

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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 In the matter of: :
 :
 MEDIA BUREAU PUBLIC FORUM ON WWOR-TV :
 LICENSE RENEWAL IN NEW JERSEY :
 :
 - - - - -x

Wednesday,
 November 28, 2007

Paul Robeson Campus Center
 The University Club
 350 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd
 Newark, NJ 07102

The above-entitled matter came on for
 public forum, pursuant to notice, at 4:00 p.m.

BEFORE: LOUIS SIGALOS
 Moderator

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION:

MICHAEL E. COPPS
 JONATHAN S. ADELSTEIN
 MONICA S. DESAI
 BARBARA KREISMAN

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (4:00 p.m.)

3 COMMISSIONER COPPS: Well, I don't
4 have a gavel, but let me call this meeting to
5 order.

6 Good afternoon, I'm Commissioner
7 Mike Copps from the Federal Communications
8 Commission. The chairman of the Commission,
9 Kevin Martin, is unable to be here today, so
10 as a member of the Commission, I am pleased to
11 call this public forum regarding Fox
12 Television Station, Incorporated, application
13 for renewal of license WWOR-TV, to order.

14 Let me first of all thank Rutgers-
15 Newark for hosting us today and everybody in
16 this audience, the panelists and audience, and
17 participants all for coming. I'm delighted
18 this public forum is being held.

19 And I am particularly happy that
20 our friend Senator Frank Lautenberg is here to
21 participate with us. For those of you who may
22 not know, Senator Lautenberg is a senior

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1 member of the Senate Commerce Committee which
2 overseas the Federal Communications
3 Commission. And I can tell you from first-
4 hand experience that he has been a tireless
5 advocate for the good citizens of New Jersey.

6 He's also known for his knowledge
7 and leadership across the whole gamut of
8 communications issues from telecommunications
9 right on through media. So we very much
10 appreciate Senator Lautenberg's willingness to
11 be here and his ongoing involvement in this
12 matter of your local television station and
13 whether it is duly serving New Jersey and
14 meeting its public interest obligations. And
15 at this time, I would like to ask Senator
16 Lautenberg whether he would care to make some
17 remarks before we proceed.

18 SENATOR LAUTENBERG: Thanks very
19 much. I, too, extend my greetings. And I
20 first want to say that I give my thanks to the
21 commissioners from the FCC who are here and
22 for Chairman Martin's willingness to hold this

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1 hearing.

2 I consider it a triumph in
3 openness and I thank both Commissioner Copps
4 and Commissioner Adelstein for, for being
5 here. And I want to say that we're looking at
6 Channel 9, WWOR, to see that the mission that
7 it has in order to have obtained a license is
8 fully fulfilled.

9 Before getting into the content of
10 my comments, I want to say thank you to the
11 people, staff, students from Rutgers
12 University. This facility is a significant
13 part of the community here in Newark, a
14 community that's working very hard to
15 establish itself as the premier city in the,
16 the state of New Jersey, the largest city and
17 perhaps it's fair to say also one of the most
18 active in terms of a source for educational
19 facilities and for communications with the
20 general community here.

21 This is one of FCC's first or
22 early public hearings on a license renewal in

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1 recent history. The renewals are typically
2 rubber stamped, but the situation with this
3 license warrants unprecedented attention and
4 that's why I asked FCC Chairman Kevin Martin
5 to hold this hearing in our state to hear from
6 the people of New Jersey before deciding
7 WWOR's future.

8 I want to thank today's speakers
9 in addition to the folks here from FCC,
10 including Voice for New Jersey, the United
11 Church of Christ, and the Rainbow PUSH
12 Coalition, and all of the people from the
13 State of New Jersey, even if you're from
14 across the river, from our suburbs, we welcome
15 you. And I thank, again, Rutgers for making
16 sure that New Jersey is heard in this room on
17 our airways.

18 So I want to be clear about why
19 this hearing is so important. When you pick
20 up your remote and turn to Channel 9, it's our
21 view, and it's confirmed, you are not getting
22 sufficient information about New Jersey's

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1 neighborhoods, New Jersey's problems, New
2 Jersey's schools, New Jersey's roads, all of
3 those things that make up this very dynamic
4 state of ours.

5 Routinely, the news is about the
6 earth and maybe we're included in the
7 environments at some point in time, but we're
8 as interested in what happens in Morristown,
9 Montclair, and Manalapan as we are in
10 Manhattan, and that's what we are trying to do
11 this, this day.

12 New Jersey news is largely
13 forgotten or buried deep in other newscasts.
14 And, you know, if we have something
15 unfortunate happen here as we have had, as
16 every state has had, that will get some
17 attention. But very often the routine things
18 that are important for students, for, for
19 young people to learn more about this
20 wonderful state of ours, it's not often heard.
21 It's not sufficiently heard.

22 Channel 9 is licensed as a New

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1 Jersey station. Channel 9 has an obligation
2 to cover the news that affects our
3 communities, our businesses and our families.

4 In fact, the WWOR license was specifically
5 moved from New York City to New Jersey for
6 that very reason. The FCC's 1983 decision
7 moving the station to New Jersey is very
8 specific, and I quote it here, "This station
9 will not be a New Jersey station in name only.

10 It will serve the people of New Jersey." And
11 we're not fully served unless information
12 about what is taking place in our state is
13 heard on a routine basis, just as it is in
14 other states across the country where there is
15 a sufficient media market to attract
16 television presence. That's everywhere.

17 Regrettably, this station has
18 failed to meet that obligation. Leading up to
19 the 2005 election, for example, New Jersey had
20 several important electoral races. Our
21 residents deserve local coverage of those
22 races to help them make an informed decision

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1 at the polls. But, remarkably, New York TV
2 stations provided more coverage of New Jersey
3 races than did Channel 9, according to a
4 Rutgers study.

5 And when you look at Channel 9's
6 website, it markets itself as a New York
7 station. Its website is My9NewYork and its
8 web address is My9NY.com. Now there may have
9 been a change in the website. What a
10 coincidence as we were preparing for this
11 hearing.

12 Several years ago, WWOR closed its
13 Trenton news bureau. Now what kind of
14 coverage can we have for New Jersey families
15 without a news team in our state capital.
16 Three years ago, Channel 9 attempted to move
17 its news team out of our state completely,
18 take it across the river to New York. Well,
19 as far as I was concerned, it was unacceptable
20 and inexcusable. How can WWOR do the job
21 covering our state if it doesn't even have a
22 presence in this state?

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1 So I met with then Lachlan
2 Murdoch, the younger member of the Murdoch
3 family and the owner, principal ownership of
4 the Fox Television station. This is the son
5 of Rupert Murdoch, who owns the News
6 Corporation. And he agreed, Lachlan agreed
7 with us to keep the news operation in New
8 Jersey, where it remains today. But I have to
9 tell you it was a struggle and there were
10 serious words across the table in terms of
11 what it would take to keep that license in the
12 hands of the News Corporation.

13 Well, that was a victory;
14 unfortunately, a single victory. But there is
15 no substitute, regardless of how we came out
16 then, for having the availability to have true
17 local coverage on a continuing basis.

18 New Jersey is the only state in
19 the country without its own media market;
20 imagine, the eleventh largest state in the
21 country. If we had our own market, it would
22 be the fourth largest market, media market in

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1 the country. Instead, we're wedged between
2 New York City and Philadelphia. I think Ben
3 Franklin said something about that a lot of
4 years ago. We didn't like it then, either.

5 This makes it hard enough for our
6 residents to get news about our safety, our
7 schools, our communities, our general
8 activities. Now we expected Channel 9 to help
9 us overcome this struggle and that's why it
10 was licensed in New Jersey in the first place.

11 Instead, they force New Jersey's residents to
12 turn to out-of-state stations. And that's
13 simply unacceptable for the eleventh largest
14 state in the country.

15 If the FCC renews Channel 9's
16 license -- this is not intended, I assure you
17 -- I want you to know, we expect Channel 9 to
18 help us overcome -- once again, that's why it
19 was located in New Jersey in the first place.

20 Well, it was FCC -- if FCC renews Channel 9's
21 license, it needs to get tough, make certain
22 that New Jersey gets the news coverage it

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1 needs and deserves.

2 The FCC must insist that Channel 9
3 meets specific measurable goals for New Jersey
4 coverage. WWOR has to identify itself as a
5 New Jersey station. It has to devote a
6 specific and substantial amount of air time
7 each week to New Jersey news stories and
8 events. It has to document its New Jersey
9 coverage in a separate FCC report. The report
10 should show date, time of day, duration, and
11 content in detail. And it must keep its news
12 departments and production studios in New
13 Jersey.

14 When the FCC moved Channel 9 from
15 New York to New Jersey, it said, "At renewal
16 time, it will be judged by how it has met the
17 obligation to serve the needs of northern New
18 Jersey." Well, it's now renewal time and the
19 facts are clear, Channel 9 has failed to meet
20 the test, failed to pass the test.

21 It's based in New Jersey. It's
22 time for the FCC to make sure that it, WWOR,

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1 covers the state of New Jersey as it was
2 originally intended to do when the license was
3 first issued. Thank you very much.

4 COMMISSIONER COPPS: Thank you
5 very much, Senator, for your remarks and thank
6 you also for your leadership and bringing us
7 here, today. I'm really impressed that we
8 have a standing room only crowd at four
9 o'clock in the afternoon of a busy week.

10 And, really, this is part -- I
11 know there are some very unique circumstances
12 with regard to the market that we're going to
13 be discussing today, but this kind of dialogue
14 over how stations are doing is really
15 occurring right now all over the United States
16 of America largely in result, I think, to the
17 extent of media consolidation that we have
18 seen and endured over recent years.

19 People are interested in
20 ascertaining how well broadcasters are serving
21 those local communities. And, as we all know,
22 broadcasters have a solemn obligation to do

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1 that because the American people own the
2 airways. No business, no broadcaster, no
3 special interest owns an airway in the United
4 States of America. They're yours. And
5 broadcasters get the privilege to use those
6 airways and a license to do that by pledging
7 to serve the public interest, to bring you,
8 among other things, good local news,
9 information, and entertainment.

10 The Commission used to be very
11 active in enforcing this bargain between the
12 public and the broadcaster. Every three
13 years, broadcasters are required to come into
14 the Commission to renew their radio and
15 television licenses. And the Commission has a
16 little guideline, a list of guidelines,
17 fourteen in number, that it used to judge
18 whether a station was indeed meeting its
19 public interest obligations.

20 They weren't fourteen commandments
21 or anything like that, but they were
22 guidelines that we put next to a station's

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1 application for relicense and we kind of made
2 a determination whether there was a good faith
3 effort to serve the public interest. And if
4 there was, the license was renewed.

5 But all of that changed over the
6 years and the change really picked up high
7 speed in the 1980's, when we had an FCC
8 chairman who remarked that a television set,
9 you know, was really nothing other than a
10 toaster with pictures, that's what it was
11 called and that's how they proceeded to, he
12 and his colleagues proceeded to treat it.

13 So the list of specific public
14 interest guidelines that we had was pared back
15 until almost nothing remains today over and
16 above a general obligation to serve the public
17 interest. But it's important to understand
18 that that general obligation to serve the
19 public interest is still there. It still
20 remains. It may be less well defined and
21 seemingly more difficult to implement, but it
22 is still there.

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1 And a forum like this, it is
2 unusual, but it's a wonderful opportunity to
3 task the FCC's current sensitivity to its
4 obligation, to its responsibility to see that
5 the public interest is served.

6 So what I like about a hearing
7 like this is the opportunity of the Commission
8 going out and listening to the people who can
9 best judge how a market is being served and
10 that's the viewers and listeners who live
11 here.

12 There are some unique obligations
13 that the licensee undertook in this particular
14 market and we are here today to learn whether
15 those obligations in your judgment are being
16 met. So we're interested in learning whether
17 you're satisfied with WWOR's news coverage of
18 New Jersey elections and New Jersey government
19 activities, does WWOR adequately report on
20 local news stories, is their public affairs
21 programming focused on New Jersey issues, has
22 WWOR identified itself with New Jersey or

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1 sought to identify itself and cover a
2 surrounding area outside its community of
3 license.

4 So thank you everyone here, no
5 matter what your point of view, for coming out
6 this afternoon. And before we proceed
7 further, I want to ask my good friend and FCC
8 colleague, Jonathan Adelstein, if he has some
9 opening remarks that he would like to present.

10 COMMISSIONER ADELSTEIN: Well, I
11 just want to echo what we've heard. I
12 certainly appreciate the leadership of Senator
13 Lautenberg in bringing this hearing here,
14 today. I can't remember, in my five years on
15 the Commission, ever having one of these. And
16 I think that they're probably due all over the
17 country. So thank you, Senator Lautenberg.

18 He, as you well know, has been a
19 real leader on these media issues. In
20 Congress, he's on the committee that oversees
21 us, so I guess I've got to be nice to him, the
22 Commerce Committee. But he is a leader on the

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1 issues, making sure the media is accountable
2 to local needs of citizens of New Jersey and
3 the needs of citizens all across this country.

