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For Immediate Release



MEDIA ACCESS PROJECT AND DIVERSE COALITION URGE FCC TO KEEP OWNERSHIP LIMITS

Washington — Media Access Project and a coalition of public interest, media reform and community media advocates, today filed comments in the FCC's broadcast ownership proceeding, urging the Commission to protect localism and diversity by retaining the current broadcast ownership limits.

"This proceeding is about peoples' right to receive all sorts of information and opinions from all sorts of people," said Parul Desai, Assistant Director of Media Access Project.

"Without the current rules, a small number of media executives will be in charge of deciding what information the public has a right to receive. How can one be expected to make knowledgeable choices and decisions about issues affecting their lives without a full range of relevant information."

In 2003, despite widespread public opposition to increasing media consolidation, the FCC relaxed and eliminated several broadcast ownership limits. A coalition of media reform advocates, including Media Access Project, challenged the FCC's decision in federal court. In June, 2004, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd Circuit in its *Prometheus* ruling, reversed and remanded the Commission's rulemaking.

"The last time around, Congress and the public sent a strong message to the Commission asking the Commission to retain the ownership rules," added Ms. Desai.

"This message was unfortunately ignored. This time around we can only hope the Commission cares more about the public's well-being rather than corporate demands."

The Commission is currently reviewing its broadcast ownership rules pursuant to the appeals court's 2004 decision and to Section 202(h) of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which requires the Commission to review its ownership rules every four years.

Media Access Project (MAP) is a public interest law firm representing civil rights, civil liberties, consumer and other public interest organizations before the FCC and the Courts. MAP served as counsel to Prometheus Radio Project in its successful appeal of the FCC's decision to further deregulate broadcast ownership in 2003.

Members of the coalition include: Center for Creative Voices in Media, Center for Digital Democracy, CCTV Center for Media and Democracy, Common Cause, Media Alliance, National Hispanic Media Coalition, New America Foundation, Prometheus Radio Project, and U.S. Public Interest Research Groups.

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