller independents, like
2 Hometown News, will cease to exist.

3 I've heard people say, "Oh, they would
4 never do that," or "They couldn't do something
5 like that." And I'm here to tell you, it

6 happens, it happens every day. I'll give a few
7 examples.

8 On the Treasure Coast, which is made up
9 of St. Lucie, Martin and Indian River Counties,
10 Scripps Howard is the major media company.
11 They own four dailies. They also happen to own
12 the broadcast media in Palm Beach.

13 For years they had one of the
14 fastest-growing markets in the country locked
15 up and had managed to keep out any and all
16 potential competitors. That was until Hometown
17 News came into being in 2002.

18 They were not happy. They distributed
19 fliers with disparaging information on it about
20 Hometown News. They sent personnel to talk to
21 the advertisers who were running with us and
22 telling them we were lying about this and that.
23 And when that didn't work, they went one step
24 further.

25 We were about to get a large advertiser

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1 doing a lot of business with us. It had been
2 confirmed that they were trying to get an ad
3 sent to us. When Scripps found out, they sent
4 an upper-level manager to the account and,
5 basically, threatened them, told them that if
6 they were to run with us, then Scripps would
7 have to go back and review their rate
8 structure; in essence, told them that if they
9 ran with us, they would raise their rates.

10 Of course, the business owner was upset.
11 But what could he do. We have more examples of

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12 Scripps making local businesses sign exclusive
13 advertising contracts and then offer them an
14 extra low rate.

15 And this is not the only example. We've
16 had virtually the same scenario play out for
17 Gannett in Brevard and Cox in Palm Beach and
18 Volusia counties. Do not think for a minute
19 that these are isolated cases.

20 The big media guys do not want
21 competition. That is why they promote and
22 desire cross-ownership. They are not happy
23 making a few hundred million. They want it
24 all; and they are willing to sacrifice the
25 whole concept of unbiased news coverage, fair

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1 and equitable competition, to get it. And
2 that's just the advertising side. (Applause.)

3 The biggest complaint I hear from
4 citizens and business owners in the counties we
5 serve is that the dailies have an agenda. They
6 promote whatever side of an issue they're in
7 agreement with. You can edit any discussion or
8 video or sound track to say whatever you want
9 it to say. You can interview select
10 individuals to promote the same ideals as you.

11 Can you imagine how slanted this could
12 become if you allowed one or two companies to
13 control what is being fed to the public. And,
14 believe me, this is what would happen.

15 Every one of these guys could afford to
16 lose a little money or not make as much money

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17 long enough to put me and thousands of others
18 like me out of business. And once we are gone,
19 those great deals and rates on advertising
20 would be gone.

21 With no competition left, they could
22 charge whatever they wanted, and the business
23 owners would have to pay it. And if someone
24 came into the market, they could do it all over
25 again to drive them out.

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1 And who do you think is covering the
2 local civic groups and nonprofits and other
3 charitable organizations?

4 It sure isn't the major media. We have
5 literally changed the way -- (Applause) -- that
6 the nonprofits do business. We have become
7 their link to the community. We have never
8 accepted a dime from a charitable organization
9 for one of their fundraising events. This is
10 not always how it has been.

11 The dailies would stick it to them and
12 make them pay the highest rate on a car to rent
13 for their fundraisers. That doesn't happen
14 anymore. Now the funds are used for whatever
15 worthy cause they care about. If we go, so
16 does that benefit.

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much,
18 Mr. Erlanger. (Applause.)

19 Mr. Gordon.

20 MR. GORDON: Thank you. Thank you. Good
21 afternoon. My name is Ronald Gordon. I'm the
22 president of ZGS Communications, a

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23 Hispanic-owned broadcasting company. I'm also
24 the president of the Independent Spanish
25 Broadcasters Association, an organization

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1 created by Hispanic broadcasters to promote
2 ownership and professional opportunities for
3 Latinos and minorities in the media.

4 With a name like "Gordon," you might find
5 it hard to believe, but I'm a native of Peru.
6 I came to the United States at 15, when an
7 American, my stepfather, married my mother. It
8 was my ticket to America and my Green Card all
9 rolled into one.

10 My partner and I started ZGS
11 Communications with just \$200 and through hard
12 work and dedication built our company into what
13 is the largest independent owner of
14 Telemundo-affiliated stations.

15 We have 10 television stations, two
16 full-power stations and eight Class A stations,
17 including three in Florida; here in Tampa,
18 Orlando and Fort Myers. We have almost 200
19 employees, 94 percent of them Hispanic or
20 minority; and 92 percent of our senior
21 management team is minority as well.

22 I am very proud of the contributions --
23 (Applause) -- Thank you. I'm very proud of the
24 contributions ZGS has made and continues to
25 make in support of minority broadcasting. As a

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1 Hispanic company we take our responsibility

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2 very seriously and view our FCC license, first
3 and foremost, as an opportunity to champion and
4 serve our community.

5 Our stations, our largest stations,
6 produce high-quality daily newscasts, air
7 between five to fifteen hours of local
8 programming per week, and a look at our recent
9 newsletter -- which I have here for the
10 commissioners -- shows you the kind of
11 commitment that we have and how we value the
12 opportunity to serve and make a difference in
13 our communities.

14 I'd like to think that we are a great
15 example of what having an FCC license is all
16 about. Despite the success and effort of
17 companies like ZGS, it is a tragedy that women,
18 small business and minorities have been
19 systematically disenfranchised from the public
20 airwaves.

21 As a result of -- (Applause) -- as a
22 result of poor public policy designed to
23 promote the economic interests of large media
24 conglomerates, community-based broadcasting,
25 localism and diversity of voice and ownership

1 have all been marginalized from our industry.

2 Minorities in the community represent
3 well over 30 percent of the population, yet
4 they account for less than 4 percent of radio
5 and less than 2 percent of TV ownership.

6 Despite the tremendous amount of lip
7 service, nothing has been done at the

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8 legislative or regulatory level to ensure that
9 ownership of our national airwaves is more
10 reflective of our society and its diversity.

11 Our concern at ZGS and at the Independent
12 Spanish Broadcasters is that we're headed down
13 the same road with the television industry.
14 The proposals put forth today by the Commission
15 are essentially steps towards consolidation,
16 without a single component to promote diversity
17 of voice and competition for minority and small
18 business ownership in the television industry.

19 The ownership caps, which are already
20 distorted due to the UHF discount, will only
21 allow the very big to get even bigger. The
22 proposals for leased must-carry digital
23 streams, as well-intentioned as they might be,
24 will relegate minority programmers to a life of
25 tenant farmers working at the will and to the

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1 benefit of their landlord broadcasters.

2 (Applause.)

3 All proposals to date will result in
4 fewer players, fewer voices and fewer
5 opportunities. It is incredible to think that
6 broadcasting has less minority and
7 small-business participation and equity than
8 almost any other industry.

9 At the end of the day, there has to be
10 some space, some opportunity for small and
11 minority business to participate and compete in
12 local broadcast companies.

13 Ironically, the most viable vehicle to
14 promote localism, diversity and opportunity in
15 television already exists; in fact, it is a
16 licensed service of the FCC, and our company a
17 wonderful example of its true potential, LPTV
18 Class A television stations.

19 It is the only broadcast service required
20 by law to provide local programming. It
21 already has the most women and minority owners,
22 and it almost -- it is almost entirely a local
23 and community-based service.

24 Unfortunately, despite these attributes,
25 the Congress and the Commission have never

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1 fully embraced or supported this service;
2 consequently, it has struggled to reach its
3 potential, due in large part to the fact that
4 Class A stations have no must-carry rights in a
5 television world increasingly and
6 overwhelmingly dominated by cable and satellite
7 subscription services.

8 I am hopeful that as the Commission
9 reviews its television ownership rules, it will
10 explore and embrace LPTV Class A service as a
11 unique platform to effectively increase
12 localism, diversity of voice and minority and
13 female ownership in the television industry.

14 The conditions for this support already
15 exist; a local-content requirement, a limited
16 number of stations for market, a licensed
17 service designed for small business and
18 compliance with all existing television

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19 regulatory requirements.

20 Finally, to allow this service to survive
21 and effectively compete, Congress and the FCC
22 should require cable and satellite services to
23 carry Class A primary signal on the local
24 broadcast digital tier, a condition easily
25 filled in a digital world.

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1 I trust the Commission will use the
2 proposed ruling-making as an opportunity to
3 address the inequities that exist with our
4 public airwaves; no lip service, but real
5 meaningful policies and regulations that create
6 a level playing field for all sectors of our
7 society to participate and compete in our
8 industry. Thank you. (Applause.)

9 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Gordon.

10 Mr. Jim Johnson.

11 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you,
12 Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, thank you for
13 the opportunity to address you here today.

14 I believe the Internet represents the
15 future of the media. More and more people are
16 getting their news online, and surveys have
17 shown that the number of sources for the news
18 is growing.

19 Online advertising is growing faster than
20 any other medium. And it's growing by almost
21 the same proportion as print advertising is
22 declining.

23 According to the Project for Excellence

24 in Journalism, eight percent of Americans -- of
25 online Americans -- have written some form of a

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1 blog. While 51 million Americans subscribe to
2 newspapers, 57 million Americans have read or
3 do read blogs. That's 39 percent of all online
4 adults.

5 The numbers show the trend continuing to
6 grow and online alternatives gaining wider and
7 wider acceptance; however, there's one very
8 important note to consider.

9 Online news sites generating the most
10 traffic are those owned by large media
11 corporations which have the power and finances
12 to publish a significant amount of content.

13 My own site, which narrowly focuses on
14 Florida politics sees the number of visitors in
15 one week that TB0.com gets in less than one
16 hour. At the same time, I personally post, in
17 one week, the same number of stories TB0.com
18 posts in less than one hour.

19 Content drives traffic. And large media
20 corporations have more content. The best hope
21 that citizen journalists have to compete with
22 large media corporations is hyper-local news
23 sites. These websites offer news more
24 localized than even a local newspaper could
25 ever offer; moreover, some might even argue the

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1 newsworthiness of such hyper-local news, so
2 large media corporations simply don't devote
3 resources to it.

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4 This provides an opportunity for
5 communities to produce local news that did not
6 exist even five years.

7 So where are we today?

8 As you have heard and will hear from
9 others, changing the rules on media ownership
10 will have a negative impact on local news
11 coverage. The larger media corporations can
12 grow, the less local news will be generated.
13 At the same time, not changing the local -- the
14 rules on media ownership will have a negative
15 impact on local news coverage.

16 Newspapers, and to some extent,
17 television and radio are seeing a declining
18 audience resulting in declining advertising
19 dollars. It's a downward spiral that will
20 never be reversed.

21 One of these effects is the -- in the --
22 of the audience shift and local -- is a
23 reduction in local news, which is already being
24 seen as the newsrooms across the country
25 downsize.

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1 Now, if you can't change the rules
2 because local coverage will suffer, and you
3 have to change the rules because local coverage
4 is starting to suffer, what do you do?

5 I think you have to find a middle ground.
6 If you change the rules, then put a greater
7 impetus on large media corporations to serve
8 the public interests.

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9 If you allow broadcast companies to buy
10 newspapers, require that they provide more
11 resources for local and hyper-local news.

12 If you allow companies to buy more radio
13 stations and televisions (sic) within a market,
14 require a minimum of HD and digital programming
15 on those news stations to be locally produced
16 and locally oriented.

17 Finally, make it easier for low-powered
18 community radio and/or television stations to
19 operate. If media companies who still produce
20 the bulk of online content are not strictly
21 required to provide local news, then the amount
22 of local news online will decrease.

23 Simply pointing to the Internet as proof
24 of competition will not be enough in the
25 foreseeable future. There are not enough local

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1 content providers, and the audience is not yet
2 comfortable finding those that do exist.

3 In the end, while I recognize some action
4 may be taken, I strongly urge you to temper any
5 action you take with the recognition of the
6 need for greater oversight on those companies
7 who move beyond the current limits. It is
8 still better to do nothing than to change the
9 rules without oversight. Thank you.

10 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

11 Mr. Klinenberg.

12 MR. KLINENBERG: Thank you.

13 I'm an associate professor at New York
14 University. And I spent the past five years

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15 studying how FCC rule changes allowing more
16 concentration have affected diversity and
17 competition and localism in our nation's media
18 system.

19 And that said, I wish the Commission
20 would solicit, formally, research from all
21 social scientists and not just the economists.
22 Because there's a lot that they can't tell you.

23 My testimony today will focus on the
24 issue of cross-ownership -- (Applause.) I
25 didn't know that many people didn't like

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1 economists. (Laughter & Applause.)

2 The FCC originally passed the ban in 1975
3 to ensure that citizens have access to a wide
4 range of viewpoints on local issues and to
5 prevent any single media company from having an
6 undue influence deciding which perspectives and
7 positions get an airing and which do not.

8 Your predecessors believed that diversity
9 in ownership promotes competition, that it
10 creates opportunities for small independent
11 media companies, including those owned by women
12 and people of color, that it provides outlets
13 for minority perspectives in creative
14 programming, and that it promotes local content
15 that's not only vital to democracy but also
16 makes our hometown feel like home.

17 In 1975 broadcast television stations and
18 newspapers were the two most popular sources of
19 local news. And today, despite all the new

20 media we have, they still are.

21 The companies calling for repeal make two
22 core complaints. The first is that they say
23 the ban is no longer necessary because new
24 media provides consumers with diverse
25 perspectives. And "Second," they say,

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1 "Newspaper companies today need profits,
2 They're losing money," they say, "They need
3 profits so that their television stations can
4 subsidize journalistic operations."

5 Yet, overall, nationally speaking, the
6 record gives us real reason to pause and be
7 skeptical.

8 Consider the Tribune Company in my
9 hometown, Chicago. Before the U.S. Senate
10 Commerce Committee, Tribune's former president
11 of publishing assured officials that with new
12 media offerings, there is no risk of one voice
13 dominating the marketplace with ideas.

14 But that's hard to square with what
15 Tribune's current president and CEO recently
16 told investors in a shareholder meeting.
17 Before then he said, "In Chicago, Tribune's
18 newspapers, television stations, websites,
19 magazines and radio stations reach 6.4 million
20 people." That's 90 percent of the market.

21 So let me ask you. Which of
22 Tribune's two stories are we as citizens, or
23 you as commissioners, to believe?

24 And if the Tribune CEO is being honest
25 with his shareholders, is this not exactly the

1 kind of market domination that is dangerous for
2 democracy, the very condition that the
3 cross-ownership ban is designed to prevent?

4 (Applause.)

5 Today some newspaper companies say that
6 cross-ownership will serve the public
7 interests by promoting more and better local
8 journalism.

9 But, again, consider Tribune. In LA,
10 where it owns the LA Times and KTLA TV,
11 Tribune has a limited -- eliminated about
12 one-quarter of the newspaper editorial staff.
13 That's about 300 people -- (inaudible comments
14 from the audience) -- since establishing its
15 cross-ownership arrangement (Applause.)

16 In New York, where I live, Tribune owns
17 Newsday and CW11. It's cut about one-third of
18 the Newsday editorial staff in the past three
19 years. And the story is similar in Chicago and
20 in Hartford.

21 I know none of this will surprise you
22 here in Tampa. Media General recently
23 announced plans to eliminate 70 staffers, while
24 also focussing on hyper-local contents. And
25 doing hyper-local content sounds great, but it

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1 also begs the question: How can a news
2 organization cut 70 people and then do more
3 local journalism? (Applause.)

4 In my research, I've also learned that

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5 cross-ownership exacts other more insidious
6 toll, on newspaper reporting in particular.
7 When media companies converge operations,
8 managers urge or even require staffers to spend
9 less time reporting and more time on
10 television.

11 And in Tampa and in Chicago I met
12 journalists who said that doing TV spots means
13 writing short scripts, putting on makeup,
14 taping, editing, taking off the makeup. And
15 that can take up to a quarter of one's day,
16 costing time they need to produce quality news.

17 I heard related concerns with
18 cross-ownership. Journalists can be rewarded
19 or even retained for being telegenic. With
20 cross-ownership plum assignments can go to
21 multitaskers, not necessarily to the best
22 reporters.

23 With cross-ownership, citizens are
24 exposed to fewer perspectives than when TV
25 stations and newspapers are separately owned.

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1 So now we have to ask: Who is going to benefit
2 from cross-ownership?

3 From my view, it's not journalists, it's
4 not citizens, it's not cities, it's not
5 communities; it's just a few corporations which
6 will become even more profitable than they
7 already are. (Applause.)

8 I'm going to ask for a few seconds just
9 because of the -- the blocks (sic) here. I
10 want to emphasize that I mean more profitable.

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11 We all know that newspapers stock values
12 are sagging. We all know that circulation is
13 lagging. There's no question that newspaper
14 managers are under great pressure to deal with
15 those problems.

16 But we need to acknowledge that typical
17 newspaper chains are getting profit margins
18 around 20 percent. That's three times the norm
19 in the Fortune 500 companies. The problem
20 they're facing comes from investment bankers
21 and organized institutional shareholders, who aren't
22 satisfied with that, not with --

23 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. SIGALOS: Mr. Manteiga.

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1 MR. MANTEIGA: Thank you for the
2 opportunity to speak before this commission.

3 My name's Patrick Manteiga. I'm the
4 publisher of La Gaceta. I represent an
5 endangered species -- (Applause) -- in our
6 modern age of communications, the family-owned
7 small newspaper.

8 La Gaceta was founded by my grandfather
9 Vitoriano Manteiga, in 1922, here in Tampa.
10 And we continue to publish today in three
11 languages, Spanish, English and Italian. Our
12 goal is to inform, promote and serve the Latin
13 community.

14 I feel there's a real danger in allowing
15 cross-ownership of a major daily newspaper and

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16 television stations in the same market and
17 unrestricted ownership of radio and television
18 stations.

19 I have witnessed that these and similar
20 relationships are used to silence competition
21 with business practices that are unfair and, in
22 the end, detrimental to the market they serve.

23 The Tribune, under Media General's
24 ownership, closed its afternoon daily in the
25 early '80s after it became apparent that the

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1 market forces -- that market forces made it
2 more than difficult for anyone to start up an
3 afternoon daily. This action removed one voice
4 from our community.

5 A decade later, Media General bought up a
6 group of local weeklies called "Sun-Belt
7 Publishing." When they were first purchased,
8 Media General and the Tampa Tribune promised
9 the public that these weeklies would remain
10 independent from the Tribune.

11 But over the years the major dailies
12 slowly incorporated these weeklies into
13 becoming a section of the Tampa Tribune. These
14 weeklies carry the Tribune logo on the front
15 page and are inserted in the Tribune.

16 They no longer have an independent
17 editorial voice focussed on the local
18 communities they serve. Plant City, Sun City,
19 Brandon and other communities have lost their
20 voice.

21 The Tribune is now using its size in

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22 relationship with its television station to
23 gain an unfair advantage in niche markets. My
24 newspaper now faces competition from Centro, a
25 Spanish-language publication started by the

1 Tribune a year ago.

2 I would welcome competition from other
3 Spanish newspapers; in fact, there've been
4 several independent startups over the past few
5 years. Head-to-head competition can make us
6 try harder, work smarter, and in the end make a
7 better product.

8 But in this case I am not competing
9 against Centro. I am competing against Media
10 General, the Tampa Tribune, WFLA-TV and
11 TB0.com. Centro ads are being inserted by the
12 -- sold by the Tribune, and in many cases are
13 part of the package that basically gives away
14 advertising in Centro if a client buys ads in
15 the Tribune or its affiliates.

16 Competing against an opponent who has
17 unlimited resources, and in this case is
18 willing to take a -- take a loss here, is from
19 our perspective, unfair.

20 This kind of competition is meant to put
21 us and all of other independent Spanish
22 newspapers out of business by cutting off our
23 revenue and separating us from our community.

24 One of the tactics is to offer nonprofit
25 events support from Media General's TV and

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1 newspaper, if the event gives exclusivity to
2 Centro. You can see this is almost impossible
3 to compete against.

4 What makes the situation worse is that
5 Centro does not offer an independent political
6 editorial. While the Tribune works to silence
7 us, they do not want to use their newspaper as
8 a voice for the Hispanic community. Centro
9 does not endorse candidates, does not fight for
10 fairness, takes positions, contrary to the
11 Tribune.

12 The Latin community needs nurturing and
13 help. It needs an advocate. The Tribune only
14 wants our money. They are not just silencing
15 us; they're silencing the Latin community.

16 The same thing is happening at Spanish
17 radio. CBS has opened a Spanish FM station
18 that is hurting locally-owned AM stations.
19 It's using its many English stations here to
20 market and sell its Spanish one.

21 The local AM so far has done an admirable
22 job of community programming. CBS has not
23 matched their involvement and probably never
24 will. It's just money to corporations like
25 Media General and CBS.

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1 When CBS started La Nueva in this market,
2 for the first few days no one at the
3 all-Spanish stations spoke Spanish. It's
4 kind'a hard to serve the community when you
5 can't understand what they're saying.

6 (Applause.)

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7 The FCC wants our airwaves --
8 (Applause) -- the FCC wants our airwaves to be
9 used responsibly. And I'm sure, while you
10 don't regulate print, you hope for the same for
11 that media. Local ownership is really the only
12 way to guarantee responsibility.

13 When it's your family's name on the door,
14 you act responsibly. When you meet those you
15 serve at school and at church, at the grocery
16 store, you act responsibly.

17 The problem with letting the media get
18 bigger than it is now, is that ownership is
19 further removed from the community, so they
20 care less, they are harder to reach, and in the
21 end community advocacy, responsible journalism
22 and commitment to diversity comes secondary to
23 making a buck.

24 For years we fought for the Latin
25 community, because the Tribune wouldn't. Now

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1 that our numbers are greater, they want a piece
2 of the pie, but they won't share the
3 responsibility.

4 Please don't make my job any tougher than
5 it is. Cap the size of big media before they
6 use their size to extinguish the minority
7 voice. (Applause.)

8 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Manteiga.
9 Mr. Roberts.

10 MR. ROBERTS: Good afternoon,
11 Mr. Chairman and Commissioners of the Federal

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12 Communications Commission.

13 I am Pat Roberts, President of the
14 Florida Association of Broadcasters and
15 Chairman of the FCC State Emergency
16 Communication Committee.

17 Over the past couple of years I've served
18 on the FCC's Media Security and Reliability
19 Counsel, both the first and the second. I have
20 spoken before the U.S. Senate on hurricane
21 preparedness and your FCC Katrina panel and
22 currently serve on your FCC Warning Act Panel.

23 I co-chaired the National EAS, an
24 Emergency Communications Summit, for the
25 country. And since Hurricane Andrew, in 1992,

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1 Florida has spent time and invested in a
2 state-wide EAS system that is also utilized by
3 Amber Alerts.

4 Today we are the model for the country.
5 Unfortunately, most states still rely on a
6 local daisy-chain system, not state-wide
7 operation. Florida has also partnered with FAB
8 and local stations in a major public education
9 campaign to prepare the state for hurricanes.

10 Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, I want to
11 personally thank each of you and the staff of
12 the FCC for the help you've provided the
13 broadcasters in our state and states across the
14 Gulf Coast during the recent hurricanes.

15 Your staff was there seven days a week,
16 including weekends, to check the condition of
17 the local and TV radio stations and to offer

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18 your assistance. Of all the federal agencies
19 and departments, you were the shining light
20 during a very difficult time.

21 I know this personally, 'cause I've been
22 at the Florida EOC during every landfall of
23 every hurricane since Andrew and at the cities
24 of the impact within 24 hours. This includes
25 Hurricane Katrina, where I arrived on the

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1 Mississippi coast the next day with other
2 Florida First Responders.

3 When the path of hurricane start toward
4 Florida or other states, the TV and radio
5 stations go full-time with news to warn their
6 communities. After landfall, usually, large
7 areas are without electric power. Radio truly
8 becomes the lifeline to their community.

9 In our state, radio and TV stations have
10 already established partnerships to reach the
11 people. TV usually has more resources for
12 news, weather and emergency information. So in
13 those cases, the local TV signals and audio
14 track are carried on multiple local radio
15 stations to reach the residents in the impacted
16 area.

17 We know that these partnerships have
18 saved lives during the time around landfall and
19 immediately following hurricanes. And they
20 have been the only communication to the people
21 for several days thereafter.

22 In 2004 we did use EAS when Hurricane

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23 Charley made a sharp right-hand turn. It's the
24 first time we'd ever used the EAS during a
25 hurricane, because we always thought we knew

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1 they were coming.

2 When Max Mayfield called and asked our
3 governor to immediately alert all the residents
4 of Ft. Myers and Punta Gorda that their area
5 was going to be hit, the EAS message was sent
6 out within minutes in both English and Spanish,
7 and all the local stations carried it.

8 This change of course with Hurricane
9 Charley would not have been known by most of
10 the residents if they had not had an effective
11 and reliable EAS system in that area.

12 Today you are with us in our largest
13 media market, Tampa-St. Petersburg. It's a
14 diverse market with a substantial
15 senior-citizen population, a strong historic
16 Hispanic community, a viable and respected
17 Black community and a strong business community
18 on both sides of the Bay.

19 The owners of broadcast stations in this
20 market and across Florida have found the
21 programming and formats that work for them.
22 But more importantly, they meet the needs of
23 these diverse groups.

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24 Let me say, as president of the Florida
25 Broadcasters, I am most proud of the efforts

1 broadcasters have taken on to serve their
2 community, not only with Hurricane Preparedness

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3 but also Amber Alerts, support of local
4 charities, education on such things as drug
5 abuse, spouse and child abuse, underage
6 drinking, helping groups like the American
7 Heart Association American Cancer, homeless
8 campaigns and helping our National Guard in
9 Florida recruit people to join, as well as many
10 other worthwhile projects.

11 The current ownership rules, as they are
12 represented in Florida, have worked well for
13 our citizens in the broadcast community. The
14 cross-ownership of the Tampa Tribune and WFLA
15 has not created an unfair advantage for them.

16 You only have to look at the strong and
17 viable competitors, such as the St. Pete Times,
18 the other local TV and radio stations and many
19 smaller daily, weekly papers and the multiple
20 Internet sites that are serving Tampa Bay.

21 Florida has also seen the importance of
22 TV duopoly in serving the community. Today
23 with the multiple sources of news, information
24 and entertainment, TV duopolies often allow the
25 combined operation the opportunity to utilize

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1 their resources to serve their communities in a
2 more viable and economical way.

3 I believe the current radio ownership
4 rules have worked well for the local
5 communities. Because they have allowed
6 broadcasters to become economically stronger
7 and to better serve their community.

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8 In closing, today broadcasters face
9 growing competition from cable, Internet,
10 newspapers, satellite TV, satellite radio, cell
11 phones and even iPods. The digital waves will
12 only increase competition and sources of
13 information to the public.

14 No other industry serves their community
15 as well as TV and radio. They raise funds for
16 worthy causes. They are the backbone of the
17 EAS and Amber, and they are the primary source
18 of information for residents on news, weather,
19 and most important, they are the lifeline
20 during disasters.

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Roberts.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. ROBERTS: Broadcasters take their
24 responsibilities seriously. Thank you.

25 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

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1 Mr. Rowbotham.

2 MR. ROWBOTHAM: Good afternoon. I'm Art
3 Rowbotham, President of Hall Communications
4 and General Manager of WONN, WPCV, WLKF and
5 WWRZ in -- Radio in Lakeland Florida. I've
6 been the manager there for 24 years.

7 Lakeland's a town of about 90,000 people
8 located in the Tampa Bay PMA, just east of
9 Tampa. Thirty-seven radio stations are listed
10 in the latest Arbitron Ratings for the
11 Lakeland-Winter Haven Metro Survey Area.

12 Hall Communications was founded in 1964
13 by the late Robert M. Hall, based in Lakeland

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14 now, and it also operates in four other markets
15 in the northeastern United States.

16 My wife, partner and principle owner of
17 Hall Communications, Bonnie Hall Rowbotham, who
18 is in the audience today, is carrying on the
19 traditions of localism and community service of
20 her father. She joins in these comments. And
21 we thank the Commission for allowing us to
22 share our thoughts with you.

23 Our stations are committed to localism
24 and serving our communities. All program
25 decision are made locally. We donate tens of

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1 thousands of dollars of free airtime yearly to
2 charities and nonprofits. 97 Country WPCV,
3 through its radiothons, has raised a total of
4 \$869,000 over the last four years for
5 St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

6 We cosponsored fundraising drives and
7 events for thousands of promotional
8 announcements for charities, such as Citrus
9 Center Boys Clubs, American Cancer Society, Big
10 Brothers and Big Sisters, and many more.

11 We donate thousands of dollars more of
12 free airtime annually to nonprofits, such as
13 the Imperial Symphony Orchestra, the Polk
14 Theatre and the Pied Piper Theatre.

15 On top of all that, a total of about
16 25,000 minutes of locally-produced public
17 service announcements and programming are aired
18 on -- each year on our stations.

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19 We maintain a news and public affairs
20 staff. Our capable staff performed
21 extraordinarily well when confronted by
22 Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne in 2004.
23 During that weather emergency we maintained
24 local coverage simulcasts on all four of our
25 stations.

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1 We worked in partnership with Channel 8
2 WFLA, to give our listeners the best news and
3 weather resources when our stations were
4 literally the only lifeline of communication to
5 our communities.

6 We coordinated our efforts with the local
7 emergency operations center, where one of our
8 news team was based. We worked with the
9 Florida Association of Broadcasters and the Red
10 Cross.

11 Some of our stations were without power
12 for three weeks. But we stayed on the air,
13 thanks to having generators and backup
14 transmitters at all four of our tower sites.
15 One of our towers was surrounded by
16 floodwaters. An employee donated his fishing
17 boat so we could reach the tower to stay on the
18 air.

19 Our staff worked incredible hours, lived
20 at the stations, and after the storms passed,
21 they helped raise hurricane relief supplies of
22 food, blankets and other goods that were
23 desperately needed by the community.

24 These efforts to support our community
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87 25 are all examples of local free radio. What is

1 the secret of good local radio?

2 That secret is something we rarely
3 discuss. It's the elephant in the room that we
4 ignore. Good local radio requires people.
5 Local promotions, local news and local public
6 affairs require local personnel.

7 (Applause.)

8 They must be talented, productive --
9 (Applause) -- committed radio people. We have
10 plenty of those kind of people at Hall
11 Communications. But there's a catch. The
12 secret is that effective localism requires a
13 substantial financial investment.

14 Hall personnel are fairly compensated,
15 have great health and dental benefits, generous
16 retirement plans, substantial life insurance
17 and many other benefits. None of this would be
18 possible without consolidation of ownership.
19 By owning multiple stations in small markets,
20 we can spread the cost of localism over several
21 stations.

22 We ask the Commission to evaluate the
23 impact on small markets of regulatory changes
24 before they are made, so that small family
25 companies, like Hall, can continue to properly

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1 serve their local communities.

2 Again, we thank the members of the
3 Commission for allowing us to present our

4 thoughts. (Appl ause.)

5 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Rowbotham.
6 Mr. Wilson.

7 MR. WILSON: Commi ssi oners, I thank you
8 for the opportuni ty to address you today on
9 this important issue. And I speak only for
10 mysel f, as a broadcast journali st for more
11 then 35 years. Yet I can assure you that
12 there are countless other reporters who hold
13 some of the same vi ews.

14 As you review the advi sabi lity of further
15 li fting the restri cti ons on medi a ownershi p, I
16 ask that you consider how the purpose of a
17 giant corporati on can be di rectly at odds wi th
18 an organi zati on that i s mandated to fi rst serve
19 the publi c i nterests.

20 What i f they expected our priest,
21 reverend or rabbi to i ncrease the headcount at
22 every servi ce by any means necessary and to
23 make sure that what' s i n the col lecti on pl ate
24 each week i s more than the week before?

25 Trying to meet the demands of Wall Street

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1 and the sharehol ders, who see no di fference
2 between making refri gerators and usi ng the
3 publi c ai rwaves to trul y serve a communi ty, i s
4 l argely responsi ble for l eavi ng journali sm, and
5 especi ally televi si on journali sm, i n the state
6 i t i s today.

7 As bi g medi a have been allowed to get
8 even l arger, they' ve demanded more consi stency
9 and central control. Now, when you' re making

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10 lightbulbs in Dayton, the principles are pretty
11 much the same as when you produce them at the
12 factory in Denver or Dallas.

13 But when you're serving a community,
14 Dayton is not Denver or Dallas. Yet, this is
15 how many big media organizations are operating
16 now. And the bigger they are, the more they
17 grow, the more they tend to lose their focus on
18 local public service and do whatever enhances
19 profit margins on return in investment.

20 Now, certainly, there's nothing wrong
21 with profit. And good journalism requires good
22 business. But from the inside, I've seen how
23 too often it runs counter to the public
24 interests.

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25 I've spent the last six years working in

1 Detroit, one of America's biggest and in many
2 ways most-troubled cities. CBS owns and
3 operates two of its 39 television stations
4 there. Its marketing motto: "CBS Detroit,
5 where no news is good news. Watch the
6 Hollywood Insider at 6:00 and Everybody Loves
7 Raymond at 11:00."

8 (Laughter & Applause.)

9 Can you best serve a troubled community
10 with no news broadcast on either station? Not
11 the Bill Bailey, Ed Morrow, Walter Cronkite CBS
12 where I once worked.

13 The number of different broadcasts voices
14 in a community also affects the diversity of

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15 coverage that viewers get, and media
16 concentration has led to a far more homogenized
17 approach to the news. Greater ownership and
18 more centralized control is not always in the
19 public interest.

20 Here in Tampa, at one of this market's
21 leading stations, decisions about which issues
22 to cover has been second-guessed and controlled
23 by the parent company 800 miles away. And I'm
24 not talking just about some corporate news
25 executive who directs decisions at some

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1 two-dozen stations this group owns in several
2 states, I'm talking about the corporate
3 marketing men deciding what viewers will and
4 will not see.

5 Now, why is this a problem? Because the
6 station's local management and its journalists
7 who live and work right here in Tampa -- the
8 people best able to judge what's in the best
9 interests of serving their own community --
10 those people are told that their news judgments
11 must meet a different criteria more than
12 important than what they know to be important
13 here.

14 And what's more important to the big
15 broadcaster? Choosing to report only what are
16 good marketing opportunities to promote the
17 television station's brand.

18 So when the Tampa news director sends
19 into the corporate headquarters the required
20 list of issues he intends to cover -- usually

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21 during the ratings period -- the company
22 marketing men can overrule the local
23 journalist's judgment and summarily kill any
24 story.

92 25 "Not that it was a bad story," wrote the

1 marketing chief in this internal memo, "just a
2 story that wouldn't be broad enough to draw in
3 a large amount of viewers in one that
4 demonstrates your brand."

5 "Don't take offense," nearly two dozen
6 news directors were told, "We're just trying to
7 get the best stories for your station to
8 market."

9 So at this station group, and others like
10 it, who do you suppose is trying to get the
11 best stories to serve the community, especially
12 for those important issues that lack the flash
13 and opportunity for self-promotion?

14 Bigger is not better.

15 And at this same Tampa television station
16 and at other stations -- I assure you, I'm not
17 picking on just this one -- pressure from
18 corporate offices to increase profits have led
19 to news directors being judged no longer
20 primarily on the quality of the stations
21 journalism, now we are scored 25 out of 100
22 points for overall delivery of brand
23 ambassadorship and defining moments and
24 supporting the brand within reporter packages,
25 15 points for presenting the anchorman's

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1 perspective, showing him or her as the radio
2 station's brand ambassador at least once in
3 every newscast.

4 They give bonus points for
5 well-showcasing the station's talent, and they
6 take away points whenever there's a significant
7 missed opportunity to showcase the station's
8 brand.

9 Now, nowhere on this score sheet that I
10 obtained do news managers in this whole outfit
11 get any points anymore for selecting relevant
12 and important subjects, for journalistic
13 enterprise or for good judgment. And nothing
14 rewards accuracy and fairness.

15 At too many stations, now, we don't
16 succeed anymore by being good journalists
17 serving the viewer. We're brand ambassadors to
18 help sell an image -- (Applause) -- largely
19 unrelated to substance and the quality of our
20 reporting. (Applause.)

21 Yes, journalists and their managers could
22 take a stronger stand inside their own
23 companies, but it doesn't -- seldom happens,
24 because speaking up sometimes leaves you out.

25 And in closing, might I urge you and your
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1 staffs to seriously investigate these matters.
2 If you're going to allow fewer and fewer to
3 control more and more, please, honor your own
4 obligation and duty to assure that these
5 licensees are of sufficient character to

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6 control the airwaves.