4 I certainly appreciate his bringing us
5 together, all the panelists are going to share
6 with us, and especially all of you.

7 It's critical that we hear from
8 you. And we do this, Mike Copps and I have
9 gone across the country to talk to people, we
10 really learn so much each place we go and each
11 situation is so unique. And to be able to
12 focus on this, tonight, is a real privilege.
13 And we're here tonight, of course, because as
14 Commissioner Copps said the public airways do
15 belong to you, the American people, and the
16 people of New Jersey have a right to be
17 served. You have a right to have your voices
18 heard, I think, in this process.

19 The FCC has not kept up its part
20 of the bargain to ensure the public is
21 protected. We failed to issue rules on public
22 interest obligations to broadcasters since

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1 1999. And our license renewal process really
2 lacks the teeth that are necessary to weed out
3 stations that aren't serving the public
4 interest.

5 Your presence here, today, really
6 represents how important these issues are.
7 You all came out at this time there's so much
8 going on in your lives but you felt this was
9 important and you know how important this
10 issue is. And there's a special history here.

11 You've heard some about WWOR. As
12 Senator Lautenberg said, in 1983, Congress set
13 a special act. It was -- I used to work in
14 Congress for fifteen years and it's unusual
15 legislative language, colorful language from
16 your predecessor Senator Bill Bradley that
17 said that it was operating for the benefit of
18 the unserved State of New Jersey. And the
19 Commission said that WWOR would operate in New
20 Jersey for the benefit of the people of the
21 state.

22 The station would not -- the law

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1 says the station would not be a New Jersey
2 station in name only; it would serve the
3 people of New Jersey, very unique language.
4 And our job is to enforce the law.

5 The Commission has stated in the
6 past that the lack of local VHF television
7 service in this highly populated area of
8 northern New Jersey presents a unique set of
9 circumstances wherein special obligations have
10 been imposed on all New York City and
11 Philadelphia TV stations.

12 Accordingly, you expect the
13 licensee of WWOR to perform a higher degree of
14 service, to its greater need coverage area
15 than is normally required of a broadcast
16 licensee. I'm not sure the Commission has
17 ever held the licensee to this higher
18 standard. It's very important to the people
19 of New Jersey this station and your needs
20 can't be ignored.

21 They have special obligations to
22 serve New Jersey; but, unlike other major

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1 broadcast stations in New York City, this
2 primary communicative license is here in
3 northern New Jersey. And in a letter to
4 Senator Lautenberg, Chairman Powell reassured
5 the senator several years ago that the
6 Commission imposed a special service
7 requirement to, quote, "establish and maintain
8 a physical presence to New Jersey in order to
9 facilitate the coverage of issues of interest
10 to the residents of New Jersey."

11 And the chairman further affirmed
12 that the Commission would prioritize the
13 review of WWOR-TV. He said that WWOR-TV's
14 service to northern New Jersey, which the
15 Commission viewed as broader than the
16 community of Secaucus, would be reviewed
17 during the proceedings to review the license
18 of the station.

19 So here we are. It's actually
20 happening in an unusual circumstance where the
21 government actually does what it says it's
22 going to do. It's a rare and unique

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1 opportunity for you to tell us how the station
2 is serving your needs in its public interest
3 obligations.

4 So you have a big responsibility
5 here tonight and you are the ones who will not
6 let your voices be swept under the rug.
7 You're speaking for so many of your fellow
8 citizens in New Jersey. And we take what you
9 say very seriously. And we need to look at
10 the broader context. As the senator said and
11 as Mike Copps said, we're now in the crucial
12 moment of our review of the broadcast media
13 ownership rules in this country.

14 And some in DC and not
15 surprisingly the companies that we oversee
16 want the FCC to adopt a package of -- the
17 ownership rules that is portrayed as moderate
18 but is really a wolf in sheep's clothing. But
19 we can't let the wool be pulled over our eyes.

20 The proposal would open all
21 markets to masses consolidation, allowing one
22 company to combine broadcast properties with

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1 cable, the local monopoly newspaper, and even
2 the internet service provider. That proposal
3 could propel mergers across the United States.

4 And though we know that broadcasting is still
5 the dominant source of not just local news and
6 information but also entertainment
7 programming, it's still the broadcast industry
8 that disseminates the news and information
9 that really affects what you see here and
10 read.

11 So it's time for us to establish
12 clear and quantified public interest
13 obligations for all broadcasters. You deserve
14 not only on this station but on every station
15 that's licensed. Here we have a special
16 obligation. But in every station, you deserve
17 quality local music, quality local news and
18 public affairs.

19 Your great local musicians deserve
20 to be heard on local radio stations at hours
21 people can actually hear them. And minority
22 communities deserve to be portrayed on the

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1 evening news in a manner that reflects the
2 many contributions, not underrepresented, not
3 misrepresented, not stereotyped. Women and
4 people of color should be owners, not just
5 consumers or leasees of broadcast media
6 services.

7 And you can certainly join me and
8 your leaders in Congress, like Senator
9 Lautenberg, in demanding that these policies
10 are implemented before and not after we change
11 the media ownership rules. So ultimately you,
12 the people of New Jersey that we're here to
13 listen to are going to have the last word
14 tonight and you should have the last word.
15 And I thank you so much for coming out, and we
16 look forward to hearing from you. Thanks for
17 being here tonight.

18 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Good afternoon
19 and welcome to this public forum on WWOR-TV's
20 license renewal being conducted by the Media
21 Bureau of the Federal Communications
22 Commission.

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1 I would like to echo the senator
2 and commissioner in thanking Rutgers
3 University for hosting this event today. My
4 name is Louis Sigalos. I am with the FCC's
5 Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau and I
6 will be your moderator.

7 With us also today from the Media
8 Bureau we have Monica Desai, who is the chief
9 of the Media Bureau, and Barbara Kreisman,
10 chief of the bureau's video division. We will
11 now hear opening remarks from Ms. Desai.

12 MS. DESAI: Thank you, everyone.
13 On February 1st, Fox Television Stations filed
14 an application seeking renewal of its license
15 for station WWOR-TV, Secaucus, New Jersey.
16 Thereafter, petitions to deny that application
17 were filed by Voice For New Jersey and by the
18 Office of Communications of the United Church
19 of Christ and Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

20 Among other things, petitioners
21 allege that WWOR-TV has failed to provide and
22 program service adequately meeting the issues

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1 and needs of its northern New Jersey viewers.

2 The licensee disputes that WWOR-TV's
3 programming efforts fall short of its public
4 interest obligations.

5 The Commission has not reached a
6 determination with respect to these claims.
7 Given WWOR-TV's unique program service
8 obligation stemming from Section 331 of the
9 Communications Act, the Commission has decided
10 to hold this local public forum in which the
11 public can participate and express views and
12 concerns on this matter.

13 Your input here, today, will be
14 included in the docket in the WWOR-TV renewal
15 proceeding and assist the Commission in
16 resolving the matters at issue. Thank you.

17 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you, Ms.
18 Desai. It is now time to hear from our
19 invited speakers. But before we begin, I
20 would like to briefly review the ground rules.

21 Each invited speaker has been
22 allotted a specific amount of time for their

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1 comments. I will be strictly enforcing these
2 time limits to leave as much time as possible
3 for the public comment period. Please note we
4 have a timer clock right straight ahead, so
5 it's within your view. When that clock
6 actually goes down to zero, I am like a
7 machine and I politely thank you for your
8 invited comments at that point in time.

9 Because Fox's renewal application
10 for station WWOR-TV is the subject of this
11 proceeding, they will be given ten minutes for
12 their remarks. Each party present that
13 opposed the application and our other two
14 invited participants will have five minutes
15 for their statements.

16 Members of the audience, please
17 listen respectfully to the speakers even if
18 you dispute the views that they express. I
19 know that the issue we're discussing today may
20 arouse a lot of passion. But for this forum
21 to run smoothly and be successful, we need to
22 maintain basic decorum and avoid unnecessary

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1 interruptions. And for that I will thank you
2 in advance.

3 Participating as our invited
4 speakers today are Lew Leone, vice president
5 and general manager, WWOR; Donna Sandorse,
6 Voice for New Jersey; Darul Desai, assistant
7 director, Media Access Project; Ingrid Reed,
8 director, Eagleton Institute New Jersey
9 Project; Wendy White, executive director, The
10 Three Doctors Foundation. Mr. Leone?

11 MR. LEONE: Thank you. Senator
12 Lautenberg, Commissioners Copps and Adelstein,
13 thank you for the opportunity to highlight the
14 great service My9 provides to the viewers of
15 northern New Jersey.

16 Joining me today are just a few of
17 the over 200 employees that work at our
18 station in Secaucus, including our news
19 director, anchors Brenda Blackman, Harry
20 Martin, Russ Salzberg, and Audrey Puente.

21 I'd like to also thank the many
22 local community leaders who have come to

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1 support us. Please stand and be recognized
2 along with the My9 team. Our goal is to
3 provide northern New Jersey residents with
4 information to help them get through their day
5 and enrich their lives. But rather than tell
6 you what we do, let me show you who we are.

7 (Whereupon, a video recording was
8 played.)

9 MR. LEONE: My9 news is every
10 night at ten, with hourly updates weekdays
11 between four and seven. We provide
12 unparalleled coverage of northern New Jersey
13 news, as well as regional, national, and
14 international news of interest to New Jersey
15 residents.

16 My9 also provides extensive
17 political coverage from Governor Corzine's
18 budget plan, to the Keyport ban on smoking in
19 cars with children. We cover elections
20 statewide from federal to municipal races. We
21 have two weekly public affairs shows, Real
22 Talk and New Jersey Now, which include in-

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1 depth coverage of political and social issues
2 of interest to New Jersey voters.

3 In 2007, we interviewed members of
4 the Assembly, state senators, mayors, and the
5 chief of police from Montclair State
6 University, as well as community leaders,
7 educational groups, and citizens of New
8 Jersey.

9 Here's a stat to think about, and
10 you saw it in the tape, My9 airs more than
11 10,000 public service announcements a year.
12 We've been recognized with five local Emmy
13 awards in 2007 alone, and multiple awards from
14 the New Jersey Press, Associated Press.

15 My9 employees participate in
16 community events, providing hands-on
17 volunteerism and fund raising to help
18 charities throughout New Jersey. My9 runs a
19 number of training programs, including a paid
20 apprenticeship program, the Emma Bowen Foundation
21 for Minority Interests in Media, Job
22 Development Program; an internship program

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1 involving twenty-two New Jersey colleges,
2 including Rutgers; a mentoring program with
3 the 100 Black Men Organization.

4 While we always strive to do
5 better, I'm surprised to hear people challenge
6 our level of commitment to the viewers of New
7 Jersey. We are submitting to the FCC
8 additional documentation of the great service
9 My9 provides.

10 Today, I'm happy to tell you that
11 we've heard your concerns and have already
12 begun making changes to our website to best
13 serve New Jersey. In closing, My9 goes above
14 and beyond both on the air and behind the
15 scenes.

16 The government doesn't require us
17 to attend community events or support good
18 causes. It doesn't require us to have job
19 training programs. But we are committed to
20 New Jersey. We have spent \$11.8 million to
21 upgrade our Secaucus facility.

22 Why do we do all of this? Because

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1 our employees live and work in New Jersey.
2 They vote and spent money in New Jersey. Many
3 were born and raised in New Jersey, and went
4 to college here. Now they are raising their
5 kids in New Jersey. And they take pride in
6 doing a great job of informing and
7 entertaining their families, friends, and
8 communities.

9 My9 is, at its heart, run by
10 people, people who are as much a part of the
11 New Jersey community as anyone sitting in this
12 room. I look forward to hearing your, your
13 views. And we will all be available after
14 this hearing to talk with you. Thank you.

15 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you, Mr.
16 Leone. Before I announce the next speaker,
17 there are a few empty seats if anybody wants
18 to try to filter in throughout the room. Now
19 would probably be your best opportunity.
20 There's a few seats I see over here, a few
21 scattered about there. Ms. Sandorse?

22 MS. SANDORSE: I'd like to thank

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1 the commissioners for calling this hearing and
2 coming today to hear how New Jersey residents
3 feel about the media coverage that they
4 receive from WWOR. My name is Donna Sandorse.

5 I'm a lifelong New Jersey
6 resident, a Rutgers graduate with a small
7 business, who has served on several New Jersey
8 nonprofit boards. I speak today on behalf of
9 Voice for New Jersey, a grassroots affiliation
10 of New Jersey residents founded by Leadership
11 New Jersey 2006, dedicated to improving
12 broadcast media coverage of our state.

13 I'd like to thank the Eagleton
14 Institute of Politics at Rutgers, Media Access
15 Project of the Free Press for supporting our
16 efforts, and particularly Senator Frank
17 Lautenberg and his staff. The senator has
18 been a long time champion of better media
19 coverage for our state.

