



NEWS

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**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS
ON THE MEDIA BUREAU APPROVAL
OF THE CUMULUS-CITADEL MERGER**

“The wheels of media consolidation spin on. Today the Media Bureau approves the combination of Cumulus and Citadel, the number two and number three radio companies in the country, creating a media giant that will own more than 560 stations. Earlier this year we had the huge Comcast-NBCU transaction. Last week we learned of another large company buying up seven additional media outlets. Time after time and in market after market, there are fewer independent options and fewer local voices. To pass FCC and DOJ muster, Cumulus-Citadel needs to divest only 14 stations. Applicants will put these stations in a trust pending sale to, hopefully, women and minority owners. But too often such stations just languish, unsold, in a trust. Just this month, in another proceeding, a petition to deny was filed as licenses in such a trust were being renewed after three-and-a-half years without being sold. Applicants also claim this merger will lead to additional funding for programming to serve local audiences, but chances are we won’t hold their feet to the fire if they fall short. So round and round we go.

“If the Commission is intent on continuing to bless consolidated control of more and more of our broadcasting outlets by fewer and fewer big interests, isn't it time to ensure that we have some public interest guidelines so that consumers and citizens can be assured of at least some level of local programming, real news about real issues, independent production, and coverage of issues of interest to the diverse populations that make up local communities?”

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