7 When you're presented with evidence that
8 a journalist was pressured to deliberately
9 present false, distorted or slanted news and
10 fired when they threatened to tell you about
11 it -- as happened in my own case -- should it
12 take years just for you to acknowledge that
13 you're taking it seriously?

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, sir.

15 MR. WILSON: Commissioners, bigger is not
16 better, not better for public service or
17 journalism. Thank very much. (Applause.)

18 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much, Mr.
19 Wilson.

20 As we now transition to the
21 public-comment period, I need to first
22 recognize the following three individuals who
23 were asked to speak for two minutes, at this
24 point in the program, in order to keep the
25 panel to a more manageable size.

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1 At this point could Congressman Jim Davis
2 please come to the microphone. (Applause.)

3 CONGRESSMAN DAVIS: Commissioners, thank
4 you for being here. Thanks for the chance to
5 speak. I am not a congressman. I am a former
6 congressman, and I'm here to speak as a
7 citizen.

8 I spent eight years as a state official
9 here, ten years as a congressman. I'm now
10 practicing law with a law firm that does legal

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11 work for broadcasters, including Media General.

12 But I'm here today to express my own
13 views and the same views I expressed in
14 Congress. I oppose much of the relaxation of
15 ownership limits that this commission proposed
16 while I was in congress and actively fought for
17 those personally and successfully as a member
18 of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

19 As you have seen here in this room
20 tonight -- I'm sure you've seen this all over
21 the country -- there's a lot of people here
22 because they don't think their voice is being
23 heard.

24 There are a lot of people here who feel
25 let down, because they do not think we have had

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1 an open-and-honest debate in this country about
2 the Iraq War and many other major issues.

3 (Applause.)

4 You have heard of certain ideas about how
5 to give more individuals the right to be heard.
6 I am here tonight to tell you that I think that
7 the cross-ownership here in this community has
8 had some benefits.

9 I would strongly urge you to survey the
10 many listeners and readers who will not have
11 time to be here tonight. And I know you will
12 listen to all the speakers.

13 But in my experience, since the
14 conversion, I feel there has been more hard
15 news, less entertainment -- not enough hard
16 news for my taste, but still more -- in both

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17 quantity and quality in the news network that
18 has experienced the conversion. I urge you to
19 survey the viewers to find out for yourself.

20 Secondly, one of the things I think we
21 can all agree upon here tonight is less people
22 are reading the newspaper. I believe that you
23 should consider the benefits in competitive
24 markets like this, particularly, where we enjoy
25 the benefit of the competition of ideas from

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1 dueling dailies to allow a newspaper to survive
2 by combining it with a television station.

3 I think that is important to preserve the
4 future of the newspaper industry. Because many
5 of the issues we will be debating -- not just
6 the issues you'll be debating -- do not fit
7 into 30 seconds, do not even fit into a
8 two-minute news broadcasts.

9 We want to preserve the written word and
10 the creation of ideas that comes from competing
11 newspapers and competing television and radio
12 stations in communities like this. Thank you
13 for the chance to be heard. (Applause.)

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

15 Monsi gnor Hi ggi ns.

16 MONSIGNOR HIGGINS: Well, I am not any
17 great expert on any of these things. But I'd
18 just like to say that I agree completely with,
19 large j just doesn't mean best.

20 I'd like things, basically, as far as
21 possible to come from the bottom. I always

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22 remember the wisdom of one of the old people,
23 when I was young, telling me this, that most of
24 the big decisions in the church came from the
25 bottom. But, of course, many times they were

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1 not listened to.

2 But then I'd like to think that the local
3 news, for example, is best handled by local
4 people. They are the ones, for example, that
5 know what's going on and that would know what's
6 best for their community.

7 The bigger we get, the farther away we
8 get from the center, and when we get away, the
9 less we're going to get of our own local news.
10 And it's very difficult, I know, in this day
11 and age.

12 And I'm very concerned about the small
13 person, the mom-and-pop stores disappearing.
14 I'm very concerned, for example, that the
15 little shops have disappeared, too, and that
16 the richer become richer, and the poorer become
17 poorer and that, basically, we have no
18 mom-and-pops (sic) at all.

19 It concerns me greatly. Because I want
20 people to want ownership, even though it may be
21 a small thing. When you're talking to --
22 you've dealt with -- (Inaudible) -- in some way
23 and in dealing with your -- the newspapers, the
24 local newspapers, all I can say is that I know
25 that it's a very difficult question, but I

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1 would add to the members here that we have got

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2 to, first of all, try and get our people back
3 to reading again, because very few of them are.

4 That starts with our schools. We have to
5 strive for them to even start reading the
6 newspapers. Because they don't read, and if
7 you don't read, well, that's that part taken
8 care of.

9 And the second part that we have to try
10 and do is that we put in the news, for example,
11 was it newsworthy or news -- for example, the
12 local news, that is -- the facts each and every
13 one of us -- the news as best we can -- that's
14 subjective.

15 And I know that it's a difficult one.
16 But I know that you'll try and do your best,
17 because democracy depends on the news in many
18 ways. Because we depend on you -- time to get
19 out to the public the different views, so that
20 we can make up our minds and tell you what to
21 do. (Applause.)

22 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

23 MONSIGNOR HIGGINS: Thank very much.

24 MR. SIGALOS: Mark Lunsford.

25 (No audible response.)

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Mark Lunsford.

2 (No audible response.)

3 MR. SIGALOS: All right. Now it's time
4 for the public-comment period of our program.
5 Before I review the ground rules, if you would
6 please -- I'd like to call out the first

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7 names -- go to the nearest aisle microphone.
8 Greg Vawter, John Scott Duffy, Eric Land,
9 Mark Adams and John Russell.

10 I would like to thank our panels very
11 much for their participation. (Applause.)

12 All right. Just go to the nearest-aisle
13 microphone. Okay. Here are the ground rules.
14 Everybody sees the time clock. We have a
15 two-minute time limit. We're going to follow
16 that quite strictly.

17 We have many, many people who've signed
18 up. Occasionally, I'll go over the number.
19 Some of you may recall the number where you
20 signed up, what order you were in. I'll go
21 over that from time to time. Again, we have a
22 two-microphones setup. This isn't --

23 A VOICE: Is there a break?

24 MR. SIGALOS: There is a break scheduled
25 at 7:30. So, as much as we come towards that

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1 time period, you know, just so you have an
2 idea that -- whether you might be speaking
3 before or after the break, just wanted to give
4 you a sense of that.

5 And we have -- our speakers just have one
6 mike. You can -- just remember, I just want to
7 bring you to the closest microphone. We'll go
8 in order -- most obviously, the closest
9 microphone.

10 A VOICE: -- call me by number?

11 MR. SIGALOS: Oh, from time to time, I'll
12 call out the number. Right now I'm just going

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13 down names.
14 Greg Vawter. (Applause.)
15 MR. VAWTER: Thank you.
16 Commissioners, my name is Greg Vawter.
17 I'm a career public service television manager
18 (sic.) Through my work I've taught many
19 organizations and individuals to use media to
20 express themselves. I have also organized
21 productions for local schools and governments
22 and nonprofits.

23 And during my time here, I'll refer to
24 two ideas, commodities for sale and economies
25 of scale. Commodities for sale allow

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1 broadcasting to be profitable.

2 As you know, commercial stations
3 advertise. But the products they tout are not
4 the commodities of broadcasters, rather
5 viewers and listeners are the commodities.

6 The public's eyes and ears are sold to
7 advertisers. And while that fact is often
8 disturbing for citizens to hear, it's nothing
9 new.

10 But now the economies of scale are
11 driving large media conglomerates to gobble up
12 as many broadcasting outlets as the Commission
13 will allow. Consolidated companies operate at
14 less cost per unit than smaller outfits,
15 resulting in far greater profits for
16 shareholders.

17 But that's not so great for us citizens.

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18 We need differing perspectives on our TVs and
19 radios and in our newspapers so we can make
20 more informed decisions in our democracy.

21 We give the programmers their frequencies
22 at no charge, so we and you as our
23 representatives must not put their desire for
24 profit above our need for diversity.

103 25 Please decide against allowing media

1 companies to consolidate their business
2 interests at the expense of America's choices
3 among differing voices. Instead of letting a
4 few conglomerates buy even more local media
5 choices, give us more options in the voices to
6 which we can -- (Inaudible.) Thank you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

8 John Scott Duffey.

9 MR. DUFFY: My name is John Duffey. I
10 was a broadcast news producer for 25 years
11 until disabled by a heart attack.

12 I've spoken at FDA, FCC and other
13 hearings only asking the government to put
14 human interests ahead of corporate interests.
15 And I feel like I'm largely ignored.

16 So, no more Mr. Nice Guy. Today I will
17 demand: Quit relaxing broadcast news
18 broadcast ownership rules. Roll them back and
19 require more local control of our airwaves.

20 Two weeks ago tornadoes ripped across
21 Tampa Bay. Clear Channel, the company owning
22 a lot of radio stations in this town,
23 broadcast a warning during its -- 9:00 a.m.

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104 24 and another one at 9:30 during their newscast
25 on 97 WFLA, but nothing between them.

1 Even though Clear Channel promotes this
2 station as the news leader, it failed to keep
3 listeners updated for 25 minutes, the critical
4 time this storm front passed through our
5 community.

6 They were fusing (sic) up the Sunday
7 morning policy (sic) programming and a
8 constant stream of commercials, because they
9 failed to provide adequate staff for coverage,
10 even though this storm had already killed many
11 people on the other side of the Gulf of
12 Mexico, and anyone with half a brain knew a
13 day earlier that we were going to get hit.

14 When I complained to the Clear Channel
15 local boss, he said they planned to install
16 robotic devices. They had a similar system
17 online five years ago in Minot, North Dakota,
18 where they've got a lot of radio stations.
19 They cut labor costs.

20 They failed to alert people that a train
21 loaded with toxic chemicals derailed in the
22 middle of the night. The disaster killed one
23 person and injured many more. To this day,
24 Clear Channel still blames local law
25 enforcement for their failure.

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1 Letting companies like these pass --
2 takes us -- to control more and more channels,

3 putting profits above public health and safety
4 and you put lives at risk.

5 Please stop that now. You must require
6 at least half of all broadcast licenses in
7 every market to go to local interests, local
8 control. Doing otherwise violates the public
9 trust you've vowed to us. Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you. Eric Land.

12 MR. LAND: Good evening. I'm Eric Land,
13 the chief operating officer of the Tampa Bay
14 Buccaneers.

15 In my role I see firsthand how the
16 combined operations of Media General, WFLA-TV,
17 the Tampa Tribune and TBO.com are working
18 together delivering more news to the area than
19 they could have done alone.

20 If a Tampa Tribune reporter gets just a
21 sports figure, she is just as likely to break
22 the story on the air or online in the
23 newspaper. And when that happens, I routinely
24 see an in-depth follow-up the next day in the
25 Tampa Tribune. Journalists take the position

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1 the story belongs to the public, not to a
2 particular outlet.

3 I live in Tampa and care deeply about
4 local government. Media General's properties
5 have given a little more political coverage
6 and hard-hitting investigative pieces than
7 could ever be produced alone.

8 Tampa residents have come to rely on

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9 these three outlets, not only for analysis in
10 truth in candidate statements and advertising,
11 but as hosts for broadcast of debates of key
12 races (sic.)

13 Before my year and a half in the NFL, I
14 enjoyed a 32-year career in the TV industry,
15 first as a TV reporter, ending as
16 president/general manager at WFLA-TV, the
17 Media General TV station here in Tampa.

18 I helped launch the new center. I have
19 deep roots in the industry. My dad retired
20 from a 56-year career overseeing newspaper, TV
21 and radio cross-ownership operations in
22 Gainesville, Ohio.

23 Media General and its local competitors
24 have continued to be the voice for the
25 voiceless and hold powerful accountable. In

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1 an age of relentless media competition, I've
2 never seen efficiency be a replacement for
3 integrity.

4 Media General and other newspaper
5 companies put news first and foremost. Never
6 in my 32 years with them did I ever witness a
7 case where corporate headquarters dictated an
8 editorial addendum, reporting or content.

9 Elimination of network compensation,
10 indeed TV conversion expense and competition
11 from unregulated media put incredible
12 financial pressure to bear on TV stations and
13 news operations. Don't handicap the very

14 institutions who bring free speech to a free
15 society.

16 Permitting companies who have owned
17 heritage and deep commitment to own, jointly
18 operate newspapers and stations in the same
19 community in the best interests of the FCC --
20 guarantee the future for local news in
21 communities of all sizes (sic.)

22 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

23 MR. LAND: Thank you.

24 MR. SIGALOS: Mark Adams.

25 MR. ADAMS: My name is Mark Adams. The

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1 FCC is required to act in the public interest,
2 not in the interest of big business. A free
3 flow of information -- (Applause) -- is
4 necessary for our democracy to function.

5 This is why our founders protected
6 freedom of speech and the press. They
7 understood that the public needs to know what
8 our government is doing. They knew only an
9 informed public can make sure that we were
10 protected from tyranny.

11 Yet the FCC is considering action that
12 would allow for more media consolidation
13 which, according to its own study, results in
14 six-minutes less news per half-hour newscast.
15 That's one-third less news coverage.

16 Already most people feel that our news
17 media does a poor job covering our government.
18 They realize -- (Applause) -- that the media
19 does not cover issues thoroughly. And many

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20 know the media will cover up serious problems
21 which the public should know about.

22 For example, I represent candidates
23 challenging the official results of the 2006
24 elections for four members of Congress and
25 Florida's Governor. We had evidence showing

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1 that the official results took votes from
2 Democratic and Independent candidates and gave
3 them to Republicans. But there has been
4 little coverage of this serious issue, even
5 though there is abundant evidence that the
6 official results produced by the secret
7 vote-counting computers have not been accurate
8 in the last few elections throughout our
9 country. (Applause.)

10 There was little coverage -- (Applause)
11 -- there was little coverage of the recent
12 conviction of officials in Ohio for rigging
13 the 2004 presidential election recount. If
14 our media will not cover election fraud, then
15 it's not interested in preserving our
16 democracy.

17 A VOICE: You bet.

18 MR. ADAMS: Commissioners, do you want to
19 be remembered as someone who further stifled
20 the flow of information and undermined
21 democracy or as someone would acted to
22 preserve the will of the press in our
23 democracy.

24 Thank you very much. Please choose

110 25

wi sel y. (Appl ause.)

1 MR. SIGALOS: Will the following
2 people -- will the following people now please
3 head to the microphone.

4 Brandy Doyle, Louise Thompson, Pat Burke,
5 Jane Acre, Brad Ashwell and Donna Reed.

6 A VOICE: I just want --

7 MR. SIGALOS: Brandy Doyle, Louis
8 Thompson -- sir?

9 A VOICE: -- supposed to hand out a copy
10 of Aaron Russo's Americans for Freedom packet.
11 They asked me to offer copies to --

12 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much, sir.
13 (Appl ause.)

14 Again, Brandy Doyle, Louise Thompson, Pat
15 Burke, Jane Acre, Brad Ashwell and Donna Reed,
16 if you'd just come to the nearest microphone.

17 And now Mr. John Russell.

18 MR. RUSSELL. Thank you very much.

19 My name is John Russell. I'm one of
20 those congressional candidates which is
21 contesting the results of the election for
22 2006 -- (Appl ause) -- here in Florida, one of
23 the elections contests that you've not heard
24 about (sic.)

111 25

As the introductory speaker said, the
1 public owns the airwaves, and the public wants
2 them back. (Appl ause.) George Orwell --
3 (Appl ause) -- George Orwell would roll over in
4 his grave today if he were here to see what's

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5 going on.

6 We're going to a place in this country
7 that we do not want to go, and it is a
8 consolidation of the corporate news media that
9 is going to take us there.

10 While efficiency is the rationale, one
11 must look at it's not about quantity of news
12 or news repeated endlessly over and over
13 again, much of it just about entertainment or
14 figures thereof, it is about the quality and
15 objectivity of the information that is
16 provided to the public so that they can make
17 quality decisions when they talk about making
18 decisions that are key to their life as well
19 as politics.

20 And what I have for you here today is
21 very cogent and must be considered. But when
22 we talked about the Tribune and being
23 grandfathered in, well, throughout the
24 elections they used Survey USA as a poll that
25 they pushed at least four times in the general

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1 election.

2 And this was a poll that was conducted
3 using statistically irrelevant methodology.
4 And while we conducted our own poll using
5 Rastus in Research, which appears on the April
6 10th front-page edition of the Tampa Tribune,
7 Rastus in Research being in the 1 percent
8 efficiency.

9 Survey USA is not even mentioned. I rest

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10 my case. They will not even cite their own
11 poll when they talk about "Bad Lines, Dumb
12 Society" or "Polls Get It Right."

13 Your own poll, Tampa Tribune did not get
14 it right, and it was published in --
15 (Inaudible) -- hurting people's right to know
16 what is true and objective.

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

18 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you very much.

19 MR. SIGALOS: Brandy Doyle.

20 MS. DOYLE: As a correspondent for the
21 Sarasota Harold Tribune, I'd like to talk to
22 you about the state of the newsroom in a world
23 of increasingly consolidated media ownership;
24 however, I've never actually been inside the
25 newsroom, except on the day my contract was

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1 signed.

2 With no real competition, dailies like
3 the Harold Tribune cut corners by outsourcing
4 much of their local news coverage to
5 freelancers like myself.

6 I don't have a journalism degree or
7 training as a professional journalist. I get
8 no health insurance benefits or job security.
9 I have little professional contact with others
10 who work at the paper. I get no real feedback
11 from my editor. And I've never been asked to
12 write a second draft of a story.

13 In fact, I'm really discouraged from
14 providing coverage that's too in-depth or
15 controversial. I write for the community news

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16 page.

17 My colleague told me that it was bake off
18 speed (sic.) But it's not just bake off, it's
19 done cooked off -- (Inaudible) -- end up here,
20 with the news section with stories which
21 could've been developed into informative,
22 meaningful pieces are relegated to the media
23 equivalent of junk food (sic.)

24 When a community group organizes around a
25 social issue, we usually cover it, but with

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1 photos of people standing around holding
2 plaques, not with real research into the
3 problems for our community.

4 I want to add, the Harold Tribune, which
5 is a New York Times paper, is not a bad paper.
6 But, unfortunately it's a typical one. While
7 I can't speculate about the people who own
8 newspapers and TV stations, at the editorial
9 level, at least, I don't get the impression
10 that most people are actively trying to
11 squelch debate or suppress minority
12 viewpoints.

13 The problem is that uncovering and
14 investigating local issues just doesn't fit
15 into business model of today's media outlets.
16 With more consolidation it's only going to get
17 worse.

18 Don't lift the caps on media ownership.
19 The public interest isn't served by big
20 conglomerates that treat local news as just

21 another product to be made as cheaply as
22 possible. Thank you.

23 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. SIGALOS: Louise Thompson.

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1 MS. THOMPSON: I'm Louise Thompson. I'm
2 the executive director of the local
3 public-access channels for Tampa and
4 Hillsborough County and the Greater Tampa Bay
5 Community Network.

6 Although I've stayed there nine years,
7 I've been working with a nonprofit group that
8 took over those channels from the cable
9 companies and have been fighting every step of
10 the way to make sure that the public's voice is
11 still available on the air.

12 There would be no big crowds coming there
13 to the public access station if their voices
14 were being heard elsewhere. I'm with a group
15 that wanted to do civic and community
16 journalism in the face of what's happening in
17 the media.

18 With the largeness of the Tampa Tribune
19 and other our places and the fact that they're
20 interested, as they should be, in their
21 corporate bottom line, there are less reporters
22 available, less time for those reporters to be
23 available to cover the kinds of issues that are
24 important to us locally. There is no localism.

25 If it were not for the public access

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1 channels or the community radio station, WMNF,
2 a lot of those issues would never, ever be
3 covered in the corporate -- (Inaudible.)

4 People that come to us, musicians who
5 cannot, because of Clear Channel's ownership
6 of eight or nine channels here in our
7 marketplace, cannot, like the musicians that I
8 grew up with, go to their local radio station
9 and get their music played.

10 And so the public access station, we play
11 local musicians' music overnight on our
12 community bulletin boards. Because they can't
13 get coverage someplace else. We have voted in
14 the darned wrong- -- wrongest people in the
15 universe, because our reporters don't have
16 time to investigate half of them. I mean, if
17 the -- am I wrong here?

18 (Applause.)

19 We've voted, now, locally, nationally,
20 we've got the worst people in -- are not --
21 are not covered well enough, nor the missions
22 of our environmentalists. Please keep the
23 cap. (Applause.)

24 MR. SIGALOS: Pat Burke.

25 MS. BURKE: Thank you. Good evening

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1 Commi ssi oners. Well, my name is Patricia
2 Burke. And for the past 23 years I've spent
3 working for a local cable company as their
4 government relations manager. I've also
5 served for ten years in the third largest city

6 in the Pinellas County as a local elected
7 official.

8 Having said that, I am here tonight to
9 say that I'm in opposition to any loosening of
10 media ownership rules. (Applause.) I know
11 how corporate works, and I have some idea of
12 how government works. And knowing this, I can
13 tell you, this is a very bad idea.

14 Corporate works for shareholders, and
15 government works for the party. I am
16 confident that you, as FCC members, will see
17 this for what it is and not allow it to
18 happen.

19 One of our most cherished freedoms is
20 knowing that news is being reported honestly
21 and without prejudice. A free press is
22 necessary for democracy. With any loosening
23 of these rules, this could change, and
24 certainly not for the good of the people.

25 The public is way too smart to want this
118 change. And I thank you very much.

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

4 Jane Acre.

5 MS. ACRE: Thank you Commissioners for
6 being here. It's very important that you are
7 here.

8 My name Jane Acre. I've been a broadcast
9 journalist across the country for more than 20
10 years including, most recently, here in Tampa.

11 As a medical reporter for Channel 10, I
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12 was frequently approached by public-relations
13 professionals and CEOs, trying to convince me
14 that their latest product deserved news
15 coverage. They were usually very persuasive.

16 When I hear from convergence supporters
17 that sharing online radio and television
18 newsrooms is a good thing, I have to disagree.
19 Sharing one newsroom means that PR folks only
20 have to pass their information through one set
21 of eyes.

22 What if the product is defective?

23 What if the marketer is in it for a quick
24 financial hit at the public's expense?

25 What if PR is selling a flawed public
119 policy?

2 It's one-stop shopping for the market;
3 but for the public, fewer eyes means less
4 scrutiny for the products and the news and
5 information.

6 When I began as a radio news director in
7 1978, part of the job was filing the FCC
8 community ascertainment, which was a sort of
9 checks and balances to make sure we were
10 serving the public. That was then. Today
11 there are no community ascertainment
12 required; in fact, no news is required.

13 I believe the FCC should return to those
14 tougher mandates and remind broadcasters the
15 use of the airwaves is a special privilege.
16 (Applause.) Traditional business models need

17 not apply to something so vital to democracy.
18 That is indecent.

19 And, Commissioners, you say the public
20 can file a complaint. In January of 2005, my
21 husband and I challenged the operating license
22 of the Fox-owned station right here in Tampa.

23 We have proven in court that top ranks of
24 management engaged in news distortion (sic.)
25 Resisting them cost us our jobs. More than

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1 two years later we have yet to receive any
2 response from the FCC on the status of that
3 complaint. Meanwhile, the station continues
4 to broadcast business as usual.

5 Chairman Martin, if you ask the public to
6 help you regulate, do so. Work in the public
7 interest by regulating this precious and
8 limited commodity of the airwaves. Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

11 MR. ASHWELL: Hi. My name is Brad
12 Ashwell, and I'm the consumer democracy
13 advocate with the Florida Public Interest
14 Research Group. We're a nonpartisan,
15 statewide, nonprofit public interest advocacy
16 group. We work on a number of different
17 issues.

18 And before I go to any of them, I just
19 want to thank you for coming. I can't express
20 how important it is that you're here,
21 exemplifying the importance and the gravity of
22 these issues to the Tampa Bay Area and

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23 Florida, in general. So thank you.

24 And I'd also like to point out that, you
25 know, due to the early nature of this meeting,

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1 a lot of people couldn't make here as early,
2 because of the -- you know, it's a -- it's a
3 Monday or it's a workday. But we expect more
4 people to come as the night goes on. And we
5 hope that you withhold any judgment or
6 impressions of the Tampa media area until
7 you've heard from everybody.

8 Now, as an advocate working on a lot of
9 different issues, I look at the media almost
10 every day. And they're, you know, extremely
11 helpful. But one thing that increasingly
12 surprises me is the fact that every time I
13 talk to them they ask fewer and fewer
14 investigative probing questions.

15 More and more, it just seems like sound
16 bites really rule the day. If I don't have a
17 good sound bite, I'm not going to get quoted,
18 my message isn't going to get into the story.
19 And that's the sad truth.

20 And I can't help but attribute this to
21 the fact that media consolidation is leading
22 to more streamlined and less staffing and less
23 time to really focus on the stories and get
24 behind their own people and to tell the truth.

25 I think we are going to find ourselves
1 interject -- in injecting something that --

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2 (I naudi ble) -- fact-based informati on for
3 publi c debate.

4 But, you know, we -- we attribute a lot
5 of the sound-bite news cul ture to medi a
6 consoli dati on. We thi nk it's a
7 negati ve trend.

8 Conversely, we actual ly benefi t from
9 medi a consoli dati on in lots of ways. I can
10 make two calls from the Capi tol. You know, we
11 have offi ces here in Flori da. We have offi ces
12 in Tampa, Tallahassee and Mi ami .

13 From the Capi tal , where I get to work, I
14 can make two calls to a few of these stati ons.
15 And that's going to go across the enti re
16 state, medi a consoli dati on isn't good for the
17 publi c -- (I naudi ble) -- of important goals we
18 have to put that over the powers of the --
19 (I naudi ble) -- and best interests. Thank you.

20 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

21 Woul d the follo wi ng peopl e please come to
22 the nearest mi crophone. Robert Supe or Supay,
23 Dotti e McKi nnon, Barbara Ri bold, John Schul er,
24 Li nda -- Li nda Overhouse.

25 Donna Reed

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1 MS. REED: Good eveni ng, Commi ssi oners.
2 I' m Donna Reed, the vice presi dent of news for
3 the publi shi ng di vi si on of Medi a General . I
4 have over 32 years of experi ence as a reporter
5 and edi tor at the Tampa Tri bune, i ncl udi ng as
6 managi ng edi tor

7 Duri ng that time I worked wi th Dan

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8 Bradley and others at Media General to design
9 and launch the news center. I know firsthand
10 that convergence has strengthened print,
11 broadcast and online journalism in Tampa, all
12 to the benefit of the public.

13 Through convergence, the combined staffs
14 have gained greater access to sources in the
15 community. Time and again, that has resulted
16 in more hard-hitting investigative pieces than
17 if they had acted alone.

18 These stories have included exposes on
19 disintegrating bridges, a collapsed expressway
20 and lapses in hurricane preparedness.
21 Overall, convergence has allowed media
22 journalists to serve communities better in
23 times of crisis and to foster community
24 discourse.

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25 In five additional markets across the

1 southeast, convergence strengthens news at
2 Media General's television stations and
3 newspapers. Since convergence began, the TV
4 stations in four of these five markets have
5 added between seven and a half hours to 30
6 minutes of local news each week. In the fifth
7 market, the station has continued to offer
8 more than 20 hours, solely, of local news.

9 I want to emphasize that local news
10 departments decide what platforms tell what
11 stories. Because values do serve community to
12 community (sic.) So there is no way that this

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13 news coverage can be dictated by Media
14 General. It just doesn't work that way.

15 Convergence means residents in small
16 markets receive the same benefits as the
17 residents of Tampa with higher-quality local
18 news. This approach promotes a more informed
19 citizenry, which is something that should be
20 of growing concern to the FCC against the
21 backdrop of -- (Inaudible) -- across current
22 in broadcast news industries (sic.)

23 I'm glad that's helped the Tampa Tribune,
24 WFLA and Media General bring more news to our
25 communities. And I urge the FCC to permit the

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1 same service in more communities, large and
2 small, across the country. Thank you.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 Robert Supe.

6 MR. SUPE: Hello Commissioners. My name
7 is Robert Supe. I'm president of Action
8 Audits (sic.) We're a public interest firm.
9 My firm has responded to a number of your
10 MPRMs (sic.) And we have matters that are
11 pending -- (Inaudible) -- before the full
12 commission. I presume the ex parte rules
13 don't apply here this evening.

14 But, anyway, the best way to look at
15 consolidation is to recognize that in science
16 it's best to predict future outcomes by
17 examining past circumstances. So where does
18 consolidation work?

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19 Well, in the media it's worked well in
20 China, the USSR, Cuba -- (Applause) -- and in
21 Germany. This is where the media spoke with a
22 common voice to reinforce political ideology.

23 Second case study, Agra Business, federal
24 tax incentives of the '60s, '70s and '80s
25 resulted in the demise of small local

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1 independent farms where farm-to-market
2 distance was but a short drive. Corporate
3 farms were quickly followed by multinational
4 corporations, food processors, and the like,
5 which resulted in contaminated foods --
6 remember salmonella -- and in contaminated pet
7 foods, melamine.

8 So, media consolidation, the conventional
9 wisdom says consolidated newsrooms lead to
10 better reporting. But it really doesn't. It
11 leads to a single voice dedicated to
12 supporting or discrediting or hiding stories
13 that are injurious to national and
14 multinational interests.

15 You must recognize that consolidation --
16 for what it is, what it really is -- is a way
17 to improve the corporate bottom line, not the
18 human condition.

19 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

20 MR. SUPE: No other culture --

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. SIGALOS: Dottie McKinnon.

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MS. MCKINNON: My name is Dottie
McKinnon. I'm here to speak of my experience

1 with Media General, owner of the Tampa Tribune
2 and WFLA News Channel 8. My up-close-to (sic)
3 with both is from being involved in this
4 community for over 20 years, being a former
5 Hillsborough county commissioner and one of
6 the founders of Joshua House, a home for
7 abused children and now building another
8 shelter for 60 abused children.

9 Jim Zimmerman was also one of the
10 founders of Joshua House when he was with
11 Channel 8. He's now in Richmond at Media
12 General. But he shared the Joshua House board
13 for many years until he relocated to Richmond.

14 Channel 8 helped us with videos, provided
15 PSAs, provided financial help in building
16 those facilities for over 60 children. Gail
17 Stearns, co-anchor of the 6:00 and 11:00
18 o'clock news has volunteered every year for
19 Joshua House, MC's our luncheon for 500
20 people, is always available to help us.

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And the Tampa Tribune has been fair and
objective in their reporting. As a county
commissioner I didn't always appreciate some
of their publicity. But you're fair game when
you're a public official. And we always gave

1 them plenty of material. But I have to say it
2 was fair and balanced.

3 To be honest, I also read the

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4 St. Petersburg Times every day. And they also
5 provided financial support in building Joshua
6 House. It's obvious the Times, by
7 circulation, has not been hurt by their
8 competition and being owned by a company that
9 also has a TV station.

10 My husband and I have travelled quite a
11 bit. And I take my computer with me to be
12 able to read the Tampa Tribune and the
13 St. Petersburg Times online.

14 I realize that with digital
15 communications, newspapers are getting less
16 circulation. I have never seen a case where a
17 reporter was slandered in any way because both
18 a newspaper and television station was owned
19 by the same owner.

20 Bottom line, having Media General as
21 owner of a newspaper and a television station
22 has only strengthened their commitment to this
23 community by their strength, not restricted.
24 They have certainly helped the quality of life
25 here by their involvement, and they give back

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1 to this community. Lifting the ban (sic)
2 would surely increase competition for Media
3 General.

4 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

5 MS. MCKINNON: But that's the free
6 enterprise system. Thank you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 Barbara Ri bold.

Sessi on 1

9 MS. RIBOLD: Hi. My name is Barb Ribold.
10 I'm the executive director of the Pediatric
11 Cancer Foundation. And I want to thank you
12 for the opportunity to share with you my
13 experience with WFLA and why media is so
14 important to nonprofit organizations as the
15 Pediatric Cancer Foundation.

16 WFLA and its affiliates, TBO.com and the
17 Tampa Tribune have always supported
18 organizations in the community who have a
19 message that needs to be heard and who improve
20 the quality of life of those around us.

21 They have helped the Pediatric Cancer
22 Foundation educate the general public about
23 the high incidence of childhood cancer and the
24 lack of funding for the number one killing
25 disease of our children in the United States.

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1 WFLA has helped give a voice to childhood
2 cancer. When many pharmaceutical companies
3 and government agencies have said that
4 children with cancer are not a priority, WFLA
5 has said, "Yes, they are."

6 The support we receive from, WFLA,
7 TBO.com and the Tampa Tribune allows us to
8 create awareness and funding for research to
9 find a cure for childhood cancer, something
10 that comes a lot easier for organizations in
11 dealing with adult cancers because of the
12 numbers.

13 One of the big advantages for us is the
14 power of their convergence. We can

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15 communicate our message on TV, the Internet
16 and the newspaper in one coordinated effort.
17 This is much more efficient, and the results
18 are exponential, using all three mediums
19 simultaneously.

20 On behalf of the children and the
21 families battling childhood cancer, I commend
22 WFLA and its affiliates for doing their
23 homework, understanding our challenges, our
24 mission, and most importantly, giving back to
25 the community. Thank you for listening. (

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1 (Applause.)

2 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

3 John Schuler.

4 MR. SCHULER: Good evening,
5 Commissioners. My name is John Schuler, and
6 I'm the president of the Florida
7 Communications Group of Media General.

8 In this position I oversee the operations
9 of Media General's converged properties here
10 in Tampa, which include WFLA, Tampa Tribune,
11 Centro and TBO.com.

12 Now, contrary to what you've heard from
13 many people this evening, convergence allows
14 Media General to bring more high quality local
15 news more rapidly to the community and others.
16 Our numerous journalistic awards and repeated
17 rating successes speak to the quality of our
18 local news product.

19 With convergence we have been able to

20 bring this greater quantity and quality of
21 local news to the community without
22 sacrificing diversity.

23 The staffs of each of our properties
24 operate totally independently. And I am aware
25 of no instances in which our corporate

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1 headquarters have ever been involved in
2 determining local news content.

3 Convergence has also helped us deliver
4 more and better news at a time of rising
5 financial pressures on broadcast and on print
6 media.

7 Despite rising TV expenses, evaporating
8 net worth, compensation and increasing
9 pressure from other advertising outlets, Media
10 General has been able, through convergence, to
11 grow its news content and to retain the news
12 broadcast staffs.

13 Mr. Klinenberg's comments made about the
14 Tampa Tribune about reducing the staff by 70,
15 what he didn't tell you is that no local beat
16 reporters were among the 70. Local news
17 coverage isn't declining at Media General. We
18 have added and invested in local news
19 resources, and we will continue to do so.

20 With television stations around the
21 country cutting back on local news, I believe
22 that Media General's convergence initiatives
23 will ensure the continued provision of a
24 strong local news product.

25 And with that, I urge the FCC to make the

1 changes necessary to allow convergence in all
2 markets. Thank you.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

4 I'd remind everybody that microphone
5 works as well. I'd like to get the following
6 people to head to their nearest microphone.

7 Mark Lunsford, Fran Solomon, Kimberly
8 Markus, Joseph Kyles, Hal Hogan and Tim
9 Lalonde.

10 Linda Overhouse.

11 MS. OVERHOUSE: Thank you. Hello
12 Commissioners, and thank you for allowing us
13 to speak tonight.

14 The local -- I'm -- I'm the executive
15 director of the Spring of Tampa Bay, and we're
16 the certified domestic violence center here in
17 Hillsborough County.

18 The local media here is one of our
19 strongest partners, next to law enforcement.
20 The media helps us to increase awareness to
21 victim families in need. The media also
22 allows us to quickly and efficiently get our
23 message out to prevent domestic violence,
24 protect victims and promote change in lives,
25 families and communities.

1 They allow us to do this in a way that
2 we, the nonprofits, just would not be able to
3 do otherwise. About half of the people that
4 we see at the Spring say that they come to us

5 because they learned about us through the
6 media.

7 This not only allows us to increase
8 awareness about domestic violence, but it's
9 actually helping us to save the lives of
10 victim families in this community. I'm here
11 today to support and commend our local media.
12 Thank you.

13 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

14 Mark Lunsford.

15 MR. LUNSFORD: Hi there. I guess I don't
16 want where to start out, but what the media --
17 I get emotional 'cause, really, I'm going to
18 tell you some things.

19 My God, I can't believe I'm hearing that
20 someone has to tell you that you can't change
21 the way media has done things for me and the
22 children across America.