20 I'd also like to acknowledge the
21 person who inspired us to take up this cause,
22 Bernard Spigner, former director of

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1 Communications for the New Jersey Sports &
2 Exposition Authority, who passed on earlier
3 this year.

4 VNJ filed a petition to deny the
5 renewal of WWOR-TV's broadcast license
6 predicated on the station's failure to meet
7 its public interest obligations to the people
8 of New Jersey. The airways are valuable
9 public property, use of which is granted free
10 of charge to broadcasters with the sole
11 requirement that they meet public interest
12 obligations.

13 There are a number of factors that
14 the Commission has historically considered in
15 evaluating a broadcaster's performance. One
16 is localism. In the FCC's own words, a
17 broadcaster has a basic responsibility to
18 contribute to the overall discussion of issues
19 confronting a community, a duty for which each
20 licensee will be held individually
21 accountable.

22 To facilitate the kind of

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1 discussion that the FCC envisions, a
2 broadcaster clearly must provide sufficient
3 news coverage to keep the public informed of
4 relevant events throughout the service area.
5 By this standard, WWOR has failed the people
6 of New Jersey.

7 First, the station provides
8 dramatically less total news coverage than any
9 of its peers in the New York metro area.
10 Second, the station has provided inadequate
11 coverage of New Jersey elections and
12 government, and virtually no local coverage of
13 some of the largest communities in the service
14 area. Third, in its branding and marketing,
15 the station has turned its back on the
16 community of license and taken on a strong New
17 York identity.

18 WWOR broadcasts only one hour of
19 news per day, not one hour of local news but
20 one total hour of news coverage, while their
21 peers to dramatically better. These other
22 stations broadcast three to seven hours of

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1 regularly scheduled news programming per day,
2 on average, more than five times the coverage
3 of WWOR. WWOR has failed to allocate
4 sufficient time for such coverage to be
5 presented.

6 This leads quite naturally to our
7 second point, WWOR's appalling lack of news
8 coverage of some of New Jersey's largest
9 communities. Here, I'll point to information
10 in the station's own quarterly issues and
11 programming reports, which while not
12 comprehensive, these reports by FCC definition
13 present the licensee's most significant
14 programming treatment of community issues.

15 New Jersey's six largest
16 communities all fall within WWOR's service
17 area. Any station meeting the public service
18 obligations would of necessity provide
19 substantial news coverage in such large
20 population centers.

21 While the sixty-three New York
22 based news stories that they have identified

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1 during the fifteen-month period from January
2 1st, 2006, to March 31st, 2007 are hardly
3 adequate, New Jersey's next five largest
4 municipalities do dramatically less well.

5 For example, they report only
6 thirteen New Jersey city stories, that's less
7 than one per month; eight Patterson news
8 stories, or one story every two months; and
9 only two Elizabeth news stories, one story
10 every seven months. Half of these stories
11 were crime and non-issue related.

12 It is our position that WWOR's
13 news coverage in these major cities is so
14 minimal as to constitute complete abdication
15 of the station's responsibility to, again in
16 the FCC's own words, contribute to the overall
17 discussion of issues confronting the
18 community.

19 Finally, we take exception to the
20 station's ongoing failure to identify itself
21 with its community of license. Our analysis
22 of their news coverage clearly shows their New

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1 York bias. Of the less than 10 hours of news
2 coverage identified in their issues and
3 program reports in the first three quarters of
4 2006, a scant 2.7 hours was dedicated to New
5 Jersey, while 4.7 was dedicated to New York
6 stories, over 77 percent more broadcast time.

7 Identification with New York
8 permeates their marketing branding. The
9 station's website, My9NY.com, shows the
10 Manhattan skyline and the words "New York" at
11 the top of the page. In the lobby of the
12 station's Secaucus headquarters, visitors are
13 greeted by a large My9NY poster, promoting the
14 station's news program with the words "Your
15 Neighborhood, Your News" over the Manhattan
16 skyline.

17 The Commission has long recognized
18 New Jersey's unusual position with respect to
19 media coverage. This densely populated state
20 would, if analyzed independently, be the
21 fourth largest media market in the nation.
22 Yet, because of its location between the

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1 dominant New York and Philadelphia markets,
2 there is only one VHF commercial television
3 station licensed within its borders.

4 Over twenty years ago, the
5 Commission designated the license to serve the
6 public interest of New Jersey. As such, the
7 people of New Jersey are entitled to expect a
8 high level of service from its holder.

9 WWOR does not measure up and we
10 have amply demonstrated it has consistently
11 failed to fulfill even the bare minimum of its
12 public interest obligations. We urge the
13 Commission to act decisively to provide the
14 people of New Jersey with the broadcast media
15 coverage they deserve.

16 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you, Ms.
17 Sandorse. Ms. Desai?

18 MS. DESAI: Thank you. I am with
19 Media Access Project, I am also here to
20 represent United Church of Christ and Rainbow
21 PUSH Coalition. Growing up in New Jersey, in
22 Clifton, New Jersey, I, like many of my peers,

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1 identified myself with New York.

2 This was naturally the result of
3 what I saw on TV. I knew plenty about Mayor
4 Koch and Mayor Dinkins, as well as the clean
5 up taking place on 42nd Street. On the other
6 hand, while I knew Thomas Kean was my
7 governor, I knew very little about my city's
8 mayor or my own state senators.

9 Coverage of New Jersey didn't get
10 any better during my years at Rutgers and New
11 York law school, at which time I was actually
12 able to vote. With my New Jersey driver's
13 license, I could not participate in New York
14 politics; yet, I could not rely on the local
15 TV stations to inform me as to why I should
16 care about local elections taking place in New
17 Jersey.

18 How then could I, like many other
19 residents of New Jersey, feel compelled to
20 actively participate in or care about local
21 issues and elections? As I continue to spent
22 a considerable amount of time in my hometown,

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1 where my parents have lived for almost forty
2 years now, it's obvious that little has
3 changed.

4 This type of coverage becomes
5 especially important because, as a 2006 study
6 shows, a majority of Americans watch and rely
7 on their local newscasts for news and
8 information. That is, that is why it is so
9 critical that Channel 9 live up to its
10 obligation to serve New Jersey; otherwise, how
11 can New Jersey residents be expected to
12 participate in local elections and make
13 informed decisions without adequate coverage
14 of candidates' positions on issues, or how can
15 New Jersey residents become aware of or
16 understand the impact of decisions being made
17 by local governments without coverage and
18 analysis of these decisions?

19 Unlike the other stations in this
20 market, Channel 9 has a specific and special
21 obligation to serve northern New Jersey. As
22 we have heard, this obligation did not come

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1 about by accident. Since the 1980's, the
2 intent of the law has been to ensure that
3 Channel 9 is responsive and attentive to the
4 needs of New Jersey residents in a consistent
5 and thorough basis.

6 While ownership of Channel 9 has
7 changed over the years, this obligation to
8 serve New Jersey has not changed. While
9 Channel 9 is quite properly afforded some
10 discretion as to how and whether to address
11 certain issues, that discretion is not
12 absolute. The law is clear, Channel 9 is not
13 entitled to a renewal if it has abused this
14 discretion. As VNJ has demonstrated, the lack
15 of coverage of issues and politics of concern
16 to New Jersey residents is a gross abuse of
17 discretion which is not compatible with
18 Channel 9's most fundamental obligation to
19 serve New Jersey.

20 While Channel 9 has an obvious
21 economically driven preference for being
22 perceived as a New York based station, it is

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1 now up to the Commission to ensure that
2 Channel 9 does not shortchange the residents
3 of New Jersey. Localism is one of the basic
4 elements the Commission looks at in
5 determining whether a license renewal is
6 warranted.

7 The Supreme Court has also
8 emphasized the right of the public to receive
9 suitable access to social, political,
10 economic, and other ideas. That means New
11 Jersey residents are entitled to adequate
12 coverage of issues and news relevant to them,
13 and they are just not getting it.

14 Unfortunately, in other renewal
15 challenges, the Commission has failed to serve
16 the public interest. The Commission has often
17 turned its back on localism and decided that
18 the First Amendment somehow precludes the
19 Commission from reviewing the broadcasted
20 editorial discretion.

21 However, the law requires the
22 Commission to also consider the absolute right

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1 of the viewers to receive programming
2 responsive to the needs of their local
3 community. While the Commission has made it a
4 habit to blindly renew licenses, Channel 9
5 presents an easy and simple case where the
6 Commission simply cannot renew the license of
7 Channel 9 without further scrutiny.

8 Based on the evidence provided by
9 VNJ and the obvious branding of Channel 9 as a
10 station dedicated to New Yorkers, the
11 Commission cannot seriously conclude that
12 Channel 9 broadcasts in the interest of New
13 Jersey residents. Channel 9's license has
14 also been challenged because Fox Television's
15 ownership of Channel 9 is an outright
16 violation of the Commissions rule prohibiting
17 one entity from owning a TV station and a
18 newspaper in the same market.

19 In this case, that rule prohibits
20 Fox from owning Channel 9 and the New York
21 Post. In fact, Fox has been in violation of
22 the rule since 2001. Despite promising to

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1 come into compliance with the rule, after six
2 years, Fox has instead tried to skirt the
3 rule. For this reason, United Church of
4 Christ and the Rainbow PUSH Coalition have
5 asked the Commission to deny the license
6 renewal.

7 The Commission has the obligation
8 to conclude that an automatic renewal would be
9 a disservice to the residents of New Jersey.
10 Instead, the Commission must further
11 scrutinize the service provided by Channel 9
12 and determine whether the license should be
13 renewed or whether additional conditions are
14 warranted.

15 To do otherwise would be a
16 disservice to New Jersey and to send a clear
17 message to the residents of New Jersey that
18 the Commission is just not serious about
19 making sure that Channel 9 keeps its promise
20 to serve New Jersey. Thank you, senator and
21 commissioners, and Media Bureau.

22 MEDIATOR SIGALOS: Thank you, Ms.

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1 Desai. Ms. Reed?

2 MS. REED: Let me express my
3 appreciation to the commissioners and to the
4 Commission staff for holding this public forum
5 today on an issue of great importance to the
6 State of New Jersey. And I want to thank
7 Senator Lautenberg for his continued long-term
8 and enthusiastic commitment to this problem.

9 While this hearing has a specific
10 focus on the renewal of the license of WWOR-
11 TV, it fits into a much larger context for our
12 state, a context that has a long history. It
13 is one that has had a profound effect on our
14 governance and the participation of our
15 citizens in elections and in civil life more
16 broadly.

17 Specifically, it's New Jersey's
18 reliance on New York City and Philadelphia for
19 television coverage of its politics and
20 governance. It is now legendary. I grew up
21 in Vineland, in southern New Jersey, and
22 watched only Philadelphia stations. I now

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1 live in Princeton and rely on New York City
2 stations. And so it goes.

3 WWOR-TV located since the mid
4 1980's in the northern most populous part of
5 our state was a welcomed and I might add hard
6 fought addition to this fragmented television
7 service, and there were high hopes of what it
8 would bring.

9 But even now, our government and
10 every presentation about the problems facing
11 the state, its citizens, elected officials,
12 and civil leaders has the lack of a television
13 station with the primary focus on covering our
14 state cited as the main reason for our lack of
15 cohesion, identity, and knowledge about
16 ourselves.

17 This is especially troubling since
18 there is widespread grievant that people rely
19 mainly on television for their news. So what
20 do we know about what they get to see?
21 Eagleton decided to collect data to accurately
22 present the television coverage available to

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1 us when we, in effect, rely on the kindness of
2 strangers for understanding ourselves and New
3 Jersey's public affairs.

4 We first studied the coverage of
5 television evening news in the month of
6 October for the 2005 gubernatorial campaign,
7 and we're continuing that study now and will
8 have information out on 2006 and '07 in the
9 spring. I thought it would be helpful in this
10 forum to highlight some relevant data we
11 collected about WWOR-TV, our New Jersey
12 station, in the context of eleven other
13 stations in the study, four in New York, four
14 in New Jersey, and two cable and public
15 television in New Jersey.

16 WWOR-TV showed thirteen election
17 stories in their evening news during the
18 thirty days before the election, ten of the
19 stories were about New Jersey or sixty-seven
20 percent. WWOR-TV had the second least stories
21 when compared to the four New York stations
22 that presented a total of seventy-nine stories

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1 about New Jersey elections. One station had
2 only seven. The three others ranged between
3 eighteen and thirty-three.

4 WWOR-TV had the least percentage
5 of New Jersey stories when compared with
6 Philadelphia stations, and they did not pay a
7 lot of attention to New Jersey, much fewer
8 than New York stations. WWOR-TV did have
9 longer stories and had the longest sound bites
10 of candidates speaking; however, seventy
11 percent of these stories appeared in the final
12 week of the election.

13 This picture means that the
14 citizens of New Jersey had less change to
15 learn from WWOR-TV, fewer stories than other
16 stations, and concentrated over a shorter
17 period, probably with little predictability
18 when they would see something about the state.

