



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

April 7, 2020

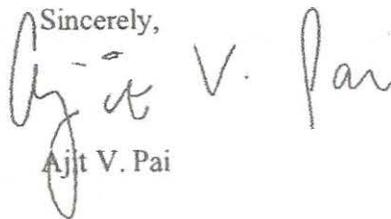
The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone:

Thank you for your letter regarding a broadcast station's right to air legally protected speech. As you note, I have always stood firmly in the defense of the First Amendment for all Americans. Under the Constitution and the Communications Act, broadcast stations have broad discretion to decide what programming to air on their stations. Absent very narrow circumstances, the government cannot and should not investigate stations or revoke licenses based on programming the station airs.

This has been my long-standing position, and there should be no question as to my commitment to these ideals. In fact, just this week, the Commission's Media Bureau and Office of General Counsel denied an emergency petition filed by "Free Press" demanding that the Commission take action to curtail the freedom of the press and investigate, or at least guide, the editorial judgments of broadcast stations. (I have attached the letter denying Free Press's petition for your review.) Standing up for the constitutional rights of broadcast stations means that we must do so in all instances in which their rights appear threatened. I hope that you agree. Indeed, given your position on this powerful Committee and the unique opportunity you have to send a message in this particular case, I strongly encourage you to speak out publicly in favor of the First Amendment—and thus in opposition to this group's misguided petition.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



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April 7, 2020

The Honorable Mike Doyle
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Ajit V. Pai