23 Because of the media being there for me
24 and letting me say what I want to say,
25 thousands of children's lives have been

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1 changed. And it has had an impact on them,
2 because of Jesse's Law or the Florida Lost
3 Child Safety Act or just due to awareness and
4 educational benefits to inform people of
5 everything that's going on around us about,
6 well, you know, pedophiles.

7 The media has never let me down. In 29
8 states, all over, whether I speak on radio
9 shows in England or even through the news
10 media and the newspapers in Germany or China

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11 or even TV stations, the media has given me
12 the opportunity to tell America where people
13 are failing our children.

14 That's pretty -- that's pretty important.
15 If you change things, and it has an impact on
16 what I do -- not me alone, but hundreds of
17 child advocates -- and the message that we're
18 trying to get across, I mean, basically,
19 without our children -- and you guys were kids
20 once -- we have to be able to put out the
21 information that needs to be put out,
22 education, awareness, legislation.

23 And the media, and I can't think of any
24 channel that wasn't there for me. And when I
25 first met them, I said, "I need your help," I

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1 couldn't believe how many trucks were at my
2 front yard with no hesitation.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

4 MR. LUNSFORD: Thank you. (Applause.)

5 MR. SIGALOS: Fran Solomon.

6 MS. SOLOMON: Good evening. My name is
7 Fran Solomon, and I am the marketing manager
8 for the Tampa Tribune. I've been in this role
9 for 15 years, working closely with many
10 not-for-profit organizations in the Tampa Bay
11 region to help them accomplish their goals,
12 primarily making our community a better places
13 to live for all of our residents.

14 We work with approximately 130
15 not-for-profit organizations over the course

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16 of a year. In many cases, we coordi nate our
17 support wi th WFLA-TV, TBO.com and our weekly
18 Spani sh-l anguage newspaper, Centro.

19 The Tampa Tri bune by i tsel f is a powerful
20 adverti sing medi um to help these chari ties
21 promote thei r fundrai sing events. And
22 together wi th WFLA, TBO and Centro, we extend
23 our reach through the enti re PMA.

24 Thi s greatly enhances the support that we
25 can gi ve to our regi on' s chari ties. Chari ties

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1 that have experi enced the full range of our
2 support have been awed by the communi ty
3 response recei ved.

4 Susan Harmaty, Executive Di rector of the
5 Gaspari l l a Di stance Cl assi c Associ ati on, has
6 sai d, "Si nce 1978 the Di stance Cl assi c
7 Associ ati on, Tampa Tri bune and WFLA News
8 Channel 8 have worked together to grow and
9 nurture a partnershi p that benefi ts the enti re
10 Tampa Bay communi ty and several worthy Bay
11 Area news chari table organi zati ons.

12 Provi di ng val uabl e promoti onal space and
13 ai rtime, both of whi ch are crucial to the
14 event, has l ed to staggering success to the
15 Di stance Cl assi c Associ ati on.

16 More than one mi l l i on ri ders and wal kers
17 have crossed the fi ni sh l i ne, and \$2.5 mi l l i on
18 has been donated to the Boys and Gi rls Cl ubs
19 of Tampa, Gi rls, Incorporated, of Pi nel las,
20 the Fri ends of Tampa Recreation and several
21 runni ng-rel ated programs. "

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22 Our mission is to enrich lives through
23 community and through democracy. The combined
24 force of our marketing capabilities across the
25 Tribune, WFLA, TBO and Centro when applied

1 apply to the area's not-for-profit agencies
2 does an amazing job for the first two
3 missions, enriching lives for this community.
4 Thank you.

5 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 Kimberly Markus.

8 MS. MARKUS: Hello. My name is Kimberly
9 Markus, and I'm the executive director of the
10 Public Policy Institute and director of media
11 communications for the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition."

12 Today I'll be reading comments on behalf
13 of Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., President
14 and Founder of Rainbow/PUSH Coalition. Today
15 I'm going to be heard and not just tolerated.

16 A national outrage occurred when Don Imus
17 used our public airwaves to verbally assault
18 the young women of the Rutgers basketball team.
19 He is gone. But this is an issue that goes
20 beyond Imus.

21 At the heart of those remarks there's a
22 gap between who owns the airwaves, the people
23 or those who bought and sold the airwaves. It
24 is an issue of diversity, giving all of
25 American access to the airwaves, to the

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1 newsroom, to the producers, to the writers and
2 to those who share a broader point of view.

3 Free Press found that none of the more
4 than 60 stations that aired Imus In The Morning
5 at the time of the calculation were own by a
6 minority. And the stations that aired Imus
7 were more likely to be owned by a large-group
8 owner, companies that own stations in multiple
9 markets or own more than three stations in a
10 single market.

11 Owners and publishers choose editors,
12 writers and on-air personalities. They choose
13 priorities and ultimately, at least, for the
14 content (sic). Giving us indecent hate speech
15 from shock jocks like Don Imus all day, all
16 night, all white, clearly does not represent
17 the diversity of American culture.

18 (Applause.)

19 With most of our TV and radio stations
20 controlled by giant corporate conglomerates,
21 now less than 10 percent of TV and radio
22 stations are owned by minorities or women, we
23 all deserve the right to share our point of
24 view.

25 But instead of addressing the national

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1 disgrace, the Federal Communications Commission
2 is actually trying to let the larger companies
3 buy up even more stations, drowning out
4 minority and female voices.

5 Our -- (Inaudible) -- Free Press found
6 that the current state of the broadcast TV

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7 industry does not represent our country's
8 diversity.

9 Women comprise half of the of U.S.
10 population but own less than 5 percent of the
11 broadcast TV stations. Minorities comprise a
12 third of the U.S. population but own
13 approximately 3 percent of the broadcast
14 stations.

15 In short too own -- own too much at the
16 expense of too many (sic.) I am submitting the
17 complete testimony of Reverend Jesse L.
18 Jackson, Sr., to be included in the transcripts
19 of this hearing. Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

22 Joseph Kyles. Joseph Kyles.

23 MR. KYLES: I already said thank you.

24 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

25 MR. KYLES: To Mr. Chair and your

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1 distinguished colleagues, I'd like to, first
2 of all, say thank you for allowing us this
3 opportunity to speak to you today.

4 I'd like to bring a historical approach
5 and talk a little bit about some of the
6 positive things that happen when diversity
7 and community local participation really works
8 well.

9 In 1968 Dr. Martin Luther King came to
10 Memphis to work on behalf of sanitation
11 workers. African-American men who were not

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12 being treated fairly wanted the decent right
13 to work hard and earn a decent pay.

14 Dr. King was eventually, as you know the
15 story, assassinated. He was shot with a
16 bullet large enough to penetrate the exterior
17 walls of his -- (Inaudible) -- with a
18 high-powered rifle; a peaceful man that had a
19 violent end.

20 Had it not been for the small radio
21 stations and the local papers, those like
22 Tri-State Defender, Lincoln Civil Star News
23 (sic), AM 1340 WLAA AM, if it had not been for
24 those small organizations, there would not
25 have been an opportunity to help the community

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1 heal.

2 Because if you speak from one voice and
3 if those that are in power continue to hold
4 that power and unjustly don't serve the
5 community, those are some of the things that
6 we are having to deal with.

7 I come to you from Memphis, Tennessee.
8 And it was important for me to come to Tampa
9 to speak about this issue. Because something
10 is going to have to change, if we are going to
11 face the problems.

12 And one thing I would like to share with
13 you, Sears and Roebuck, in 1971 -- after
14 Operation Push was founded, People of the
15 United States to Served Humanity -- we were
16 organizing to make sure that those in the
17 community could come out of this with some

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18 sense of a healing and hope.

19 And when you continue to have suppression,
20 and when there is not hope -- right now, when
21 you think about the amount of money that's
22 been spent on Katrina, in the rebuilding
23 effort, but still there are millions of people
24 who want to ask questions, they want to know
25 why hundreds of thousands of folks haven't had

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1 a chance to back home -- it's because you are
2 hearing enough of a diverse message.

3 So I ask you to just consider --
4 sincerely consider this and make sure that
5 there an opportunity to resolve. Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 Hal Hogan:

9 MR. HOGAN: Good evening. I'm going to
10 just say something nice about someone.

11 My name is Hal Hogan. And I'm a
12 long-time viewer of Channel 8. When I found
13 out that they used volunteers, I wanted to be
14 part of that. I'm happy to say that I have
15 done so for 12 years.

16 Just to touch -- my background includes
17 34 years at Trans World Airlines in master
18 service, including 22 years as a supervisor
19 responsible for all TWA passenger activity at
20 an airport.

21 If any of you has ever flown anywhere,
22 you know what happens to the -- (Inaudible) --

23
24
25
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when your airplane has a delay. They call for the supervisor, I'm the guy standing in front of the fan.

1 But I'm here to speak about the good that
2 Channel 8 does for its viewing community.
3 Just a few of Eight's charming -- Channel 8's
4 community service projects are a
5 five-day-a-week ongoing community consumer
6 help line, paint-your-heart out projects,
7 hurricane help lines, All Children's Hospital
8 fundraisers, holiday travel help lines,
9 specialized call-in lines, such as the Breast
10 Cancer Awareness and the food bank collection
11 and sorting.

12 All of our volunteer workers as -- and
13 coordinated by Channel 8's Laurie Stokes. We
14 do so much good work for the community. And I
15 just wanted you to know how committed we at
16 Channel 8 are. Thank you.

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

18 Will the following people please go to
19 the nearest microphone has. Merle Allshouse,
20 Suzanne Willet, Guy Maxfield, Susan Fox,
21 Stephanie Shreve and Erica Rogers.

22 Tim Lalonde.

23
24
25
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MR. LALONDE: Last night when I was in my car listening to the radio around 6:30 a.m. on a Sunday morning, I was tuned in to a music

1 station. But at this hour it was airing a
2 community story. I listened to it for a few

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3 minutes, but it failed to keep my attention.
4 So I switched the station. To my surprise, I
5 found the same story playing.

6 Just for the sake of curiosity, I went
7 through the entire FM spectrum, digital C
8 button (sic.) I counted eleven -- six radio
9 stations playing the same story. All six
10 stations owned by Cox out of Atlanta, Georgia.

11 I find it hard to believe that classic
12 rockers, alternative rockers, hip-hoppers,
13 easy listeners, country music listeners are so
14 much in sync that one story speaks for all of
15 them. (Applause.)

16 I find it more difficult to believe that
17 these six stations would be playing the same
18 story if it were owned by six different
19 companies with six different owners
20 representing their actual audience.

21 We hear much talk about the free market.
22 The free market does a great job of deciding
23 which products are deserving of your
24 hard-earned dollars.

146 25 Steve Johnson revolutionized the way we

1 listen to recorded music. With the iPod, he
2 cornered the market on mp3 players. But let
3 us not confuse the free market with the
4 marketplace of ideas. In the true marketplace
5 of ideas, the environment is created with a
6 lot of fast (sic) ideas that come forward,
7 uninhibited.

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8 In a free market the cornering of the
9 market is the end game, blocking out all the
10 competition. When this model's allowed into
11 the marketplace of ideas, we end up with the
12 kind of competition that attempts to squash
13 out ideas and voices instead of nurturing
14 them.

15 In 1996 the marketplace of ideas was
16 bruised and battered. Today we decide whether
17 we should put it out of its misery or nurture
18 it back to health along with our democracy.
19 Let the free market compete for our
20 discretionary dollars. Let a healthy
21 diverse and vibrant --

22 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

23 MR. LALONDE: -- marketplace of ideas
24 compete for our hearts and minds. Thank you
25 very much.

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

2 Merle Allshouse.

3 (No audible response.)

4 MR. SIGALOS: Merle Allshouse.

5 (No audible response.)

6 MR. SIGALOS: Suzanne Willet.

7 MS. WILLET: Thank you, Commissioners,
8 for being here and having us in Tampa today.
9 Thank you, everybody else, for attending this
10 meeting.

11 If I want to learn about this country, I
12 have to leave this country. When I was in
13 Winnipeg, I learned about the soft-wood lumber

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14 dispute between the United States and Canada.

15 When I was in Edmondton, I learned that
16 Canada is the largest supplier of oil into the
17 United States.

18 When I was in Germany, I learned more
19 about the aftermath of Hiroshima in one
20 documentary than I have on the History Channel
21 for the past ten years.

22 Finally, to find about CDL --
23 (Inaudible) -- I have to catch her on speaking
24 at a coffeehouse or hopefully catch it on
25 Democracy Now.

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1 I ask the commissioners: Do I have to
2 become Canadian to learn about the United
3 States?

4 Is not the voice of media in this country
5 narrow enough, and do we have to make it
6 narrower? Thank you. (Applause.)

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 Guy Maxfield.

9 MR. MAXFIELD. Good evening, ladies and
10 gentlemen. My name is Guy Maxfield, and I'm
11 representing the C News TV.com (sic), an
12 Internet broadcast company.

13 I grew up in '58, so of watched
14 television come from something that I had a
15 lot of potential, a lot of good things were
16 happening.

17 What happened is my question. Because I
18 watched where Mussolini and Hitler took new --

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19 took books, burned books and had one point of
20 view, and it led to being burning up.

21 If we're not careful, our future
22 generations and our children could be burning
23 up or worse. One person should not be able to
24 determine the image or the message that you
25 hear and only that message.

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1 We've got to wake up. We've got to stop
2 moving in the direction that we're moving.
3 This opportunity with the media is so amazing
4 and important, we don't need to waste it.
5 Corporations get enough money as it is. They
6 get corporate welfare.

7 There's a public trust involved with
8 media, radio, television, print. And, yes,
9 the children need to be reading again. I got
10 a girl that was telling me her ear is hurting
11 because they don't want to read (sic.) Our
12 son drives me crazy with this.

13 There's a lot more I've got to be able to
14 say. I don't have enough time. But let me
15 finish off of this. If we're going to have a
16 future, as the leader of the world setting an
17 example for everybody else, we can't be afraid
18 of having opposing viewpoints.

19 We've got to be able to discuss and
20 impart -- (Applause) -- and debate. That's
21 democracy. If we're not going to be about
22 democracy, we may as well hang it up. Thank
23 you.

24 (Applause.)

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MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

1 Susan Fox.

2 MS. FOX: I speak to you as president of
3 the board of one of the rare community
4 independent media outlets, and that's WMNF
5 88.5 on -- (Applause.)

6 We've been on the air 30 years, but we're
7 sponsored noncommercial. We have about
8 100,000 listeners and about 10,500 member
9 supporters.

10 And you have come to a town that knows
11 about independent media. We know the
12 difference, because we have it here, and we
13 love that. We love independent media in
14 Tampa.

15 We carry our own WMNF evening news where
16 you hear about real issues, not just the car
17 crashes and the crimes. We have the daily
18 college show where people can discuss the
19 issues.

20 We carry news about sustainable living,
21 about alternative health, the Women's Show,
22 talking about women's issues. We have a full
23 block of African-American affairs on Sundays,
24 followed by the Sunday Simco Jewish Affairs.

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On Fridays we have two talk Muslim
1 affairs. We have a Latin American radio show.
2 We have out-in-the-open for gay, lesbian and
3 bisexual communities. This is what democracy

4 sounds like.

5 A VOICE: You bet.

6 (Appl ause.)

7 MS. FOX: It's a diverse group of --
8 (Inaudi ble) -- and respond on a rational level
9 and try to seek understanding and common
10 ground.

11 But for the past two decades, we've seen
12 a retrenchment all across America in corporate
13 media. I'm going to file my full -- my
14 two-page remarks. But, obviously, we oppose
15 any further consolidation. And we think that
16 more community voices, like ours, needs to be
17 on the air. Thank you. (Appl ause.)

18 MR. SIGALOS: Stephanie Shreve.

19 (No audi ble response.)

20 MR. SIGALOS: Stephanie Shreve.

21 MS. SHREVE: Hi. My name is Stephanie
22 Shreve, and I'm a graduate student at the
23 University of South Florida in -- (Inaudi ble)
24 -- my studies. And I've been following the
25 media-ownership consolidation topic since 2002

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1 with the biannual review then. And I have a
2 couple of comments that I'd like to make of
3 concern.

4 I believe that the further consolidation
5 of media is going to be moving more revenue
6 out of the local community and causing fewer
7 jobs and more of a Wal-Marting effect
8 on communities.

9 It's -- if the Commission is serious

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10 about localism, competition and diversity, why
11 not go back to the original rule, one outlet
12 per -- per community. (Applause.)

13 And if consolidated media is really the
14 best way to start with public interest, why is
15 the majority of the public unaware of the media
16 ownership -- (Inaudible) -- the future
17 elimination of analog television as they know
18 it, how digital interactive television will
19 impact their lives.

20 If media wants to serve the public
21 interests, they must make the public aware of
22 the information they need to make informed
23 decisions.

24 And we ask you to help us find our way to
25 a balanced media landscape that can give us

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1 the hurricane coverage we need, as well as the
2 opportunity for the public to get the
3 information they need for democracy.

4 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. SIGALOS: Would the following people
7 go to their nearest microphone, starting with
8 Number 27, Cynthia Mercer, James McCarthy,
9 Beth Wolfe, Chris Brudy, Bill Bucolo and
10 Andrew Rock.

11 Erica Rogers.

12 MS. ROGERS: Erica Rogers, Regional Vice
13 President of the American Heart Association.
14 Since 1948, the American Heart Association has

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15 worked with the media to generate funds and
16 educate the public about fighting vascular
17 disease.

18 Here in the Tampa Bay Area, broadcasters
19 work closely with our organization to achieve
20 these results by sponsoring our fundraising
21 events, hosting special media events and
22 providing editorial coverage of the issues.

23 The local media sponsor of our
24 fundraising events have, by doing so, by
25 giving the agreed amount of public service

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1 announcements designed to drive attendance
2 while also creating awareness about
3 cardiovascular disease (sic.)

4 Thanks to media support of our local
5 fundraising events, we've raised nearly 2.5
6 million dollars in Tampa Bay Area within the
7 last 12 months.

8 Not only have the local broadcasters been
9 generous with their donation and on their
10 inventory, but they've also created their own
11 special media events designed to teach Tampa
12 Bay how to stop how diseases grow (sic.)

13 Each year the American Heart Association
14 works with the local affiliates to host
15 Charter Heart (sic) in February and Stroke
16 Alert in May. Each event, at no cost to the
17 American Heart Association, includes viable
18 interviews, packaged stories, a day-long phone
19 bank at the station in which viewers are
20 encouraged to call and receive additional

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21 information.

22 Three years ago, during one of these
23 events, a viewer called in to the phone bank
24 having just seen a story about a young woman
25 suffering from a stroke. The viewer described

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1 having similar warning signs. She was quickly
2 to told hang up and dial 911. We received a
3 note from that viewer a week later saying that
4 story saved her life.

5 The American Heart Association teaches
6 the community how to reduce the risk from
7 heart disease through these special media
8 events as well as through traditional
9 editorial coverage.

10 I could recount dozens of examples, like
11 the one I just mentioned, of the positive
12 impact our partnership with local media has
13 had on the people in our community.

14 The local media allows the American Heart
15 Association to connect with hundreds of
16 thousands of Bay Area residents each and every
17 month in a meaningful, memorable and
18 manageable way.

19 Our media partnerships are truly helping
20 the Heart Association not only change lives
21 but save them.

22 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

23 Cynthia Mercer.

24 MS. MERCER: I want to take a walk down
25 memory lane. I'm a child of television. I

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1 grew up in the '50s and early '60s. And
2 media -- and I actually remember when media
3 were locally owned.

4 I had grew up in Charlotte, North
5 Carolina. We had a couple of network
6 television stations. The quality was poor, by
7 today's standards, but it was local
8 information and served the community.

9 There were farm reports in the early
10 morning. There was a children's program later
11 in the afternoon. There was usually a
12 home-making show in the middle of the day.

13 And, by the way, the stars of the local
14 children's program was available for birthday
15 parties. And most of the kids knew this guy
16 personally.

17 And these local shows advertised local
18 businesses that many people in the community
19 knew and -- and went to -- went shopping
20 there. On the weekend there was usually a
21 local bandstand-like show for teens.

22 The evening news was news, not a promo
23 for network programming or cross-promotion for
24 the station's sister newspaper. There was
25 always an editorial that made you think. We

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1 often disagreed, but it was better than what
2 we have now.

3 The radio carried a variety of
4 programming. There were black-owned stations.
5 The DJ programming was strictly local with a

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6 few minutes of national news and sports on the
7 half-hour.

8 Now my main sources of local and state
9 news are our local public and community radio
10 stations and the Internet and the St. Pete
11 Times.

12 I tune out most of the commercial TV
13 stations and all commercial radio. They no
14 longer serve my needs. News is -- I get my
15 television news for international and national
16 from the BBC and PBS.

17 I would ask you, please, put the "local"
18 back in local media and support democracy.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

21 James McCarthy.

22 MR. MCCARTHY: Good evening. I'd like to
23 thank the Commissioners for coming to Tampa to
24 listen to this. I'm a disabled veteran, and
25 I've been in this position for 45 years.

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1 I have some experience in the media,
2 because I've worked for two newspapers and
3 worked for a publisher in Hartford,
4 Connecticut, and more recently have become
5 involved with community nonprofit TV and radio
6 here in Tampa.

7 As a concerned citizen, I try to gain
8 news from as many possible sources as I can,
9 because, frankly, I don't trust most of them.
10 Recently, a couple of my more liberal friends

11 chided me for reading the Tampa Tribune over
12 the St. Petersburg newspaper.

13 I was informed that the Tribune wrote at
14 the level of a fifth-grader, and the
15 St. Petersburg newspaper wrote at the level of
16 a ninth-grader. I am smarter than a
17 fifth-grader.

18 I would like to congratulate some of the
19 speakers, most notably the ones from the
20 newspaper, the Neighborhood News, and the last
21 speaker that spoke. He was right on the
22 money.

23 It's unfortunate many of the decisions
24 made in corporate America have to do with
25 money. But in the case of the media, it's

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1 really tragic when they have their own
2 agendas, and they slant the news, do their --
3 whatever they call it -- "spins" in order to
4 accomplish their agendas. It doesn't say much
5 for how we receive news in this country and
6 is -- the problem is exacerbated by companies
7 who own too many companies. Thank you.

8 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

9 Beth Wolfe.

10 MS. WOLFE: My name is Beth Wolfe. I'm
11 opposed to further media consolidation. I
12 don't think the current arrangements serve the
13 public interests.

14 The current level of media consolidation
15 has created the illusion of diversity; media
16 landscape that may appear diverse on its face

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17 but in reality fosters little or no debate and
18 includes little or no divergent perspectives.

19 In Tampa Bay, the only place where I can
20 hear my perspective, hear from minority
21 candidates or learn the details of government
22 decisions made on my behalf is the community
23 radio station, WMNF (Applause.)

24 The station that's been for -- finance
25 the -- (Inaudible.) This community station

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1 has survived in spite of the corporate media
2 environment not because of it.

3 Citizens are clamoring for access to
4 media with diversity and local information.
5 So 30 years ago activists walked door to door
6 in this community soliciting contributions to
7 start this radio station. And they still
8 support it today, because it helps them be
9 better citizens.

10 But in today's media environment,
11 consolidation levels as they are, there would
12 be no way that a commercial-free,
13 listener-supported broadcaster could start up
14 and survive.

15 Licensing restrictions aside, the idea of
16 creating and funding another source of media
17 doesn't seem urgent for most people, because
18 they languish under the idea of this illusion
19 of diversity.

20 People see a Spanish-language TV station
21 or a newspaper, and they may assume it's owned

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23
24
25
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and operated by someone who's got an interest.
But 99 times out of a hundred, it's owned by a
media conglomerate, controlled by shareholders
or wealthy PR firms on Madison Avenue.

1 Can the public interest be served best by
2 those whose first priority is a 20-percent
3 profit margin?

4 The video news release in convergent
5 newsrooms who don't -- (Inaudible) -- they all
6 play a part in lulling people into the
7 illusion that they are local media outlets
8 working to serve their interests, when
9 actually the corporate bosses in cities far,
10 far away have had their corporate filters on
11 it first.

12 Community stations are one answer. But,
13 again, starting one today from scratch, when
14 people are already paying ever-increasing sums
15 for cable TV and satellite radio, which
16 creates this illusion of diversity, could be
17 just like this shy of impossible (sic.)

18 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

19 (Applause.)

20 Chris Brudy.

21 MR. BRUDY: My name is Chris Brudy.

22 Let's see, the biggest media companies will
23 extend their reach further after this, even
24 though it's gone far too far, as it is.

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To be honest, the media should be

1 fragmented down to the lowest level. It would

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2 be great if nobody owned more than one radio
3 station, one newspaper, one channel;
4 unfortunately, that won't happen.

5 A remand of the Fairness Doctrine should
6 be reinstated. Lapses should be severely
7 punished.

8 A VOICE: That's right.

9 MR. BRUDY: The won't happen either. The
10 reason is because the same people that own the
11 mainstream media and the MSN are the same ones
12 who are the war-profiteers, the same ones who
13 financed, present control -- controlling the
14 executive branch.

15 They are making big money on the war.
16 And they need to fool the America vacuum.
17 People need to get this back in (sic.) This
18 is what the mainstream media does.

19 And all along, the United States is being
20 run by traitors headed by Dick Cheney. These
21 traitors with the MSN, own the whole
22 oligopoly, have stolen the White House in
23 2000, they are going to straight on the
24 attack, and they have -- in 9/11 -- killing
25 thousands of Americans (sic.)

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1 They were out to gain the U.N. and the
2 American public with a wall of big lies
3 concerning the attack. They fooled us into
4 backing their invasions in Afghanistan and
5 Iraq. And they were after all -- and the
6 money that could be drained from the treasury

7 (si c.)
8 The fact that they had just finished
9 assuming power in 2004 through the use of
10 their voting machines was just an added bonus
11 for them. It could've not've been done
12 without the help of the Republican mainstream
13 media oligopoly.

14 They've corrupted and criminally misused
15 the defense, intelligence and law enforcement
16 sectors in the federal government making this
17 hearing really just kind of a side show. The
18 real news story is treason, hundreds of
19 treasons.

20 They need -- they need some help in this
21 country, and that's from the free Internet.
22 Thank God, there are still ways to get some
23 information around. There are still ways to
24 do -- and find out what has been actually
25 going on here.

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1 You should go with people like Bob Bowman
2 and Mike Hooper and Gary Singh (Phonetic),
3 Mark Adams, Clint Curtis and Prison Planet
4 (sic), if you'd like to know more. Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. SIGALOS: Bill Bucolo.

7 MR. BUCOLO: Good afternoon,
8 Commissioners. I'm Bill Bucolo. Thank you
9 very much for coming to the Tampa Bay to
10 personally to hear our views on media
11 ownership and consolidation.

12 I'm a media broker. And I worked in

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13 print communications and in the general field
14 of journalism for over 40 years. I currently
15 publish an area-wide e-mail list of several
16 hundred local -- (Inaudible) -- residents and
17 activists.

18 Our founding fathers considered the free
19 flow of information to be the life blood of
20 our democracy. It is the prized right of
21 Americans (sic.) Over 200 years later, we
22 still, obviously, do not take it for granted,
23 as you can see from your mail and the large
24 audiences you draw to a public hearing.

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25 That said, it must be clear what the

1 public's opinion of the FCC's recent trends
2 toward corporate consolidation is.
3 Consolidation interferes with the free flow of
4 information, because large corporations simply
5 cannot serve local businesses and residents as
6 well as local business and residents.
7 (Applause.) And people have suffered because
8 of it.

9 Unless you have decided that America
10 needs less media diversity, less locally
11 produced news, less responsive public service,
12 you need to stop supporting corporate
13 consolidation over local media.

14 Please encourage diversity. Also
15 encourage more locally-produced news and
16 entertainment. Make this mandatory, no matter
17 who owns the media.

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18 And please keep this in mind about the
19 giant corporations who ask you to approve
20 owner consolidation. Be suspicious.
21 Corporations exist to make money, not to
22 provide a free flow of information.

23 I remind you, it is large corporations
24 who consistently oppose governmental roles in
25 universal health care, clean air, water and a

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1 healthy government, our environment. Please
2 say -- that they oppose better safety
3 regulations in the workplace --

4 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

5 MR. BUCOLO: -- and developing
6 alternative energy, and only large
7 corporations -- (Inaudible) -- stop this
8 disastrous war.

9 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

10 MR. BUCOLO: Corporations are killing us.

11 MR. SIGALOS: Will the following people
12 please go to the nearest microphone. Anne
13 Goldenburg, Wayne Salade, Kristin McClanahan,
14 Mary Ann Massolio, Jamie Ewing and Ben
15 Winthrop.

16 Andrew Rock.

17 MR. ROCK: Commissioners, thank you very
18 much for taking your show on the road and
19 letting the public into the process for a few
20 hours. I really hope you will remember our
21 voices when you're back inside the beltway
22 surrounded by lobbyists.

23 We are your constituents, not them. We

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167 24 are the people who care about democracy, not
25 them -- (Applause.) I'm here as a concerned

1 citizen, who is incredibly concerned about the
2 preservation of American democracy. And
3 that's why I'm against further consolidation
4 of the broadcast media.

5 Democracy relies on the press, now called
6 the media, to inform us and provide diverse
7 opinion. Unfortunately, the corporate
8 broadcast media is not about informing the
9 public. As Steven Wilson said, it's about
10 selling to the public, what to buy, what to
11 think, who to vote for.

12 My wife and I don't have a television.
13 We didn't when we were raising our kids, and
14 that's precisely because we wanted them to
15 grow up as we well-informed citizens and
16 independent thinkers.

17 We subscribed to the -- we subscribe to
18 the St. Pete Times, but we rely on WMNF and
19 the Internet for our real news.

20 As we said earlier, it's amazing when you
21 travel internationally to find there's better
22 coverage of the United States in foreign
23 papers than you find in our own shores.

24 Yes, the networks do a good job, pretty
25 much, on the hurricanes. But what have you

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1 heard from them about global warming, until
2 about ten days ago when it was impossible to

3 ignore?

4 Finally, I want to make a heart-felt plea
5 to the Commission. TV and radio broadcasters
6 should be required, as a condition of
7 licensure, to provide free and equal time to
8 all credible political candidates.

9 (Applause.) Out elections should not be
10 decided by which candidate raises the most
11 money and pays for ads on television.

12 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

13 MR. ROCK: Thank you.

14 MR. SIGALOS: Anne Goldenberg.

15 MS. GOLDENBERG: Hello. Good evening.
16 I'm Anne Goldenburg. I'm the executive
17 director of the Tampa Education Cable
18 Consortium. We are a small, nonprofit local
19 company that's made up of all of the local,
20 educational and cultural institutions here in
21 Hillsborough County.

22 We were created over 20 years ago to take
23 advantage of the new thing in town, "Cable."
24 We program now two 24/7, 355 days a year of
25 noncommercial local educational programming.

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1 Here's some examples of the programs you
2 can find on our local channel that you can't
3 find anywhere else. We have gavel-to-gavel
4 coverage of all of our school board meetings.
5 We have the Florida Department of Education
6 come into town, we are there to give the
7 public the entire unedited coverage.

8 We also provide our local college

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9 students with over 52 college courses. So
10 whether you're a student at the University of
11 South Florida or HCC, you can get your college
12 telecourse.

13 We also provide Math Homework Hotline. I
14 don't know about your kids, but I know my kids
15 sometimes have a little bit of trouble with
16 math and, well, it is essentially the path
17 (sic) in today's world.

18 When our community looked at this issue
19 and asked how can we use television to help
20 our kids, Math Homework Hotline was what we
21 came up with.

22 We have great teachers who man the phones
23 every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and help
24 our kids. There are TV teachers that take
25 live calls and off-screen teachers that take

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1 calls. We've helped over 2,000 kids this year
2 and over 20,000 kids since we've been on the
3 air.

4 We've also made tutorials that are
5 available, not only on the air but on the web.
6 We also do things with our League of Women
7 voters, like school-board debates, so
8 candidates in our community can really have a
9 good understanding of what kind of school
10 policies are going to be affecting their kids.

11 We also have over 110 noncommercial,
12 nonviolent children's series on Saturday
13 mornings. If you turn on the education

14 channel on Saturday morni ng --

15 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

16 MS. GOLDENBERG: -- you will not
17 be cursorily interrupted. It's good stuff. We
18 want more good stuff. So please be very
19 careful when you're thinking about media --

20 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

21 MS. GOLDENBERG: -- in public and about
22 how you can encourage a variety of public
23 di scourses.

24 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

25 MS. GOLDENBURG: Thank you.

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Wayne --

2 MR. SALLADE: It's "Sallade," sir.

3 Thank you. I'm not an elected official,
4 not a former politician, not a business person,
5 not a ex- -- disgruntled ex-employee. I'm the
6 emergency management director from Charlotte
7 County, Florida, Punta Gorda.

8 You heard Pat Roberts allude earlier this
9 afternoon to what we went through on August
10 13th, 2004, when we got the hurricane that was
11 coming to Tampa Bay.

12 As the hurricane was bearing down on us
13 with its winds of 150 miles an hour and gusts
14 over 190 miles per hour that would destroy
15 11,000 homes in our community, destroy six of
16 our schools, four fire stations and countless
17 lives, the broadcasters of my local radio
18 stations, one a small independent AM from the
19 west county, and the other, a Clear Channel 5

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20 station conglomerate was by my side.

21 They never left my side. Until we were
22 forced to evacuate the emergency operations
23 center, when the winds began to take the
24 building apart, they stayed with me. They
25 went with me to the hiding place where we rode

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1 out that hurricane that fateful Friday
2 afternoon.

3 When the winds began to ease, they all
4 wanted to leave before it was safe. I had to
5 physically restrain them. When the Clear
6 Channel guys got back to their studio, the
7 roof was gone. They had the station back on
8 the air -- one of their stations back on the
9 air -- within about two hours.

10 They broadcast through the night for
11 18 hours to the people of Charlotte County,
12 who had no other means communication. They
13 kept on the air, talking to people, letting
14 them tell us what was going on.

15 They kept their representatives at my
16 emergency operations center throughout the
17 days and weeks that followed, including
18 Hurricane Frances and Hurricane Jeanne, which
19 forced us to evacuate our facilities again.

20 Those folks from Clear Channel were there
21 for us. And I just thought that side of the
22 story needed to be told. That's one local
23 news story that is very, very good news. And
24 I'm very proud to be a partner and to have

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25 them as partners in my community.

1 And this is my chance to publicly thank
2 them for their efforts on August 13th, 2004,
3 and the weeks that followed. Thank you.

4 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

5 Kristin McClanahan.

6 MS. MCCLANAHAN: Hi. Thank you very much
7 for the opportunity to speak tonight.

8 I work for Junior Achievement. I'm a
9 marketing manager of Junior Achievement of
10 West Central Florida. In case you don't know,
11 Junior Achievement is a nonprofit organization
12 that provides programs and activities to
13 children, teaching them the economics of life.

14 Junior Achievement of West Central
15 Florida feels the collaboration of eight Clear
16 Channel stations has made a tremendous impact
17 on our Bay Area and young people more so than
18 anyone individual radio station would have
19 been able to do or could ever do.

20 Clear Channel radio stations provide
21 job-sharing experiences for hundreds of high
22 school students throughout the year.
23 Corporate team members volunteer inside the
24 classrooms, teaching kids about the economics
25 of staying in school.

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1 And Clear Channel is a major sponsor of
2 two enterprise villages on both sides of the
3 Bay. By Clear Channel's support and
4 contributions to Junior Achievement, they

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5 impact more than 30,000 kids annually.
6 Clear Channel Communications is one of
7 Junior Achievement's top partners in the
8 community, providing the children with a
9 unique experience that no other business could
10 alone provide.

11 Their participation allows for kids to
12 learn about mass communication and the
13 business principles needed to support this
14 industry in our community.

15 On a personal note, whether the media
16 industry is being consolidated or broken up,
17 as a young person with younger siblings, I
18 feel that what's most important and what I
19 would like to see happen in the media industry
20 is a little bit of reformation.

21 I want to see more honesty. I hate that
22 everything seems to be driven by what brings
23 in the most ratings and what brings in the
24 most money. I want to see good intentions,
25 and I want to see what's best for the people,

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1 whether that's more or less, I just want to
2 see what's best.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

4 MS. MCCLANAHAN: Thank you.

5 MR. SIGALOS: Mary Ann Massollio.

6 MS. MASSOLIO: Good evening. My name is
7 Mary Ann Massollio, and I'm the executive
8 director for the Children's Cancer Center,
9 which is a local 501(c)3 organization that's

10 been here in the Tampa Bay Area for about 30
11 years.

12 We've talked a lot tonight about
13 organizations, Clear Channel's WFLA. What I
14 wanted to do is kind of a tap into the
15 individuals behind these big names.