19 But, once a story was produced and aired by
20 WWOR-TV, more time was devoted to it and to
21 hearing the candidates speak.

22 Clearly, there is potential to do

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1 better and to build on that performance. Let
2 me say again how much we appreciate the
3 Commission's attention to New Jersey and to
4 our station, WWOR-TV. You will hear from many
5 informed individuals in groups, today. But
6 from my experience, I can say there are
7 thousands who would gladly tell you in
8 informal ways that they wished the television
9 news they see would help them understand
10 what's happening in their state and who the
11 public leaders are who have the responsibility
12 for solving those problems.

13 All stations that surround us
14 deserve rigorous examination of their
15 performance in serving our state, but
16 especially this station located in our state.

17 We look to you to inform us about what we
18 should expect from WWOR-TV. I think you would
19 find willing partners in New Jersey to use the
20 requirements for coverage of public affairs
21 and local news to assure that we have the
22 highest level of performance from WWOR-TV, our

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1 TV station, who we hope we will look forward
2 to seeing at the State House. Thank you.

3 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you, Ms. Reed.
4 Ms. White?

5 MS. WHITE: Thank you. I would
6 also like to thank the Commission and the
7 senator for this opportunity. I am a proud
8 Rutgers grad -- go Scarlet Knights -- and also
9 born and raised in north New Jersey. So this
10 is a wonderful opportunity, so thank you for
11 that. I, I do want to share with you just the
12 main focus of The Three Doctors Foundation and
13 that would focus on four core areas, health,
14 education, leadership, and mentoring. And our
15 relationship with My9 has extensively helped
16 us achieve those goals throughout the years,
17 so I do want to thank you for that. We
18 actually have great partnerships with
19 individuals on both sides of this discussion
20 today and I do want to say that I'm here today
21 to tell the truth about the great relationship
22 that we do have with our friends at My9. As I

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1 mentioned, The Three Doctors Foundation
2 focuses on health, education, leadership, and
3 mentoring. And I can confidently say that the
4 support from My9 has definitely helped us
5 reach success in these areas, as I mentioned
6 before, certainly through event promotion,
7 because we completely rely upon word of mouth
8 and the media coverage to make sure that we
9 reach our target audience. And My9 has done
10 that year after year, to make sure that we are
11 able to reach the community and they are able
12 to come to our health events, and they are
13 able to meet the three doctors, and are able
14 to understand what we have to offer and why.
15 Also, My9 has more directly provided us with
16 their television personalities who, as you saw
17 from the film, have volunteered of themselves
18 time and time again to come up to the
19 community, to meet with our young people, to
20 meet with our donors, to help them understand
21 why it is important to support our
22 organization. I can say that Ms. Brenda

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1 Blackman this year hosted our annual fund
2 raising gala, as well as Ms. Linda Lopez on a
3 separate occasion hosted our fund raising
4 gala, which was critically important to us
5 because that particular event is the only way
6 that we have to generate support for our
7 outreach programs. Our organization, if
8 you're not familiar with it, is based upon
9 three young physicians who are from north New
10 Jersey, they're from the community, and they
11 made a promise that they were going to beat
12 the odds and succeed, and they have. And My9
13 has been extensively supportive of making sure
14 that we've been able to share that message
15 with the New Jersey community. Without them,
16 I don't know that we would have been able to
17 do as much as we have in New Jersey. I do
18 want to personally thank Ms. Brenda Blackman
19 for all the help that she did this year. We
20 have supporters from all over the country.
21 And our biggest sponsor is actually in
22 Seattle, Washington, and they commented on how

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1 wonderful the level of support we received
2 from the media, My9 especially, as well as our
3 other New Jersey constituents. So I do want
4 to thank you for that. We have also had My9
5 television personalities come out as mentors
6 for our mentoring program that we have every
7 year. The kids especially continue to be
8 impressed with seeing recognizable role
9 models, people who they see on television, on
10 a daily basis, who give back to the community.

11 For us, we cannot put a price on that because
12 the kids naturally respond to them and they
13 see them with the doctors, and that helps to
14 give us credibility as an organization and
15 make sure that we're able to do what we do
16 year after year. My9 has also featured the
17 doctors on a number of their television
18 stations. And that, in itself, has generated
19 a lot of support, a lot of unsolicited donors,
20 a lot of unsolicited other coverage from other
21 partners throughout the country, as well as
22 locally, and again we thank you for that. I

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1 do want to also mention that, you know, the
2 doctors wanted to be here tonight, but they
3 are physicians and they couldn't today. But
4 they did want to also extend their personal
5 thanks for your support year after year to our
6 organization and making sure that we are
7 successful. Thank you for your time.

8 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you, Ms.
9 White. And I would like to thank all of our
10 invited speakers for their participation this
11 afternoon. We will now transition to the open
12 public comment period for those people who
13 have registered to speak. And I want to
14 remind anybody who may not have registered
15 that the registration which is at that front
16 desk in the lobby will close in five minutes.

17 So if you want to speak, you have five more
18 minutes to register. Before I go over the
19 ground rules, will the following people go to
20 either one of these iron microphones. This is
21 the closest one. Chuck Lovey, Suzy Kass,
22 Bill Hassall, Patrick Adams, Tim Karr, Christa

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1 Pugh, Harold Winard, Reverend Jacques DeGraff,
2 just either one of those two microphones.
3 Okay, the ground rules for this portion of our
4 hearing are really quite simple. Each public
5 commenter will be allotted two minutes for
6 their statements. Please keep an eye on the
7 clock as you do that, so we ensure that you
8 get your most important comments to us within
9 that time period. We will be strictly
10 enforcing this time limit so that everyone
11 will have an opportunity to be heard. Please,
12 audience, still do abide by our request for
13 basic decorum during this public comment
14 period. All right, Mr. Lovey?

15 MR. LOVEY: Thank you. I'd like
16 to thank the FCC commissioners for calling
17 this hearing and coming to New Jersey today to
18 speak with us. My name is Chuck Lovey. I'm a
19 lifelong resident of New Jersey, I currently
20 reside in Plainfield, and I'm a member of
21 Voice for New Jersey. I'd like to share with
22 you some data that we developed from WWOR's

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1 FCC filings. For those who are not aware, the
2 FCC requires broadcast licensees to submit
3 quarterly reports documenting programming that
4 addresses key issues in the broadcaster's
5 local community. For the first three quarters
6 of 2006, WWOR reported less than ten hours of
7 news programming that was responsive to
8 community issues, scarcely less than two
9 minutes per day of programming. Perhaps
10 coming to a sense of shame, the station
11 stopped reporting the airtime of its public
12 interest programming altogether in the fourth
13 quarter of 2006. Speaking for Voice for New
14 Jersey, we view this level of programming as
15 so minimal that it is tantamount to a complete
16 abdication of the station's public interest
17 obligations with respect to news coverage.
18 Now in its petition -- or in its response to
19 our petition, WWOR stated that the reports
20 that VNJ analyzed were never meant to be all
21 inclusive. The station would like us to
22 believe that its actual performance is better

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1 than what we have portrayed. If this is so,
2 let WWOR show us the real numbers and let them
3 do it today. If they cannot, the Commission
4 must accept that WWOR's own reporting
5 abundantly proves the case against it as
6 documented in the Voice for New Jersey
7 petition. To do otherwise would be to accept
8 that the station's own reporting failures
9 should somehow be construed to its benefit,
10 and would be a gross violation of the public
11 trust. Let me again thank the commissioners
12 for coming to New Jersey today. Thank you
13 very much.

14 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Ms. Kass?

15 MS. KASS: Yes. My name is Suzy
16 Kass. I'm from Montclair, New Jersey. I co-
17 chair the media reform group for Blue Wave New
18 Jersey. This issue is near and dear to our
19 hearts because we don't see this as a red
20 issue or a blue issue, this is simply about
21 getting the information we need to know as
22 citizens. We can't fix what we don't know is

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1 broken. We can't care about people we don't
2 know about. We can't fix problems that we
3 don't know exist. You at WWOR will hear a lot
4 about what you're not doing. But what I want
5 to tell you is that the New Jersey residents,
6 what many of us want from you, we want to hear
7 something real, so talk to us. Talk to us
8 about how we're doing environmentally in New
9 Jersey. Tell us about our veterans coming
10 back from Iraq. Tell us about our candidates
11 running for office. Better yet, offer to give
12 them some air time so they can tell us about
13 themselves. Tell us about post 9/11 New
14 Jersey, how safe are we and what will you do
15 in the event of an emergency. Tell us about
16 our legislature. Perhaps you could do a
17 visual crawl underneath the news at night so
18 we know how everybody voted and what the
19 issues are. You do a little of this, but you
20 don't do enough. In a complicated world where
21 the stakes are so high, we cannot allow you to
22 squander our airwaves, and they are our

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1 airwaves. We own these airwaves and stations
2 need to prove themselves worthy of their use.

3 I implore the FCC to be a better voice for
4 the individual. Start the great wave across
5 this country and hold WWOR accountable to its
6 public interest obligation and its mandate to
7 serve our area, because the caliber of our
8 actions and our decisions depend on your
9 responsible stewardship of our media.
10 Finally, on behalf of Blue Wave New Jersey and
11 myself, thank you so much for this
12 opportunity.

13 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
14 Mr. Hassall?

15 MR. HASSALL: Hi, the name is Bill
16 Hassall from Galloway, New Jersey. First of
17 all, I'd like to thank the FCC for giving this
18 subject the specialized attention that it
19 deserves. I would also like to thank Senator
20 Frank Lautenberg for the work -- for his work
21 to give New Jersey its own voice. I have
22 lived in New Jersey my whole life and I can

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1 never remember hearing about any major news
2 coverage that didn't have either Philadelphia
3 or New York as its target audience. Being the
4 most educated and densely populated state in
5 the nation, one would think that more, not
6 less local community outlets would be here.
7 For a state that's trying to re-identify
8 itself with New Jersey, come see for yourself.

9 We sure aren't seeing for ourselves what New
10 Jersey has to offer the media market. I was
11 doing research on publicintegrity.org, a
12 website that tracks media ownership. And I
13 found that of the commercially licensed TV
14 stations that serve my hometown of Galloway,
15 only thirty-six percent are actually located
16 in New Jersey. It's no wonder that when
17 election time is near, I hear mostly about
18 out-of-state politics. We need to stop being
19 overshadowed by our neighboring states and
20 embrace our own local communities. And maybe
21 it's just me, but I don't understand how a
22 station that calls itself My9 New York could

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1 even begin to claim that its aim is to serve
2 the people of this state. I'm surprised to
3 see they are even here covering this event,
4 today. WWOR really doesn't serve the public
5 interest. Therefore, I urge you to deny the
6 request for license renewal. Also, I am very
7 excited that this event is happening.
8 However, I would like to know why Senator
9 Lautenberg attached an amendment to the Local
10 Community Radio Act in 2007 that will prevent
11 low power FM from helping communities in New
12 Jersey. Senator Lautenberg should make sure
13 that communities have access to local media.
14 Thank you.

15 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

16 Mr. Adams?

17 MR. ADAMS: My name is Patrick
18 Adams. I'm from Union, New Jersey. I'd like
19 to thank the FCC and Senator Lautenberg for
20 having this hearing. First thing I notice, I
21 watch a lot of news, that on Channel 9, the
22 news is rarely on, especially in the morning

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1 they don't really have news coverage, although
2 it's on in the evening. And when it is on,
3 it's news to me that, that it's based in New
4 Jersey. I thought it was just another New
5 York channel. They do kind of the same type
6 of stories that the Fox 5 and, you know,
7 Channel 11 do. So there's really not a big
8 difference between the type of news that they
9 report and the type of news that Fox 5 and
10 Channel 11 report. And when I do want to see
11 New Jersey news, I usually go to News 12 New
12 Jersey, because this is a much more accurate
13 representation of New Jersey news. So for
14 this reason, I urge the FCC not to renew the
15 license of WWOR. All we need is another
16 organization that represents New York based in
17 New Jersey. We already have the Giants. We
18 already have the Jets. The Mets are moving to
19 Brooklyn. So that's all I have to say. Thank
20 you very much.

