

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1304

October 4th, 2011

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Chairman Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I write to encourage you to include the impact that media ownership consolidation in television broadcasting has had on maintaining delivery of local news, weather, and community information in the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) future Quadrennial Media Ownership reviews.

The FCC's broadcast media ownership rules are designed to foster three primary goals - competition, localism, and diversity of voices. Free over-the-air television broadcasters have been meeting these goals for decades by providing important, and at times life-saving, information to local community members who may have no other sources for local information. Indeed, it has been the television broadcaster's local focus that has distinguished their service from most other sources of information available. In many areas, the reporters, anchors, and other members of the production staff feel a personal obligation to the region that furthers the service they provide to the local community.

It has come to my attention that in some situations a single owner of multiple television broadcast stations that cover several geographical areas has tested moving local news and weather production out of the locality and even out of the state. This raises serious concerns regarding the ability of television broadcasters to respond quickly to developing news stories or rapidly changing weather conditions.

Consolidation in broadcast media has been ongoing for several years but has been matched by the emergence of new sources of information available primarily via the internet. And while there is a reasonable place for economies of scale and reducing duplication of work, removing the local focus from free over-the-air broadcasting lessens the value and utility of the broadcast for those in the

service area. Including more detailed analysis of the impact media ownership rules and consolidation in free over-the-air broadcasting has had on the delivery of local news and weather in the FCC's continual evaluation of media ownership rules will help better shape long term policy.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dick Durbin", is written over the printed name.

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

RJD/tr