16 Clear Channel is a huge company. It does
17 what it needs to do. But what I want to do is
18 talk a little bit about the above and beyond
19 that these employees do.

20 They don't need to be at our fundraisers,
21 they don't need to be at our children's
22 funerals, they don't need to be arranging any
23 -- (Inaudible). But they do. They have their
24 jobs. They are required to do PSA. But what
25 they do above and beyond is what I want to

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1 talk about today.

2 And Ron Diaz and Ian Beckles are two fine
3 examples of that. As many of you maybe
4 listened to them for sports reasons, you'll
5 also hear that they do a lot of promoting of
6 the Children's Cancer Center.

7 Ron had one of our teams on about two
8 years ago on air, fell in love with this
9 child, and as a result, has done an annual
10 golf tournament every year, again on the side,
11 off the air, behind the scenes.

12 But I want everyone to know that Ron Diaz
13 has raised over \$80,000 for the Children's
14 Cancer Center, on his own, recruiting friends,
15 as has Ian Beckles, as has Tom Doyle and Mike

Sessi on 1

16 Olivera, who actually serves on the board here
17 at the Children's Cancer Center.

18 And I know that they're very busy people,
19 and I know that they have a lot of other
20 things to do, but I wanted to put kind of a
21 happy slant on it and a better slant on it and
22 show you what they do.

23 The media tends to just advertise and
24 show the bad side of our athletes and what's
25 going on with media. And I'm here to say that

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1 there's a very nice side to them, as well,
2 that we are a local charity and we depend very
3 heavily on local support from the free local
4 radio. Thank you.

5 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

6 Jamie Ewing.

7 MS. EWING: Good evening everyone. My
8 name is Jamie Ewing. I am from ACORN, the
9 Association of Community Organizers for Reform
10 Now.

11 We are one of the groups that WMNF Radio
12 was talking about, the door-knockers. I am a
13 member and a chairperson at ACORN, so I feel
14 that I can speak on this issue and represent
15 many, many other people in our community.

16 We do not want these big conglomerates to
17 come in and be able tell us what we can see,
18 what we can hear or what we can read. What
19 they will be doing is not only getting richer
20 off of us, but they will be forming a

21 dictatorshi p.

22 They will dictate to us what we see, what
23 we hear and what we read. We want to hear
24 what is going on in our local communities. It
25 is important to us that live here to know what

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1 is happening in our own communities. I don't
2 care what's going on in Chicago, Illinois. It
3 does not affect my life here in Tampa.

4 We do not want these people to be able to
5 come in and take over our lives. And that is
6 virtually what they will be doing. Thank you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 Would the following people please come to
9 the microphone. Dr. Don Thompson, David
10 Beaton, Lawrence Rossini, Arlene Sweeting,
11 Sarah Kell, David Carr and Ellen Lasher.

12 Ben Winthrop.

13 A VOICE: -- what number?

14 MR. SIGALOS: I called just to Number 45.
15 That's the last number. And I'm trying to
16 time it. It's 7:15 now. We're trying to take
17 our break at 7:30. Hopefully, I've done it
18 about right. But that last name, Ellen
19 Lasher, was Number 45.

20 Mr. Winthrop.

21 MR. WINTHROP: I'm cool.

22 MR. SIGALOS: Yeah.

23 MR. WINTHROP: All right. Good.

24 So, yeah, I'm Ben. And I just really
25 want to say, what part of "Monopolies Are A Bad

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1 Idea" do you people not seem to get anymore?

2 (Appl ause.)

3 I mean, really, okay. Like, look, I play
4 the Parker's Brothers, a little board game,
5 for awhile, until when I was about eight years
6 old. And I had a lot of fun with it. It was
7 a great game. All right. If you want to take
8 that same concept and apply it to our media
9 market just strikes me as idiotic. And I
10 really can't think of a worse way to go.

11 Let me ask you a question. All right.
12 How many people know that they have
13 foreclosed -- there've been foreclosed homes
14 in America; it's risen by 300,000 homes in
15 year (sic)?

16 All right. We've got four people. Come
17 on. Now, there's been numerous -- there --
18 there have been press conferences on this.
19 There has been quite a lot to talk about this
20 issue. There's been studies reported and
21 everything else. And all of this stuff has
22 been sent to local media markets.

23 And we've got four people in here who
24 knows that, who knows what's going on with
25 that, four people who know the number of homes

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1 being foreclosed on. Those are homes in our
2 neighborhoods.

3 We've got people right now who are -- you
4 know, they're just losing everything, you got
5 the elderly, first-time home buyers, young

6 families, couples -- everything -- losing
7 everything. And, still, it's not really being
8 report on that much.

9 And I ask, will these four people know
10 what's going on with the home mortgage prices
11 and other finance crises that are facing
12 America today if we have further media
13 consolidation.

14 And, I'm sorry, but -- (Inaudible) --
15 Monopoly board game, I general speak in --
16 yeah, I just talk trash to everybody around
17 me. And I'm pretty sure that's what the rest
18 of them will do, too. Thanks a lot.

19 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

20 Dr. Don Thompson.

21 DR. THOMPSON: I'm Dr. Don Thompson. I'm
22 also a retired United Methodist minister and
23 graduate of Dickinson College in Harrisburg
24 area, where I learned critical thinking.

25 And my friend Dick told me the story of

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1 the minnow that was eaten by a fish, and the
2 fish was eaten by the barracuda. And that's
3 what's happening with media conglomerates.
4 They're the barracudas that are eating up our
5 valuable local sources, like WMNF and WSLR in
6 Sarasota.

7 And we also have the Knight-Ridder
8 information from our local newspaper in
9 Bradenton, the Bradenton Herald. So these
10 kinds of things that we're not getting in the
11 media that's -- (Inaudible) -- itself and

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12 having its hench-people write about it so
13 much, are not telling us the truth.

14 They didn't tell us about how Katherine
15 Harris, the secretary of state, manipulated
16 the 2000 election by deleting 90,000 voters
17 from the rolls because they had names similar
18 to felons in their record. We learned that
19 from WMNF and WSLR and Frank Powells
20 (Phonetic), who happened to be an
21 investigative reporter in the Manchester
22 Guardian in order to survive a document with
23 that kind of truth (sic.)

24 I also have been -- well, I listen to --
25 (Inaudible) -- when it starts. And we found

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1 that no invasion of Panama, not all of the
2 South American newspapers, condemned the
3 invasion of Panama, except the international
4 Miami Herald. That should tell you something
5 about conglomerate newspaper, video, TV,
6 radio, how it operate. We need the
7 enlightenment that has had -- (Inaudible)
8 through '54. And I think --

9 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

10 DR. THOMPSON: -- do not allow the
11 conglomerates to continue on their --

12 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

13 David Beaton.

14 MR. BEATON: Hello, Honorable
15 Commissioners. I, David Beaton, come to you
16 today as the current chair of WSLR an LP-FM

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station in Sarasota.
We are a nonprofit, low-power FM community station. We empower folks to understand the media, understand their community and understand their role in the community.
We build democracy every day by giving people and organizations a voice on the air every day, not at nonprofit golf classics or fundraising events, we give access to the media on the air.
In our market, Sarasota, the New York Times owns the local daily paper and the local cable news channel. So what primarily motivates commercial media consolidation? It is profit, not public service.
Community radio, on the other hand, is motivated by community involvement. We at community radio are beholden to our community, our Greek community, our Hispanic community, our youth, our seniors, our arts community, our environmental community, our civic community.
Capitalism is a great motivator, no doubt. But even greater is the freedom that our forefathers gave us. The right to campaign, to stop on the street corner and pass out the pamphlet of common sense was instilled in our Constitution
at the age of 12 Ben Franklin first began to learn the business of printing the truth.

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23 And Thomas Jefferson wrote, "The only security
24 of all is in the free press."

184 25 A free press today is hard to find,

1 though, to find in the corporate world, where
2 a tangled web of ownerships exists, where
3 marketing directors have more power than
4 journalists (sic.)

5 I'm here today to say no to more
6 consolidation and yes to community radio. The
7 citizens have the right to the airwaves. So
8 let's protect these rights today and get LP-FM
9 stations primary status as to protect the
10 citizens' airwaves.

11 Currently LP-FMs have a secondary status.
12 We are requesting that you give them greater
13 than primary status and create more access to
14 the media for the citizens by expanding LP-FM
15 and do away with third channel adjacent
16 restrictions on the LP-FM licenses (sic.)
17 Thank you very much. (Applause.)

18 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

19 Lawrence Rossini.

20 MR. ROSSINI: My name is Lawrence
21 Rossini, from Bradenton, Florida. Mr.
22 Chairman and Commissioners, thank you for this
23 opportunity.

185 24 I co-host a news and information program
25 on a community radio station, WSLR, low-power

1 FM 96.5 in Sarasota. The value of our program

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2 and our station comes back to us every day
3 from listeners who like what they hear. And
4 we know the reason is the diversity of our
5 voice, the multiplicity of perspectives, the
6 absence of talking points and the sounds of
7 the community echoing through the station.

8 We live in a world of corporate giants.
9 We understand that. But the problem with
10 media consolidation is not only the uniformity
11 of these corporations, it's the censorship
12 caused by their corporate and political
13 filters.

14 I, like many who have spoken before me
15 today, have had the opportunity of living and
16 working all over this great country of ours,
17 the Pacific Northwest, Washington, D.C., New
18 England, the Midwest, and now Florida. And I
19 regret to say I've never been in a place,
20 especially a major media market, where the
21 mainstream media sees the world through a
22 smaller lens than it does in Tampa Bay

23 (Applause.)

24 Community radio and low-powered stations,
25 such as ours, give a direct channel to the

1 people's voice. And it's essential for a
2 community to stay informed and kept aware of
3 the broad range of viewpoints that are
4 affected -- where the people are affected.

5 Divergent viewpoints are more likely to
6 be carried on outlets like ours. It's
7 important to preserve the smaller outlets.

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8 And I urge you to oppose further media
9 consolidation, to open up the spectrum, so
10 that communities like ours can benefit from
11 low-power stations with locally produced
12 content. Thank you.

13 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

14 Arlene Sweeting.

15 MS. SWEETING: I am here today to express
16 my opposition to any relaxation or elimination
17 of the public interests limits on media
18 ownership.

19 In 2000 we, a number of people of here,
20 applied for a low-power FM station, because we
21 were dissatisfied with local news coverage and
22 citizen access to media in Sarasota.

23 WSLR-LP 96.5 went on the air in the
24 summer of 2005. Our call letters "WSLR" stand
25 for Sarasota Local Radio. And that is our

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1 mission and our commitment, to serve our local
2 community.

3 We have over 100 volunteers from the
4 community that participate in programming and
5 day-to-day operations of the station.

6 Joshua Rabo (Phonetic), our youngest
7 programmer, is eight years old, and last year
8 he was certified as the youngest DJ in with
9 world by the Guinness Book of World Records
10 (Appause.)

11 He does the Sunday morning cartoon show
12 and take -- (Inaudible) -- the air -- and every

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13 other Saturday at the station. We have middle
14 school students, high school students and
15 college students involved in programming.

16 Our station was the result of an MX
17 agreement with New College of Florida, and we
18 strive to serve the youth in our community
19 whose voice is often neglected when it comes to
20 the mainstream media.

21 Youth are viewed as consumers of media,
22 but not necessarily as voices to be heard on
23 the air. At WSLR this is not the case. We
24 serve as a training ground for future
25 journalists and disc jockeys, giving people

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1 both young and old opportunities to experience
2 the power of the media and to have fun too.

3 Having had the experience of working at
4 WSLR-LP for almost two years now, I can say
5 that LP-FMs provide a valuable community
6 service and help to promote localism and
7 diversity in broadcasting.

8 I hope the FCC will recognize the value
9 of LP-FMs by awarding them primary status and
10 protecting them from encroachment by full-power
11 stations. It makes no sense that the only
12 station in town willing to cover the city
13 council meetings should get knocked off just
14 because some top-40 station wants to shift away
15 from the town it currently serves and move
16 closer to an emerging population center.

17 I urge you to be true champions of
18 democracy, diversity and localism by supporting

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19 the expansion of the LP-FM service and lifting
20 the thi rd-channel adjacency restrictions on new
21 LP-FM frequenci es.

22 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

23 MS. SWEETING: Thank you.

24 (Appl ause.)

25 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

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1 Sarah Kell .

2 MS. KELL: Thank you, Commi ssi oners, for
3 holding this hearing and allowing us to
4 comment on this important issue. I'm one of
5 those college students that Arlene was just
6 talking about who's involved in WSLR in
7 Sarasota, Florida. And I came here to
8 encourage you-all to move away from
9 consolidation and support local media.

10 It's important that the community has
11 low-power radio, public TV stations and
12 independent news to report on urgent local
13 news in a timely manner, to represent diverse
14 groups in the community and to provide
15 information and dialogue on local matters of
16 importance.

17 Commercial stations just do not do the
18 job in these areas. Here's two examples from
19 Sarasota, Florida. About two weeks ago, a
20 fellow student of mine rode his bike down the
21 street in my neighborhood and was assaulted by
22 a gang with baseball bats.

23 I bike down that street regularly to get

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to work so, naturally, I was concerned. I called a reporter at the low-power community

1 radio station. Right away, he did some
2 research with the police department and
3 reported that this was just one in a stream of
4 recent biker attacks on that street and the
5 parallel street.

6 No other media outlet in my community has
7 covered this story to date. Community media
8 reported on important bicyclist news in a
9 timely manner.

10 Another example has to do with local
11 political coverage. Just last month Sarasota
12 was preparing for the city commission
13 election.

14 The candidate information that Sarasota's
15 New York Times affiliate carries was minimal
16 to none. And I couldn't find any information
17 on commercial radio or TV stations, other than
18 the paid political ads.

19 I got that information, instead, through
20 candidate forums held locally and rebroadcast
21 on the LP-FM community radio stations as well
22 as -- (Inaudible) -- on that station and from
23 a small independent paper.

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These community media sources were able to cover candidate information in a more

1 interactive and detailed manner than would
2 other media.

3 In closing, I encourage the FCC not to
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4 consolidate media ownership and to expand and
5 protect low-power and local media for the
6 health of our communities. Thank you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 David Carr.

9 MR. CARR: My name is Dave Carr. I'm a
10 former policy analyst for the U.S. Congress in
11 science and technology policy.

12 I really don't believe that you need us,
13 because I think you already understand the
14 situation very well. I think that this is, in
15 some sense, a farce -- (Applause.) So for --
16 some of you who have been put on this
17 committee specifically because you have -- you
18 will follow an agenda of your corporate owners
19 or corporate handlers, and what we say is
20 irrelevant.

21 But I want to try to change somebody's
22 mind on this committee. I'm going to take my
23 limited time to do it. This is what I have to
24 say. Our remarks today are not direct -- are
25 not addressed to all members of this

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1 commi ssi on.

2 Those to whom my remarks do not apply
3 have my sincere appreciation for their public
4 service. Some people say we're in the mess we
5 are in as a nation due to incompetence. And
6 some say it's due to mal evol ence. I believe
7 it is due to incompetence and the mal evol ence.

8 It is clear to me and to many others that

9 the decisions of this body has seriously
10 undermined the foundation of our democracy.
11 The question in my mind is, what part of the
12 problem are you; are you incompetent or are
13 you malevolent?

14 Some of you, I am sure, don't even
15 believe in the concept of the public interest.
16 And, yet, you are part of an organization
17 chartered to protect the public interest.

18 The American people you have been -- have
19 been underserved by the corporate masters of
20 media, if the agenda of which you have so
21 assiduously advanced along in increased
22 concentration of ownership.

23 This is not to say that you alone bear
24 responsibility for our calamity. But you make
25 the rules for those who rule the minds of

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1 America. Knowledge is power, and the denial
2 of knowledge gives demagogues the opportunity to
3 rule through unreasoned fears.

4 Among other things, this has led us to a
5 costly and unnecessary war and undermining of
6 our civil liberties and produced a populous
7 often unable to understand where their
8 interests lie.

9 I ask you to think beyond your interests
10 in serving the media ogreists (sic) and think
11 instead of what your parents would think about
12 what you are doing to confront the --

13 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

14 MR. CARR: -- the consequences for your

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15 decisions for your grandchildren. (Applause.)

16 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

17 Ellen Lasher.

18 MS. LASHER: Good evening, Commissioners
19 and guests. My name is Ellen Lasher. I'm the
20 community relations and programming director
21 for WTSP-TV, the CBS affiliate here in
22 St. Petersburg.

23 Annually, we produce many, many different
24 local programs. Among them are hurricane
25 specials. We produce specials highlighting

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1 local children who are available for adoption.
2 We recruit foster parents.

3 We work very, very hard to make people
4 aware of the draught conditions that are
5 happening right now. And as a news station,
6 we maintain a reporter in Tallahassee, so that
7 she can provide a local spin on all of the
8 actions that our state legislature is taking.

9 I want to talk just a little bit about
10 the community outreach that we do. And,
11 Commissioner Copps, I am very respectful of
12 your caution to us about not highlighting our
13 good works.

14 But as part of the United Foundation of
15 Families, we are privileged to be able to
16 distribute significant funds every year to
17 local 501(c)3 nonprofit agencies. To date
18 that amount has totaled over half a million
19 dollars.

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20 The programs that I'm talking about are
21 partnerships with Poynter Institute for Media
22 Studies, to help train high school journalism
23 students.

24 We work with Big Brothers, Big Sisters on
25 their Amachi Program, which helps provide

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1 mentors for kids whose parents are
2 incarcerated.

3 We've worked with St. Petersburg ACORN to
4 fund voter-registration drives, Kids Voting
5 Tampa Bay for voter education. It's these
6 kinds of things that our ownership of the
7 Gannett Company -- the Gannett Foundation
8 makes us a stronger local citizen. And for
9 that we're very, very proud.

10 Additionally, every year we do a
11 bone-marrow donor registry drive around the
12 Martin Luther King holiday. To date we've
13 added over 500, mostly minority, bone marrow
14 donors to that national registry.

15 We take our mission very, very seriously
16 to serve the Tampa Bay community. Thank you.

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

18 Thank you very much for participating in
19 this portion of today's hearing. We will
20 temporarily adjourn and restart the hearing in
21 30 minutes at 8:00 p.m.

22 I know that there are many of you still
23 seeking to comment, and Commission staff will
24 remain here to ensure that your comments are
25 heard and made part of the record in the

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1 Commission's Media Ownership proceeding.
2 Once again, the evening portion of our
3 program beginning with the second panel will
4 begin again at 8:00 p.m. Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 * * * * *

7 (Transcript continued to Volume II.)

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1 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
 2 MEDIA OWNERSHIP, TAMPA-ST. PETERSBURG
 3 FOURTH PUBLIC HEARING
 4 VOLUME II
 5 (Pages 197 - 384)

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DATE: Monday, April 30th, 2007

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TIME: 4:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.

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LOCATION: Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center
 Louise Lykes Ferguson Hall
 1010 North W. C. MacInnes Place
 Tampa, Florida 33602

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MODERATOR: LOUIS SIGALOS, Federal
 Communications Commission
 Chief of The Consumer Affairs
 and Outreach Division, Consumer
 and Governmental Affairs Bureau

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REPORTED BY: Elida T. Hager, R. P. R.
 Notary Public, State of
 Florida at Large

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(Transcript continued from Volume I.)

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1 (Transcript continued from Volume I.)

2 PROCEEDINGS

3 MR. SIGALOS: As we move to our second
4 panel discussion, I'd like to reiterate the
5 ground rules very briefly.

6 Panelists, each of you will have five
7 minutes to make your remarks, and I'll be
8 strictly enforcing this time limit to leave as
9 much time as possible for the public-comment
10 period.

11 Members of the audience, one more time,
12 please, please, listen respectfully to the
13 panelists, even if you disagree with the views
14 that they express. It's extremely important
15 that we maintain our basic decorum, as we did
16 earlier, and avoid unnecessary interruptions.
17 Thank you very much.

18 Okay. On this panel, Gerardo
19 Reyes-Chavez, Coalition of Immokalee Workers.
20 We'll have Glenn Cherry, President and CEO,

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21 Chairman of the Board of Tama Broadcasting;
22 Bob D'Andrea, President of the Christian
23 Television Network; Dr. Karen Brown-Dunlap,
24 President of the Poynter Institute; Bob
25 Gremillion, President, CEO and Publisher of

1 the South Florida Sentinel; Carol Jenkins,
2 President of the Women's Media Center; Larry
3 Lee, Jr., Owner of WFLM-FM, WIRA-AM, Port St.
4 Lucie, Florida; Luis Lopez, Director of Public
5 Relations, Hispanic Alliance of Tampa Bay;
6 Carlina Rodriguez, Director of Organizing
7 Spanish Language, Screen Actors Guild of
8 America; Som Rosenwasser, President and
9 General Manager of WTSP-TV; and Rich Templin,
10 Communications Director, Florida AFL-CIO.

11 We're going to start off with
12 Mr. Reyes-Chavez, who is going to make his
13 presentation in Spanish, and we're going to
14 translate it into English for you.

15 Mr. Chavez.

16 MR. CHAVEZ: My thanks to the
17 Commissioners for inviting me here today.

18 My name is Gerardo Reyes-Chavez. I am a
19 farmworker living in Immokalee, Florida, and a
20 member of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers.
21 I am here to describe how important a local
22 and accessible media system is to farmworkers
23 and to demand that the FCC not just stop the
24 consolidation of media ownership but expand
25 and protect the truly local media we need to

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1 survive.

2 For a poor community, like ours, that has
3 few economic resources and faces daily
4 violations of our human rights, it is
5 difficult to have access to
6 commercially-controlled media most of the
7 time.

8 In the past, when we wanted our community
9 to hear an important message about their basic
10 rights, we had to pay for time on the air and
11 hope that the commercial station wanted to
12 grant us that time.

13 Media consolidation risks thousands of
14 worker lives. Many farmworkers speak
15 indigenous languages, like Mayo, Kanj obal and
16 Creole. Many times, Spanish is our second
17 language.

18 But, like everyone else, we need the
19 media to reach us when there is danger.
20 Farmworkers live in trailers that are in bad
21 condition and are often frightened or confused
22 when storms move through, and they cannot
23 understand the warnings coming their way.

24 When this happens, we have a hard time
25 understanding the warnings that come through

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1 the radio, especially if they don't -- are not
2 fluent in English or Spanish.

3 The smaller communities where farmworkers
4 live, like Immokalee, lose details, coverage,
5 than safer, larger markets, like Naples, Tampa

6 or Ft. Myers.

7 In 2003 we built our own low-power radio
8 station called Radio Consciencia or WCIW-LP,
9 broadcast at 107.9 in Immokalee. While most
10 workers have little access to the Internet,
11 newspapers or television, Radio Consciencia
12 gives Immokalee a voice and provides our
13 community with the information it needs.

14 When Hurricane Wilma hit Immokalee in
15 2005, we realized the deep value of Radio
16 Consciencia. All of the local radio stations
17 were transmitting alerts on the impending
18 hurricane, but Radio Consciencia was the only
19 radio station that was transmitting
20 information on where to go and what to do, in
21 Spanish, in the indigenous languages spoken in
22 our community.

23 When many of the farmworkers had to work
24 in the field as the hurricanes approached and
25 did not return home until transportation to

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1 shelter being provided by Collier County had
2 stopped running or people were confused about
3 what was happening, they were able to contact
4 us at the radio station to find out the
5 current situation, the imperatives of
6 evacuation trailers and where to find shelter.

7 We received so many calls from people who
8 were stranded in trailers that we knew the
9 unmet needs of our community. We transported
10 over 350 people to shelters until late in the

11 night, at 1:00 a.m.

12 After the storm, we saw that several of
13 the homes in the camps from which we evacuated
14 people had been completely destroyed. Radio
15 Consciencia continued to transmit information
16 on where to find food and water and safety
17 measures to take.

18 When the county realized the importance
19 of Radio Consciencia to the community, they
20 loaned us a generator so that we could
21 continue to communicate these important
22 messages to the community.

23 As for myself and other farmworkers, I'd
24 like to communicate to the community that I
25 would like to build similar radio stations so

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1 that they can communicate to their communities
2 as well.

3 I'd like to see other radio stations in
4 the north, where a lot of the migrant workers
5 go for the season when they finish their work
6 in Immokalee, and to communities where workers
7 are more isolated and where workers face
8 severe violations of their human rights and
9 the atrocities of -- of their human rights.

10 But the FCC already gave away most of the
11 frequencies that these communities could use.
12 Those spots are now filled with translator
13 stations, which bring listeners no local
14 contact, but instead, repeat a signal from
15 Twin Falls, Idaho, across the nation.

16 We are here to ask the Commission to
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17 prioritize new local broadcasters over the
18 existence of translators and stop silencing
19 community radio hopefuls waiting years to
20 broadcast.

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much,
22 Mr. Reyes-Chavez. Thank you very much.

23 Mr. Templin.

24 MR. TEMPLIN: I just want to start off my
25 remarks by recognizing my union brothers in

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1 the back here from IATSE Local 321 that are
2 making all this rigging and all these lights
3 and all this sound system work. So I want
4 everyone to recognize the guys from IATSE.

5 I am the communications director for the
6 Florida AFL-CIO. I'm a long-time volunteer in
7 community radio and how proud to sit in a
8 global independent media center movement.

9 The Florida AFL-CIO, we are fire
10 fighters, teachers, transportation workers,
11 state employees, construction workers,
12 health-care professionals, retirees. There's
13 no part of life in Florida that is not touched
14 by the people I'm fortunate enough to be able
15 to represent before you today and ask you to
16 reject these changes in media-ownership rules.
17 (Applause.)

18 We love our members. Because Florida is a
19 right-to-work state, meaning that not one of
20 our members have joined our movement as a
21 condition of their employment. They have

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joined us because they care. They care about their state. They care about people who are less fortunate than they are. They care about building brighter futures for everyone.

1 They have joined us because they want to
2 be a part of the work we do. They want their
3 legacy to be a stronger, more egalitarian
4 society for future generations.

5 We are not a special-interests group,
6 unless, of course, you consider special
7 interests, economic justice, quality of public
8 schools, accessible health care for all and an
9 end to unjust wars. (Applause.)

10 Perhaps the most important thing that our
11 members can do to aid that effort is to add
12 their perspectives to the public discourse,
13 share their stories with the public in an
14 effort to encourage full and open discussions
15 about the problems we face and work
16 cooperatively to solve them.

17 The best way for them to do this, perhaps
18 the only way for them to do this in a state as
19 big and diverse as Florida, is through the
20 media.

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I've been on this job now for over six years. I came out of the academic world, where I researched media issues and was initially shocked at the complete lack of news coverage on working family issues here in

1 Florida. So I helped to institute a program

2 to train union members in all of our nine
3 central labor councils across the state on to
4 how work with the media again.

5 I'm really proud of the strides they've
6 made. And I'm really comfortable with the
7 progress that they've made. But,
8 unfortunately, I felt that if I gave them the
9 skills and taught them the processes of news
10 gathering that that would solve the problem.
11 I was naive. And it hasn't.

12 When I've heard back from our central
13 labor councils and local unions, no matter how
14 hard they try, they've been unable to crack
15 through the blockade standing between them,
16 their local media, and most importantly, the
17 community at large.

18 Now, the problem is not one of content.
19 It's a lack of access created by a loss of
20 resources for news gathering because it is
21 deemed unprofitable, the loss of local news
22 outlets, the mergers and buyouts, and in some
23 cases, outright bias against the labor
24 movement by pat (sic) corporations who see a
25 vibrant movement of workers as their enemy.

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1 I will briefly illustrate all of these.
2 First, it's been well-documented over the past
3 ten years with media consolidation that it has
4 decimated are critical for the state (sic.)

5 Forty-four thousand news jobs have been
6 lost in the last five years alone. It's just

7 simple math. Fewer journalists, fewer
8 resources, mean fewer stories. A reduction at
9 the top is covering a lack of depth for those
10 which are covered.

11 I work with the Capitol Press Corps in
12 Tallahassee every day. I know these
13 reporters, and I trust them. It's not that
14 they don't care about our issues, that they
15 don't cover it. It's that they don't have the
16 time, and they're under too much pressure from
17 their management to cover the more hot-button
18 issues of the day.

19 Unfortunately, it's not clear if we had
20 more reporters or more -- (Inaudible) -- if it
21 would make any difference. Because we have
22 lost so many of our local media news outlet.

23 I encourage any of you to look through
24 Mark's Media Guide, which is a comprehensive
25 guide of all the media in Florida. Each year

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1 over the past seven years we've lost local
2 news operation; by my calculations, as much as
3 30 percent in the last six years.

4 Now, also, there's a problem with bias.
5 There are three major papers in this state
6 that absolutely refuse to cover labor issues.
7 No matter how -- I won't name them, because I
8 don't want to hurt the work that our local
9 unions are doing in this community.

10 But they have communicated to me that
11 they simply will not cover labor because
12 either they personally or their managing

13 corporations are against the labor movement.
14 And these areas are where members have
15 developed relationships with the local TV.

16 Imagine if you were to pass the
17 cross-ownership rule change. Imagine what
18 would happen to our voices in those
19 communities if these newspapers were to also
20 control one of the few local broadcast news
21 operations.

22 We're facing great challenges in this
23 country. We're losing millions of jobs to the
24 new global economy. The disparity between the
25 super-wealthy and everyone else is growing at

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1 an unprecedented rate. Our health-care system
2 is crumbling. Higher education is once again
3 becoming unaffordable, and we have a war that
4 is disproportionately taking the lives of
5 working people.

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Templin.

7 MR. TEMPLIN: Thank you.

8 MR. SIGALOS: Mr. D'Andrea.

9 MR. D'ANDREA: Good evening Chairman
10 Martin and Commissioners Tate and Copps,
11 Adelstein and McDowell. Thank you for the
12 opportunity to testify before you.

13 My name is Bob D'Andrea. I'm the founder
14 and president of the Christian Television
15 Network with locally-owned commercial stations
16 across the country, including WCLF here in the
17 Tampa Bay Area.

18 We started broadcasting in Tampa Bay 27
19 years ago. I am here today representing both
20 CPN and the religious voices in broadcasting,
21 also known as RBB, which is comprised of the
22 nation's largest religious broadcast networks
23 and many small and independent religious
24 broadcasters that are carried on cable as a
25 result of the must-carry provision.

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1 While our group does not have a strong
2 opinion on media ownership, per se, we do
3 encourage the Commission to provide
4 opportunities for independent voices to be
5 participants in the television marketplace.

6 One such concept is the anti-stripping
7 regulations which are embodied in the 1992
8 Cable Act ensuring that cable continues to
9 carry each broadcaster's six megahertz TV
10 signals.

11 Without it, it is the opposite of what
12 the Commission wants to accomplish; and that's
13 the proliferation of programming.

14 Post transition, there will be a few
15 ultralarge cable companies who carry all of
16 the programming streams of equally large
17 broadcasters. In our area cable has developed
18 its own news 24-7, sports 24-7, Spanish news
19 24-7, and on-demand of over 300 channels.

20 This is especially important given that
21 all RBB stations provide the type of
22 family-friendly, children-and-community
23 focussed programming that Congress intended to

24 preserve in the '92 Cable Act and the '96
25 Telecommunications Act.

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1 Cable and media conglomerates produce
2 violence, profane, indecent pornographic
3 programming that has inundated television
4 today that can bring about mass murderers
5 among our youth, from Columbine to Red Lake
6 High, Santana High School to Virginia Tech.

7 Thus, while 'a la carte, would allow
8 consumers to deselect channels from their
9 cable coverage in hopes of reducing the costs
10 of cable and addressing indecency, RBB
11 community members feel strongly that most
12 significant initiatives can be passed to
13 address these two is anti-stripping, a basic
14 tenet of American communications policy.

15 While the FCC looks to expand digital
16 television environment by encouraging
17 independent programmers, such action should
18 not disconnect -- or not discount existing
19 small and independent broadcasters.

20 To further we erode our standing in
21 digital television, our stations are
22 struggling with the burden of developing
23 digital programming in an uncertain regulatory
24 environment, while simultaneously financing
25 the cost of an unfunded federally-mandated

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1 digital buildout, thus anti stripping is the
2 foundation to our viability.

3 We applaud the Commission's recent
4 proposed rulemaking that would require that
5 all cable operators receive our programming,
6 whether they have analogue or digital service.

7 In Tampa Bay alone we spend over three
8 million dollars complying with the
9 federally-required digital buildout and have
10 added about 20,000 per month in ongoing
11 expenses during the three-year transition.

12 RBB members are not driven by profit but
13 by positive impact we have in our local
14 communities. Small and independent stations
15 with limited resources will not survive a
16 digital transition.

17 I believe that you all understand the
18 significance of the contributions of our
19 stations and what they make to the communities
20 we serve; therefore, we encourage the
21 Commission to ensure that opportunities will
22 exist for all levels of players in television,
23 including small, independent, religious and
24 minority broadcasters through the affirmation
25 of a multitask anti-stripping mandate.

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1 In Tampa currently, WCLF is programming
2 three channels with the same six megahertz of
3 spectrum that the cable has always carried.
4 But they are stripping out three channels.
5 Thank very much.

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

7 Dr. Dunlap.

8 DR. DUNLAP: Commissioners, welcome to
Page 16

9 Tampa Bay, a great place to discuss media
10 ownershi p.

11 Over 30 years ago this area gave birth to
12 a uni que form of medi a ownershi p. Nel son
13 Poynter, then-owner of the St. Petersburg
14 Times, i nvested ownershi p of hi s newspaper i n
15 a school for journali sts, student journali sts
16 and medi a leaders.

17 The Poynter Insti tute focuses on
18 i mprovi ng news medi a, parti cularl y i n the
19 practi ce of values. It fol lows, then, that
20 whi le I most hear offer suggesti ons on medi a
21 ownershi p, my comments and recommendati ons
22 poi nt to news medi a values.

23 Underl ying the i ssues of cross-ownershi p
24 and duopol ies, of competi ti on, local i sm and
25 vi ewpoi nt diversi ty i s a concern about

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1 publi c-affai rs programmi ng i n a democracy.
2 Now, I' ll defi ne publi c-affai rs programs as
3 presentati ons that hel p i ndi vi duals i n thei r
4 rol e as ci ti zens.

5 Entertai nment i s fi ne, consumer
6 i nformati on i s usef ul, but i t' s essenti al for
7 medi a to provi de sol id news to mai ntai n a
8 democracy.

9 Thi nk of news as an i ndependent report of
10 facts and opi ni ons on si gni fi cant i ssues and
11 events. As you consi der medi a ownershi p,
12 please consi der steps that promote quali ty
13 news reports.

14 In 1927 the nation needed an FCC to serve
15 the public interests by uncluttering the
16 airwaves. Today the nation needs the FCC to
17 serve the public interests by lifting news
18 from the clutter of talk and opinion.

19 What can the FCC do to encourage
20 independent reports free of the entanglements
21 of business and political opinions?

22 How can the FCC promote the use of
23 resources to seek out facts?

24 Talk is cheap. Downie and Kaiser note
25 that programming of arguments and opinions

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1 give the impression of covering news while
2 actually giving programs that costs less to
3 produce than does newsgathering.

4 Quality reporting calls for investment in
5 time, money and training. What can the FCC do
6 to advance explorations of issues and events
7 significant to the lives of citizens?

8 Reports on celebrity breakups and
9 adoptions draw interest, but that doesn't
10 nourish a community. It won't improve our
11 schools, help us understand our environment or
12 tell us about candidates for public office.

13 The late Carol Kneeland of KVUE-TV
14 Austin, Texas, stressed the importance of
15 local news. So does Paula Madison, President
16 of KNBC-TV Los Angeles, and others.

17 A quote attributed to the
18 journalist-philosopher Walt Whitman says, "The
19 role of news media is to keep a community in

20 conversation with itself."

21 That calls for civil discourse. It calls
22 for all segments of a community involved as
23 participants and conversation, all segments,
24 as a subject of conversation, including their
25 views on the victories and challenges of their

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1 communities, and all segments as owners and
2 manager of the means of communications.

3 For years many states have checked off
4 their public affairs obligations by offering a
5 program featuring a person of color that would
6 broadcast at a time when very few were
7 watching.

8 We can do better than that. I ask you to
9 consider a community report prior to the
10 periodic licensing of each station. That
11 report shouldn't be cumbersome or costly. It
12 would be a return for a more rigorous
13 assessment.

14 It would involve a small task force of
15 citizens, a cross-section of the community,
16 led by a leader from outside that community,
17 maybe a journalism professor. A one-day
18 hearing of citizens and station leaders would
19 allow the community to note the strengths and
20 weaknesses in service.

21 The task force would present a written
22 report to the FCC to raise the level of
23 accountability and public-affairs reporting.