21 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

22 Tim Karr?

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1 MR. KARR: Hi, I'm Timothy Karr,
2 the campaign director for Free Press, National
3 Media Reform Group, but I'm a longtime
4 resident of Hoboken, New Jersey. That we're
5 having this hearing today in Newark is a bit
6 of a miracle. It's a miracle because business
7 as usual at the FCC requires a television
8 station to do little more than mail a postcard
9 to Washington for a rubber stamp approval of
10 its license to broadcast. It's a miracle
11 because so many people in New Jersey took the
12 time to say enough business as usual, we
13 demand that you hear our concerns, concerns
14 about a conglomerate owned station that has
15 the gall to call itself My9 New York, in open
16 defiance of its mandate to serve the people of
17 northern New Jersey. But here's where the
18 miracle evaporates. If we're denied this
19 opportunity to remove WWOR's license today,
20 we'll have to wait another eight years before
21 we have an opportunity to challenge its
22 license again. It didn't always used to be

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1 this way. It used to be that every three
2 years, a broadcaster had to demonstrate that
3 it was meeting a long list of FCC public
4 interest guidelines. But lobbyists working
5 for commercial broadcasters didn't like that
6 and they strong-armed the FCC to change their
7 renewal process to eight years, a postcard,
8 and a rubber stamp. Eight years is a long
9 time. Newark simply can't afford eight more
10 years of too little news and too much My9 New
11 York. Newark can't wait eight more years for
12 a station that doesn't even pretend to serve
13 our local interest while serving up a junk
14 news diet of murder, car crashes, and reality
15 television. The real reality is the people
16 before you today. We're sick and tired of
17 more business as usual at the FCC. We're sick
18 and tired because local newscasters like WWOR
19 have snubbed us. We aren't going to wait
20 another eight years. The FCC should stop this
21 neglect immediately and hand over WWOR's
22 license to a local broadcaster who really

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1 cares about interests. Thank you.

2 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
3 Christa Pugh?

4 MS. PUGH: Thank you for this
5 opportunity to speak today. My name is
6 Christa Pugh and I am the regional management
7 director for the Eastern Region of the Ad
8 Council. I work with all local media outlets
9 in the New Jersey area to secure time and
10 space for our fifty-plus public service
11 campaigns. For over six decades, the Ad
12 Council has been successfully using public
13 service advertising to address the most
14 pressing social issues, to raise awareness in
15 spite of change, and make a positive
16 difference in our society. Because of WWOR-
17 TV, fewer wildfires have started in places
18 like the Pine Barrens, fewer friends across
19 the state have let friends drive drunk, fewer
20 of our neighbors have experienced
21 discrimination. The Ad Council does not pay
22 for any media and relies solely on donated air

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1 time. Because of My9, the people of New
2 Jersey are receiving critical information on a
3 host of pressing, locally important issues
4 including the prevention of youth reckless
5 driving, education on childhood obesity
6 prevention, the promotion of financial
7 literacy, the recruitment of mentors for local
8 Big Brother and Big Sister Chapters, autism
9 awareness, the reduction of gun violence, and
10 increasing parental involvement in schools.
11 And when the need is urgent, WWOR-TV responds
12 quickly. Recently, New Jersey and the greater
13 New York area experienced a critical blood
14 shortage. Within days, My9 was airing Ad
15 Council PSA's to help rapidly restore blood
16 link supplies. And for the past two years,
17 Lew Leone has served on our local leadership
18 committee representing all the TV stations in
19 the tri-state area, helping us to identify and
20 to respond to critical local issues. My9 has
21 demonstrated a remarkable commitment to public
22 service. They help raise awareness, change

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1 behaviors, and ultimately save lives. On
2 behalf of all Ad Council nonprofit sponsors, I
3 am honored to be here today to thank and to
4 congratulate WWOR-TV for their terrific
5 support of local social issues --

6 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

7 MS. PUGH: -- that make a positive
8 difference in the New Jersey area.

9 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
10 much. Before I announce the next speaker,
11 would the following people please come
12 forward. Kate Blofson, Debbie Spigner, Dale
13 Alexander, Bill Lavin, Louis Zaroni, Curtis
14 Farrow, Sharon Brown, Diane Doctor, and Faris
15 Jebara. Harold Winard? Mr. Winard, please,
16 step forward.

17 MR. WINARD: Thank you very much.

18 I would first like to thank Senator
19 Lautenberg for facilitating this meeting and
20 the commissioners for being here in this
21 unusual meeting to air what you hear are the
22 grievances of the New Jersey public toward the

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1 situation in broadcasting in New Jersey. I
2 would first like to emphasize that this is not
3 a new problem. My own personal involvement
4 and interest, and it goes back almost forty
5 years, I have here a letter from the
6 Commission that was sent to the late Senator
7 Clifford Case about the situation of
8 television broadcasting in New Jersey, and it
9 was from Mr. Cahill, legal assistant to the
10 chairman, and it's dated August 1968. That's
11 almost forty years ago. I have here clippings
12 that I maintain. TV plea by Harris, this is
13 from the New York Star Ledger, charging that
14 New York television stations have not lived up
15 to their pledge to improve their coverage in
16 New Jersey, Newark City Council President Earl
17 Harris has called on the members of FCC to
18 give the Garden State its own commercial
19 station. This is dated July 1977. Here's
20 another Star Ledger article, FCC asks New
21 York, Philly to increase Jersey news. This is
22 dated 1976. This is a problem that has been

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1 going on for a very, very long time without
2 resolution. I hope this forum can serve as
3 the impetus for resolution of the problem, not
4 just with WWOR, which is an icon of the
5 problem, but for all stations that are
6 involved. Another issue, I hope the
7 Commission is not taken in by slick production
8 and commercial type presentation of what, what
9 Channel 9, WWOR-TV does by way of its news
10 coverage. What we see here is tokenism. We
11 see here news stories that are vetted against
12 the interest not of people in New Jersey, but
13 how much that story will appeal to the
14 interest of a listener in Brooklyn, New York.
15 We need New Jersey stories that are of
16 interest to people in New Jersey. I hope the
17 Commission sees fit to reject the application
18 of WWOR-TV and hopefully another --

19 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
20 much. Reverend Jacques DeGraff?

21 REVEREND DeGRAFF: Good evening.
22 I'd like to thank the Commission for being

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1 here and the leadership of Senator Lautenberg.

2 My name is Reverend Jacques DeGraff. I'm
3 with the 100 Black Men. I would like to say
4 that I'm a Baptist and I'm a Democrat, and I'm
5 also a resident of New Jersey. In the
6 experience of African Americans and many other
7 people, media in general has disappointed,
8 stigmatized, and stereotyped many of us. And
9 so we approach all media with, with skepticism
10 at best. But I am here today to support the
11 license renewal for WWOR 9 because of my
12 specific and our specific experience with
13 them, the leadership from top to bottom, not
14 just Lew Leone but Gene Fuentes, Ian Moore,
15 Rupert Murdoch himself, who signed agreements
16 and kept their word, and exceeded their
17 expectation in providing resources for
18 mentoring and internship programs. And then
19 they went beyond that. They provided coverage
20 to the issues that were important in our
21 community. I serve on the board of the Newark
22 Community Health Centers in seven locations in

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1 Essex County and they cover the issues that
2 are of concern to our communities. They are
3 people who have kept their word and kept their
4 commitment. The issues about the coverage and
5 the other concerns every person in New Jersey
6 whose safety and feeling shares those
7 concerns. But the license renewal, they are
8 the best ones to fulfill the obligations of
9 the license and to get it right. I want to
10 reward them for what they have done. And so
11 since they have done the right thing by us, we
12 want to stand with them today and continue to
13 support them. Thank you.

14 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
15 Kate Blofson?

16 MS. BLOFSON: Hi. Thank you,
17 commissioners, for taking the time to hold
18 this important hearing. My father is an
19 independent film maker who has lived and
20 worked in New Jersey for over thirty years.
21 He has produced documentaries on New Jersey
22 organizations and the important community

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1 issues they work on like domestic violence,
2 child abuse, environmental degradation,
3 poverty, and housing among, among others,
4 mostly in Trenton. New Jersey -- NJN public
5 television is the only outlet in New Jersey
6 for documentaries like the ones my father
7 worked on. And according to him, NJN now has
8 its own stock that's been decades since
9 they've hired independent producers. There's
10 no other outlets in New Jersey that
11 independent producers like my dad can turn to.

12 The Philly and New York markets are very
13 difficult to break into and they're not
14 interested in the pieces that focus on New
15 Jersey communities. While I commend WWOR for
16 its community service and PSA's, community
17 service is not the same as providing broadcast
18 service and PSA's are often used by stations
19 to use up unsold airtime. My father ends up
20 showing his documentaries and workshops to
21 community organizations and at the library,
22 not on New Jersey's airways. I want New

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1 Jersey's media outlets to cover the issues
2 facing our New Jersey communities and to give
3 a real opportunity to hear the voices he puts
4 on film. I applaud the commissioners and
5 Senator Lautenberg for taking the time to hold
6 the broadcast licensing holder accountable to
7 the community it is licensed to serve. While
8 I don't expect the FCC to deny WWOR's license
9 renewal application, I do hope that this
10 hearing sets a kick in the pants precedent
11 across the country where broadcasters will
12 turn out to defend their licenses and are
13 forced to take seriously the mandates of their
14 public interest obligation. I also hope
15 Senator Lautenberg will choose to extend --
16 concern over New Jersey televisions serving
17 New Jersey communities to local radio and
18 regions that are in -- discouraging local
19 radio in New Jersey.

20 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

21 Debbie Spigner?

22 MS. SPIGNER: Good evening. My

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1 name is Debra Spigner. I'm from Metuchen.
2 I've been a resident of New Jersey for eleven
3 years. My husband, Bernard Spigner, was a
4 leadership New Jersey graduate 2006. He was a
5 radio talk show host for five years on WCPC
6 4050 AM. As a host, he always had the best
7 for New Jersey residents at heart when he
8 interviewed his, the leaders and when he
9 talked to citizens in a dialogue that he knew
10 was the ownership of the people of New Jersey.
11 He was thrilled about the idea of bringing
12 this petition to the FCC for a number of
13 reasons. A born New Jerseyan, Bernard had a
14 passion for his state and for presenting a
15 positive image of -- people of New Jersey. It
16 was his wish to do and help to shape -- sorry,
17 the state image in a way that will give a more
18 balanced and progressive image unlike that
19 often painted by media of New York and
20 Philadelphia. It seems that the only new
21 coverage in Jersey by the media are the
22 negative issues, and Bernard always complained

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1 about that. I'm here today to bring forth
2 this wish for my husband, who looked at the
3 relicensing of WWOR as an opportunity for New
4 Jersey residents to take in order to derive
5 more positive coverage for our state. I
6 remain in New Jersey and will continue to do
7 this, to endeavor to -- the opportunity to
8 receive the media coverage it deserves, the
9 people of New Jersey deserves, the minority
10 groups -- people who have no voice and hardly
11 ever heard. I will do -- my husband Bernard,
12 a true, true New Jerseyan.

13 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

14 Dale Alexander?

15 MR. ALEXANDER: Good afternoon.

16 I'm Dale Alexander. I am representing the
17 United Negro College Fund, New Jersey office,
18 which is based right here in Newark. I,
19 myself, have been a resident of Newark for
20 over forty years. We are charged in New
21 Jersey with raising funds from the New Jersey
22 community to support our mission of supporting

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1 our thirty-nine historically Black colleges
2 and universities, as well as providing
3 scholarships and internships for students from
4 New Jersey to attend those schools and other
5 colleges around the country. Since our
6 partnership with My9 started two years ago,
7 they have been a strong supporter of helping
8 us in that mission in that they -- we are one
9 of the number one nonprofit organizations who
10 My9 runs our PSA's to get our mission out in
11 front of the public, as well as featuring two
12 of our staff members from the United Negro
13 College Fund, New Jersey office on My9's Real
14 Talk public access program. Through that,
15 that gives us another opportunity to get our
16 mission out towards the New Jersey public.
17 Finally, My9 has supported us in addition by
18 airing our "An Evening of Stars" television
19 special. January of 2007 was the first time
20 they aired it and they will air our 2008
21 special this coming January. And that one
22 television program is our greatest single

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1 opportunity annually to get our message of
2 supporting our historically Black colleges and
3 universities, and the deserving students from
4 New Jersey who seek to attain a college
5 education but need funds to do so. So we
6 stand today in support of My9 and thank them
7 for their support of UNCF.

8 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
9 Bill Lavin?

10 MR. LAVIN: Thank you. Thanks for
11 the opportunity to speak to you today. I want
12 to certainly recognize Senator Lautenberg and
13 thank him for his support of firefighters. I
14 am an Elizabeth firefighter, right next door
15 to Newark. I also am the president of the New
16 Jersey State Fireman's Mutual Benevolent
17 Association, 5,500 career firefighters
18 throughout the state of New Jersey from Cape
19 May to Hoboken and beyond. It's ironic that I
20 am here today and have this opportunity
21 because I'm here to celebrate what WWOR has
22 done for the fire service in New Jersey. Our

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1 issues don't always match that of government,
2 as Senator Lautenberg will attest to. Not all
3 the people who represent us in government
4 share our views as far as safety and staffing,
5 those issues, and I certainly want to
6 recognize Senator Lautenberg as one of the
7 champions of that. But Harry Martin, for one,
8 has allowed myself and others within the fire
9 service, one of the view who have allowed us
10 to go on air, on shows like Garden State
11 Matters and other PSA's that we have put out
12 our message as far as staffing and so on. In
13 addition to that, our humanitarian efforts,
14 when we responded to the Gulf Coast, to
15 Hurricane Katrina, and built handicap
16 accessible playgrounds for the people of the
17 Gulf Coast, when we worked with Save The
18 Children and other humanitarian issues, they
19 have always been there for us. We have
20 honored in 2006, Harry Martin, Joe Silvestre
21 for what they have done for us, giving them
22 awards that we rarely give to media. In the

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1 wake of September 11th, it was about New
2 Jersey firefighters and how we responded and
3 what that meant. I'd also just like to, I
4 would love to see the Jets and Giants call
5 themselves the New Jersey Jets and New Jersey
6 Giants. So if that's the issue, so be it.
7 But my support is squarely behind the people
8 who have helped us in the past. So thank you
9 for your time.

