

**Remarks of FCC Commissioner Mignon L. Clyburn**  
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Good afternoon everyone, and thank you Mr. Kaplan, for that kind introduction. It is great to be back at the NAB Show, in what may actually be my 5<sup>th</sup> appearance as an FCC Commissioner. Underpinning that yearly experience, is the continued importance and value of localism, and the exciting innovation that is underway across the broadcast industry.

For those of you who do not know me well, I am an unabashed fan of traditional media outlets, particularly local broadcast television and radio. Why? Broadcast television continues to shape the way I see things, influence how I express my thoughts and view the world.

Today, broadcasters continue to deliver, the most watched, talked about, and listened to programming, and when communities come together for its most notable events, so often, it can be found, on broadcast stations. For those who predicted your demise, just consider the Nielsen ratings for the week of March 28<sup>th</sup>. Among primetime broadcast programming, the number one ranked show that week had an 8.8 rating. No cable program had a higher rating, and only one would have made the broadcast list's top 10 that week and, not surprisingly, that was AMC's the Walking Dead with a 7.4.

I say all of this, as a reminder of how important it is to preserve these industries and free over-the-air programming, folds squarely into my message of community, community, community, where family, friends and neighbors are brought together in a way no other medium can match. Even with this, there are many challenges ahead. As the title of the panel suggests, one is how local newsrooms report on race in America. At its core, the relationship between a journalist and her audience begins with 'trust.' Yet, a recent study by the Media Insight Project found that just six percent of Americans say they have "a great deal of confidence in the media." Among African American and Hispanic Americans, this same study found that they are "more likely than white Americans to say it is very important that they see their communities and people like them in the reporting." Similarly, 65 percent of African Americans surveyed, said the presentation of diverse views is extremely/very important, compared to 56 percent of white Americans.

Knowing that people of color place even greater importance on the value of diversity, leads me to the question: what can or should the FCC do to strengthen viewpoint diversity. Allow me to share with you today some of the Commission's recent successes as well as some of the opportunities that lie ahead.

In October, at my urging, the FCC took steps for the first time in more than 25 years, to revitalize AM radio. AM radio is part of the foundation of our media landscape and has tied communities together for generations. It is also one of the more diverse parts of our dial which is why since my time as Acting Chair, I have consistently advocated for actions that provide relief to AM broadcasters.

Today, female-owned and minority-owned stations make up a greater percentage of stations on the AM dial than the FM dial. And my professional career was buoyed on a station that could be found for years on the AM dial in Charleston, South Carolina. So yes, I have a special affection for the AM service and its place in our culture. With the Commission's recent action, over 600 applications have now been filed to relocate FM translators for AM rebroadcast use.

In practice this means an opportunity to extend programming hours, boost listenership and increase advertiser support. I am pleased to report that the Media Bureau staff, to date, granted 80 percent of these applications, a critical step towards ensuring the long-term viability of AM broadcasting.

The Commission has also been working to encourage new entrants into commercial media. As you know, low power FM (LPFM) radio service was created as a way to serve local and/or underrepresented groups within communities. In just over two years since the LPFM filing window opened, 1,900 construction permits for new LPFM stations have been issued with the expectation that by the end of this year, there will be approximately 2,000 LPFM stations operating on the air. This phenomenal success story will result in a diversity of new viewpoints and hyper local content that is so desperately needed in our country.

In the coming months, the Commission is expected to undertake its statutorily mandated review of its broadcast ownership rules. Fostering viewpoint diversity has long been a cornerstone of FCC policymaking and I look forward to the Commission's review of these important rules.

In the meantime, I have never been shy in saying that we need a better, more comprehensive picture of the current state of female and minority ownership. We know from the FCC's own data that in 2013, of nearly 1,400 full power commercial television stations, African Americans held a majority interest in just nine, down from 11 in 2011. This same report showed that Latinos held a majority interest in just three percent of full power commercial television stations. The 2015 data will be coming soon, but we don't expect that it will reflect significant ownership changes.

In January, in an effort to improve the ownership data we have, the Commission adopted an Order making changes to our Form 323, which tracks media ownership. This Order will enable the Commission, to obtain data reflecting a more useful, accurate, and thorough assessment of minority and female broadcast station ownership in the U.S. And importantly for this audience, we adopted some processing changes that will reduce certain filing burdens. This information is critical in measuring the amount of minority ownership across the country.

Finally, I would like to share a few thoughts, on something that I am very proud of, that is the Commission's examination of how best to promote the availability of diverse and independent sources of video programming. This fact-finding exercise, which was taken up at my urging, and adopted by the Commission in February as a Notice of Inquiry, stems from having spoken to dozens of independent programmers since my arrival at the FCC in the summer of 2009.

From my conversations with stakeholders, three core issues emerged: there are insurmountable challenges, when it comes to acquiring program carriage; it is difficult to receive fair or reasonable contract terms; and growth in their online distribution model is inhibited, because program distribution access, is often restricted via contract.

The comment period in this proceeding is still open, but at last check, nearly 36,000 comments had been filed in the docket, including many of which were submitted by individual consumers. The Commission will also hold a workshop next week, to discuss the challenges facing independent and diverse programmers. While I do not know what the outcome of this inquiry will be, I believe that having a clearer understanding of the challenges, will make it easier to identify solutions that can enhance our access to independent and diverse voices.

In closing, I think it is important that when we talk about opportunities to enhance viewpoint diversity that we include the incentive auction and the ability to channel share, as one way to preserve or even enhance access, to diverse broadcasters. The Commission's auction rules of course, allow for sharing between commercial and non-commercial stations as well as between Class A and full-power stations. I am optimistic that these arrangements will come together and give a boost to the broadcast industry.

Similarly, some of you are excited about the potential benefits that could come from ATSC 3.0. When the recently filed petition reaches the full Commission, I will be looking at what it can do, to lead to greater diversity on the public airwaves. By some accounts, today's six megahertz broadcast channel, could be used to distribute as many as six to eight separate high-definition channels. This could lead to new voices in the market, or provide an option for the many LPTV stations I have met with, who are concerned about their future in broadcasting. I look forward to learning more about the ATSC 3.0 standard from stakeholders, and the opportunities it may present to fulfill my goal of greater viewpoint diversity.

Thank you again for inviting me to be here, and I look forward to a robust discussion that will follow among the expert panelists joining us here today.