24 Clearly, one form of media ownership

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doesn't determine the quality of stewardship.

1 Many communities suffer under local owners who
 2 bleed their stations for profits and promote
 3 personal interests. They are large
 4 corporations, including chain owners, who
 5 provide local communities with outstanding
 6 service.

7 The heroes of Katrina included the
 8 Hearst-Argyle chain that moves coverage from
 9 WDSU-TV in New Orleans to WESH-TV in Orlando.
 10 The Belo Organization sustained WLTV through
 11 hurricane recovery.

12 But there's another side, and it's
 13 represented by Nelson Poynter. He believed
 14 that organizations served by focussing on its
 15 local area. He willed his newspaper to a
 16 school to promote journalism education but
 17 also to make sure that his newspaper remained
 18 independent and locally owned.

19 He said, "Ownership of a publication of
 20 broadcast property is a sacred trust and a
 21 great privilege."

22 As you ponder media ownership, please
 23 focus on steps to maintain that important
 24 trust. Thank you. (Applause.)

221 25

MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

1 Bob Gremlion.

2 MR. GREMLION: Thank you for this
 3 opportunity to speak with you. I can provide
 4 you with -- I think I'm going to provide you

5 with a unique perspective for this hearing.

6 I started my career as a broadcaster in
7 my native New Orleans at WGNO-TV. At the
8 time, it was a small independent TV station.
9 We had no network affiliation, no news
10 department and very little working capital. I
11 can tell you firsthand that we were struggling
12 to survive.

13 In 1983 Tribune Company bought the
14 station. And I've been with the company ever
15 since. I had the opportunity to run WGNO
16 until 1992.

17 Today WGNO is an ABC affiliate providing
18 superior news, public-affairs programming and
19 community service. It never would've been
20 able to grow and serve New Orleans without the
21 support of a committed company like Tribune.

22 After WGNO I moved to Chicago, where I
23 was fortunate enough to be involved with
24 launching ChicagoLand Television News, better
25 known as CLTV. It was one of the nation's

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1 first 24-hour local cable news channels. It
2 took years before CLTV made a profit. We
3 believe CLTV is a very important asset that
4 enriches the public dialogue in Chicago.

5 Ten years ago, I moved to the newspaper
6 side of our business, where I've been the
7 publisher of the South Florida Sun-Sentinel.
8 The Sun-Sentinel is based in Fort Lauderdale
9 and serves Broward County and parts of Palm

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Beach County, Florida.
I'm also still involved with the TV side of our business. I oversee the management of WSFL-TV, Tribune's CW-affiliated station in Miami, which we operate by temporary waiver pending the outcome of the Commission's cross-ownership rulemaking.

Having lived in both New Orleans and South Florida, I also have firsthand knowledge and experience as to how the media, broadcast and newspaper, responds to disasters.

Like thousands of New Orleans residents, my mother lost her home in Hurricane Katrina. And, certainly on a much smaller scale, my home in Ft. Lauderdale was damaged by Hurricane Wilma. I also lost my office in

Fort Lauderdale for several months following significant damage from Wilma.

In New Orleans WGNO would not have survived the economic fallout from Katrina without the resources of Tribune. The building where WGNO had its studios and where the company had just constructed a brand new newsroom was rendered permanently uninhabitable by the hurricane.

For months there was no advertising revenue, the station's only source of income. The station has operated out of nine temporary facilities since that great storm, producing its newscast first in Baton Rouge and then from double-wide trailers in a parking lot;

16 yet, Tribune kept everyone on the payroll.

17 The station is playing an integral role
18 in returning New Orleans to economic health.
19 We produced and broadcast three candidate
20 debates in last year's important majori al
21 election and four hour-long speci als regarding
22 the recovery efforts.

23 In South Florida, after Wilma, our
24 relationship with WSFL allowed us to share
25 news resources to more effectively serve the

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1 communi ty's informati on needs and to also
2 assist in critical recovery efforts.

3 These public service efforts would never
4 have happened wi thout the commi tment and
5 resources of a large mul timedi a company like
6 Tribune.

7 Regularly, a Sun-Senti nel TV reporter and
8 videographer prepare news packages for WSFL's
9 prime-time newscasts, developi ng stories that
10 in most cases would not be covered on local
11 televi si on otherwi se.

12 These stories have i ncluded
13 i nvesti gati ons i nto questi onabl e cri si s grants
14 and counsell i ng programs provi ded by the
15 federal government i n the aftermath of the
16 2005 hurri cane season and a series of feature
17 stories hi ghli ghti ng chi ldren i n our local
18 schools who demonstrate strong moral
19 character.

20 While I've personal ly and professi onal ly

21 seen and benefitted -- seen and experienced
22 the benefits provided to our audiences and
23 communities by cross-ownership in today's
24 extremely competitive media marketplace, I
25 understand that cross-ownership raises

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1 questions for those from the FCC and other
2 concerned citizens here today.

3 For those of you from Washington and not
4 familiar with the South Florida area, please
5 visualize the following. The Sun-Sentinel is
6 located in Ft. Lauderdale, as I mentioned
7 earlier, in essentially in the middle of the
8 South Florida area.

9 We compete aggressively against two major
10 newspaper competitors. McClatchy's Miami
11 Herald is to our south, and Cox Palm Beach
12 Post is to our north. The Sun-Sentinel is the
13 leading newspaper in our primary market of
14 Broward, while the Miami Herald is dominant in
15 its primary market of Miami-Dade County.

16 To put it in perspective, the number of
17 paid subscriptions we have in Miami-Dade
18 County is less than 800. Our TV station,
19 WSFL -- the "SFL" stands for South Florida --
20 is a UHF station, and it competes against VHF
21 stations owned by Post, Newsweek, Sunbeam,
22 NBC, CBS, and it competes with monopolies
23 owned by NBC, CBS and Univision, WSFL's
24 seventh greatest television station in the
25 market.

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Gremillion.
2 (Appl ause.)

3 MR. SIGALOS: Ms. Jenkins.

4 MS. JENKINS: Good evening, now, to
5 everyone. As president of the Women's Media
6 Center, a nonprofit dedicated to increasing
7 women's voices in the media and as a former TV
8 anchor and reporter in New York City for 30
9 years, I thank the Commissioners for the
10 opportunity to share some observations.

11 A pivotal question that now, certainly,
12 requires an answer is: What is media doing to
13 serve nearly 52 percent of its population?

14 The established inclination that couples
15 the designations "Minority" and "Women" as
16 similar and equal constituencies obscures the
17 fact that women are the majority -- the
18 invisible majority to be sure -- of the
19 "public" that the media must serve.

20 It makes the statistics we deal with all
21 the more disturbing, if not appalling. Only
22 5 percent or 67 of the television stations in
23 this country are owned by women. Women of
24 color own less than one half of 1 percent of
25 those TV stations. Those members come from

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1 the Free Press study aptly titled "Out of the
2 Picture."

3 The percentage of women who have a
4 majority stake in radio is a mere 3.4 percent
5 or 483 of more than 11,000, almost 12,000

6 stations. Those numbers come from a group of
7 top women working in radio. "Mentoring and
8 Inspiring Women" is the name of the group,
9 which against the odds, they actually do.

10 At the Women's Media Center we refer to
11 another statistic, this one from an Annenberg
12 study that sums up our problem.

13 In mainstream media we hold about 3
14 percent of the titles that could be described
15 most effectively as clout positions. Three
16 percent, even here today, is symptomatic,
17 perhaps, of -- our problem is that only 3 of
18 the 21 panelists presenting today are women.
19 We're glad to be here, though.

20 The Women's Media Center was founded in
21 2005, because of what we call a crisis in
22 representation and participation in the media.
23 No matter where you look, it does not look
24 good.

25 Martha Lauzen of San Diego State tracks
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1 the number of women producers, writers,
2 directors and editors working in Hollywood.
3 It declined to 15 percent last year. And we
4 lost three of four women heads of studios, all
5 replaced by men.

6 Our mission is to make women visible and
7 powerful in the media. And you can join us in
8 this effort at our website,
9 womensmediacenter.com.

10 We did some research and found that women
11 were largely missing from broadcast radio. In

12 all but a handful of markets there is no talk
13 radio programming catering to women.

14 Women -- deregulation made it possible
15 for a company to amass a thousand or more
16 stations with few to none with programming for
17 women. Perhaps one reason for this is the
18 paucity of women in the programming food chain
19 or in the executive positions within radio
20 companies.

21 Ninety percent of the program directors
22 are men, 85 percent of the general managers to
23 whom they report are men. And going up the
24 chain of the major publicly-traded radio
25 companies collectively owning 2,364 radio

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1 stations, 86 percent of their top officers are
2 men, and five of the top-line radio groups did
3 not list any women at all in their executive
4 suites.

5 Talkers Magazine's Heavy Hundred talk
6 show lists -- those are the big shows -- dated
7 March of 2007, includes 85 male hosts, 15
8 female hosts.

9 Talkers' full list of 250 talk show
10 hosts, 86 percent men, 14 percent women. Of
11 the 19 syndicated talk shows that reach
12 audiences of more than 2 and 1/2 million
13 listeners per week, only two women hosts. And
14 that's Dr. Laura and Laura Ingraham, something
15 about the Lauras there.

16 That's why the Women's Media Center's

17 first project was to create and spin out a
18 for-profit radio company, GreenStone Media on
19 whose board I serve. And we provide talk
20 programming alternatives for those underserved
21 majority, the underserved majority of the
22 population.

23 GreenStone produces 12 hours a day of
24 talk programming, Monday through Friday, a
25 three-hour news talk show on the weekends, and

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1 is syndicating to stations across the country.
2 It can be heard online at greenstonemedia.com.

3 It really matters that minorities are the
4 majority of the public women have little to
5 say about what shows up on publicly-owned
6 airwaves.

7 At a time when women have become supreme
8 court justices, secretaries of state, heads of
9 Fortune 500 companies, presidents of foreign
10 countries, and even a candidate for president
11 in this county, it's puzzling why women can't
12 seem to rise to the top in American media; and
13 more pertinent to the discussion today, why
14 they lag behind so spectacularly in ownership.

15 No matter what we found out in studies
16 that -- we already know this much. There is
17 some -- there has to be some accountability
18 for the poor showing thus far.

19 According to Catalyst, women are
20 stagnating or losing ground in mainstream
21 media corporations. There are only 14.7
22 percent of directors or boards, and one major

23 company has no women directors, whatsoever.

24 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

25 MS. JENKINS: Thank you.

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1 Mr. Lee.

2 MR. LEE: Good evening Commi ssi oners, and

3 thanks for thi s opportuni ty to be here today.

4 As we were dri vi ng over, my wi fe and I --

5 we're from the east coast of Florida, what i s

6 called the Treasure Coast, Indi an Ri ver,

7 Martin and St. Luci e Counti es.

8 I am part owner of WFLM, WI RA. My wi fe

9 and a group of communi ty peopl e were very

10 concerned about what' s happeni ng on radi o

11 today. About 13 years ago we deci ded -- we

12 had careers, we were very comfortabl e wi th

13 what we were doi ng -- but we deci ded that we

14 wanted to make an impact i n our communi ty.

15 And we were very di ssati sfi ed wi th a lot

16 of the garbage that was bei ng put on the

17 ai rwaves. We were very concerned wi th the

18 lack of the big stati ons bei ng real ly i nvol ved

19 i n our communi ty. So we deci ded to do

20 somethi ng about i t.

21 We organi zed oursel ves, and we got a

22 group of i nvestors who beli eved i n the same

23 values, beli eved i n what we beli eved i n, and

24 we created our fi rst radi o stati on, WFLM. And

25 later we purchased WI RA, about three years

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1 ago.

2 Now, I'd like to say to Commission Copps
3 when he started out today, I tell you, driving
4 over here, I said, "This is like going up
5 against -- David going up against Goliath."

6 When you look at Clear Channel and these
7 big -- I'm going to make some points in a few
8 seconds to drive home my point. You become
9 very discouraged every day when your
10 salespeople come in at the end of the day, and
11 they're throwing the towel in, but they can't
12 compete.

13 And what -- what's happening out here --
14 and you really need to become aware of -- but
15 I want to give you two examples, because what
16 you did today -- I'm a former football
17 player -- and it reminds me, as I was sitting
18 there looking -- listening to your comments --
19 when we were getting ready to go to Dallas
20 some days or some evenings where the opposing
21 teams are, our coach would call us in the
22 corner (sic), and even though the Goliath was
23 bigger than we were, and many times they were
24 faster, they gave us that little push that we
25 needed.

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1 And I want to thank you for giving me an
2 extra push today. Because we're not going to
3 give up this fight. But I want to tell you
4 about two incidents that happened recently
5 with Clear Channel.

6 Our county decided that they were going
7 to spend \$100,000 on solid-waste recycling.

8 They wanted to get out to the public the
9 importance of recycling plastics and
10 newspapers. So what happened? We didn't get
11 the buyer.

12 So I asked -- we didn't get any of the
13 buyers. So I called the county commissioner
14 and asked him, you know, "What is this?"

15 He said, "Well, Clear Channel outbid
16 you."

17 I said, "That should not even be up for
18 bid in the first place, because Clear Channel
19 can outbid anyone."

20 So what happened was, I said, "Now, you
21 need to go back to your Commissioners, because
22 I'm going to be coming before them, and I'm
23 going to put this out in the public's view."

24 He -- "Well, wait, let -- let me check
25 into this."

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1 So he goes back, and he finds out they
2 have this policy, which because of me speaking
3 up they are now changing their policy. But
4 what they did, they gave Clear Channel all the
5 money.

6 My friend Greg White who owns WTSL --
7 he's out in the audience -- he has the one and
8 only Hispanic station in the market. No one
9 else can reach that market but him.

10 We have the Number 1 and Number 2
11 stations that reach African Americans. Clear
12 Channel blew, went in there, snowed those guys

13 and -- and sometimes this stuff is, basically,
 14 connections.

15 The low people don't have the connections
 16 that Clear Channel and these big companies
 17 have to get into some of these -- these media
 18 buyers and even compete. So they just
 19 establish the relationships.

20 And what ended up happening was, he
 21 ignored the Hispanic community and the
 22 African-American community. And my question
 23 was, "Wouldn't you want everyone to recycle?"

24 And, of course, you know, so, by not
 25 advertising on Hispanic or the

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1 African-Americans, you're going to ignore
 2 those communities.

3 Next point, real quick. Longwood Medical
 4 Center, Clear Channel goes in with them. I
 5 go with one of our salespeople to ask who's
 6 the advertiser. "Why are you not advertising
 7 on our radio station. Thirteen years we've
 8 been in the market, struggling."

9 "Well, we use Clear Channel."

10 "But Clear Channel can't reach the
 11 Hispanic and the African-American community."

12 "Well, we use Clear Channel."

13 Fortunately, I knew the CEO at the
 14 hospital. And, finally, we did get some
 15 buyers there.

16 Well, all I'm saying is this level of
 17 playing field -- because these people, when
 18 they come out there and they talk about what

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19 these big companies are doing, yeah, sometimes
20 they will come in and they send a few people
21 out into the community, do a few
22 public-interest things, make themselves look
23 good, but, basically -- I'm with Steve
24 Erlanger, who spoke earlier -- sooner or
25 later, when people like me are no more, then

1 the community will realize what we have.

2 And we have, finally, one other program
3 that we do for people over 70, where we give
4 away money. Every Friday we do good news --
5 well, let me -- I didn't realize five minutes
6 would go by so fast. Thank you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. SIGALOS: Mr. Lopez.

10 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you. Welcome to Tampa,
11 Distinguished Commissioners.

12 My name is Luis Lopez. I'm the public
13 relations director for the Hispanic Alliance
14 of Tampa Bay. The Hispanic Alliance of Tampa
15 Bay is a nonprofit umbrella organization that
16 represents 48 nonprofit organizations here in
17 the Tampa Bay Area. I thank you for allowing
18 us to present our position.

19 Let me start by saying when the
20 Telecommunications Act of 1996 lifted
21 ownership limits for radio stations, leading
22 to incredible consolidation of radio station
23 and other media ownership, these changed their

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24
25

original purpose from information, education,
communication, entertainment and community

1 services, that changed to sales, margins
2 exclusivities, takeovers and profits.

3 It is our belief that these media outlets
4 do not exist to promote the public interest.
5 They exist to make profits. And we agree
6 that, like any other business, there should be
7 profits.

8 But before profits, media companies are
9 supposed to provide information. This
10 information should be diverse, competitive,
11 independent and with a local flavor.

12 It should address the lives and needs of
13 the communities they agreed to serve when they
14 received a license by the Commission to use
15 our airwaves, the airwaves that belong to all
16 of the public of this great nation.

17 (Applause.)

18 These media outlets all have a huge
19 public file with the many activities they do
20 to serve the local community. Let me bring to
21 your attention some of these so-called public
22 services.

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For example, a media outlet decides that
they will sponsor an event for a nonprofit
organization, when in reality some of these

1 outlets will actually buy out an organization
2 for a so-called donation that, in fact, is
3 tied to an exclusive contract that virtually

4 locks out any other media outlet that wishes
5 to participate, especially the smaller
6 independent operators.

7 Is this something that this commission
8 considers as a public service or a very well
9 planned marketing scheme with the only purpose
10 of obtaining market share?

11 We believe that the latter is the correct
12 answer. The weakness of some organizations
13 when confronted with sums of money that they
14 probably won't be able to raise in a short
15 amount of time is being used for the purpose
16 of marketing. Distinguished Commissioners,
17 that is not public service.

18 Another example, a media outlet offers to
19 help you out promoting an event with your
20 organization. You visit their studios to
21 record a promotional piece or you send them a
22 ready-to-air promotion thanking them for their
23 help and avoiding them the work of having to
24 produce a piece for the organization.

25 You ask them one simple question, and the
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1 questions is, "By the way, when is this little
2 one-minute piece going to air?"

3 And the answer is, "Oh, yes. That will
4 be aired Sunday morning at 7:00 a.m. or
5 sometime during the a.m. hours," meaning
6 between midnight and 5:00 a.m.

7 Again, is this something that the
8 Commission considers a public service or just

9 a way of getting around the public-file issue?
10 Again, Distinguished Commissioners, that is
11 not public service.

12 If an independent media outlet wants to
13 bid for national advertising, they don't have
14 a chance against these huge conglomerates.
15 There are already independent operations that
16 have had to close, because they just cannot
17 compete.

18 And let's not forget minority ownership.
19 All the minorities continue to be
20 under-represented in our communities. Please
21 don't forget that more than one third of the
22 population of this nation belongs to a
23 minority group.

24 Big companies only serve certain
25 minorities that will guarantee them profits.

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1 If we continue to move in this direction, all
2 information will be under siege by these huge
3 groups, as we are starting to see. All
4 independent media will eventually disappear.
5 And minorities will not be able to move ahead.

6 The local flavor, the local information,
7 the needs of the community and the services
8 that we, as citizens of this country expect
9 from our media, will disappear. Again,
10 Distinguished Commissioners, that is not
11 public service.

12 In conclusion, we kindly ask the
13 Commission to avoid this disaster and to
14 fulfill its place in history, in the history

15 of this nation, as the Commission that brought
16 back information, education and public service
17 to the airwaves, the Commission that decided
18 to enhance the original principles of the
19 public interest and fight against the profits
20 of others that, in all ways, are disrespecting
21 not only the communities it's supposed to
22 serve but also you as commissioners.

23 Don't let this happen, for the sake of
24 all the informed people in this great nation.
25 An informed person is a better neighbor.

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1 Don't let that information been controlled by
2 a few.

3 Again, Distinguished Commissioners, this
4 is the only way we will have real public
5 services for all our communities.

6 MR. SIGALOS: I thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 Ms. Rodriguez.

9 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Chairman Martin and
10 Commissioners, thank you for holding this
11 important discussion today.

12 My name is Carlina Rodriguez. I am the
13 national director of Spanish Language
14 Organizing for the Screen Actors Guild based
15 out of our Miami office.

16 I'm here today representing approximately
17 120,000 performers nationwide, who are the
18 actors, singers, dancers, stunt performers,
19 puppeteers and voice performers who appear in

20 feature films, television commercials,
21 television shows and other new media
22 platforms. We are also a proud member of the
23 AFL-CIO.

24 According to a 2003 Census Bureau Report,
25 Hispanics now constitute America's largest

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1 minority, numbering in excess of 40 million
2 people. According to recent estimates, the
3 total number of Hispanic television households
4 will grow 160 percent, to more than 31 million
5 homes by the year 2050.

6 It is forecasted that the number of
7 Hispanic persons in television households will
8 climb 136 percent, to 94.4 million, over the
9 next 43 years.

10 These numbers would seem to suggest that
11 creating successful English-language content
12 for Latinos would be imperative. In
13 actuality, however, such content is sorely
14 lacking on broadcast network television,
15 especially during prime time.

16 While some efforts are underway to
17 produce television programming directed at
18 Hispanics nationwide, there are only a handful
19 of examples that address this growing
20 demographic.

21 Most notable are a telenovela-inspired
22 show, Ugly Betty, which ranked among the 20 --
23 top 20 shows in the 18-to-49 age group, or the
24 George Lopez Show.

25 Thus, despite representing 13 percent of

1 the nation's population, Hispanics are
2 woefully under-represented on the networks'
3 prime time broadcast schedules.

4 Of course, bilingual Hispanics can always
5 tune in to Spanish-language programming on
6 Telemundo or Univision; however, there exists
7 precious little in the way of English-language
8 options for programming that depicts American
9 life in America today.

10 This lack of Hispanic programming harms
11 not only Latinos but non-Latinos as well and
12 does incalculable damage to our overall
13 national cultural dialogue, by essentially
14 ignoring a vibrant flourishing sector of
15 America's population.

16 In past years, break-through programming,
17 like All in the Family, Chico and the Man,
18 Good Times, The Jeffersons and The Cosby Show,
19 introduced African-Americans, Latinos and all
20 of Americans -- Americans -- to some of the
21 most well-loved and unforgettable characters
22 in the history of television.

23 These shows not only made us laugh and
24 cry, they also helped to open up a dialogue of
25 understanding and empathy between different

1 segments of America's society. Importantly,
2 these shows were all independently produced.
3 They were not produced by the networks that
4 aired them.

5 In today's era of unparalleled vertical
6 integration, these groundbreaking shows would
7 likely never see the light of the day. How
8 many similar shows are not being broadcast
9 because the networks are not willing to
10 develop or air them?

11 Against this backdrop, Screen Actors
12 Guild as the representative for thousands of
13 Latino performers, urges you to help secure a
14 marketplace wherein programming exists that is
15 more relevant to and more reflective of our
16 lives.

17 Specifically, I appear before you today
18 to ask that the FCC adopt the proposal to set
19 a new standard that a minimum 25 percent of
20 the networks' prime-time schedules be filled
21 with programming made and owned by independent
22 producers. (Applause.)

23 These recommendations have been
24 previously submitted to the Commission by the
25 Coalition for Program Diversity, of which

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1 Screen Actors Guild is a member of.

2 As we can see by the programming
3 currently available on our airwaves, the days
4 of an independent producer making his or her
5 creative vision a TV production is a thing of
6 the past.

7 A decade ago, 67 percent of prime-time
8 television programs -- programming -- aired by
9 the four networks was produced by independent
10 producers. Today, only 25 percent of the

11 broadcast networks' prime-time programming is
12 obtained from independent producers; and most
13 of that content is reality-based programming.

14 Big media companies create almost every
15 show and cast almost every actor, because they
16 can. They own most of the product. They make
17 decisions based on their own cultural
18 experiences and expectations of revenue, not
19 always on the needs of the community,
20 specifically, underserved and
21 under-represented community.

22 Unfortunately, there exists no
23 independent program sources to counterbalance
24 a networks' power. So what is wrong with the
25 four networks producing and owning the vast

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1 majority of the prime-time, over-the-air
2 programming?

3 After the financial syndication rules
4 were allowed to lapse in 1993, the networks
5 said that they would not favor in-house
6 developed and produced product in their
7 programming choices.

8 But, of course, that is exactly what has
9 happened. The FCC study titled "Program
10 Diversity and the Program Selection Process on
11 Broadcast Netcast Television" --

12 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 Mr. Rosenwasser.

15 MR. ROSENWASSER: Good evening and,

16 Commi ssi oners, wel come to Tampa Bay.

17 My name is Sam Rosenwasser, and I'm the
18 president and general manager of WTSP Channel
19 10, WTSP-HD on Channel 24, 10 Weather Now on
20 Channel 24.2, tampabays10.com, Studio 10.TV,
21 10weathernow.com and two more websi tes coming
22 in the next 30 days.

23 We offer local consumers many di fferent
24 places to go to for local news, information
25 and entertainment. Choice. Consumers have

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1 more choices for news and information than
2 ever before.

3 We recognize that in our on-demand
4 society, people want their news and
5 entertainment on their time table, not ours.
6 So we've expanded on to new platforms that
7 enable us to be a 24-7 resource for them
8 providing many di fferent resources and
9 services to our local consumers.

10 I sit before tonight, as a broadcaster,
11 very proud of the local product we produce
12 every day. With each weekday we provide four
13 and a half hours of live local news and
14 information. In addition, we produce a local
15 hour-long program each weekday that gives
16 local nonprofit agencies a forum to talk about
17 what they're doing to benefit the public.

18 I also sit before you tonight as a
19 broadcaster who, in view of the massive
20 explosion of information sources available to
21 consumers, is very concerned about local

22 broadcasters' future.

23 The media landscape has changed
24 dramatically since 1975, when the newspaper
25 broadcast crossed-ownership rules were put in

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1 place. I won't argue about whether these
2 actions in 1975 were warranted. But I can
3 tell you that in 1975 no one in Tampa Bay was
4 watching CNN, the Weather Channel, logging on
5 to the Internet or watching 24-7 local cable
6 news channels. They couldn't. Because they
7 different exist.

8 Competition in today's media environment
9 is intense. And I don't see that changing.
10 Every day in Tampa Bay, we compete with 12
11 full-time television stations, dozens of radio
12 stations, 11 daily newspapers in our DMA, two
13 full-time cable local news channels and
14 millions of websites. That's right,
15 "Millions."

16 In fact, if you type in "Tampa Bay" in
17 Google you will find almost 20 million search
18 results. Even my network partner, CBS, has
19 announced they'll utilize other websites to
20 run their prime-time programming before they
21 air on my station. All this means is that the
22 pie is getting split up into smaller and
23 smaller pieces.

24 Today, the lines that used to define
25 television, newspaper and radio are blurring

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1 very quickly. Television reporters are
2 writing for websites and producing expanded
3 versions of stories seen on their newscasts.
4 Newspaper reporters are shooting and editing
5 video for their websites. And radio station
6 websites offer news and information as well.

7 Each day I compete with Media General,
8 which owns WFLA-TV, the Tampa Tribune and
9 TBO.com. Has this newspaper-TV combination
10 kept us from competing successfully in this
11 market? Absolutely not.

12 In the most recent rating period, we held
13 the number one position in adults 25-54, women
14 25-54 and women 18-49 for the 11 o'clock news
15 time period. But I can appreciate the
16 opportunity that Media General has to provide
17 local viewers and readers extended coverage
18 from different angles.

19 In addition, common ownership works
20 extremely well in Phoenix, Arizona, where my
21 company, Gannett, operates KPNX and owns the
22 Arizona Republic. That joint ownership
23 creates enhanced products for the local
24 consumer, and the citizens of Phoenix benefit
25 from that fact.

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1 At the same time the editorial
2 independence of each of these properties is
3 maintained. And this has been documented in
4 comments filed with the Commission. The
5 concern that two commonly-owned properties
6 would present the exact same position just

7 isn't realistic and goes against journalistic
8 ethics and sound business judgment.

9 Newspapers and Television are so
10 different. For one thing, newspapers have the
11 luxury of space. I once heard that if you
12 took every word spoken in an average
13 television newscast, it wouldn't fill one
14 column in a newspaper. On the other hand,
15 television is a media. And websites have the
16 ability to combine the best of newspapers and
17 television.

18 Local news and information products
19 represent significant investments to a local
20 community. For broadcasters to continue to
21 successfully operate in today's highly
22 competitive media environment, we must look
23 for opportunities to maximize our efforts to
24 attract viewers and web users.

25 As is true in Phoenix and here in Tampa
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1 Bay, permitting joint ownership of television
2 operations and a newspaper --

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

4 MR. ROSENWASSER: -- will make it
5 possible to better serve local consumers with
6 more local information. Thank you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Rosenwasser.
8 Dr. Glenn Cherry.

9 DR. CHERRY: Good evening Commissioners.
10 My name is Dr. Glenn W. Cherry, and I'm
11 president and CEO of Tama Broadcasting, Inc.

12 For 19 years my family has owned radio
13 stations in the state of Florida. We are the
14 largest African-American radio broadcaster in
15 the state. In many ways my story's similar to
16 that of other African-American owners and
17 former owners.

18 Most African-American broadcasters got
19 into station ownership to serve their local
20 community. They wanted to provide a distinct,
21 compassionate and caring voice and to help
22 solve community problems and provide the type
23 of positive programming that our community
24 could be proud of.

25 Upon entering the radio business, most
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1 African-American broadcasters serving
2 predominantly African-American audiences soon
3 learned that some advertisers would not
4 advertise on our stations at all and that
5 others would vastly discounted the value of
6 African-American consumers. We call that the
7 "Black Tax."

8 And at any time after we moved into an
9 ownership position to look at the "Black Tax,"
10 we paid higher cost for our stations, the cost
11 of capital was higher for us, and the return
12 on our investment from what services that we
13 rendered were less than the general market.

14 The 1996 Telecommunication Act allowed
15 unprecedented consolidation in the industry,
16 changing the ownership landscape to the
17 detriment of minority and small broadcasters

18 and new entrants.

19 After many discussions with other
20 broadcasters, my family decided that we would
21 have to grow or sell our three AM stations at
22 the time. And so we tried to find capital
23 investment in the state of Florida.

24 Unable to attract capital, we moved to
25 New York, where we found a black-venture

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1 capital firm and a lender who no longer lends
2 on such small deals (sic), and we purchased
3 eight FM stations between 2001 and 2004.

4 Unfortunately, since this was after 9/11,
5 the terrorists attacked, and the maturing
6 consolidation of the broadcast industry and
7 the economic instability of the post 9/11
8 environment made it extremely difficult for
9 African-American small broadcasters to compete
10 in the marketplace.

11 In a down economy, we struggle to
12 effectively compete against larger companies
13 that were consolidated. It almost took ten
14 years before we got started. They are
15 ruthless in their pursuit of total domination
16 of the advertising revenues in our market and
17 will engage in unethical and illegal
18 anti competitive behavior if necessary.

19 At the same time, local communities are
20 seeking more public service, especially local
21 nonprofits. As small broadcasters we are
22 closer to the community than larger

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correspondence and, thus, we see more grassroots initiatives. We are called on to provide a disproportionate amount of local

1 public service from the community.

2 Ownership of radio stations by small
3 broadcasters are a labor of love. We are a
4 training ground for many minorities. And we
5 have two women general market managers during
6 a time when the industry has not promoted
7 women in great numbers to upper management.

8 You-all know the ownership numbers of
9 African-Americans in this country is less than
10 2 percent. The Telecommunications Act of 1996
11 directly caused this loss of diversity of
12 ownership. As a result, many small owners
13 found themselves unable to compete and sold
14 their stations to larger competitors instead
15 of risk going out of business.

16 By owning only eleven stations, Tama is
17 one of the largest Black-owned radio groups in
18 the country. This is not an achievement in
19 which the radio industry should be proud. The
20 loss of minority owners robs the American
21 public of the diversity of broadcast voices.

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The Commission, Congress and the Courts
have historically recognized that it's
essential to protect the First Amendment
rights of all Americans.

1 We support the recommendations by the
2 National Association of Black-Owned

3 Broadcasters, which you-all have in your
4 hands, as well as the recommendations of the
5 Minority Media Telecommunications Council.

6 The promotion of the First Amendment
7 rights of listeners and viewers to receive a
8 multiplicity of often conflicting viewpoints
9 from a diversity of sources is the
10 Commission's principal obligation in its
11 regulation of the public airwaves; and to this
12 end it must promote these interests and give
13 paramount consideration to that balance.

14 Because of the serious
15 under-representation of minorities and the
16 ownership of broadcast stations and increasing
17 minority population numbers, the Commission
18 can best promote its First Amendment
19 obligation by making promotion for minority
20 ownerships of broadcast facilities its primary
21 objective in the media-ownership proceedings.

22 I have personally experienced many
23 opportunities where Commission rules and
24 regulations have been manipulated by large
25 broadcasters to keep us from improving our

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1 signals in the marketplaces. And there should
2 be some attention paid to that and what
3 abilities that the Commission has to enact
4 restraints on these large corporations when it
5 comes to their technical abilities. Thank
6 you. (Applause.)

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Cherry.

8 And, audience, will you please join me in
9 thanking all of our panelists this evening for
10 their participation. Thank you very much.

11 All right. Now, as we can transition to
12 the second and final public-comment period. I
13 need to first recognize the following
14 individuals who asked to speak for two
15 minutes, at this point, this evening.

16 At this time would Dick Greco, former
17 Tampa mayor, please come forward.

18 (No audible response.)

19 MR. SIGALOS: Dick Greco?

20 (No audible response.)

21 MR. SIGALOS: How about Kim Scheeler,
22 Tampa Chamber of Commerce President and CEO.

23 Mr. Scheeler.

24 MR. SCHEELER: Yes. Thank you.

25 Good evening Commissioners. A couple of
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1 quick points I'd like to make about some of
2 the benefits the community receives from the
3 convergence of Media General companies here.

4 I ran the United Way for six years here
5 before moving over to the Chamber. And I can
6 tell you as a head of a charity, it was a
7 great benefit to have one source that you
8 could go to and receive public service
9 coverage in three different outlets within the
10 community and less time, less money spent
11 trying to get exposure out there for our
12 organization. It was a great benefit for the
13 charities in the community.

14 The other is the shared resources that
15 these outlets can utilize. From a business
16 perspective that's -- that means that, for
17 example, we can have a business reporter from
18 the Tribune on WFLA providing coverage about
19 business events and business happenings in the
20 community that normally wouldn't happen,
21 because the TV station wouldn't be able to
22 have that resource available to them.

23 So we see that as a great benefit for the
24 community. We appreciate that. And we think
25 that we have better news coverage, more

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1 effective news coverage and more in-depth news
2 coverage as a result of that. Thank you.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Scheeler.

4 Okay. It's time to continue with public
5 comments. Before the break we heard from
6 approximately 45 people. We're starting with
7 Number 46.

8 I would like to, again, urge everybody,
9 if they could just try to make sure they
10 incorporate those things that they want said
11 within our two-minute period. It would make
12 it much quicker for us to get through
13 everybody without me having to interject.

14 A VOICE: Dick Greco is here.

15 MR. SIGALOS: Dick Greco is here.

16 MR. GRECO: It's taken me this long to
17 get from the back to the front. I'm not used
18 to this.

19 Commi ssi oners, thank you very much for
20 taking your time to do this. I was sitting
21 here thinking how wonderful it is to see all
22 the wonderful people passionate about anything
23 (Appl ause.)

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24 Regardless of what point of view, I think
25 that the -- as stated tonight that you will

1 take something home with you. I must say that
2 the Tampa newspaper and the channel that we're
3 talking about mostly tonight has been part of
4 my life since I was a little boy.

5 I started watching all the television
6 stations here at their inception when they
7 first started. For the most part, they do a
8 good job. I don't always agree with all their
9 points of view, but that's life in the big
10 city today.

11 But I will say that newspapers and
12 television and radio and all the media has a
13 big, big responsibility today. It's the only
14 way we can make up our minds, many times,
15 about everything that goes on. And just a
16 smattering won't do it. These people here
17 probably read and listen to everything. But
18 others simply don't care.

19 I would love to see all of the media
20 recognize the importance that they play. I've
21 seen some people who hate people in public
22 life.

23 You say, "You know them? You ever met
24 them?"

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"No. "

1 It happens today because of maybe some
2 story or -- it seems like many of them are
3 competing with each other and trying to do
4 something that will get people's attention as
5 opposed to -- exactly what's going on.

6 I have no quarrel with any of the papers
7 or any of the television stations. I think,
8 by and large, they do a good job. Many of the
9 stations have kept people for many years
10 that've worked there, they've become part of
11 your family. You listen to them.

12 It's terribly, terribly important today,
13 the media. I've talked to many young
14 reporters and said to them, "What you're
15 saying about me, about others, about people in
16 general is very meaningful, and I hope that
17 you take it very seriously."