10 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
11 Louis Zaroni?

12 MR. ZANONI: Yes. My name is
13 Louis Zaroni. I am, I am the chairman of
14 WCPN-TV, a classic television station on
15 Channel 25 in Trenton, the only TV station in
16 the area that produces daily newscasts that
17 focuses all of the, all of the attention on
18 the news in New Jersey. New Jersey is a small
19 sandwiched state between the major markets of
20 New York and Philadelphia. It's only natural
21 that the big stations will gravitate towards
22 the big cities that have happen, that have --

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1 happened in New Jersey since the advent of
2 television since almost sixty years ago.
3 Stations in northern New Jersey try to be New
4 York stations and stations in the south try to
5 be Philadelphia. That's always going to
6 happen, even when Congress gives stations like
7 WWOR a new license in return for moving across
8 the river to New Jersey because big market
9 dollars will always drive the marketplace.
10 But New Jersey can have its own real TV
11 broadcast identity through Class A stations
12 like my own. Our, our signal doesn't cover
13 Philadelphia, so we serve the area we cover,
14 our state capital of Trenton. We're a truly
15 New Jersey station, but we are blocked over
16 the air by, by -- over the air again by cable
17 companies that won't carry our station. We
18 live close to, we live close to the -- we live
19 close to the station because we can't get to,
20 get to the major TV distributor systems. The
21 digital transition will make, will make it
22 worse and will kill us altogether because a

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1 lot of the converting boxes that government is
2 subsidizing will block our analog signal and
3 keep us out of, keep us out of more TV
4 receivers than cable already has kept us from
5 reaching. Thank you. Thank you very much.

6 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Curtis Farrow?

7 MR. FARROW: Before you start that
8 clock, good afternoon.

9 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Start the
10 clock. Start the clock.

11 MR. FARROW: I just want to say
12 this has nothing to do with this but I hope
13 that we can get some heat in here. Good
14 afternoon, everybody. My name is A. Curtis
15 Farrow. I am the owner of Urban Street Rap,
16 which is located right here in the beautiful,
17 magnificent City of Newark, New Jersey. We
18 can happily clap to that. It is with great
19 pride and pleasure that I am here today. And
20 I didn't realize that this was not going to be
21 a slam dunk because, in my opinion, it should
22 be. I represent the McDonald's Gospel Fest.

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1 We -- I am the producer of the largest gospel
2 fest not only in the country but in the world.
3 Yes, you can clap to that. And we get over
4 80,000 kids and members of churches that
5 audition for the gospel fest. Out of that
6 80,000, 30,000 come from the state of New
7 Jersey. And if I would have known it was
8 going to be this kind of affair, I would have
9 brought them here with me, today. I say that
10 to say My9 has always been in our corner. We
11 -- I've been producing it for nine years.
12 This is the twenty-fifty anniversary. And I
13 am going to say this because it's true, we
14 were at ABC for five years. We moved,
15 senator, to My9 four years ago and we have
16 never got the response from New Jersey the way
17 we get it now. And I'm, I'm surprised. I'm
18 standing here going like are these people
19 watching the same newscasts that I watch? Are
20 you really Channel 9 viewers? I am. I don't
21 get it. But I will say to the FCC not only
22 should you give them their license, they

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1 deserve their license, our mayor, I called the
2 mayor. I called Mildred Crump and said, you
3 know what, this year is the twenty-fifth
4 anniversary of the McDonald's Gospel Fest, the
5 largest gospel event. We want to bring it to
6 Newark. I haven't heard from them yet. But
7 guess who calls me? My9 is like a Cassidy in
8 Newark. And guess what?

9 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

10 MR. FARROW: It's going to be in
11 Newark. My9 deserves --

12 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
13 much.

14 MR. FARROW: -- their license.
15 They deserve their license.

16 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
17 much, Mr. Farrow.

18 MR. FARROW: They deserve their
19 license --

20 (Simultaneous speech)

21 MODERATOR SIGALOS: I would now
22 like to --

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1 MR. FARROW: They deserve their
2 license. Thank you.

3 MODERATOR SIGALOS: We actually
4 heard they deserve their license the first
5 time and we appreciate the repetition. Sharon
6 Brown.

7 MS. BROWN: Hello. My name is
8 Sharon Brown and I represent the state African
9 American Festival. And I'm honored to be here
10 to support My9. And I'm in a most unique
11 position because I must be the only person
12 here that My9 chased down from the public
13 affairs office. In fact, they chased me down,
14 Joan chased me down when I was in Aruba with
15 my husband, and then they chased me down at
16 the Christian Education Conference. They
17 really reached out to the African American
18 Festival because they wanted to do a piece on
19 our senator. And we were very pleased to have
20 them do a piece. We celebrated our twentieth
21 anniversary. And we could never get up north
22 at all. I live in Monmouth County and that's

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1 where the festival is. And, finally, they
2 called me so much, we came down, we did a half
3 hour piece, and we went from 5,000 attendants
4 to 7,000 people coming. And we got vendors,
5 non-food vendors, and food vendors that came.

6 It upped everything. So we went from giving
7 five students \$500 scholarships to \$1,000
8 scholarships to ten people every year. And
9 that was three years ago, and we're still
10 working and growing. And it's all because of
11 this man that we gave an award to. And,
12 unfortunately, he died. And we give out
13 community awards. He was the first non-
14 African American to get this award. It's very
15 difficult to give. It's the Outstanding
16 Community Award and we've only given out, in
17 twenty years, fifteen of them. And it went to
18 their Ray Blanco, and Lou -- received this, he
19 passed, for his outstanding dedication to the
20 community.

21 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

22 MS. BROWN: In his memory, he died

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1 before we could give it to him.

2 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
3 much.

4 MS. BROWN: And that's the book.
5 And thank you.

6 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
7 Before I announce the next speaker, would the
8 following people come forward, Ann Rea,
9 Barbara Belasco, Steve Edwards, Tracey Reed,
10 Mario Tapia, Duda Pentiado, Tom Dallessio,
11 Kaili Baucum. I'm now going to announce our
12 sixteenth registered speaker. It's a big
13 after 5:30 and we have thirty-seven in total,
14 and many busy schedules. Senator Lautenberg?

15 SENATOR LAUTENBERG: I will be
16 just one minute's worth because the one thing
17 I want clearly understood is this criticism,
18 if it is that, at WWOR is not that they don't
19 do a lot of good things. They do a lot of
20 very good things. We think that more can be
21 done for the reasons that have already been
22 stated and restated. But I just wanted to

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1 clear that air. And I congratulate you,
2 Harry, and all of your colleagues for work
3 that you do on behalf of the community. It's
4 wonderful. But we've got to have more news.
5 Thank you very, very much. I must go now.
6 Forgive me, please.

7 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Diane Doctor?

8 MS. DOCTOR: Hi.

9 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Hold on a
10 second. Move that stand real quickly. That's
11 it.

12 MS. DOCTOR: Much better. Hi, I'm
13 Diane Doctor. And I was the news director at
14 Channel 2 and Channel 4, and I was the
15 assistant news director at Channel 9, but I
16 won't tell you how long ago that was, so I
17 have a fair idea of news coverage in this
18 market. And I echo what was said earlier. I
19 believe that Channel 9 has done a great job of
20 covering New Jersey. I won't go into
21 specifics, but I'll point out that it's very
22 unusual in this business, and I'm an example

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1 of more typical of movement from station to
2 station. Channel 9 has some people that have
3 been in this market, and have covered it and
4 stayed at the station, and have provided great
5 depth and great news judgment. And the
6 station has also accumulated probably more
7 Emmy awards for its investigative reporting
8 and its distinguished reporting in New Jersey
9 than most people realize. Brenda Blackman,
10 Russ Salzberg, Steve Linden, Jim Driscoll, who
11 was a production assistant when I was at
12 Channel 9 is now the new director, these are
13 people that live in New Jersey, that know the
14 state, and that are highly respected as
15 journalists. And I just thought you all ought
16 to know that. Real quickly, you probably saw
17 me on that videotape. I produce "NJ My Way,"
18 which is an online, daily e-newsletter. And
19 it's all about the positive things in New
20 Jersey. When I left broadcast news, I vowed
21 to try to take my home state to a different
22 public relations profile. And every day we

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1 publish something that tells people of New
2 Jersey something good, something positive, and
3 something to their benefit. And when I called
4 Lew Leone and I said I'm doing this, could you
5 put it on Channel 9's website, he welcomed it
6 with open arms. And if you check it out, on
7 their website you'll find great content about
8 New Jersey and all the positive things about
9 the state. Thank you very much.

10 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
11 Faris Jebara?

12 MR. JEBARA: Hi, my name is Faris
13 Jebara. I'm a student here at Rutgers
14 University and an intern for the public
15 interest group, New Jersey's B NJPIRG for
16 Student Chapters. Since September of this
17 year, NJPIRG has dedicated its efforts to
18 registering the student and the people of New
19 Jersey to vote in the past election. When not
20 working on this campaign, I was truly
21 flabbergasted and appalled at the political
22 ignorance of my peers. WWOR, also more

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1 commonly known as My9NewYork, ironically
2 enough this is New Jersey's only public
3 broadcasting media outlet's name, has done
4 minimal to cover and inform the citizens of
5 which it is both financially and socially
6 responsible to. No longer will, no longer
7 will New Jersey's only public media -- no
8 longer will New Jersey's only public news
9 broadcasting be taken hostage by self-
10 interested business people with money-making
11 as their sole prerogative. No longer should
12 this be tolerated on the backs of my
13 politically ignorant peers. Thank you.

14 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
15 Ann Rea?

16 MS. REA: Hi, my name, my name is
17 Ann Rea, and I live in Montclair, New Jersey.

18 After twenty years of viewing the affects of
19 the free market on television since media
20 deregulation rules were passed in the 1980's,
21 I can clearly see that government regulation
22 has the potential to benefit society. The

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1 people of New Jersey need to have more
2 information to make political decisions. They
3 need a constant stream of news on a daily
4 basis to make important judgments about their
5 communities and their lives. Responsible
6 journalism and fact-based reporting are
7 essential to our democracy. The Founding
8 Fathers knew that a well established news
9 media with lots of competition was essential
10 to the running of our democratic institutions.

11 They made deliberate plans to support it and
12 the creation of a postal subsidy that made it
13 less expensive to send newspapers and
14 periodicals around the country. In 231 years,
15 our means of getting the news has shifted. We
16 have television now and that requires new
17 rules to support the free flow of news and
18 information, and we need our government to do
19 this job. A civilized country needs to
20 nurture the sources of news, which we used to
21 do in these United States. To have the
22 citizens' participation as required by our

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1 form of government, we need readily available
2 and accurate information to thrive as a strong
3 nation at home and abroad. I urge the FCC not
4 to issue this broadcast license renewal. The
5 FCC should use this process to promote better
6 news service to the people of New Jersey.
7 Thank you for your time.

8 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
9 Barbara Belasco?

10 MS. BELASCO: Hello, I'm Barbara
11 Belasco.

12 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Could you
13 adjust that microphone? Yes.

14 MS. BELASCO: Thank you. I need a
15 short one, thanks. I'm Barbara Belasco and I
16 live in Glen Arden, but I'm here on behalf of
17 the League of Women Voters of New Jersey.
18 We're a nonpartisan organization, which
19 encourage the active informed participation of
20 citizens in government. We believe that good
21 government depends on informed and effective
22 electorate, which is why I am here today. We

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1 also believe that WWOR-TV is not covering the
2 important issues facing state and local
3 citizens. How are we being served by WWOR-TV?

4 I don't have a polling organization to help
5 me, but I did bring a schedule, last week's
6 schedule. And if you look at that and I'd be
7 glad to leave it with you, thirty-five hours
8 of programming is devoted to infomercials.
9 The nightly news show, My9 News, which I did
10 watch last night, is mostly sensational
11 stories about crime. Most of the remainder of
12 the schedule, at least last week, was filmed
13 entertainment leftovers from Channel 5's
14 inventory. But, on Sunday afternoon, there
15 was a half-hour public affairs show called NJ
16 Now, and I understand that the show after it,
17 called Real Talk, may also be a public affairs
18 program. What's new? Where are the important
19 national issues, the ones that have an impact
20 on New Jersey residents, local warming,
21 healthcare, the Iraqi war? What about
22 specifically New Jersey issues? For example,

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1 the new state school funding formula, property
2 tax reform, political correction, clean
3 elections. Where are they? Where are the
4 children's shows? I didn't see any children's
5 shows on the schedule. Where are the New
6 Jersey cultural institutions, New Jersey
7 Symphony, NJ -- the New Jersey Symphony
8 Theater, and excuse me -- in conclusion, the
9 existing license was granted with the
10 requirement to operate in New Jersey for the
11 benefit of the people of the state. Before
12 you give a valuable public asset to the
13 current licensee --

14 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

15 MS. BELASCO: -- please -- the
16 needs of citizens. Thank you.

17 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
18 much. Steve Edwards?

