



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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DIVIDED FCC VOTES TO ROLL BACK MEDIA MERGER PROTECTIONS

Washington, DC – This morning, in a 3-2 vote, the Federal Communications Commission approved a measure that will substantially rewrite media concentration protections. The changes include:

- National concentration: A national television network may now acquire dozens of local broadcaster stations and control up to 90 percent of the national television market;
- Local concentration: A single corporation may now acquire, in one city, up to three television stations, eight radio stations, the cable TV system, numerous cable TV stations, and the only daily newspaper.

Chairman Michael Powell, and Commissioners Kathleen Abernathy and Kevin Martin voted to approve the measure. Commissioners Michael Copps and Jonathan Adelstein dissented.

Copps stated that: “I dissent because today the FCC empowers America’s new Media Elite with unacceptable levels of influence over the media on which our society and our democracy so heavily depend . . . I see centralization, not localism; uniformity, not diversity; monopoly and oligopoly, not competition.”

Copps and Adelstein had called for public hearings ahead of the sweeping rule changes, and that the changes be publicly aired before the vote. When the FCC agreed to only one official hearing and refused to make the proposed new rules public, more than 150 bipartisan Members of Congress, and a politically diverse group of organizations including civil rights groups, churches, family values groups, labor unions, and city councils called for the FCC to reconsider voting on the proposal. The FCC received comments from nearly 750,000 people, hundreds of hundreds of thousands from NRA members alone. More than 99 percent opposed allowing more consolidation. Nonetheless, the Commission went forward today over these objections.

Copps continued: “Bad rules and legal vulnerability result from an opaque regulatory process and inadequate data . . . This proceeding has been run as a classic inside-the-Beltway process with too little outreach from the Commission and too little attention paid to the public.”