18 So I know you people are taking your job
19 very seriously. What you've gathered here
20 tonight, maybe take a little bit or all of it
21 together and come up with really benefit --
22 (Inaudible) -- around the world. Thank you.

23 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

24 Joe Illingworth, Gavin Baker, Rob Lorei,
25 Nancy Greenlees, Joseph Floyd, Richard

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1 Sparrow, please head to the nearest
2 microphone.

3 Mr. Illingworth.

4 MR. ILLINGWORTH: My name is Joe
5 Illingworth. I am a resident of Largo and an
6 executive director of absolutely nothing. But
7 I'd to point out that my speech is not been
8 computer-printed, it's not double-spaced, it
9 was not prepared by a PR department, and it
10 has not been reviewed by six corporate
11 attorneys so that I can present it tonight.

12 (Laughter and Applause.)

13 I am a citizen of the earth, like all of
14 you. I would like to point out that media is
15 not just about free speech and free democracy
16 and fair competition, it's much more important
17 than that, it's much, much bigger than that.

18 Media ownership and diversity is not how
19 our society organizes itself, about how it
20 orders itself; it's about how our society
21 controls itself or is controlled by someone.

22 The same technology that allows
23 consolidation of media also allows us and
24 manufacturers and corporation to produce
25 enormous amounts of stuff very cheaply, 24

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1 color pens for a buck.

2 The same technology doesn't quite make as
3 many colored plasma TVs as we would like, but
4 it has the capability of covering the earth
5 not with plastic-like products, but CO2 and
6 other global gases that create a greenhouse
7 effect and cause global warming.

8 Right now we have a very hot spot right
9 there in a little country called Iraq. Right

10 now we are starting to have a very diverse and
11 vivid debate in our county about why we are
12 there and what it's all about. That debate's
13 four years too late. (Applause) .

14 It's cost 100,000 lives and hundred of --
15 billions of dollars. The same debate needs to
16 happen about global warming. For 10 or 15
17 years we've been denyi ng -- (Inaudi ble) --
18 scientists -- the medi a that they need to
19 reach a mass audi ence.

20 We need to talk about diversi ty of medi a
21 and how it's presented. We need massi vely --

22 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

23 MR. ILLINGWORTH: -- cooperati on and
24 collaborati on across the globe to have thi s
25 happen. (Applause.)

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

2 MR. ILLINGWORTH: -- later to give that to
3 the Commi ssi oners (Inaudi ble.) That's very
4 fragile. The worl d's in thei r hands.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

7 Gavin Baker.

8 MR. BAKER: Good eveni ng Commi ssi oners.

9 My name is Gavin Baker. I'm a student at
10 the Uni versi ty of Flori da. And I'd like to
11 thank the Commi ssi on for organi zi ng thi s
12 heari ng. Clearly, I appreciate thi s
13 opportuni ty, because I drove two hours from
14 Gainesvi lle to be here.

15 I urge the Commission not to loosen its
16 media-ownership rules. All you've heard from
17 a number of speakers is on the sad state of
18 the public interest in commercial broadcasting
19 today.

20 Myself, I don't even listen. As a young
21 person who wants to be connected with my local
22 community, there's nothing for me on
23 commercial TV and radio. And so it goes for
24 most of my friends. I find that problematic.

25 Now, if media are just a commodity in the
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1 market, then it's not troubling if I choose
2 not to buy. But media is so much more. The
3 media play an integral role in the community,
4 in self-expression, communication among
5 neighbors, not just a market, but a
6 marketplace of ideas, a gathering place for
7 exploring our shared identity.

8 The spectrum is not the square footage at
9 the shopping mall. It's a precious natural
10 resource that the public owns. It belongs to
11 us.

12 But if the broadcast spectrum were a
13 national park, the park would be fenced off
14 20-feet high with barbed wire on the top. We
15 own it, but we can't use it. You can look
16 inside, but don't go in. You can consume it,
17 but you can't produce it.

18 That's why myself and much of my
19 generation have -- (Inaudible) -- the
20 broadcast media. But me (sic) and I are not

21 content to be excluded, to be consigned to the
22 new media because the old media has abandoned
23 us. We want it back.

24 The commission can help us by rejecting
25 rules that will mean more of the same -- or,
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1 really, worse than the same -- and put us on
2 the track to more localism, more diversity and
3 a media that serves more than its market, a
4 media that serves its community. Thank you.

5 MR. SIGALOS: Rob Lorei.

6 MR. LOREI: Good evening Commissioners.
7 Thank you for coming. Great to see you.

8 I'm Rob Lorei, one of the founders of
9 WMNF Radio, the community radio station in
10 Tampa. (Applause.) I just want to give you a
11 quick glimpse of what's happened since we
12 started the radio station.

13 When we started reporting, back in the
14 early 1980s, there were seven or eight radio
15 stations competing with us at that time. Now,
16 reliably, there are only three. Something has
17 happened in that time period to give us less
18 local reporting. And I think it is those
19 media-ownership rules that you've enacted and
20 loosened up.

21 In the time that we -- in the 1980s up to
22 the early 1990s, though, we had plenty --
23 plentiful number of talk stations and radio
24 stations. I've got a friend who works for a
25 commercial radio station in town. He was one

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1 of the last local commercial radio talk show
2 hosts at the Clear Channel station in town.

3 He was fired recently. The reason was --
4 Clear Channel said -- that it couldn't afford
5 the \$3,500 a year to keep his two-hour-a-week
6 talk shows on the radio. Clear Channel has
7 plenty of money. And right now Clear Channel
8 has replaced most of its local talent with
9 nationally syndicated programs.

10 We're well-served if you're conservative.
11 And we're hardly served if you're a liberal or
12 a person of color. I'm sorry I'm rushing.
13 I'm going through this so fast, the -- there
14 is a -- on any given night on television
15 stations, the big four commercial television
16 stations, we get eight minutes of local news.
17 On any given night, if your watching is down
18 (sic), it is a rehash of crime stories.

19 We rarely get city council meetings,
20 county commission meetings, neighborhood
21 controversies -- (Applause) -- civil
22 rights and peace groups and other activist
23 groups are kept out. (Applause.)

24 For an outsider coming to town watching
25 local television the news, it would be easy to

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1 conclude that we are living in an area
2 populated by murderers, car thieves and
3 convenience-store robbers, home invaders and
4 pit-bull owners that let their dogs run amok.
5 The media has failed us in this city. Please

6 do something about it. (Applause.)

7 MR. SIGALOS: Nancy Greenlees.

8 MS. GREENLEES: Hello. My name is Nancy
9 Greenlees. I want to speak against media
10 consolidation. I speak simply as a concerned
11 citizen.

12 I'm fortunate to live in Tampa, where I
13 can listen to community radio station WMNF and
14 read the independently-owned St. Petersburg
15 Times. I want to speak on behalf of my
16 family, who don't live in Tampa and couldn't
17 be here tonight.

18 My family lives in a city of just one --
19 just under 100,000 residents. Most of the
20 media is owned by Clear Channel and other
21 large corporations. There is one commercial
22 radio station, however, that is owned and
23 operated by a small local company.

24 My brother is currently serving as a city
25 commissioner. And he knows that an informed,

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1 engaged citizenry is important to good
2 government and community life. Many of his
3 constituents lack easy access to the Internet
4 or don't have a subscription to the
5 newspapers.

6 The locally-owned station is the only one
7 in town that gives them daily free and
8 convenient access to information about local
9 government and school and police concerns,
10 public safety issues, community events and

11 also gives them an opportunity to call in to
12 the locally-produced public-affairs program
13 every weekday to express their concerns and
14 opinions.

15 We know that a lot of people choose this
16 programming over the nationally-produced talk
17 shows from the other medias in town. Because
18 when my brother attends community meetings or
19 speaks to individual citizens after his
20 occasional visits to the radio station to
21 discuss city council issues on the air, he
22 meets many people who say, "I heard you on the
23 radio."

24 We are concerned that if further
25 consolidation of media ownership is allowed,

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1 this station will be sold to one of the media
2 giants and will no longer have this vital
3 local programming. Please don't let this
4 happen. Please, at the very least, maintain
5 the current-ownership limits (sic.) Thank
6 you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 Joseph Floyd.

10 MR. FLOYD: My name is Joseph Floyd, and
11 I'm from Gainesville, Florida.

12 A lot of the large companies in the
13 government that control the information in the
14 general population here is not diversifying
15 our media. I've come down here to ask you,
16 the five board members to represent the

17 people's interests when it comes to allowing
18 companies like CBS Corp., Clear Channel and
19 News Corp., who continue to throw a mask over
20 our communication resources.

21 I don't watch, listen to and read the
22 news to be entertained. I watch, listen to
23 and read the news to learn about what's going
24 on in my community and globally.

25 I feel that these companies are trying to

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1 dictate what is popular rather than
2 encouraging different points of view. And,
3 most importantly, I'm terrified that the FCC
4 Board, as a whole, has not done more to hold
5 these companies accountable for cheating the
6 system.

7 We all know that fining a company like
8 Clear Channel three-and-a-half million dollars
9 for payola is nearly useless. It's a slap on
10 the wrist to the companies and a slap in the
11 face to artists, musicians, journalists and
12 people around the world.

13 You all, as the FCC, are supposed to be
14 protecting us, the people, from corporate
15 brainwashing and manipulation.

16 I grew up watching television for
17 multiple hours a day. But for the last three
18 to four years I felt as if I was getting less
19 intelligent for every second I've listened to
20 corporate media. (Applause.)

21 Thankfully -- thankfully -- now I get the

22 majority of my information from reading
23 online, which at least for now is a much more
24 diverse place to get information.

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25 I realize that companies have to

1 advertise to make money to keep their business
2 afloat. But allowing these media companies to
3 subliminally push products to people is simply
4 wrong. We, the people, need information from
5 large varieties of sources so we can draw our
6 own conclusions as to what is going on in our
7 community and around the world.

8 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

9 MR. FLOYD: Do your job.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. SIGALOS: Greg Lendwirth, Clay
12 Colson, Lillian Dunlap, Leonard Coolidge,
13 Nathan Gove, Arlene Engelhardt, please go to
14 the nearest microphones.

15 Richard Sparrow.

16 MR. SPARROW: Good evening. Thank you
17 for bringing this FCC hearing to Tampa Bay.
18 My name is Richard Sparrow. I am a member of
19 the American Federation of Musicians and a
20 delegate for the West Central Florida
21 Federation of Labor, a nonprofit organization.

22 We held a Labor Day celebration at the
23 Florida State Fair grounds and invited the
24 public to attend for free. Since the day
25 after Labor Day 2006, with the primary

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1 election in Florida, we also invited many

2 politicians to come to the event and spend
3 time with the public. And with help from the
4 Music Performers Trust Fund, we were able to
5 provide live music for our event.

6 I volunteered to be on the media
7 committee. And I want to share some of the
8 issues we had with our local commercial media.
9 We sent faxes and E-mails to several local
10 newspapers, radio and television stations
11 detailing our event to news department and
12 asked them to be included in the calendar of
13 events published for the general public.

14 Because of the free nature of this event,
15 we thought it would be easy to get
16 public-service announcements -- announcements
17 from the commercial local media. It turned
18 out that all the air time for Labor Day
19 Weekend was being held because -- you're right
20 -- the candidates and the local parties were
21 buying all of it.

22 I can only assume, now, that the stations
23 couldn't pass up an opportunity to make some
24 more money off of our election process.

25 After we discovered that we were being

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1 shut out for public-service announcements, we
2 found some more money to use to purchase some
3 air time. We inquired of several local
4 commercial radio stations, and they gave us
5 options to buy packages that started in the
6 several -thousand dollar range.

7 After further inquiry, we discovered that
8 it would indeed be impossible for us to buy
9 what we needed. We did spend our money on
10 advertising locally, in the newspapers, a
11 couple of weekends. And we relied on
12 community calendars to announce our event.

13 I don't believe that we were served well
14 by our commercial TV and radio. Fortunately
15 for us, there was WMNF Community Radio.
16 (Applause.) They held a live on-air event
17 discussion Friday before Labor Day, and we
18 were allowed to attend week. Thank you very
19 much.

20 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

21 Greg Landwirth.

22 (No audible response.)

23 Greg Landwirth.

24 (No audible response.)

25 Clay Colson.

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1 MR. COLSON: Greetings. My name is Clay
2 Colson. I'm a native Floridian, one of the
3 endangered species.

4 I'd like to think I speak for "We the
5 People," when I tell you, the FCC, what your
6 job is. It is to serve the public interests.
7 Media consolidation is not in the public
8 interest. Media consolidation is dangerous to
9 our democratic republic.

10 A working democracy requires independent,
11 unbiased factual reporting of the news. To
12 function properly, a well-informed public is

13 tantamount to our democratic republic. This
14 cannot happen with further media
15 consolidation.

16 I offer as evidence the lead-up to the
17 illegal, immoral invasion and occupation of
18 Iraq, as the corporately consolidated and
19 controlled media acted as cheerleaders for the
20 administration, beating the drums of war.

21 (Applause.)

22 Further evidence is the Downing Street
23 minutes, front-page news around the world,
24 even in Canada and Mexico, but virtually
25 unreported by our corporately consolidated and

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1 controlled media.

2 Then, still, are the stolen presidential
3 elections of 2000 and 2004. Again, front-page
4 news worldwide. There was proper, in-depth
5 investigation done by grand (sic) powers of
6 the BBC of the mechanisms and deception and
7 how it happened. Yet, virtually, no coverage
8 in this country.

9 But if you want the best evidence of how
10 we, the people, have failed -- especially
11 locally -- just go back to your hotel, turn on
12 your TV and watch how the local standard
13 broadcast stations covered this event. And
14 don't forget to pick up the two major papers
15 on your way out of town. They'll speak
16 volumes.

17 No media consolidation. Thank you.

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(Appl ause.)

MR. SIGALOS: Lillian Dunlap.

MS. DUNLAP: Hello. Thank you for bringing this meeting here. My name is Lillian Dunlap. I am a journalist, a former professor of journalism, and also currently a media consultant.

And, actually, my comments are about

access. And, first of all, I would say that when we don't have diversity of voices in the news, we just don't fail to include a voice, we actually fail to accurately tell our story.

And, in fact, we don't -- we don't even have a story to tell, because it's filled with holes. And I'm concerned about that, as we lead up to 2009 in our move from analogue to digital.

So by 2009 television stations, for example, will have potentially six channels instead of just one. Right. Some will use traditional programming. But there could be as many as four left. And I'm concerned about those four and those being available for minority groups or for small businesses, and so forth.

So my comment is -- and this is what I would like for the Commissioners to do. I've read of that -- this discussion among the Commissioners, about allowing minority groups to lease digital channels or to somehow -- somehow participate in having a digital

277 24 channel. And that sounds like a very good
25 idea to me. And I'd like to encourage you to

1 continue to talk about that. And keep us in
2 the loop, if you will, in the loop about how
3 the discussions are going, when such channels
4 might be available and how, at long last, we
5 might really make ourselves eligible for that
6 kind of participation with digital-channel
7 distribution. Thanks.

8 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

9 Leonard Coolidge.

10 (No audible response.)

11 MR. SIGALOS: Nathan Gove.

12 MR. GOVE: Hello. I'm a doctorate
13 student in the field of science studies. And
14 I want to talk about studies which address
15 whether media consolidation serves public
16 interests.

17 We can't trust conclusions just because
18 they have the term "Scientific" stamped on
19 them; who's doing the research, what is being
20 measured and how.

21 There's research by the likes of Media
22 General who say that consolidation creates a
23 healthier media. Then there's research by the
24 likes of Free Press and by the Consumer Union,
25 which publishes consumer reports. Their

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1 studies conclude that consolidation is against
2 public interests.

3 I don't know about you, but if I'm
4 evaluating a product, I would trust Consumer
5 Reports more than the product's seller. But
6 let's be fair and look at an example of the
7 research.

8 Media General said that a TV station in a
9 cross-ownership community has more hours of
10 nonentertainment programming. But they
11 weren't looking at news or local content. And
12 they failed to note that in the
13 noncross-ownership markets, a higher number of
14 stations carried the news. Taking this into
15 account, noncross-ownership communities have
16 10 to 25 percent more news.

17 What about the FCC's own research?

18 In 2002 the FCC commissioned studies,
19 which received the 200-page rebuttal from
20 watch dogs. And in 2004 the Courts ruled that
21 the FCC studies were insufficient. I don't
22 know all the reasons why. I am disappointed
23 to hear that the FCC apparently buried a study
24 which demonstrated the benefits of local
25 ownership.

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1 I do know that the FCC did one good piece
2 of research. They opened their mailbox. In
3 2003, 3 million Americans weighed in with the
4 FCC about lifting caps on media ownership; 98
5 percent were against it.

6 Now, it's not the same as a random
7 survey, but it still is solid evidence that
8 Americans were strongly concerned about this

9 and that those who cared enough to write in
10 were overwhelmingly opposed to further media
11 consolidation.

12 In fact, with this evidence, something
13 seems clear. If you still say that relaxed
14 media-ownership rules is in the public
15 interest, then you are saying that Americans
16 don't know what's good for them.

17 And thanks for coming.

18 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

19 Will Fred Sowder, Tom Krumreich, Mary
20 Schoonover, Neil Cosentino, Elly Wencka, Norma
21 Bostock, please go to the nearest mike, and
22 Arlene Engelhardt.

23 MS. ENGELHARDT: First of all, I want to
24 say thank you for being here and thank you for
25 listening to Tampa Bay. We really do

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1 appreciate it.

2 I serve as co-host of a show that
3 represents the under-represented majority of
4 the women in this community, the Women's Show,
5 on WMNF, our community radio station
6 (Applause.) And I also serve on the advisory
7 board of the Women's Studies Department at
8 USF.

9 As such, I urge you to remember the needs
10 of women and minorities as you're considering
11 what is best for media in this country and to
12 look at the statistics that were brought up by
13 Carol Jenkins, President of the Women's Media

14 Center, and carefully look at those statistics
15 and what happens, with consolidation of media,
16 to women and minorities.

17 Freedom of speech is the most important
18 right of people in a democracy. It separates
19 us from totalitarianism and tyranny. Media
20 consolidation threatens localism, diversity
21 and media competition, as well as the strength
22 of our very democracy.

23 If our media are owned by a distant
24 corporation, we can forget about local news
25 and information. Yes, there will be a little

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1 bit of it there, but it'll be the accidents
2 and the glamour stories and not those things
3 that are of real concern to the real people of
4 the community.

5 As Lowry Mays, CEO of Clear Channel said,
6 "We're not in the business of providing news
7 and information. We're simply in the business
8 of selling our customers' products."

9 It is exceedingly important that we have
10 access to a wide diversity of media, a wide
11 range of voice locally, nationally and
12 globally.

13 I urge you to consider that, as you move
14 forward with your deliberations as to what the
15 new rules should be, and to consider the
16 importance of diversity in local media. Thank
17 you. (Applause.)

18 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

19 Fred Sowder.

20 MR. SOWDER: Thank you very much
21 Commissioners, Chairman Martin, for this
22 opportunity for public comment.

23 My name is Fred Sowder. I'm a graduate
24 student at the University of Florida in
25 Gainesville.

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1 I've spent over a dozen years in the
2 radio broadcasting industry. I've worked
3 about equal amount of time, both before and
4 after the 1996 Telecom. Act.

5 After its passage, I had to leave a job
6 in Miami, thank's to such job-eliminating
7 techniques as automation and voice-tracking.
8 A job I once held as a graduate assistant at a
9 University of Florida radio station no longer
10 exists, having been combined into another
11 nonstudent job position.

12 I don't think I'm alone in the
13 experiencing these things. While we -- maybe
14 myself included -- initially thought that the
15 '96 ownership rule changes would open up new
16 opportunities for those who have a real love
17 of the broadcasting business, the result's
18 been largely the opposite, kicking many
19 talented broadcasters to the curb in the
20 process.

21 Many of these people work, as I do now,
22 in jobs completely unassociated from
23 broadcasting in spite of possessing the
24 training and experience in the field that they

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25

know and love.

1

Personally, I do commend the Commission for your creation of a low-power radio service, as I'm working with a small group of individuals at the Civic Media Center in Gainesville to get 94.7 WGOT-LP up and running to serve the Gainesville community.

7

In this day and age, 24-hour news cycles, a lack of diversity of ownership has made these cycles resemble something closer to a circus clown uni bike. Doesn't stop with news, public affairs and talk programming either. The same cookie-cutter music formats impressed upon market after market is the result of another visible track record when it comes to program diversity and localism.

16

The state of broadcasting must change. And relaxing media cross-ownership rules will not eliminate this; in fact, it will have the opposite effect.

20

The ownership rules were relaxed -- as members of the commission you no doubt hear much from organizations, such as the FAB and the NAB. Of course, these organizations represent the license-holding corporations that stand to profit from increased

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conglomeration and job-market downsizing.

2

MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

3

MR. SOWDER: The American public that owns the airwaves deserves better.

4

5 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

6 MR. SOWDER: Thank YOU.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Tom Krumrei ch.

8 (No audi bl e response.)

9 Tom Krumrei ch.

10 (No audi bl e response.)

11 Mary Schoonover.

12 MS. SCH00NOVER: Good eveni ng. My name
13 is Mary Schoonover. I've been a resident of
14 Pinell as County, Flori da, for the past 20
15 years.

16 And I'm currently servi ng on the Ci ty
17 Council of Bell aire Beach. Our town is
18 located on a barrier island in the Gulf of
19 Mexi co, just west of Clearwater and Largo.

20 Although we are a communi ty of only about
21 1600 ci ti zens, we've devel oped a cable TV
22 stati on whi ch broadcasts publ ic-servi ce
23 announcements, a bullet in board, local and
24 regional events, and more importantly, we
25 broadcast video replays of all ci ty meeti ngs,

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1 candi date i ntervi ews and other publ ic
2 i nformati on i tems that mi ght be of i nterest or
3 affect our resi dents.

4 So we've got a ci ty channel. What does
5 that have to do wi th medi a consoli dati on?

6 On the surface you mi ght say nothi ng;
7 however, last Fri day the Flori da House and
8 Senate passed legi slati on that ki lls publ ic
9 access, educati onal and government TV i n

10 Florida. A bill has been sent to the Governor
11 that transfers cable franchising from cities
12 and counties to the state.

13 It allows existing cable franchises to
14 terminate their franchises and eliminates
15 obligations for funding public, educational
16 and government-access channels. It eliminates
17 free services to government buildings and
18 schools and eliminates local authority over
19 consumer issues.

20 This is a pattern. It is no accident
21 that this legislation is being passed at the
22 same time that corporate media is attempting
23 to monopolize our airwaves.

24 Not only do they want the opportunity to
25 buy up multiple outlets in the same geographic

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1 area, but they want the ability to take over
2 and limit the public access, educational and
3 government channels and sell them back to us,
4 the original owners.

5 As you can see by the testimony offered
6 here today, the Tampa Bay market will not go
7 quietly. We will be carefully monitoring the
8 FCC's deliberations in these matters, and we
9 will hold each of you commissioners
10 responsible for your individual conduct in --

11 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

14 Neil Cosentino.

15 MR. COSENTINO: Good evening. My name is

16 Neil Cosentino. I'm a member of Camelot, a
17 Florida public interest think tank. I'm the
18 project manager for a program called Camelot
19 Community Media Network.

20 We propose a transition to a more
21 balanced approach to the licensing of the
22 radio spectrum. We are working towards an
23 actual goal of 50/50 percent ownership;
24 50 percent owned by the public, and 50 percent
25 owned by commercial entities. We do not

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1 believe this is radical. Community should
2 only benefit directly from the expanded
3 ownership of air rights and broadcasting
4 rights.

5 Camelot Florida believes that the most
6 empowering element is community radio.
7 Imagine if it was as easy to obtain
8 broadcasting rights, as it is to get a car
9 registration, why the power of community-based
10 radio would spread across America and make an
11 incredible positive influence on our society.

12 If we -- (Inaudible) -- the FCC's
13 proposal to allow companies to own more radio
14 stations in a given area, there's no doubt
15 that this would be harmful to the interest of
16 our communities. Please vote against that
17 proposal.

18 Low-powered community radio in the nation
19 should be championed so the community's --
20 (Inaudible) -- of one. But one -- (Inaudible)

21 -- to access should be able to get them.

22 We ask you to be the change you want in
23 America. We're asking you to be the change.
24 So please vote for the vitalization
25 of broadband (sic) for the greatest possible

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1 good for the greatest number of citizens.
2 Please empower -- (Inaudible) -- and support
3 community radio.

4 Remember that each of you can be the
5 change you want for America.

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

7 MR. COSENTINO: Please start right here.
8 Thank you. (Applause.)

9 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

10 Elly Wencka.

11 (No audible response.)

12 MR. SIGALOS: Elly Wencka.

13 (No audible response.)

14 MR. SIGALOS: Okay. Would the following,
15 starting with Number 63, Lowell Stewart
16 Harris, come down, Anthony Lepore, Jaime
17 D'Soto, Mark Paul Plutho, Delaangel a Maryho,
18 Lucille Gri ggs.

19 Norma Bostock?

20 MS. BOSTOCK: Yes.

21 MR. SIGALOS: Okay.

22 MS. BOSTOCK: The radio waves belong to
23 the people, and they should reflect what we
24 have in common and our diversity. We need to
25 keep regulations that don't allow just a few

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1 corporations to have only their point of views
2 disseminated around the country. We need more
3 local ownership. We need more diversity.
4 With the raises in our country, there should
5 be more media with Black ownership.

6 What is happening in our neighborhoods
7 besides the crime?

8 We need more local broadcasters and more
9 opportunities for local entertainers on our
10 airwaves. Newspaper ownership and electronic
11 media should be separate. We do not want the
12 oligarchy telling us what to think.

13 And how many news media are going to give
14 sufficient time to show this FCC meeting
15 today?

16 I get my news from WMNF community radio
17 or public access or alternative magazines.
18 When I want to catch the lottery numbers, I
19 change from news channel to news channel, and
20 they're all showing the same news.

21 I mean, all they really separate? And
22 then it goes on for 15 minutes. That's your
23 evening news. They love violence of all
24 kinds.

25 What about the people who are addicted,

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1 the gentrification of our neighborhoods?

2 We don't find that in our local news,
3 especially on TV. And I please ask you, as
4 somebody else did, that the TV channels give
5 free access to political candidates and save

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our democracy.

A VOICE: You bet.

MS. BOSTOCK: Thank you.

MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

Lowell Stewart Harris.

Hello. I'm Lowell Harris, and I teach a large intro to mass communications -- society course at USF, and I'm also a doctoral candidate in communication.

I have been watching over the past week to see if any of our news outlets would publicize this hearing. And I was very disappointed.

Yesterday, there was columnist talking take about it in one article in the St. Pete Times. And finally today, the Tampa Tribune weighed in on the issue with a very disingenuous editorial.

Debate on media-ownership rules ignore realities of digital age, and they, as usual,

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refer to labeling -- resorted to labeling and mislabeling when they said -- and I quote -- "The FCC decided to lift the cross-ownership rule on newspaper-television ownership four years ago. But an appellate judge sent it back.

Then congressional democrats and union organizers hysterically began beating the drums to keep the old paradigm. Today's hearings are meant to inform the process. Our motive in writing today was to inform you,

12 too."

13 Inform us? At the last minute?

14 We found nothing other than this, today,
15 from the Tampa Tribune. I'll bet that if the
16 public were really informed today, they would
17 fill the rafters of this spacious hall
18 (Applause.) Instead, what we have are two
19 papers acting in their own best interests, not
20 ours.

21 However I am very optimistic, based on
22 what I heard from your opening statements,
23 that we finally have the right FCC
24 Commissioners in this group to make the right
25 and the best decisions on our behalf to end

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1 this malignancy that has been created by a
2 very divisive partisanship. Thank you.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Anthony Lepore.

4 MR. LEPORE: Commissioners, I am here
5 this evening on a matter germane to tonight's
6 discussion but unrelated to this market. I'm
7 here on behalf of the Independent Small
8 Broadcasters of the Island of Puerto Rico and
9 the Puerto Rico Radio Broadcasters
10 Association.

11 I'd like to ask that in the course of
12 this review you correct an error in the prior
13 ownership rule revising the definition of
14 "Market" as it applies to Puerto Rico.

15 In the 2003 order you defined the
16 relevant market in Puerto Rico, the same way

17 that Arbitron did, as being the entire island;
18 however, Arbitron neglected to use the OMB's
19 definition, which is the metropolitan
20 statistical area, of which there are three
21 upon the island, and rather island used the
22 overall island as a market definition. We
23 would like, on behalf of the independent
24 broadcasters on the island, that this
25 deficiency be corrected in the current

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1 proceeding and use either the OMB's
2 definition, there, to wit, make the relevant
3 market, the three metropolitan statistical
4 areas on the island or choose whatever
5 definition you decide to apply in the
6 nonarbitrated -- nonArbitron-rated markets.

7 And in that manner you will help promote
8 the success and the independence of the
9 independently broadcasters in Puerto Rico.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

12 Jaime Soto.

13 MR. SOTO: Hello. My name is Dr. Jaime
14 Soto. I'm executive vice president of
15 programming for Uno Radio Group in San Juan,
16 Puerto Rico. Thanks for the opportunity.

17 We are a small local family-owned company
18 founded by my father, Jesus Soto, in 1973,
19 through a lot of hard work by him, my brothers
20 and myself and about 489 employees that we
21 have today.

22 We serve communities in all of Puerto

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Ri co. We donate our time to local and national charities, my little -- for -- (Inaudi ble.)

1 Last year we created a foundation in
2 memory of my brother who was a broadcaster
3 dedicated to his people and his communi ty. He
4 died in a car accident two years ago.

5 The foundati on gi ves schol arshi ps to
6 talented students in economical needs in the
7 areas of communication, music and arts. This
8 is one of the many ways that we impact our
9 local communi ties.

10 Distingui shed Commi ssi oners, allow us to
11 expand our busi ness so as to serve di fferent
12 communi ties throughout Puerto Ri co in a more
13 effective and powerful way. We bring
14 resources of larger stati ons to smaller
15 communi ties on island, and we strive on
16 local ism.

17 Remember, Puerto Ri co, because of its
18 topographi cal condi ti ons, no si ngle stati on
19 covers the whole island. So we need networks
20 of at least three stati ons to cover it.

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We urge the Commi ssi oners to look at the specific case of Puerto Ri co so that small companies like ours compete more effectively with American technologies, like iPod, Internet and against the big national media

1 companies that have already established

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operation on the island.

MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

MR. SOTO: Thank you.

MR. SIGALOS: Mark Paul Klutho.
(No audible response.)

MR. SIGALOS: Delaangel a Maryho.
(No audible response.)

MR. SIGALOS: Lucille Griggs.
Lucille, before you begin, I'm going to
read a few names to come down to the
microphone. I'm going to read a few more
names this time. Please pay attention.
Patrick Flannigan, Barry Shalinsky, Bill
Stokes, Jamie Johnston, Steve Brown, Arlene
Haigh, Adrienne Helm, Edward Helm, Bill Diaz.
Thank you.
Lucille Griggs.

MS. GRIGGS: Thank you.
Thank you, Commissioners, for coming to
Tampa for listening to our comments.
I'm a second-generation native of Tampa,
and I have seen this area change so much. And
as it's grown and changed, it has become
increasingly more difficult to find
substantial information on local issues; and
this is in spite of the fact that I am
fortunate enough to have daily access to both
the Tribune and The Times, to cable television
and broadband Internet access.
That's a lot more access to information
than so many people have. And, yet, when I

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8 want the deeper story, the investigative
9 report, the analysis of an issue, I'm still
10 searching.

11 I have to wait until Friday, when La
12 Gaceta comes out. I have to make sure that
13 I'm in my car around lunchtime, so I can
14 listen to public affairs programs on WMNF. I
15 have to search out the schedules for the local
16 candidate debates on our public educational
17 and government access channels.

18 Commissioners, as you're here in Tampa,
19 take a look beyond Media General, take a look
20 at our locally-owned, locally-controlled and
21 noncommercial media outlets. You're going to
22 find that that is where the public is engaged
23 -- (Applause) -- and that is where our
24 community is being served.

25 Please make sure that your rules promote
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1 localism, diversity, independence and
2 noncommercialism. Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

5 Patrick Flanagan.

6 MR. FLANAGAN: My name is Patrick
7 Flanagan. I'm a student at the University of
8 Florida. And I've got a two-hour trip back to
9 Gainesville after this, so I can take my last
10 final tomorrow morning.

11 But this is an issue, I think, that is
12 worth the trip. As a believer in a free

13 market, I prefer the deregulation, including
 14 allowing consolidation of media. We live in a
 15 digital and new media sources are emerging
 16 everywhere you look.

17 I get my media from all over the place,
 18 the Alligator newspaper in Gainesville,
 19 sometimes the Gainesville Sun, the New York
 20 Times Electronic Newsletter and several blogs.
 21 I get my music from the Internet. My parents
 22 subscribe to satellite radio. And my dad
 23 reads the Trib', the Times, The Wall Street
 24 Journal and Cafe Hayek online.

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25 Newspapers and TV news don't just compete

1 with each other, they compete with a wide
 2 range of news sources. The advent of digital
 3 signals will allow even more consumer demands
 4 to be met by innovative entrepreneurs. That's
 5 the -- that's the beauty of capitalism. Thank
 6 you.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 Barry Shalinsky.

9 MR. SHALINSKY: I oppose the
 10 consolidation of media ownership. Eight On
 11 Your Side does well with exposing petty
 12 rip-off schemes and consumer reports and
 13 charitable events. But it's sadly lacking in
 14 any kind of in-depth analysis of real news in
 15 our community.

16 In fact, you can turn on any of the
 17 mainstream television stations, and they will
 18 all give commentary from the same professor at

19 USF as their "political expert."

20 Prior to living in the Tampa area, I've
21 lived in several places around the country,
22 and I've observed what's happened with local
23 media.

24 In a town in Kansas, where I lived, there
25 was a local radio station that had local news,

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1 farm reports, city commissioners would come on
2 every week to talk about what was going on.
3 Well, they sold out to a "regional"
4 conglomerate. And within six months all of
5 that went away.

6 In conclusion, I just want to say that we
7 need more diversity, more opportunities,
8 low-power FM and more opportunity for people
9 to know what's going on and to create their
10 own news and create their own culture.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

13 Bill Stokes.

14 MR. STOKES: My name is Bill Stokes, and
15 I'm a member of the Alliance for a Liveable
16 Pinellas, which is a coalition conservation
17 groups representing 15,000 members.

18 The present media industry in America is
19 broken. You all have an opportunity to leave
20 a legacy to your descendants of either
21 reforming it or maintaining the status quo of
22 espousing principles that are detrimental to a
23 free press and thus democracy.

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This is a nonpartisan issue that affects all Americans. Localism is in danger, when it

1 comes to media coverage. There are many
2 examples of the lack of critical information
3 in covering the frequent hurricanes that are
4 not uncommon to Florida. Oftentimes, TV is
5 vulnerable and/or inoperable and not as
6 capable of issuing up-to-the minute warnings
7 as radio.

8 When the spectrum is panned (sic) on
9 radio for local advisories, preprogrammed,
10 canned, homogenized national playlists are on
11 the air devoid of essential local safety
12 alerts.

13 All media presently is in a race to the
14 bottom to dispense vulgarity, sensationalism,
15 celebrity-worship, blatant, excessive
16 consumerism, biased reporting slanted toward
17 ownership views, scant of any local reporting,
18 narrowing the demographic to only the 18- to
19 34-year-old and a pathetic lack of any
20 semblance of an open, diverse, intelligent,
21 community-responsive and competitive media
22 environment.

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Is this the exchange you feel is fulfilling the obligation to broadcast in the public interest for the use of the public

1 airwaves?

2 Yes, the airwaves are part of the public
3 commons (sic), and they are being abused.

4 This degradati on must come to an end.

5 If the FCC continues to relax the
6 oversight on corporate medi a, it will result
7 in a serious deteri oration of the free press,
8 which is one of the most important components
9 of democracy. Thank you.

10 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

11 Jamie Johnston.

12 (No audi bl e response.)

13 MR. SIGALOS: Steve -- Steven Brown.

14 MR. BROWN: Most of my points have been
15 covered. But I'm for rolling back not simply
16 stoppi ng medi a consoli dati on.

17 But beyond the question of who owns how
18 many stations and what other medi a outlets and
19 cross-ownership. It is a question of the
20 content that beats (sic) down into almost all
21 the broadcast medi a from a hal f-dozen major
22 corporations.

23 Someone here said that he feels he's
24 getting dumber for every minute he watches
25 televisi on. I would say that in additi on to

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1 the influence, the negative influence of
2 politics of our mass medi a, it is also
3 bleeding the people who are going to become
4 our next voters; in fact, they are creating
5 by-the-medi a consumers (sic.)