19 MR. EDWARDS: Thank you, Mr.
20 Chairman. My name is Steve Edwards. I'm on
21 the Board of Commissioners for the New Jersey
22 Hall of Fame. The mission of the New Jersey

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1 Hall of Fame is to celebrate the Garden State
2 by honoring our icons that have lived among us
3 throughout the years and sending a positive
4 message to children, providing them with
5 positive roll models, hopefully motivating and
6 inspiring them to become the next Thomas
7 Edison, the next Albert Einstein, and so
8 forth. I'm pleased to say that My9 has been
9 extremely helpful to the Hall of Fame, in
10 particular Harry Martin, Joe Silvestre, Audrey
11 Pass, who just walked out of the room, Lew
12 Leone, and the late Ray Blanco. Recently,
13 they aired PSA's, I think a couple of dozen of
14 them, over a three-month period and during
15 prime time hours, I may add. They also
16 produced a thirty-minute Hall of Fame show,
17 which did a great job at promoting the Hall of
18 Fame. Quite frankly, their support has been
19 critical because it has come during the stages
20 of our development, and we're very grateful
21 for that. Moving forward, they generously
22 offered to televise the Red Carpet. I'll get

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1 a plug in. It's going to be May 4th at the
2 Performing Arts Center in Newark. They've
3 offered to televise that Red Carpet ceremony
4 and future PSA's, and to do a future Hall of
5 Fame show. So we look forward to working with
6 them, very grateful for their support.
7 They've been tremendous media partners. We
8 hope you'll give your fullest consideration to
9 their renewal. I do want to add, I give
10 Debbie Spigner a lot of credit. I knew
11 Bernard. He was a great, great, great man.
12 I'm sorry I'm on the other side of the issue
13 from Debbie, but it takes a lot of courage to
14 get up and do that. And Ray Blanco, your Ray
15 Blanco was a very special man. So thank you
16 very much.

17 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
18 Tracey Reed?

19 MS. REED: Yes. My name is Tracey
20 Reed. I am a lifelong resident of New Jersey,
21 currently reside in Roxbury, in northwestern
22 New Jersey, and I am a member of Voice for New

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1 Jersey. I'd like to welcome the commissioners
2 and their staff to New Jersey. We love our
3 state and all we want is to see our state
4 justly served by our television station.

5 I'd like to comment today, in
6 addition to all of what's been said, on a
7 quote that appeared in the Star Ledger, today,
8 in the article about the hearing, which was
9 attributed to Audrey Pass. Ms. Pass is
10 identified as a spokesperson for WWOR and is
11 quoted as saying that she would be surprised
12 if a day went by when there wasn't a New
13 Jersey story or a story of interest to New
14 Jersey residents appearing on the station's
15 nightly newscast.

16 Is that last qualifier really
17 necessary? This would seem to be an
18 acknowledgment that the station cannot plainly
19 claim to offer up even one real New Jersey
20 news story each day.

21 Is the standard implied in this
22 comment really that the public interest

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1 standard that the FCC is willing to accept on
2 behalf of the people of New Jersey? Let's
3 talk about that implicit standard. Are a
4 station's public interest obligations truly
5 satisfied if it simply broadcasts content that
6 is of interest to people in the community of
7 license? I would shudder to think what would
8 happen if the FCC were to passively accept
9 such a standard.

10 By this logic, presumably, a
11 station could broadcast infomercials twenty-
12 four hours a day. The station could then
13 claim that their public interest obligations
14 were satisfied if people in the community of
15 license ordered up some Ginsu knives, or some
16 Bowflex machines, or natural cures books.
17 After all, would not such orders demonstrate
18 that the programming was of interest?

19 If the standard of service to the
20 community is that some New Jersey residents
21 are interested in the contents of the
22 station's broadcast, we may as well

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1 acknowledge that there are no standards in
2 effect at all. In that case, the FCC would do
3 well simply to auction off the licenses or
4 sell them.

5 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

6 MS. REED: Thank you.

7 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
8 much. Mario Tapia?

9 MR. TAPIA: Good afternoon. First
10 of all, I would like to thank U.S. Senator
11 Frank Lautenberg and the FCC for this
12 important forum and the opportunity to express
13 ideals. My name is Mario Tapia. I am the
14 president and CEO of the Latino Gerontological
15 Center. This is a national nonprofit
16 organization dedicated to improving the life
17 of the Latino.

18 I have been a resident of New
19 Jersey since 1973. My questions are has WWOR-
20 TV invited us to participate in their
21 community care programming? Has WWOR-TV
22 provided us a space to publicly discuss the

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1 lack of access for the Latino elderly in the
2 State of New Jersey? Does WWOR-TV understand
3 and support our efforts as a nonprofit
4 organization? The answer to all these
5 questions is yes.

6 We feel that WWOR-TV has been
7 fulfilling the public interest on the people
8 matters in New Jersey better than any other TV
9 station including WNJN and NJU's station. We
10 have been relating to WWOR-TV for a long time.

11 We=ve been invited several times to their
12 show LatiNation, and most recently to Real
13 Talk. An important aspect of WWOR-TV
14 programming for community affairs is that
15 these shows are seen during prime time slots
16 and not in the usual time of other TV stations
17 for these types of programs. We strongly
18 support the renewal of the license for WWOR-
19 TV. Again, thank you.

20 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
21 Duda Penteado?

22 MR. PENTEADO: Thank you,

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1 committee, senator. My name is Duda Penteado.
2 I'm the chair of the Artist Certification
3 Board of the City of Jersey City. I'm a fine
4 artist. And I'm coming here to stand in
5 support of Channel 9 and to thank Channel 9
6 for the support of the Arts.

7 I'm a citizen of the United States
8 for more than ten years and I live in this
9 Jersey City for more than ten years as well.
10 I have seen increasing coverage of Channel 9
11 in the City of Jersey City, a few events like
12 Liberty Science Center, the Arts Education
13 Board, it was an important board that was
14 seeking to give back to living artists.

15 In the waterfront of Jersey City,
16 they have covered, and other events, as
17 community events as well as hosting the
18 president of New Jersey university to talk
19 about the monthly development of the
20 university and others. So I stand here to
21 thank Channel 9 and the work with the Arts and
22 the committee. And thank you to be covering

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1 more exciting news in Jersey City. Thank you
2 very much.

3 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
4 Before I announce the next speaker, would the
5 following people head to the nearest
6 microphone, Daniel Schoenberg, Dock Russell,
7 Marianne Hartman, Juan Nortez, Joseph
8 Occhipinti, and Luis Diaz. Tom Dallessio?

9 MR. DALLESSIO: Good afternoon.
10 Thank you very much. I'm Tom Dallessio. I'm
11 a lifelong New Jersey resident. And I am the
12 executive director of Leadership of New
13 Jersey. I am proud of the work that the
14 Leadership of New Jersey, Class of 2006 has
15 created in a voice for New Jersey, but I am
16 speaking as a private citizen for these
17 comments.

18 I'd like to thank Senator
19 Lautenberg, who is an honorary fellow of
20 Leadership of New Jersey, and the FCC for
21 holding this hearing in New Jersey and
22 according New Jersey the respect we deserve

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1 and we've earned.

2 My9, I'm sad to say, isn't my 9.
3 I do watch my Yankees, but that's about it.
4 I'm disappointed in the news coverage. The
5 critical issues of infrastructure, land use,
6 education, and environment are never really
7 covered in any substantive way.

8 New Jersey leads the way in open
9 space preservation, and public transportation,
10 and higher education. On rare occasion,
11 coverage is at best sensationalistic; at
12 worse, trite.

13 The people of New Jersey are
14 smart, proud, and discerning. We have high
15 incomes and we're highly involved. We deserve
16 better. I ask the FCC, please, to set
17 performance standards, set requirements that
18 will set the standard for the rest of the
19 nation for news, public affairs, political
20 coverage, and spotlight on our leaders.

21 As I said, My9 isn't my 9, but it
22 could be. They should want me to watch. They

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1 need to earn my watching the TV. This is the
2 public airways. You have the opportunity to
3 create a standard and I hope you will do that.

4 Thank you.

5 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
6 Kaili Baucum? Kaili Baucum? Daniel
7 Schoenberg?

8 MR. SCHOENBERG: Hi, my name is
9 Daniel Schoenberg. I'm a first-year law
10 student here at Rutgers Law School, Newark,
11 and I'm born and raised here in New Jersey.
12 And I would just like to comment that I, too,
13 am not a Channel 9 viewer because Channel 9
14 does not show the programs that I wish it were
15 showing.

16 We had four ballot initiatives on
17 the ballot this past November and there was
18 barely any coverage, barely any mention of the
19 issues. We've had several recent scandals
20 that involved -- that could have and should
21 have involved investigative reporting by a
22 local New Jersey channel such as our U.S.

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1 attorney being on the list of the attorneys to
2 be fired. And then our senator being accused
3 of housing violations and bribes, that was
4 very minimally covered.

5 Any of the political news
6 websites, there was no YouTube or Channel 9
7 videos of investigative reporters talking
8 about this, and that makes me sad that the
9 channel that is supposed to be representing us
10 isn't, you know, out there covering news that
11 we want covered. Thank you.

12 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
13 Dock Russell?

14 MR. RUSSELL: Good evening. My
15 name is Dock Russell and I live in Hackensack,
16 New Jersey. I'm here to represent KCAP and
17 the community. I want to take this time to
18 thank the appreciation of Senator Lautenberg,
19 the FCC Commissioners, and Channel 9, My9.

20 I've been living in Hackensack
21 over the past four years and I've been there
22 and basically been involved in organizations

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1 that they're at the level of communication PR
2 and communication. And what we've noticed
3 that whenever the why question comes up,
4 somebody is going to get fired, in the Black
5 community when you ask why, so a lot of people
6 just ask why. But every now and then you've
7 got to ask why things don't happen.

8 My first question is, are there
9 any representatives from the Elks here or from
10 the Masonics? You know, those are the
11 organizations that are in the minority
12 community that should have representation at
13 something like this and should be recognized
14 in the community by organizations such as My9
15 or any other media organization.

16 What I'd like to see is I just
17 have four basic things that I want to suggest.

18 I'm not here to criticize Channel 9 or
19 critique them. I'm here to help guide them.
20 Basically, what I'd like to see, I'd like to
21 see them have a presence in the community. I
22 would like to have them to create waves to

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1 become user friendly to the communities that
2 are not tied in.

3 In the minority community where I
4 come from, people, they say you can come, but
5 people don't think you mean that when you say
6 that. So you have to have, introduce a
7 presence that suggests that it's real.

8 Another thing that I would like
9 them to identify organizations or programs in
10 the community that they can associate
11 themselves with, if the community don't come
12 forward. Now over my time, four years I've
13 been there, I've been working in this state
14 with a lot of organization. Thank you.

15 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
16 much. Marianne Hartman?

17 MS. HARTMAN: Hi, my name is
18 Marianne Hartman. I'm Director of
19 Communication, the Office of Radio and
20 Television for the Diocese of Trenton, and I
21 have two brief statements regarding religious
22 programming on Channel 9.

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1 One is from James Goodness, who is
2 the Director of Communication for the
3 Archdiocese of Newark, who couldn't be here
4 because he's out of town at a conference. And
5 James Goodness said that there are many
6 particularly older shut-in Catholics in
7 northern New Jersey who feel the loss very
8 strongly of a program like the Sunday mass on
9 Channel 9, which was discontinued.

10 They do not have access to cable
11 and, as a result, cannot get the mass unless
12 they are up at 5:00 a.m. in the morning to
13 view it on Channel 5, a New York based
14 station. There is also a distinct void in
15 service of religious programming that Channel
16 9 used to fill. Similarly, many ethnic
17 Catholic groups lament the fact that the
18 ethnic programming in public affairs that
19 Channel 9 used to offer has left them without
20 an outlet to express their view to the larger
21 community.

22 And also my statement, in addition

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1 to the discontinuation of the Sunday mass,
2 Channel 9 also terminated the tri-state
3 religious program, Point Of View. Each week,
4 this program alternated point of views of the
5 three main faith groups at the time, Judaism,
6 Protestants, and Catholics.

7 They discontinued this program
8 despite the fact that religious and government
9 leaders wrote letters opposing it. Currently,
10 Channel 9 does not provide free public service
11 air time to religious groups or denominations
12 here in the state.

13 I believe that Channel 9 could do
14 a better service to its viewers by providing
15 some of the fine religious programming
16 produced here in New Jersey that would benefit
17 the unique spiritual needs of the community.