6 And if the current FCC wishes to maintain
7 this republic as a democracy, rather than an
8 autocracy, it needs to reverse the pattern of

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media ownership.

10

Please lessen the influence of

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advertising on the commercial media,

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especially the death grip on political speech,

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and do what you can to promote the creation

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and maintenance of a variety of public

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broadcast networks, not simply one anemic and

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politically- and commercially-constrained PBS

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or NPR (sic.)

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It's a shame and a scandal that it is

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through the -- (Inaudible) -- of the cable

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television organizations that we have C-Span

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doing what should be done in the name of the

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public and for the benefit of the public and

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to have to settle for scraps from the passing

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carriages of the network princes (sic.) Thank

25

you.

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MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

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Arlene Hai gh.

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MS. HAIGH: My name is Arlene Hai gh. I'm

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God-fearing, a capitalist and a proud American

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citizen.

6

Ten years ago I reported for a small

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newspaper owned by a media conglomerate.

8

Naively, I thought that a part-time position

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meant part-time, not part-time pay -- close to

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minimum wage -- for a full-time workload.

11

Without a trust fund, this career path was not

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an option.

13

Did I mention that was 10 years ago?

14

Instead, I am pooling my skills with the

15 money-making side of the media equation:
16 Advertising.

17 My experience includes both print and
18 broadcast ad sales. I know that advertising
19 works and that there is money to be made, that
20 small businesses with small budgets struggle
21 to reach consumers.

22 Conversely, the larger businesses can
23 project an image frequently enough to brand
24 superiority in the mind's eye of the
25 consumers. Businesses with a large enough ad

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1 budget can actually buy editorial content.

2 It seems to me that media companies'
3 profit motive is accepted now, the result of
4 which is the sacrifice of news content and the
5 promotion of large business at the expense of
6 the small, the projection of loud voices as a
7 sacrifice to the weak.

8 I believe that further consolidation will
9 exacerbate this existing problem. Further
10 consolidation will decrease advertising
11 competition, editorial voices and will
12 ultimately result in artificially high ad
13 rates.

14 I hardly cry (sic) for large media
15 companies who whine about stagnating
16 double-digit profit margins due to the arrival
17 of the Internet. They are already making
18 money, because of the Internet, through
19 Internet advertising.

20 Please investigate their income
21 statements. We agree that news is different
22 than the consumer will -- or tangible good has
23 the power to influence minds with truth or
24 spin.

305 25 Do you really expect the public to

1 believe that fewer people deciding what is
2 newsworthy is somehow beneficial?

3 Has anybody complained about local
4 weather coverage?

5 Many sources foretold of Katrina's path.

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

7 MS. HAIGH: But, really, when that
8 happens is storm -- what really matters is
9 what happens after the storm and that there
10 are many voices, reporters --

11 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

12 MS. HAIGH: -- and decision makers
13 covering it.

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

15 Adrien Helm.

16 MS. HELM: Good evening. My name is
17 Adrien Helm, and I live in St. Petersburg.
18 I'm a refugee from inside the beltway and have
19 lived in Florida for almost 20 years.

20 I'm a retired educator from Meadowlawn
21 Middle School, which will be a name familiar
22 to at least one commissioner.

23 I also, among other things, co-host a
24 weekly radio show on contemporary issues in
25 Tampa Bay and in Florida. As a teacher of

1 literacy, I am profoundly committed to the
2 power of the story. And, so, Commissioners, I
3 have a story for you, a bedtime story, if you
4 will, a bedtime story to the idea of further
5 consolidation. The story I hope is one that
6 is familiar to you.

7 It starts in the Dorchester neighborhood
8 of Boston, Massachusetts, where high school
9 students there, high school girls, were so
10 tired of hearing their gender and races
11 demeaned in mainstream media on the radio,
12 that they decided to do something about it.

13 Someone had taught these young women of
14 color that the airwaves belonged to the people
15 of the United States. And, so, with the help
16 of caring adults, four of them established a
17 radio station, Our Log 540 AM, in 2004.

18 And now I'm going to hurry.

19 They learned public speaking, broadcast
20 journalism, organizational skills,
21 fundraising, collaboration as they -- and how
22 to collaborate with one another as they picked
23 music. They now are a power within the
24 community.

25 This story demonstrates a central theme
1 about America. And it speaks to your sacred
2 trust. Diversity, not homogenization, is our
3 strength. We need many voices to speak to us,
4 not few.

5 If the media gets a story wrong -- I'm
6 hurrying -- or in the case of these young
7 women -- tells untruths, we are all
8 diminished. Please to do your duty.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

11 Edward Helm.

12 MR. HELM: Retired -- Alliance for
13 Retired Americans member, gray-haired Ed Helm.
14 I voluntarily retired from federal service
15 inside the beltway, Solicitor's Office, U.S.
16 Department of Labor, Civil Rights Lawyer.
17 Involuntarily retired to chair the Democratic
18 Party in Pinellas County.

19 (Applause.)

20 I come here to praise the FCC and to
21 criticize it. I've submitted a statement
22 adopting the more-focussed part of this to
23 your people outside, adopting Congressman
24 Kucinich's statement that we used three or
25 fours years ago, when ABC was trying pummel

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1 him.

2 I think it capitalizes, certainly, my
3 views, and, so, I won't repeat those.

4 But praise God. By the way, Kucinich had
5 the only storefront office in the primaries
6 for Democratic candidates in the Tampa Bay
7 Area. So what does that say about the
8 importance of media and the importance of
9 grassroots and citizen organizing?

10 A look at homicide. We have sociologists

11 in Florida. Dr. Leonard Begley (Phonetic),
12 writing this book on homicide, points out
13 something that the Commission is starting to
14 look, violence on TV and what we're doing to
15 our children.

16 Dr. Begley points out that the average
17 child sees four hours of television a day; in
18 the process of one year, they see over 12,000
19 acts of violence. He points out that this is
20 pernicious, this is leading to homicide. It's
21 in the book on Pages 141, 142 and 143.

22 As a person of faith, I know the
23 scripture again and again condemns violence as
24 it does greed.

25 Now for the criticism. We need your help

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1 in returning the Fairness Doctrine and the
2 political courage -- (Applause) -- the
3 political courage to make sure that candidates
4 don't have to sell their souls to raise money,
5 that, like in Europe, they're into airtime for
6 candidates so that they can focus on real
7 things. Thank you.

8 MR. SIGALOS: Will the following people
9 come to the microphone. I'm at Number 79.
10 Karen Burns, Al Frederick, John Polo, Phillip
11 Harris, Charles Rice, Brenda Young, Kevin
12 Moore, Thomas Lincoln, Barbara Skogman, Mike
13 Fox.

14 Bill Diaz.

15 (No audible response.)

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MR. SIGALOS: Karen Burns.

MS. BURNS: Thank you, and thank you for coming and thank you for your stamina today listening to all of us. I'm going to go to the end and then to the beginning, just in case I don't get to the end the second time.

I speak for the League of Women Voters of the State of Florida. I'm on the board. And we're very concerned about the consolidation issue. We don't have all the answers. But we

would ask you to ask the right questions and -- as doctors that are committed to, to do no harm.

An informed, elected electorate is the bedrock of a healthy democracy. And we ask you to consider whether further consolidation is going to help support citizens' right to know or whether it will further erode it.

Will it further curtail local coverage?

Will it further squelch diverse voices?

Those are our concerns.

And as you know, the League of Women Voters have been a long-term stubborn advocate for openness in government, at all levels, including promoting an open-air -- (Inaudible) -- system which -- (Inaudible) -- representative accountable, responsive and which assures opportunities for public participation and supports the citizen's right to know.

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22 Voters, in fact, is to encourage the active
23 and informed participation of citizens and
24 their government. That's getting tougher and
25 tougher to do, particularly at the local

1 level.

2 And inasmuch as the informed electorate
3 is the bedrock of a healthy democracy,
4 consolidation in the media industry might
5 limit that.

6 The discussion today here shows you the
7 passion that we have in the Tampa Bay Area for
8 our media. At the local level, there has been
9 an erosion, I believe, in the coverage, and
10 particularly around general election time for
11 local races.

12 And when you combine that with the high
13 cost of advertising, more and more diverse
14 voices and potential candidates, we fear, are
15 being excluded from participation. Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

18 Al Frederick.

19 MS. BURNS: -- an e-mail address where we
20 can submit full testimony?

21 MR. SIGALOS: Well, if you go to our
22 website, fcc.gov -- www.fcc.gov.

23 MS. BURNS: Okay. Thanks very much.

24 MR. SIGALOS: Al Frederick.

25 MR. FREDERICK: Hi. My name is Al

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1 Frederick, and I'm currently the
2 communications officer for the state of
3 Florida for LULAC, League of United
4 Latin-American Citizens. I am the past
5 president of the Tampa Bay Hispanic Chamber of
6 Commerce, and I currently work in the Mutual
7 Aid Society, the center for the -- (Inaudible)
8 -- of Tampa.

9 And what I wanted to say was, I've heard
10 a lot of talk about media and the Tampa
11 Tribune, Centro, Media Company. And I just
12 wanted to say, you have to give credit where
13 credit's due.

14 In the newspaper, Centro, which is the
15 weekly publication by the Tampa Tribune in
16 Spanish, there is not a day that goes by that
17 I do not see their reporters, back around the
18 street, reporting on what is happening on the
19 Hispanic events here in Tampa.

20 About three years ago, the Tampa Tribune
21 had a Hispanic market meeting -- town --
22 town-hall meeting where they wanted to know
23 what the community thought about the Hispanic
24 initiatives in the Tampa Tribune.

25 At that meeting, over 300 people

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1 participated and, well, it was very negative
2 at that time period, saying that there was
3 very little for the Hispanic market. Because
4 of that, the Tampa Tribune launched the Centro
5 magazine in Spanish to help the Hispanic
6 market here in Tampa.

7 Six months ago, approximately, they had
8 another town-hall meeting to find out how they
9 were doing. At that meeting, only 60 people
10 showed up. A lot of people wondered what
11 happened. Well, when people don't have
12 anything to complain about, they don't go.

13 So it was a very good meeting. There was
14 no complaints. And most of the people were
15 very satisfied about what had happened in the
16 newspaper about the -- about reporting about
17 Hispanic events.

18 They have two reporters, and they're at
19 almost all the -- I would say at all, if not
20 -- yeah, all of the Hispanic events that
21 happen in Tampa. Thank you.

22 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

23 John Pol o.

24 MR. POLO: My name is John Pol o. I'm --
25 I don't have much to say, just to not allow

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1 any more consoli dati on. Thanks.

2 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

3 Phi lli p Harri s.

4 MR. HARRIS: Hi. I just want to thank
5 you for coming to listen to us talk. I'm here
6 to urge you to please do not relax
7 medi a-ownshi p poli cy.

8 Years ago, I had a friend who lived in a
9 small down that was experiencing troubles with
10 flash floods. The only station that was on
11 the air to help with emergency situations was

12 a low-power FM radio station who you may know
13 as pirate radio operators.

14 The other stations in the area were
15 either off the air or playing a distant
16 satellite feed, and there wasn't even a local
17 DJ in the studio to take calls.

18 Later, I was appalled to hear that the
19 FCC shut that station down. But while it was
20 on the air, it served as a vital link to the
21 community.

22 Corporations like Clear Channel are the
23 real pirates. They have no idea what music
24 and what community affairs are really needed.
25 On a shoestring budget of less than \$2,000, a

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1 community can set up a low-power FM station
2 and serve the needs of the community, not only
3 in emergency situations, but in daily needs as
4 well.

5 Civic group programs can be organized.
6 Local public affairs can really be hatched
7 out, local artists can play music to their
8 communities, politicians can get true equal
9 air time, and a community will grow again.

10 A corporation is not a citizen and could
11 never respond to situations like this like
12 citizens can. Every community in America
13 should have a station that can provide a great
14 service like that. And it's time to make some
15 space on the dial for a true community again.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

18 Charles Ri ce.
19 (No audi bl e response.)
20 MR. SI GALOS: Charl es Ri ce.
21 (No audi bl e response.)
22 MR. SI GALOS: Brenda Young.
23 (No audi bl e response.)
24 MR. SI GALOS: Brenda Young.
25 (No audi bl e response.)

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1 MR. SI GALOS: Kevi n Moore.
2 (No audi bl e response.)
3 MR. SI GALOS: Thomas Li ncol n.
4 I 'm sorry. What i s your name, si r?
5 MR. MOORE: Kevi n Moore.
6 MR. SI GALOS: Okay. Kevi n Moore.
7 MR. MOORE: I 've been passing out the
8 America Freedom to Fasci sm DVDs. And I hope
9 everyone i n the commi ssi on woul d take a look
10 at that. (Appl ause.)
11 And I thank you for bei ng here and
12 stayi ng up l ate, and I real ly appreci ate your
13 ti me.
14 Power corrupts. Absol ute power corrupts,
15 absol utely. It' s folly to consi der poli cy
16 where the most effecti ve means of
17 communi cati on can be more easi ly mani pul ated.
18 Further medi a consoli daton woul d set the
19 stage for some ki nd of quasi -federal
20 i nformati on czar. We don' t want anythi ng l ike
21 that.
22 If I found out my nei ghbor l ied or

23 withheld information to me, I would not trust
24 him ever again, if he did it once or twice.
25 Yet, government, it's their standard operating

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1 procedure. And the media-giant bedfellows
2 spin, lie deception.

3 The sixth plank of Karl Marx's Communist
4 Manifesto calls for media consolidation,
5 central control of the means of communication.
6 Okay. (Applause.)

7 It has many advantages. Central control
8 has many advantages. But it's incompatible
9 with our constitutional republic. I don't
10 know whether you guys have taken oaths to
11 support and effect the Constitution. But I
12 hope you have.

13 A VOICE: Doesn't look like it.

14 MR. MOORE: Freedom of the press is
15 guarded by jealous competition. Thomas
16 Jefferson said, "Let no more be heard of
17 confidence in men, but rather bind them down
18 by the chains of the Constitution."

19 Same with your policy. We've got to have
20 policy that we can trust. We don't have to
21 trust a bunch of guys who are going to do what
22 people do. They're fallible, corruptible
23 human beings. We've got to limit their
24 damage -- the damage they can do.

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25 World Trade Center Seven (sic), 9/11,

1 let's -- not the media competition. At least
2 the American public has heard about World

3 Trade Center Seven. Now, you can't let that
4 continue. Thank you.

5 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

6 Thomas Lincoln.

7 MR. LINCOLN: Good evening.

8 I was listening to the testimony of some
9 of the pro-consolidation -- I guess they call
10 themselves convergents, I believe, advocates.
11 And, you know, some of the excuses they gave I
12 found offensively weak and not very
13 compelling.

14 And I have trouble connecting their duty
15 to serve the public interest as required by
16 the FCC. They, you know, mentioned some of
17 these charities, which is fine, except that I
18 think that those broadcasters may be limiting
19 and omitting other worthwhile charities, which
20 is unfair.

21 And they have mentioned hurricane issues,
22 which seems kind' a like "Duh, who wouldn't
23 cover that," especially in -- (Applause.)

24 Some of the things I got that I'd like to
25 request is 1) Reinstate the Fairness

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1 Doctrine, 2) Increase the number of
2 public-access channels and restore
3 public-access channels to Pasco County,
4 Florida, 3) -- and Pinellas -- thank you -- 3)
5 undo the excesses -- excessive levels of
6 consolidation already done, increase the
7 numbers of owners from what they're currently

8 at, 4) stop broadcasting lies and propaganda;
9 there should be more truth in reporting,
10 especially when they call it "News," 5)
11 penalize stations that refuse to run perfectly
12 fine ads, like nonprofits that want to get
13 their message out, they will yank the ad, 6)
14 eliminate any and all influence of advertise
15 over news content, 7) reduce the cost of
16 owning a station and make more channels
17 available without lots of requirements.

18 Thank you. (Applause.)

19 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

20 Barbara Skogman.

21 MS. SKOGMAN: Hi. I'm Barbara Skogman,
22 and I appreciate you coming. And I've had a
23 lot of so-called downtime the last ten years
24 due to illness and injuries. And, luckily, I
25 should be getting social security disability

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1 benefits to help me.

2 But during this time I've had plenty of
3 time to watch and hear the media, but limited
4 reading due to physical limitations.

5 But I've noticed that the quality of
6 programming or the programs have -- has gone
7 down; for example, I really don't care who the
8 father of Anna Nicole's baby is. (Applause.)

9 And not only the quality has gone down,
10 but the quantity of the issues are limited
11 also. And, mainly, I rely on publicly
12 supported local WMNF, the radio station, first
13 to get my good news. And at least there,

14 there's no more Anna Nicole that I would have
15 to listen to nonstop. Therefore, it's obvious
16 that competition has profoundly been affected.

17 And turning to politics, I want to
18 mention the Fairness Doctrine again. That
19 needs to be reinstated. So, we need to
20 bring it back where every station has to give
21 equal time to every political party.

22 They want the stations either being one
23 way and are serving special interests versus
24 public's interests; in other words, they are
25 -- they are providing this as firmly-based

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1 facts, as the system stands today.

2 Most important, the press has to be the
3 watch dog of a republic. The should be
4 speaking truth, power, whether it's civilian
5 or governmental.

6 Maybe if the media had been doing its
7 job, we wouldn't be -- we wouldn't be in the
8 Iraq War with those horrible consequences,
9 spending billions, while we have children ill,
10 whether mentally or physically, and more
11 veterans who are hungry and are more homeless,
12 living in -- on the street.

13 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

14 MS. SKOGMAN: And I just have one more
15 thing to say. There was a quote by an author
16 that said, "The closer you get to power, the
17 further you get from its truth." And it seems
18 like that may apply in this case.

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MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

MS. SKOGMAN: Thank you very much for listening.

MR. SIGALOS: Would Ersula Odom, Dale Braiman, Carlton Lewis, Dawn Morgan, Marc Vila, Joseph Wagner, David Caton, Julia Perkins, Francisca Cortes and Anthony Lorenzo,

please come to the nearest mike.

Mike Fox.

MR. FOX: Thank you so much for being here. My name's Michael Fox. I'm a resident of St. Petersburg.

I hold a post-graduate degree in mass communication and I've taught at three universities. I got my third-class radio license at age 17, had a radio show, sold radio time, worked for an ad agency, worked in pay TV and produced low-budget feature movies shot for less than the cost of a good used car, yet what you see received redistribution through major U.S. retailers; in short, I'm a media geek.

One of my earliest memories was of my huddled around a small black-and-white TV screen glued to the channels with John F. Kennedy assassination and Oswald's demise.

And we all stared in disbelief at the video of planes striking the World Trade Center. The media is one of the most important elements of our society and arguably provides the single most common shared

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experience for all of our citizens.

1 You all hold in your hands the awesome
2 power to influence our country's general
3 knowledge base. And I humbly submit that over
4 the last 25 years, the Commission's record has
5 been abysmal when it comes to ensuring a
6 diversity of thoughtful views and ideas
7 represented in the broad-access media.

8 As the result of the Anna Nicole
9 Smithification of corporate news, we have a
10 general public that's ill-informed and
11 unprepared to build a society that addresses
12 serious concerns regarding, among a host of
13 other vital issues, the use of military might
14 on others and an accurate assessment of our
15 security.

16 Arguably, the greatest source of hope for
17 any society is the open and active ongoing
18 dialectic for more, not fewer, points of view,
19 where diverse ideas are heard and encouraged.

20 So I ask the Commission, please, to
21 tighten restrictions on multiple media
22 ownership by individual corporations, to
23 promote media ownership by less economically
24 powerful entities, to bring back the Fairness
25 Doctrine once again.

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1 And for the citizenry, I ask you to
2 promote the widest access to information
3 possible, regardless of a person's ability to

4 pay for elitist premium-tier programming on
5 cable or the Internet. One's income cannot
6 determine one's access to information in a
7 just society. Thank you. (Applause.)

8 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

9 Ersula Odom.

10 MS. ODOM: Good evening.

11 I'm Ersula Odom, and I represent the
12 Weekly Challenger, which is a 40-year-old
13 African-American newspaper out of Clearwater,
14 serving the Tampa Bay Area.

15 I am not as much against one organization
16 as I am for the protection of another. I have
17 a computer background, meaning that I
18 advocated electronic performance support
19 systems. So electronic wizardry is
20 fascinating to me, and the interconnection of
21 information that they -- the large
22 organizations are able to do is good.

23 But it's not so much how they do it as
24 what they're talking about. What I am
25 concerned about is the preservation of my

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1 history, my community's history, contribution
2 as a society.

3 Who will talk about what is going on in
4 the community by the real people, the people
5 that I happen to know, my sister, my cousin,
6 my brother, my uncle, whoever, people that I
7 can relate to and share stories about.

8 When and in a hard, real term (sic), we
9 talked about the Haitian issue, yes, we talked

10 about kindred needs, effort along those lines;
11 but at the same time we also talked about the
12 fact that it was a Haitian that settled
13 Chicago and what -- Tussaud -- (Inaudible) --
14 did -- gave Napoleon Bonaparte a run for his
15 money. That's the kind -- that's information
16 that needs to be out there to spark
17 discussion.

18 Now, I do have a question. I hear the
19 numbers, 50 percent, 30 percent, 2 percent.
20 And I understand that your charter is to
21 fairly and equally disseminate the -- the
22 access to the airwaves.

23 What are you saying to African-Americans
24 and to minorities?

25 Does it take 25 to 1 for 1 basis point?

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1 Are we not as worthy as the numbers say
2 that we represent?

3 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

4 Dale Braiman.

5 MR. BRAIMAN: I'd like to begin my
6 opening remarks by thanking Mr. Copps. I
7 don't believe we'd be here today if it wasn't
8 for the steadfast work that you've done in the
9 last few years. (Applause.)

10 My next remarks have to do with an
11 observation tonight. It's very clear that our
12 corporate representatives have made it a very
13 steadfast point to make sure that the
14 recipients of their largesse have been here to

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compliment them.

Would it be much more to the benefit of us were they not to have informed us that this meeting was going to be here?

There has not been one person who has spoken against consolidation who thanked them for their information; which leads me to my second point; and that is, we all know the truth here. We're all adults.

Communications on this scale represent a balance between the role of the media in a

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democratic republic where information is vital and the role of the media in a market system where information may affect profits and power.

Recent moves that led to the public insistence upon these meetings by the FCC have indicated -- and it may be true -- that some of you value markets and profit more than information and democracy.

I don't want to believe that, because I heard your opening remarks. But if your opening remarks were true, why are you not embarrassed and shocked to the point of action over the fact that Americans today have been successfully manipulated to believe things that are not true from everything from the environment to the war in Iraq?

Why do we have to come to you to ask you to challenge the corporations that have made you think like a corporate -- (Applause) --

21 (Inaudi ble.)

22 Very frankly, the trade -- (Inaudi ble) --
23 the fundamental problem in America is not the
24 great lie but that truth is irrelevant to the
25 pursuit of self-interest.

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

2 Carl ton Lewi s.

3 MR. BRAI MAN: -- thi s shoul d be your --

4 MR. SIGALOS: Carl ton Lewi s.

5 MR. LEWIS: My name is Carl ton Lewi s.

6 And mostly of what I want to say has been said
7 already -- say the -- (Inaudi ble) -- I'm not
8 overly concerned so much about the
9 consoli dati on or the indi vi dual di fferent
10 groups as opposed to that I have a choice.

11 Now, I was told that diversi ty -- I guess
12 competi ti on was going to help me out here in
13 Tampa, when they had Clear Channel -- not
14 Clear Channel but Bright House and Horizon
15 come in.

16 And they said, "Well, we'll bring you
17 competi ti on." And then they have to -- to
18 show me the -- the consumer, the end user,
19 which is myself, I could see a lowering of the
20 cost of my cable bill.

21 So I don't understand, you know, how thi s
22 is allowed to happen. Because you said wi th
23 diversi ty or profi t or competi ti on is going to
24 help us so much, it di dn't help me. And I
25 don't see it. I still want that choice.

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6 Joseph Wagner, David Caton, Julia Perkins.

7 MR. LORENZO: I'm Anthony Lorenzo. You
8 called me earlier.

9 MR. SIGALOS: I'm sorry?

10 MR. LORENZO: You called me in the last
11 batch. Anthony Lorenzo.

12 MR. SIGALOS: Oh, okay. All right.

13 MR. LORENZO: I've been living here in
14 the Tampa community for the last 20 years.
15 I've been an activist and an organizer and a
16 volunteer in numerous campaigns.

17 I just wanted to talk to you a little
18 about my experience with the media here in the
19 Tampa Bay Area and omissions that I felt were
20 critical in some things I've worked on.

21 In 2004 I was a volunteer campaign
22 coordinator for the Kucinich for President
23 Campaign and the Democratic Primary. He came
24 down to Florida and spoke at the Orlando
25 Democratic State Convention.

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1 And the St. Pete Times showed him most
2 prominently in their picture on the front
3 page, front and center, center of the picture.
4 They went from left to right and named every
5 candidate but Dennis Kucinich.

6 Now, that omission is significant,
7 because Dennis Kucinich was the only candidate
8 that voted against the Patriot Act. He was
9 the only candidate that voted against the war
10 in Iraq that was in that race. And yet they

11 didn't feel like his presence and positions
12 newsworthy. That's pitiful.

13 I've also organized cannabis legalization
14 rallies here in the Tampa community for the
15 last ten years. I worked as the volunteer
16 coordinator for the Florida Cannabis Action
17 Network.

18 WMNF has been at every single one of our
19 events, put us on the air. In our experience
20 here in the Tampa Bay market, the St. Pete
21 Times, the Tampa Tribune have never showed up
22 for our protest. I send a press release. I
23 call them every time to make sure they've got
24 my press release. No coverage. It's like we
25 don't exist.

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1 That's what happens to unpopular
2 movements, like myself, that may not have
3 majority support in our community. And we're
4 probably the groups you should be talking to
5 to find out how censored the media is here.

6 As far as the television media, we had --
7 ABC showed up for our last two protests, out
8 of ten. And they put a maybe ten-second spot
9 on the air, "Protesters Legalize Marijuana."
10 They didn't include any of the interviews or
11 the talking points or any in-depth coverage of
12 the issue.

13 You know, so WFLA and the Tampa Tribune
14 have never covered our events. I'm very much
15 opposed to allowing them to converge with more
16 markets and silence our message through more

17 medi ums. Thank you.

18 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

19 Julia; Perkins.

20 MS. PERKINS: Hi. My name is Julia
21 Perkins, and I work with the Coalition of
22 Immokalee Workers. And I'm a listener of La
23 Consciencia, here in Immokalee, Florida. It's
24 a low-power radio station.

333 25 The Coalition of Immokalee Workers, in

1 Immokalee, Florida, is an organization based
2 in the community made up of workers who come
3 mostly from Guatemala, Mexico and Haiti, and
4 who are the lowest-paid, worst-protected
5 workers in the county, who put together this
6 amazing radio station, that I am thankful to
7 be able to listen to every day, especially
8 when I have to go to Ft. Myers or Naples, and
9 all I can get on the radio are the same ten
10 songs.

11 So you -- I swear, every time I go
12 outside of Immokalee, I hear -- I can tune to
13 any station and hear the same ten songs. And
14 I can't find any news, and I can't find
15 anything else. So it is a breath of fresh air
16 to drive -- to get about eight miles outside
17 of Immokalee and turn to 107.9.

18 That's why it was deeply stunning to me
19 to hear that one of the stations that we
20 helped to set up a low-powers from Immokalee
21 went out and said -- (Inaudible) -- and helped

22 set up a low-power station out there.

23 And they are facing the possibility of
24 encroachment, that there's a commercial
25 station that wants the space that they can

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1 exist in -- hurt their signal -- I don't know
2 what the technical term is -- and that that
3 commercial station would have priority over
4 this low-power station that just got off the
5 ground maybe a little less than a year ago.

6 Because I know that that station is
7 breathing fresh air into that community as
8 well. And it's important to have bases for
9 people who don't have a voice in any other
10 way, to be able to speak, to be able to be
11 heard by their community and to be able to
12 talk about the issues that are important to
13 them.

14 And, so, I thank you for -- for your
15 work, really, setting out low-power stations.
16 But I encourage you to protect low-power and
17 full-power stations for communities. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

20 Would the following people go to the
21 nearest microphone. Winnie Foster, Lauren
22 Hallahan, Doreen Donovan, Doug Bevi ns, Eric
23 Smith, Karen Landers, Joyce Smith, Eliot
24 Steele, Richard Crandall, Jay Alexander, Scott
25 Shoemaker.

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1 The next person I'm going to speak, in
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2 one moment, will be Francisca Cortes. But I
3 just want everybody to know we're -- you may
4 be curious. I just read out through -- the
5 last name I read was number 110. It's 20 till
6 11:00, and we're getting fairly close to a
7 situation. We're not there yet. We have --

8 A VOICE: I haven't spoken yet.

9 MR. SIGALOS: Yes. You are amongst a
10 group of people that haven't spoken, which is
11 the situation I'm getting ready to refer to.
12 And what we're going to do, we're trying our
13 very best to hear everybody who wants to speak
14 here tonight. That is the reason why we are
15 here in Tampa, Florida.

16 We also have to respect that we
17 contracted with Tampa Bay Performing Arts
18 Center for a certain amount of time, and we
19 have budget restrictions.

20 So what we're going to be doing is do as
21 many as we can till 11 o'clock. At that point
22 in time, we're going to step back, what we can
23 do, to 90-seconds per person and work through
24 to 11:30.

25 And we believe that we will be able to

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1 catch everybody's comments by doing it that
2 way. So let's keep going.

3 Francisca Cortes.

4 MS. PERKINS: Francisca will need
5 translation. So I don't know if the
6 translator is prepared for that.

7 MR. SIGALOS: Are we prepared for that?

8 MS. PERKINS: Or I can do it.

9 MR. SIGALOS: You can do it?

10 MS. PERKINS: I can do it.

11 MS. CORTES: I am Francisca Cortes, and
12 I'm a member of the Coalition of Immokalee
13 Workers.

14 I'm a DJ on Radio Consciencia, and I just
15 want to share with you the importance that it
16 has to our community. And it's not the same
17 as a commercial radio station, as many of you
18 here know.

19 Commercial radio stations don't talk
20 about issues that are important to women, like
21 domestic violence. And many of the women in
22 our community don't even speak Spanish, so we
23 use the radio to speak to them in their
24 indigenous languages.

25 And so I hope you take that into

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1 consideration and understand the importance of
2 community radio stations to communities like
3 ours. Thank you.

4 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

5 Winnie Foster.

6 MS. FOSTER: Hello. The poet likes the
7 news has written a beautiful poem (sic.) I
8 carry a line of it on my business card from
9 the Sojourna Truth Center in St. Petersburg,
10 Florida.

11 And it says, "Let America be America
12 again, the land that never was but yet could

13 be. "

14 And, so, I think we all realize how far
15 we are from the vision that many of us want,
16 that we are in perilous times; our country is
17 in perilous times.

18 And at almost 80, I'm looking to young
19 people, I'm looking to the people who are
20 passionate to organize, organize, organize.

21 We, the people, must speak, we must
22 demand. And I don't know what you all are
23 going to do. We always have to wait and find
24 out. But I will assure you that the people
25 here who are passionate about these issues and

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1 the unsolved problems in our country are not
2 going to give up. (Applause.) Thank you.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Lauren Callahan.

4 (No audible response.)

5 MR. SIGALOS: Lauren Callahan.

6 (No audible response.)

7 MR. SIGALOS: Doreen Donovan.

8 MS. DONOVAN: Good evening. I'm here
9 representing myself in support of increasing
10 the diversity in Tampa-based radio, in
11 television stations, satellite and cable
12 communications and various media outlets.

13 I'm here to encourage the FCC to require
14 that these outlets more closely reflect the
15 communities that they operate within. The
16 only way to ensure that diversity and localism
17 occurs is to limit the ownership of these

18 outlets by the mega-media giants.

19 In this age when many people have access
20 to information from so many various sources,
21 it's imperative that these sources remain
22 independent.

23 When the supply of information is allowed
24 to be controlled by a few large conglomerates
25 that are allowed to own numerous radio

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1 stations, newspapers and TV stations, the
2 result can only be a watered-down,
3 generalized, sanitized rendition of the news.
4 Information becomes hobbled by the
5 restrictions and limitations of those few
6 corporations.

7 Large national chains that continue to
8 gobble up small local media outlets, while
9 effectively streamlining costs and increasing
10 profits, generally fail to address the needs,
11 views and interests of the communities they
12 operate in.

13 The formulas and formats are repeated
14 again and again, so that the radio and TV
15 stations in Toledo, Ohio, sound and look just
16 like the ones in Tampa, Florida.

17 While entertainment seems to be the
18 driving force of many of the media outlets,
19 news that is accurate, unbiased and relative
20 to the region needs to be provided to the
21 people.

22 And it's the role of the FCC to ensure
23 that the public airwaves continue to serve the

24 public; therefore, I'm here this evening to
25 ask you to stand firm to the commitment of the
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1 FCC to ensuring that the American people have
2 access to communication services that are
3 without discrimination.

4 And to fulfill that commitment, the FCC
5 needs to keep a larger portion of those
6 communication vehicles in the hands of the
7 independent and locally owned and operated
8 providers. Thank you.

9 MR. SIGALOS: Doug Bevins.

10 MR. BEVINS: Thank you for listening.
11 All I have to say has been said, I guess,
12 throughout the night, here, by different
13 people, different ways.

14 James Madison once described the American
15 Democracy is just, like, on one end of the
16 cycle you have the elected leader who educate
17 the public by their acts. The public
18 instructs when they vote.

19 Lincoln said it in a different way. He
20 said it's a government of the people. The
21 idea is that the sensibilities and the values
22 of the people bubbles up to provide guidance
23 to the elected leaders.

24 John Stuart Mills gave us the metaphor of
25 the marketplace of ideas, a place where

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1 different policies and ideas could compete, be
2 sampled by the public, and then the public can

3 decide which to accept, and they can be
4 enacted. That's the way it's supposed to
5 work.

6 What we have now is less diversity in the
7 media going on and a marketplace that is
8 narrowing. It's simple human nature that if
9 you are the owner of a market outlet, you will
10 determine its content. Be you Salzberger or
11 Murdock, you will close the door to certain
12 ideas, to certain policies.

13 The less ownership there is, the less
14 diversity you will have in the marketplace.
15 This weakens the links between the public and
16 their elected leaders. This waters down the
17 marketplace of ideas.

18 Nobody's satisfied with the function of
19 our media now. I don't think that anybody in
20 this room is satisfied with their functions.
21 I think it's time for us to step back and
22 do -- I hope you will too -- what Madison
23 proposed.

24 Consult your experience, consult the
25 experience of all Americans and consult their

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1 values, their respect for the marketplace of
2 ideas, the way it should function, the link
3 between the public and the elected people and
4 make our democracy more healthy by ensuring
5 more diversity in the media. Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

8 Eric Smith.

9 (No audi bl e response.)

10 MR. SIGALOS: Karen Landos.

11 MS. LANDERS: It's Landers like Ann.

12 MR. SIGALOS: Oh, okay.

13 MS. LANDERS: Thank you for coming to
14 Florida to see us. And I'm from Polk County,
15 which is the next county over. It's
16 agricultural. And because we're between Tampa
17 and Orlando, we get the glory of your
18 consolidated media, twofold.

19 I can listen to a drug-addled hatermonger
20 talk on the radio six different stations at a
21 time during the day. (Laughter & Applause.)
22 So I'm driving around the country in Polk
23 County sometime. Try it.

24 Does this little dude (sic) really belong
25 in this county?

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1 Is this what we want for America, our
2 comments, our radio stations?

3 My high school graduation class, in 1969,
4 donated an entirely equipped TV station to the
5 high school so that the students coming after
6 us could learn how to broadcast, could learn
7 how to produce. We were proud of American
8 media.

9 With the destruction of the Fairness
10 Doctrine, our media automatically became
11 somehow uncivilized. Now we are at each
12 other's throats. And it's killing us. We
13 have serious things we have to take care of in

14 this county.

15 Our comments (sic), our broadcasting has
16 to be open to all of us. It cannot be
17 consolidated just for money. Because you've
18 pushed us too far, gentlemen. We're going to
19 take it back. (Applause.) Thank you.

20 MR. SIGALOS: Joyce Smith.

21 MS. SMITH: Thank you so much for staying
22 so late. My name is Joyce Smith.

23 2004, it was a very good year for
24 Hurricanes Charlie, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne. It
25 was the terrifying. I was one of the lucky

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1 ones. My home only lost power for a few days
2 in one storm and a week in another. I was
3 completely dependent on the radio.