18 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
19 Juan Nortez?

20 MR. NORTEZ: First off, thank you
21 to the commissioners for coming here. I was
22 asked when I came in here who do I represent.

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1 I have been a lifelong resident of Newark,
2 proud of it, and I'm also equally proud that I
3 started my business here.

4 But I've been in the broadcasting
5 business for twenty-six years. And,
6 fortunately, when I went through Seton Hall,
7 my internship between Channel 4, Channel 9,
8 and Channel 11. But my thing, my situation
9 has been that I know what's happening on both
10 sides. The problem is how do we best cover
11 the community that surrounds us.

12 And that's important for Newark
13 especially, because unlike what we have been
14 hearing in the news, there is a lot more going
15 good in Newark than the murders and the gangs
16 than anything else. These are the things that
17 need to come out. So we have to figure out
18 what are the best ways of doing that.

19 And one of the -- in starting my
20 business, which is in broadcasting, to try to
21 do things on radio is that I went through and
22 heard Commissioner Adelstein, who made a

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1 comment in closing a public hearing two years
2 ago about what localism is supposed to be all
3 about. That is something that I put up on my
4 wall in the business. And we have to figure
5 out how we best do that.

6 If My9 can't do it because they
7 have a wide coverage, then we have to do
8 something about radio. We have two radio
9 stations in our community. That's illegal
10 right now. They're operating from New York
11 City, WNJR, which has the history, should be
12 looked at, too, not just WWOR.

13 So that's, I needed to say that we
14 need to have a public hearing on what is the
15 attitude in the New York market and what will
16 we best be able to do as far as localism in
17 this area.

18 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
19 Joseph Occhipinti?

20 MR. OCCHIPINTI: I represent the
21 National Police Defense Foundation, which has
22 over 110,000 members and supporters, most of

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1 which are based here in the State of New
2 Jersey. We're a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in
3 Marlboro, New Jersey. And from a law
4 enforcement point of view, it will be a
5 tremendous loss for the New Jersey law
6 enforcement community if the license for WWOR
7 was not renewed.

8 I can tell you firsthand that on
9 my Rolodex, when there is any law enforcement
10 related things that have to be put out on the
11 air, Steve Linden, who is one of the editors,
12 is always there to assist the law enforcement
13 community.

14 We run several programs. We run a
15 state cop program which post a \$10,000 reward
16 when any law enforcement officer is shot in
17 the line of duty. We also run Operation Hits.

18 When we have missing children, we post
19 rewards for the safe recovery. We also, in
20 the interest of promoting positive police
21 relations in the immigrant community, we fly
22 anywhere in the world and bring back children

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1 for life-saving operations. In each and every
2 one of these cases I've described, WWOR has
3 been there and publicized it.

4 Now there has been a lot of
5 controversy about coverage of New York related
6 stuff. I can tell you that when there is a
7 seizure that takes place or an arrest of a
8 terrorist group in New York, it has an impact
9 on New Jersey because the coverage of New York
10 related law and criminal stories have an
11 impact on Jersey residents.

12 Again I could tell you, I think
13 you sent the message here to WWOR that perhaps
14 they have to focus more of their attention.
15 But as my counterpart in the Fire part has
16 stated, they have been a tremendous source for
17 the law enforcement community and I recommend
18 the approval on their license.

19 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
20 Before I announce the next speaker, I'd like
21 to call up the last six who had registered
22 today, Jeannette Mistretta, Joseph Crooms,

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1 Wilbur McNeil, Larry Petrillo, William Terry,
2 and Frank Scandale. Now Luis Diaz?

3 MR. DIAZ: Good evening,
4 commissioners. My name is Luis Diaz. I'm
5 president of the U.S. Hispanic Advocacy
6 Association, which represents Hispanic
7 consumers.

8 There are some facts that I just
9 want to point out. These are good people and
10 they've done good work, and we appreciate
11 that. I live in New Jersey. I work in New
12 Jersey. However, New Jersey is not on a level
13 playing field when it comes to media coverage.

14 That is a fact.

15 It is also a fact that the
16 minority communities within New Jersey, within
17 the local representation and media coverage,
18 are not adequately represented from our
19 perspective. It is also a fact that we're not
20 here to talk about charitable events or
21 charitable outreach, but rather substantive
22 media coverage. That's what this issue is

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1 about.

2 And, therefore, I am very
3 concerned that the facts that were highlighted
4 by the Eagleton Institute research, that they
5 should weigh in our minds as highly relevant.

6 Specifically, as Senator Lautenberg
7 mentioned, leading up to the 2005 elections,
8 there were many localized elections to serve
9 in coverage.

10 WWOR ran ten New Jersey election
11 stories in the thirty days prior, nine of
12 these were on the governor's race, thus
13 providing effectively little coverage on the
14 New Jersey elections.

15 When WWOR applied for a license
16 renewal, they attached eleven exhibits. These
17 were entitled service to New Jersey, covered
18 eight years from '99 to 2006. The documents
19 were to demonstrate commitment and it cited
20 airing 13,054 New Jersey stories, 170 stories
21 per year, fact; less than two stories -- less
22 than one every two days, that is also a fact.

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1 New Jersey is going through an
2 incredible period of transition. We are
3 facing monumental problems as a result of a
4 global economy, as a result healthcare issues,
5 as a result of the budget crisis. This is the
6 time. This is the window of opportunity to
7 send a good message to our friends that they
8 need to do more. Thank you.

9 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
10 Jeannette Mistretta? Jeannette? Joseph
11 Crooms?

12 MR. CROOMS: Good evening,
13 everyone. To our panel, we -- greetings from
14 the Guardian Angels. Our illustrious leader,
15 Mr. Curtis Sliwa could not be here today,
16 asked that I would instead.

17 I'm attending in two forms of
18 fashion. One, I'm a recent person that
19 moved/migrated to New Jersey about four years
20 ago. And I want to say to My9 that when I
21 moved to New Jersey, I didn't know how to get
22 around, and I didn't know where to turn. And

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1 then when I turned to Channel 9, My9 was
2 there. And they sort of helped me get around.

3 So I speak as a father. I speak
4 as a husband. I speak as a person that just
5 moved to New Jersey. And I also would like to
6 speak on behalf of the Guardian Angels, who
7 we're going to be working in Elizabeth to help
8 with the crime situation with the Board of
9 Education system there.

10 I know that My9 will be there to
11 make sure that our message gets out and that
12 we will be able to do a quality job. So I
13 would like to close by saying that from what I
14 see and in the simplicity of My9, I think
15 they're ready for the challenge.

16 I think that they're a
17 professional team that is accepting the
18 challenge. They're absorbing it. And I think
19 that they should receive their license. And I
20 think that this forum from all sides gave them
21 the information that they needed to be the
22 quality journalists that they are. Thank you.

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1 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
2 Wilbur McNeil?

3 MR. MCNEIL: My name is Wilbur
4 McNeil. I represent the Like It Is coalition.
5 It's a consortium of about twenty African
6 American organizations in New York, New
7 Jersey, and Connecticut.

8 We started on this, the Save It
9 Like It Is program, but when we began to look
10 at the media, we came to the conclusion that
11 it was all based in terms of minority
12 representation, so we filed petitions with the
13 FCC and we have been calling for FCC hearings
14 in Newark. And I didn't find out about this
15 one until three o'clock.

16 But we've been calling for FCC
17 hearings in Newark about the media all along.

18 We have submitted petitions to deny all the
19 major networks their license because of the
20 conditions that they treat minorities in our
21 community. And I want to thank you.

22 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

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1 Larry Petrillo?

2 MR. PETRILLO: Good evening,
3 members of the FCC Commission. I'd just like
4 to say I'm the Director of the Division of
5 Fire Safety. And I'm here not to make a
6 recommendation for or against the license for
7 WWOR, I'm here to provide some information
8 that will hopefully help you in your decision-
9 making.

10 We -- the mission of the Division
11 of Fire Safety is to save lives and protect
12 people from the horrors of fire. One of the
13 ways we do that primarily is through
14 education. And we have a great partnership
15 with WWOR in helping us get that message out
16 to the citizens of New Jersey on fire safety.

17 Whenever we have had incidents,
18 for example, we had a multiple fatality of
19 citizens in a hotel, we were able to reach out
20 to WWOR and ask them if they would help us
21 provide messages to the public that would help
22 them when they go out on vacation or into a

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1 not familiar location.

2 We have also utilized them to help
3 us get the message of fire safety to our
4 children. They participate in our, what we
5 call a FIRE bowl, which is an acronym for fire
6 information, rescue, and education program,
7 which is a college bowl type competition where
8 we literally have hundreds of children
9 participate in a competition on fire safety.

10 And the members of WWOR,
11 specifically Harry Martin, has helped us get
12 that message out to the citizens of New
13 Jersey. We have also been able, had the
14 opportunity to participate in Garden State
15 Matters to get our fire safety message out.
16 Thank you.

17 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
18 William Terry?

19 MR. TERRY: Hello, everyone. Good
20 evening. It's a pleasure to be here today.
21 First of all, I would like to acknowledge, of
22 course, the Office of Senator Lautenberg, and

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1 all his members and staff members, and of
2 course the FCC for being here as well and for
3 having this public hearing.

4 I'm originally from New York, but
5 now I live in Ancora, New Jersey, so getting
6 used to being out here and living in the State
7 of New Jersey. The points I'd like to raise
8 are the need for improved media coverage,
9 definitely, in the State of New Jersey, and
10 some of these points have been brought out
11 already.

12 Although one of the most affluent
13 and densely populated states in the nation,
14 New Jersey is one of the only two states
15 without a VHF network television affiliate.
16 This deficit is all the more remarkable in
17 light of the following.

18 New Jersey has the second highest
19 per capita income in the nation. When
20 analyzed by race and country of origin, New
21 Jersey is the most demographically diverse
22 state in the nation. That in itself includes

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1 a huge responsibility on the part of Channel 9
2 News and the complete Channel 9, My9 WWOR-TV
3 organization because you have to look at each
4 community differently and you have to be able
5 to show both sides, not just the negative
6 things that happen through a series of social
7 problems that people could be experiencing,
8 but all the positive things that have been
9 going on in these communities, but as well as
10 the cultural programs, education, and the
11 needs of those communities. It has to be
12 looked upon as on a wide scale, from a state
13 and local level, and the neighborhoods.

14 Vermont, the nation's second
15 smallest state by population, has two network
16 affiliates, White River Junction, population,
17 2,600. It is home to Vermont's NBC affiliate.

18 Now, of New Jersey's 566 municipalities, 466
19 have more people than White River Junction.
20 That is a gross, gross disparity. The State
21 of North Dakota ranks forty-eight in
22 population.

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1 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.

2 MR. TERRY: Yet, it is home to
3 nine network affiliates. I'll just say that
4 Channel 9 needs to do a lot more before the
5 FCC renews this subsidiary.

6 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you very
7 much.

8 MR. TERRY: They should consider
9 reorganizing everything. Thank you so much
10 and have a great evening.

11 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
12 Frank Scandale?

13 MR. SCANDALE: Thank you. It's
14 Frank Scandale. And I'm the editor of The
15 Record. And since I was going to be on the
16 video, I thought I'd come down and see how I
17 was going to look. And I've got some work to
18 do.

19 I can't speak to Channel 9's past.

20 I can only talk about their present
21 commitment to local news. We're based in
22 Hackensack. We serve north Jersey. We are

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1 dedicated to local news. And earlier this
2 year, we went out seeking partners, electronic
3 partners, and I can say Channel 9, as well as
4 their sister station, Channel 5, reached out
5 immediately and we began to form a
6 partnership, sharing news.

7 Our desks, our news desks and
8 their news desks have regular conversations
9 during the week. We discuss stories. We tell
10 them the most important things we think that
11 they should be covering that they can't get
12 to. As a newspaper, we have over 250
13 journalists working in our newsroom.

14 A lot of electronic media envy
15 that kind of resource. I can tell you,
16 personally, that Lew, earlier, a couple of
17 years ago when he was with Channel 2, reached
18 out to The Record to do the very same thing
19 for Channel 2. So I know from the top, the
20 commitment to do local news and do it well is
21 ingrained in the operation, and down to Steve
22 Linden and his team.

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1 And so I'm just here to say I know
2 it's working. I don't know what's happened in
3 the past. But if I had this opportunity every
4 once in a while to hear my viewers, my readers
5 come out and tell me how passionate they are
6 about what's going on, what they want to hear,
7 what they want to see, I know that the team is
8 taking this to heart. The team is here,
9 they're listening. I know they're going to
10 walk away with a better understanding of what
11 their readers -- what their viewers need.
12 Thank you.

13 MODERATOR SIGALOS: Thank you.
14 I'd like to thank all those who commented
15 publicly today. This does conclude the Media
16 Bureau's public forum on the WWOR-TV license
17 renewal. Thank you for your attendance and
18 your participation.

19 (Off the record.)
20
21
22

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