4 I do not have a battery TV, and I was
5 trying to conserve what batteries I did have.
6 So I turned on my radio. I listened
7 diligently for news, especially school
8 closings.

9 I teach at Hillsborough Community College
10 and at times found it difficult to hear all
11 the closings. Did they say "HCC" or "HCS." I
12 listened for the news about what streets, what
13 streets are flooded or have downed power
14 lines.

15 I needed to know which way to go to work,
16 so I tuned in to the radio. Some man is
17 talking on the radio, and he's point- -- he
18 says he's pointing to a map.

19 What map? This is the radio. This radio

20 news had a simulcast from the TV station. I
21 keep listening to my radio. I hear "Schmidt"
22 (sic), not a place for comfort during a crisis
23 period.

24 The entertainer pundit fills our precious
25 airwaves with messages of intolerance, disdain

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1 and disrespect. Now, he's talking about the
2 storm. How much time is Clear Channel giving
3 this guy? Heaven forbid, he's on more than
4 one station. He's yakking with some guy in
5 Palm Beach.

6 I want to know:
7 Is Kennedy and Dale Mabry flooded?
8 Can I drive on the local roads?
9 Can I get to Ybor?
10 What is happening in Tampa?

11 Clearly, big media is not helpful during
12 a crisis. Our community issues are ignored by
13 the media giants. Very little discussion is
14 given to issues important to the citizens.

15 We get to listen to the repulsively and
16 distasteful rants during the weekend by
17 Hannity in -- (Inaudible) -- like the --

18 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

19 MS. SMITH: -- in case you missed their
20 daily --

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

22 Eliot Steele.

23 (No audible response.)

24 MR. SIGALOS: Richard Crandall.

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1 of the media that you have been hearing
2 criticized quite a lot tonight. And I
3 compliment the Commissioners for your patience
4 and your courtesy and for listening to
5 everybody for the last six or seven hours or
6 so.

7 I began my broadcast career some 40 years
8 ago in Montana. And I filed a couple of the
9 comments with the Commission electronically a
10 couple of years ago regarding Hurricane --
11 (Inaudible) -- our last speaker was just
12 talking about, echoing her feelings -- and on
13 the current issues as well through your
14 website.

15 I appreciate the opportunity to do that.
16 However, I'd like to address one other issue
17 that hasn't really been talked about tonight;
18 would not have expected to, and that is the
19 effect of the decision that you make on the
20 people who work in broadcasting, people like
21 myself, and the resulting job insecurity that
22 has evolved from the concentration of
23 ownership.

24 And I'd like to quote from the website of
25 a colleague of mine that I just lifted off the
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1 Web earlier this weekend.

2 "Radio just isn't what it once was," he
3 says, "budget cuts mean less jobs in the
4 industry and a lot of old timers are sitting on

5 the beach waiting for the next call, that more
6 often than not, does not come.

7 I could stab (sic) a living radio station
8 utilizing the talent of those unemployed at
9 the current -- tremendous talent in the
10 employment line. That is what radio has
11 become today."

12 Please consider not only the opinions of
13 the people who are listening to radio,
14 watching television, reading newspapers, but
15 the people who are in the industry itself.
16 Thank you. (Applause.)

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

18 Jay Alexander.

19 (No audible response.)

20 MR. SIGALOS: Would the following people
21 please come to the mike. Mary Gerken, Sumati
22 Villaman, Ellen Thompson, Larry Thurmond,
23 Graham Thompson, T.C. Corrigan, Herman Salas,
24 Steven Norris, Nancy Norris, Susan Haig.

25 Scott Shoemaker.

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1 MR. SHOEMAKER: Mr. Moderator, I was in
2 the last batch. I am Scott Shoemaker.

3 MR. SIGALOS: Yeah. Scott Shoemaker.

4 MR. SHOEMAKER: Good evening. Members of
5 the panel, thank you for coming to Tampa.

6 My name is Scott Shoemaker. I am an
7 off-air local -- (Inaudible) -- and technician
8 in the Clearwater area. And I wanted to give
9 you some insight from people who are in the

10 industry.

11 The off-air digital transmissions have
12 been well-received and now becoming aged
13 within the household and the business. Please
14 do not ever let the digital signals go the way
15 of the February 2009 (sic) analogue carriers
16 that we certainly allowed the grip (sic) of
17 cable and satellite, which is highly
18 unfortunate.

19 I would like to highlight many stations,
20 3.1 or PBS, 3.5, the 24-7 HD, the 8.2 and the
21 10.2 weather are very, very important
22 especially in any kind of bad weather.

23 My question, as you're pondering the next
24 move: What will be the -- (Inaudible) --
25 function program for people who do rely on

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1 off-air in the 2009 window, when they will
2 have to fall from the analogue provision to
3 the digital conversion?

4 Could there be some changes made in each
5 DMA?

6 For example, could feeds from another DMA
7 been moved to the Tampa -- (Inaudible) --
8 tower; for example, could Tampa also have a
9 PBS feed out of Orlando to provide more
10 programming in a parallel -- (Inaudible) --
11 could, for example, the WWSB Channel 40 ABC in
12 Bradenton also come to the Tampa tower to
13 provide a second ABC feed?

14 And, as other people have pointed out,
15 could public-access programming currently on

16 low power come up to the Tampa tower located
17 in Brandon as a standard definition DTV
18 signals provide better coverage (sic.)

19 And last, but not least, many, many
20 people in my counties simply cannot afford
21 cable. They cannot afford satellite. They
22 are dependent on the traditional off-air.
23 Whether they like the digital yet or not,
24 they're still dependent like the --
25 (Inaudible) -- to continue. Thank you.

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

2 MR. SHOEMAKER: Thank you and God bless
3 America (Applause.)

4 MR. SIGALOS: Mary Gerken.

5 (No audible response.)

6 MR. SIGALOS: Sumali Villaman.

7 (No audible response.)

8 MR. SIGALOS: Ellen Thompson.

9 (No audible response.)

10 MR. SIGALOS: Larry Thurmond.

11 (No audible response.)

12 MR. SIGALOS: Graham Thompson.

13 (No audible response.)

14 MR. SIGALOS: T.C. Corrigan.

15 MR. CORRIGAN: Hi. Thanks for coming
16 tonight. Thanks for coming to Florida, since
17 we seem to be a place where pretty much a ton
18 of important news for America happens.

19 I'm a recent graduate of the media
20 communications studies master's program at

21 Florida State University. And I'd like to
22 talk about two issues related to media and
23 education.

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24 Gannett, the largest newspaper chain in
25 the country, a company which last year posted

1 profits of eight billion dollars, up almost
2 six hundred million dollars from the year
3 before -- granted this was a really tough year
4 for the newspaper industry, you've heard.
5 (Laughter & Applause) -- well, they -- they
6 last August purchased the FSU Florida
7 Flambeau, which is the university -- or it's
8 the student newspaper serving the Florida
9 State community.

10 It's the first student newspaper in the
11 country to be bought by a major newspaper
12 chain. And they were, basically, doing a
13 study to converge the Tallahassee Democrat and
14 the audience -- or the readers of the Florida
15 State community to be able to take advantage
16 of the opportunities there to, basically, milk
17 the community of our money (sic.)

18 They said that this was just a one-time
19 thing, that they weren't going to do this
20 anymore. And then this past February 14,
21 Gannett purchased the Central Florida Future,
22 the student newspaper at the University of
23 Central Florida.

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24 Student newspapers provide an alternative
25 viewpoint that I think is very important, and

1 it's incredibly discouraging to know that
2 they're being bought by major newspaper
3 chains.

4 I'd also like to say that regardless of
5 what your decisions are in the next coming
6 months, I would love for the commission to
7 stand behind a policy to encourage media
8 literacy in high school.

9 There's lots of major production programs
10 in high schools, but I think that media
11 literacy is something this country is sorely
12 missing. So thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

15 Herman Salas.

16 (No audible response.)

17 Steven Norris.

18 (No audible response.)

19 Nancy Norris.

20 (No audible response.)

21 Susan Haig.

22 (No audible response.)

23 Will the following people please come
24 down to the microphones. Andres -- Andres
25 Lopez, Alan Lipke, Mii Carter, Lisa

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1 Montelione, Mark Wachowiak, Don Hackett,
2 Michael Levinson, Susan James, Jim Zaharis and
3 Mark Skogman.

4 Andres Lopez.

5 (No audible response.)

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Al an Li pke.
(No audi bl e response.)
Mi i Carter.
(No audi bl e response.)
MR. LIPKE: Sorry. I'm Al an Li pke.

MR. SIGALOS: Okay.

MR. LIPKE: I produce radi o
documentari es. My company is called
"Li stening Between the Lines." And I'd like
to talk to some of the reasons why you became
commi ssi oners and why you cared to come
tonight.

Some cl aim -- some believe that news
consumers will always find suppli ers to their
taste. But the rule I learned in journali sm
graduate school, that freedom of the press
bel ongs to he who owns one, hasn't changed.

And the Internet cannot provide an
al ternate source of news, since only
dedi cated, i ndependent organi zati ons can

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afford to investigate and report. It's a
soapbox, a great soapbox, but a soapbox
nonethel ess.

In my li fetime, democracy has i ncreased
only through di versi ty of voi ces, i ncreased
di versi ty, not j ust ethni c di versi ty in U. S.
newsrooms, but also in global networks servi ng
and offeri ng the perspectives of billi ons of
people who don't look like me and who don't
look like any of you.

So bear that i n mi nd, that givi ng a

12 concentrated corporate media control over our
13 public expressions, our public knowledge, our
14 public and private culture means a tone-deaf
15 society.

16 It's long been said that those who don't
17 remember the past are doomed to repeat it.
18 But when you deny or suppress or limit your
19 present knowledge, you end up in an unwinnable
20 swamp of war in the wrong country, a ruined
21 country, this country increasingly addicted to
22 environmental poisons.

23 You end up imperiled -- your liberties
24 imperiled by secret -- secret investigations,
25 secret courts --

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

2 MR. LIPKE: -- using torture to defend a
3 corrupt economy.

4 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

5 MR. LIPKE: Thank you.

6 (Appl ause.)

7 MR. SIGALOS: Susan Hai g.

8 MS. HAIG: My name is Susan Hai g, and I'm
9 the associate conductor of the Florida
10 orchestra. (Appl ause.)

11 Thank you. Thank you very much, to the
12 commi ssi on, for your work tonight.

13 I'd like to suggest that -- I would think
14 that it would be important to revisi t the
15 fundamental triumvrate that we always hear
16 that the medi a's responsible for news, sports

17 and entertainment.

18 I personally think it's hard to turn the
19 clock back on an efficiency, the efficiency
20 that we heard described tonight. But that
21 triumvirate, I think, is not adequate in an
22 era of convergence.

23 And I -- yet, in 19 years as a
24 professional conductor, I see how hard it is
25 for journalists to grab very integral art

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1 stories and creative ideas. Yet, it's
2 essential.

3 So if there's a way to revisit that, then
4 perhaps let -- get rid of the
5 word entertainment, which is actually a huge
6 corporation itself, and somehow I'm sure the
7 creativity and individuality will --
8 (Inaudible) -- I think it would be extremely
9 helpful.

10 We need somehow to get the dissemination
11 of authentic ideas and creative thoughts in
12 this world. And I think one of the biggest
13 problems is the 24-hour distractions from the
14 central task of creating and reaching the --
15 creating and renewing a democratic society.

16 So if the commission can somehow ask, in
17 the renewing of licenses, what the educational
18 goals and the civic goals of the media are, I
19 think that would help us all. Thank you very
20 much.

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

22 We've gone past 11 o'clock now, and so
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23 we're going to reset the clock so that
24 everyone will have now 90 seconds.

357 25 MS. MONTELI ONE: My name is Lisa

1 Montelione. Thank you for saying it right.
2 Thank you for being here. Your stamina is
3 incredible.

4 I'm here as a citizen. I don't have a
5 background in broadcasting. I'm not a
6 journalist. I just decided to come down here,
7 because I think it's a very important issue.

8 I moved here 24 years ago. And I joined
9 a local women's club to get involved in the
10 community and get to know my neighbors. We
11 did all the typical stuff, raising money from
12 donations and things.

13 We have a local newspaper, and everyone
14 who works at the newspaper lives in the
15 community. I could call them up, "Come on
16 down," and say "Do a story," and they'd run a
17 little ad for our events.

18 The Tribune has purchased that newspaper.
19 Now, to get a reporter's phone number, even,
20 it's, you know, five or six or eight phone
21 calls to find out who it is that's supposed to
22 cover our area. And the person doesn't live
23 there, and they don't -- they cover a lot of
24 communities and don't really have an interest
25 in any one of them.

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1 And I think consolidation in the media is

2 not a good idea. The Fairness Doctrine is a
3 good idea. Local news I get from public
4 broadcasting, public radio and covering the
5 city and county commission hearing, meetings.
6 We don't get that on local news.

7 You don't get that on broadcast CBS, NBC,
8 ABC, Fox or any other channel. You have to
9 actually seek it out through community
10 sources. And if you silence those voices,
11 you're silencing a service to those who live
12 here. Thank you very much.

13 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

14 Mii Carter.

15 (No audible response.)

16 Mii Carter.

17 MR. CARTER: My name is Mii Carter. I
18 moved here in -- (Inaudible) -- milk Carter.
19 And I tell you find muck on the bottom of the
20 swamp.

21 I have become the only homilies man. And
22 I have a quick little story to tell you. My
23 friend told me he loaned a -- excuse me. He
24 had a saw. He gave it to a friend of his.
25 After a few years he went to borrow it. The

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1 fellow was undiplomatic, and he said,
2 "Remember who owns this," in order to remind
3 him to bring it back.

4 My friend was telling me, and he smiled
5 and said, "It's not who owns it that is
6 important, it's who gets to use it."

7 So, if the radio and television stations,
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8 the newspapers, etcetera, who gets to use it,
9 the competition is rather fierce. And the
10 question I have for you is:

11 How will you allocate these resources?

12 By what means, what standards will you
13 decide who gets to use it?

14 Ludwig Von Mises wrote a paper called
15 "Economic Calculation." He predicted the
16 demise and collapse of the Soviet Union. This
17 paper is on an Internet website called
18 mises.com -- M-I-S-E-S.com -- Economic
19 Calculation in the Soviet Commonwealth.

20 The paper I wrote is on an Internet site
21 that I pay less than \$15 to set up. It is
22 R-K-O-P-O-L-Y, like "RKO Pictures," Monopoly,
23 rkopoly.com.

24 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

25 MR. CARTER: Thank you.

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1 (Applause.)

2 MR. SIGALOS: Mark Wachowiak.

3 MR. WACHOWIAK: Hi. Good evening. It's
4 a pleasure to be here. And thank you for
5 giving me a minute and a half to talk to you.
6 I'm a chef, and I drove all the way from
7 Orlando, and I'm going to drive all the way
8 back when this is over.

9 I happen to work for one of the big
10 corporate medias. But it wasn't my choice.
11 See, my theme-park company, they owned a few
12 Spanish stations and some other stuff, and

13 this big guy that about things to life just
14 came and bought us.

15 So I just kind of work there. (Laughter &
16 Applause.) I've got two things I want to say.
17 I oppose media corporate control and media
18 consolidation. And I also want to tell you I
19 want you to preserve neutrality.

20 I get my news from the net, because I
21 feel that corporate media is not doing its
22 job. It's a cheerleader for war. And it's
23 manufacturing consent (sic.) It seem like
24 Anna Nicole Smith is more important than
25 global warming, the Iraq War or the

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1 Palestine-Israeli conflict.

2 We have a monopoly of news. We have
3 canned news with MPRs controlling news. We
4 have a lack of flavors in locality. You know,
5 it's -- really, the most vital job of the
6 corporate media is to give us the truth. And
7 they're not doing that job.

8 Recently, Somalia -- they were dropping
9 bombs on Somalia. Of the four corporate news
10 media, they spent one -- I believe it was ABC
11 that said something about it. So I just
12 really emphasize, please do not support media
13 consolidation. Thank you very much.

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

15 Dan Hackett (sic.)

16 (No audible response.)

17 Don Hackett.

18 (No audible response.)

19 Michael Levinson.

20 MR. LEVINSON: I have a question for the
21 commissioners, and I'd like you to answer it
22 when I'm done speaking.

23 Have of the campaigns for the office of
24 president of the United States begun in this
25 term, or will we have to wait until we go to

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1 New Hampshire or something like that?

2 It's a question I'd you to answer me.

3 My name is Michael Levinson. This is a
4 public forum. I declare I am a candidate for
5 the office of President of the United States,
6 and I'm entitled to broadcast opportunities.
7 I have affirm an right that was written by
8 Justice Berger in the United States Supreme
9 Court. You know all about it (sic.)

10 The issue here is Section 312.87
11 Telecommunications Law, which states that a
12 candidate for elective office has the
13 affirmative right -- that a stations can have
14 its license revoked for the written or
15 repeated failure to allow -- (Inaudible) --
16 candidate for the office of president, as you
17 well know.

18 So I'm creating an earmark in 2000. And
19 this is a "New Rule." And you can find it on
20 msn.com. I covered the earmark in a new --
21 (Inaudible.) And they said that this -- this
22 statute passed by the Congress would be
23 amended, that all of the PBS stations are no

24 longer under the access law.

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25 So if there's a candidate for federal

1 office, he can't go to the PBS stations and
2 make a -- (Inaudible) -- request for access.

3 Well, in this country we have a
4 Declaration of Independence that allows us to
5 dissolve a government, and we have a
6 Constitution that states, "Congress can make
7 no law to eliminate the First Amendment,
8 section 312.87, Telecommunications, is the
9 electronic extension of the access law to
10 every American living here.

11 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

12 MR. LEVINSON: So that's -- you people
13 have quietly adopted that --

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

15 MR. LEVINSON: -- make your ego addendum
16 in -- in the -- in the earmarks.

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr. Levinson.

18 MR. LEVINSON: And you know what I'm
19 talking about. (Applause.)

20 MR. SIGALOS: Susan James.

21 (No audible response.)

22 MR. LEVINSON: That was a public
23 announcement I made, in a public (Inaudible)
24 -- recently in a -- take note of that.

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25 MR. SIGALOS: James -- Jim Zaharis.

1 MR. ZAHARIS: My name is Jim Zaharis.
2 I'm from Tampa. I oppose the consolidation of
3 ownershi p. Rarely is bigger better. I speak

4 with some authori ty. My father owned and
5 operated an AM-FM station in Charleston, West
6 Virginia. I grew up in the business. I
7 obtained my First-Class license, became a
8 chief engineer at an AM-FM station.

9 We operate in a communi ty way through a
10 diversi ty of programming addressing all types
11 of communi ty needs. After all, it was the
12 Commi ssi on who mandated this through license
13 renewal .

14 We were only the caretakers of these
15 frequenci es. We had to prove ourselves at
16 every license renewal. Never feared the FCC
17 but had great respect, because I thought
18 you-all guarded the air space for these
19 listeners.

20 Now I feel like I've got to convince you
21 that you're on our side, that you're not on
22 the side of large corporate ownership. I
23 don't have time to go into the exhibit that I
24 brought.

25 But this is the manual, written in the

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1 1950s, the duties of a station, how it has to
2 meet the communi ty's needs. Stated (sic) into
3 the story when my father retired, he sold the
4 stations. A large group bought them, took the
5 AM dark -- simply brought in a satellite dish,
6 brought in a feed for the FM. Charleston had
7 no more rich programmi ng. Thank you.

8 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

9 Would the following people come down.
10 Joseph Valdez, Ken Scharatt, Leonard Schmiege,
11 Rhone Frazier, James Miller, Jean Etsinger,
12 Joan -- Jason Polhemus, Lisa Livingood, Frank
13 Orlando.

14 Mark Skogman.

15 MR. SKOGMAN: You want me to speak?

16 MR. SIGALOS: Yes.

17 MR. SKOGMAN: Oh, sorry.

18 Commissioners of the Federal
19 Communications Commission, thank you for
20 coming to Tampa Bay.

21 My name is Mark Skogman. I'm allowed to
22 speak with you. You're spending a lot of
23 time. I'm very concerned about the
24 developments of the last years in the media in
25 the United States.

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1 Media consolidation has been a disaster
2 for the country, generally, and local
3 communities specifically. I'm very concerned
4 and angered by -- media consolidation is a
5 terrible thing that's -- in local content,
6 local access, public-affairs programming and
7 in this division of fact that are important to
8 the public, including the truth about 9/11.

9 What is the Federal Communications
10 Commission thinking when they allow a company
11 like Clear Channel to own over 1200 radio
12 stations?

13 What affect has this on local
14 programming? It's apparently eliminated it.

15 Think of the situations that've happened where
16 local governments have had important emergency
17 information for the community and could not
18 get an employee on the telephone or at the
19 door to -- (Inaudible) -- and announcement to
20 be made on the station.

21 The radio frequencies the big stations
22 use are public property, my property. And
23 they are not being made or being used in a way
24 I consider close to appropriate.

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25 Imagine the founders of our country in

1 the 1700's allowing one company to own 1200
2 printing presses, what would this have -- what
3 effect would this have on our functioning
4 democracy at the beginning, as we know it did.

5 The physical means of information
6 dissemination cannot be controlled in this
7 way. Let's call media consolidation what it
8 is. This is government-enabled large media
9 corporation corporatism.

10 Let us remember the famous quote from
11 Benito Mussolini. When asked for the
12 definition of fascism, he said that a better
13 word for it was corporatism.

14 Corporatism has to stop and stop now, or
15 we'll suffer further serious negative damage
16 on our democracy and the world. Thank you.

17 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

18 Joseph Valdez.

19 MR. VALDEZ: Yes. Hello. You know, I

20 heard some people here talk about the race,
21 the Hispanic person, this and that. But I
22 think it's even more important than race.
23 I'm -- I'm going to just -- (Inaudible) --
24 going to use the race card.

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25 So I'm just going to tell you, I'm a

1 Cuban-American. Okay. I came here when I was
2 six years old. My father and my mom came here
3 to leave a dictatorship. Because they
4 controlled the airwaves, they controlled
5 everything.

6 And it's sad to say it, it's very sad for
7 me to be here tonight to try to convince this
8 group of people -- except for the exception of
9 Mr. Copps, I saw you on PBS with Bill
10 Moyers -- that we have to try to state and
11 prove to you how big media and what they're
12 doing and the fact that they want to buy the
13 corporate -- corporations are buying more and
14 big, big media, when in reality we should be
15 having a hearing on how to roll back big
16 media. (Applause.) Because they have not
17 done their job.

18 Okay. And you people up there are
19 supposed to represent me. I'm not a
20 professor. I am not a media expert. I'm
21 nothing. I'm just a citizen. Okay. And it's
22 your responsibility to stand up for me
23 because, according to the constitution, the
24 citizens of the United States own the
25 airwaves.

1 I don't have anyone to represent me. You
 2 do. I'll just give you a quick scenario. And
 3 you guys know about this, just because you're
 4 in the business. I'm a portrait photographer.
 5 I don't need to tell you about your business.

6 But -- (Inaudible) -- did a study leading
 7 up prior to the Iraq War. That's the accuracy
 8 and the democracy. And you know what, on PBS,
 9 ABC, CBS, they did almost 500 interviews, 500
 10 broadcasts, and --

11 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

12 MR. VALDEZ: -- you know what -- I'm not
 13 done yet. And you know what, three were for
 14 peace, three out of almost 500. I'm here to
 15 get --

16 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

17 MR. VALDEZ: I want -- I want to get both
 18 sides of the story.

19 MR. SIGALOS: -- minutes.

20 MR. VALDEZ: Excuse me. I want --

21 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you very much.

22 MR. VALDEZ: Well, wait a minute. I'm
 23 here to give both sides of the story. Okay.
 24 I want to be -- I want the airwaves -- and I
 25 want --

1 MR. SIGALOS: -- give you -- you time is
 2 --

3 MR. VALDEZ: I want the television
 4 stations to show -- to show me both sides so

5 that I can make an intelligent decision. I
6 don't want corporate American showing me one
7 side-

8 MR. SIGALOS: -- Mr. Valdez --

9 MR. VALDEZ -- of the issue.

10 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

11 MR. VALDEZ: You'RE welcome.

12 MR. SIGALOS: Ken Scharatt.

13 MR. SCHARATT: I'm here this evening to
14 state my concerns with your commission and
15 your inability to guide and direct and give us
16 the airwaves that we deserve, the media that
17 we deserve, the reporting that we deserve in a
18 free democracy.

19 You're not doing your job. And the only
20 way I can see where this is going to end is
21 that we're going to have to go, and there's
22 going to have to be a huge litigation done
23 against this organization, because you're not
24 doing your job. You've sold out. You've sold
25 your souls.

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1 A VOICE: -- class action suit.

2 MR. SCHARATT: A class action suit is
3 what is needed in this country to take and
4 bring back the power to the people. Thank
5 you. (Applause.)

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

7 Leonard Schmi ege.

8 MR. SCHMI EGE: Schmi ege.

9 Hel lo. Good evening. My name's Leonard
10 Schmi ege. I was forced to become an

11 independent journalist, video journalist.
12 When I found that the mainstream press refused
13 to provide adequate coverage, I started
14 investigating election fraud and voting
15 machines that could have become manipulated,
16 because they build -- my company builds
17 computer control systems with touch screens
18 (sic.)

19 Do not trust your vote to an electronic
20 voting machine. (Applause.) I covered with
21 the -- (Inaudible) -- District 13 race with a
22 GE. We broke down their videotaping, because
23 the news only shows up for two seconds, gets
24 the bite it needs.

25 But we drew up a full story. Go to

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1 shadowvote.org. There's two 30-minute videos
2 on there that show you exactly what a
3 catastrophe our elections processes are

4 (Applause.)

5 But the media doesn't want you to know
6 that. They want the status quo, the illusion
7 that is everything is going just fine. They
8 never do an investigation.

9 I pulled a bag of shredded ballots out of
10 the dumpster behind Deborah Clark's office,
11 the supervisor of elections in Pinellas
12 County. And I called the St. Petersburg
13 Times, and I said, "I got this bag of shredded
14 ballots here. You don't want to come check it
15 out."

16 You know what they said, "We're not going
17 on a witch hunt for Deborah Clark."

18 I said, "Who said anything about a witch
19 hunt. I thought you were just going to try to
20 find out what was the cause of the shredded
21 ballots."

22 Now, it turns out those shredded ballots
23 were duplicates, illegally disposed of, but
24 not quite as bad as -- as who's -- (Inaudible)
25 -- the original vote.

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

2 MR. SCHMIEGE: Listen to Democracy Now if
3 you want to get the truth about what's
4 happening in this country. (Applause.) Thank
5 you.

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

7 Rhone Frazer.

8 (No audible response.)

9 MR. SIGALOS: James Miller.

10 MR. MILLER: Good evening. You've heard
11 an expression of "Thanks for being here." And
12 I think you should thank us for what you have
13 heard today. That should be your gratitude
14 that you ought to express when you go back to
15 Washington.

16 I'm a board member of an organization
17 called the Florida Coalition for Peace and
18 Justice. (Applause.) It's a mission -- we
19 have a mission to transform this culture of
20 militarism, greed, violence, materialism to
21 one of equality, mutual responsibility and

22 bring it back to democratic principles.

23 I was hearing the questions (sic.) And
24 that's it. What do you think accounts for the
25 great draw of John Stewart in the evening?

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1 Were the early fathers of this country,
2 Ben Franklin and others who risked the
3 printing of leaflets opposing, would they be
4 proud or what you do and your work?

5 Are you proud of what your children,
6 maybe your parents, your grandparents, see and
7 hear?

8 Do you think there's any direct
9 connection between the rush to media
10 consolidation and a dumbing-down of America?

11 And, finally, you're either part of the
12 solution or you are part of the problem.

13 Thank you. (Applause.)

14 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

15 Jean Etsinger.

16 MS. ETSINGERER: You got it right. Thank
17 you.

18 I'm a career journalist and newspaper
19 editor. I've also been a volunteer for many
20 not-for-profits raising funds for friends. I
21 found it amazing we had so many testimonials
22 earlier today from such agencies lauding area
23 media outlets for their support; however,
24 although this may sound cruel, a news media
25 ought not to be judged in the community it

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1 serves, by the fundraisers it sponsors or by
2 its collection of Christmas Toys for Tots or
3 clothing for hurricane victims. And I speak
4 as both a hurricane victim and a volunteer.
5 Because this is not the mandate of the news
6 media.

7 The mandate in a democracy, such as ours,
8 is to provide information to the public,
9 collectively, so that people, individually,
10 can make informed decisions about everything
11 that affects their lives.

12 We are told that newspapers are dying.
13 We have heard here today the argument that
14 convergence is critical. We're keeping our
15 newspapers on artificial life support.

16 But the airwaves are a special case, a
17 public domain. My view is that the future of
18 newspapers will ride on better local community
19 coverage and local community access. Get back
20 to the broadcast.

21 On the island of St. Thomas, where I
22 lived before I moved to Sarasota, there's a
23 population of 50,000 people. There are two
24 radio stations that have full-time
25 professional news staffs. It's amazing.

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1 In the St. Thomas -- in the Sarasota
2 metro area of a half a million people, guess
3 what, there are two stations with news
4 departments, and one of them is paid, the
5 other's volunteers.

6 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.
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7 MS. ETSINGER: Thank you.

8 Jason Pol hemus.

9 (No audi bl e response.)

10 MR. SIGALOS: Li sa Li vi nggood.

11 MS. LIVINGOOD: I apol ogi ze, ' cause I
12 won' t -- probabl y won' t be as eloquent as I
13 would l i ke to be. I' ve very tired today and
14 tonight (si c.)

15 My background, I graduated, PBA (si c)
16 with a degree in economics. And I graduated
17 from American Uni versi ty with a MIS in
18 international service. I' ve spent six years
19 in radi o and televi sion and eleven years in
20 the United States mi l i tary.

21 The first three things that I want to ask
22 you is 1) to reject the consoli dation of
23 medi a, 2) to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine,
24 and 3) to promote i ncrease local and
25 i ndependent medi a.

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1 But I ask you thi s for di fferent reasons
2 than those that were stated here tonight. The
3 reasons I ask you for thi s is because you have
4 the opportunity to impact not only the freedom
5 of speech in the United States, but also for
6 the future of global medi a.

7 The decisions that you make impact the
8 l i keli hood that the United States wi l l
9 continue to be hated in other countries. What
10 most people don' t recognize is that our medi a
11 is read and understood.

12 Fox News is broadcast all over the Middle
13 East. And when a reverend says that Muslims
14 are satanists and that the reason that the
15 earthquake hit Pakistan and 30 million people
16 died is because they are satanic. But that
17 directly impacts back on our country in the
18 United States.

19 So the Fairness Doctrine is critical.
20 And it is your responsibility to look after to
21 not only the United States' welfare, the
22 Constitution but the -- (Inaudible) -- as
23 well. And I ask you to uphold your
24 responsibility. Thank you very much.

25 (Applause.)
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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

2 Would the following five people and the
3 following final people come to the mike.
4 Michelle Kenoyer, Jarvis El-Amin, Hakim Aquil,
5 Ahmed Bedier, Barbara Fite.

6 And right now if Frank Orlando would come
7 forward.

8 MR. ORLANDO: Hello. My name is Frank
9 Orlando. And my job doesn't provide me with
10 the abilities to afford cable or satellite
11 radio.

12 My job does provide with authority to
13 spend 50 hours listening to music and seeing
14 Tampa and the Orlando music markets. And when
15 the -- when Clear Channel incorporated eight
16 radio stations into one building, you could
17 dramatically see the level of programming

18 significantly dropped.

19 And you -- examples of news broadcasts
20 from one radio station being combined and
21 that, like, when I went over to drive over to
22 Orlando, which is a completely different
23 market, the rock station there and the rock
24 station in Tampa was doing the same morning
25 program.

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1 And the DJ -- we used to have a local
2 Tampa DJ, and they would go to different night
3 spots, and they make themselves publicly
4 (sic), and they communicated with local
5 musicians. And now with these syndications,
6 it makes it difficult for a particular DJ to
7 put his energy and his staff into that
8 community.

9 So that's just one of my personal
10 concerns about consolidation. And I have
11 more, but that's -- that's all. I'll leave it
12 at that.

13 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

14 Michelle Kenoyer.

15 MS. KENOYER: Thank you, Commissioners,
16 for staying late to hear all of us. While I'm
17 now a Tampa area resident, I'm not originally
18 from Florida. And I've previously lived in
19 diverse regions of the U.S., both culturally
20 and politically.

21 The mainstream media outlets in
22 Tampa-St. Pete, however, by-and-large do not

23
24
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reflect, cater to or serve the needs and interests of the Tampa Bay Area's diverse citizenry; in fact, most of the

1 Tampa-St. Pete's radio and TV networks present
2 news and opinions with a decidedly right-wing
3 bias, masquerading as balance and knowledge of
4 power. I witnessed close family members alter
5 their opinions of government, war and our
6 fellow Americans as a result of what they have
7 seen on O'Reilly or heard on Sean Hannity's
8 show.

9 As a taxpaying homeowner in the Tampa Bay
10 Area, I find it unsettling that large
11 conglomerates can have so much impact over
12 what we listen to and watch and what we make
13 of this information.

14 Consolidated, unregulated media ownership
15 is harmful in a democracy, if this information
16 is controlled and contrived by an elite few.
17 Because what we see and hear over our public
18 airwaves -- airwaves can influence elections,
19 overturn laws, threaten civil rights and start
20 wars.

21 I implore the Commission to do what it
22 can to reverse the negative impact of media
23 consolidation and restore openness to our
24 once-free airwaves that belong to all of us.
25 Thank you. (Applause.)

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1 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.
2 Jarvis El-Amín.

3 (No audi bl e response.)

4 MR. SIGALOS: Haki m Aquil .

5 (No audi bl e response.)

6 MR. SIGALOS: Ahmed Bedier.

7 MR. BEDI ER: Good eveni ng. My name' s
8 Ahmed Bedier. I' m the executive di rector of
9 the Counci l on Ameri ca-Isl ami c Rel ati ons, a
10 Musli m ci vi l ri ghts group.

11 And my -- (I naudi bl e) -- is to help us
12 stop bi g medi a from doi ng three thi ngs:
13 Di ssemi nati ng trash over our ai rwaves,
14 di ssemi nati ng poli ti cal propa ganda and hate
15 speech.

16 And as for most of us li vi ng in thi s
17 country, the li es and hate speech di rected at
18 our communi ty post 9/11 is unacceptabl e. Some
19 have compared to it Nazi propa ganda agai nst
20 Jews duri ng World War II, where there were
21 more and more voices over the ai rwaves,
22 conservati ve ri ght-wi ngers are constantl y
23 attacki ng Musli ms, inci ti ng hatred agai nst our
24 communi ty and putti ng the li ves of other
25 Ameri cans that j ust happen to be practi ci ng a

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1 di fferent fai th i n jeopardy, peopl e li ke Neal
2 Boortz sayi ng that Isl am is a cancel , and i t
3 needs to be uprooted; peopl e li ke Glenn Beck
4 who sai d that Musli ms wi ll see the west
5 through razor wi res, meani ng -- i n internment
6 camps of Musli ms and then had the audaci ty to
7 use the ai rwaves to questi on the loyalti y of

8 the first Muslim elected to Congress,
9 questioning him, "Prove to me, sir, you don't
10 work for the enemy."

11 That's ridiculous. That's unacceptable.
12 I can't even turn on the radio or turn on the
13 television when my kids are up, my two
14 children, because I'm afraid that they'll feel
15 like victims all their lives.

16 And every time they turn on the
17 television, they hear that Islams, Muslims are
18 terrorists, Muslims are violent, that Islam is
19 inherently violent. That's unacceptable.
20 It's got to stop.

21 And when we try to reach out, we do -- we
22 only find obstacles. It's your job to defend
23 this Constitution and the airwaves. Help us
24 do that. Thank you.

25 MR. SIGALOS: Thank you.

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1 Barbara Fi te.

2 (No audi ble response.)

3 MR. SIGALOS: Barbara Fi te.

4 (No audi ble response.)

5 MR. SIGALOS: Ladies and gentlemen, thi s
6 concludes the Commi ssi on's fourth hearing on
7 medi a ownershi p.

8 On behal f of the Federal Communi cations
9 Commi ssi on, I woul d like to thank so very much
10 for your attendance and for your
11 parti ci pati on.

12 Good ni ght.

13

19 Fl ori da.

20

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22

ELIDA T. HAGER, R. P. R.
Notary Public
State of Florida
My Commi ssi on Expi res 1/7/2008
Commi ssi on No. DD279405

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