

Statement of Chairman Mike Doyle
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Hearing on
"Lifting Voices: Legislation to Promote Media Marketplace Diversity"
2322 Rayburn House Office Building
January 15, 2020

Good morning, and welcome to the Subcommittee on Communication and Technology's legislative hearing on "Lifting Voices: Legislation to Promote Media Marketplace Diversity." I'd like to thank our witnesses for appearing before the Subcommittee.

Today, we will discuss four pieces of legislation that seek to address a fundamental shortfall in our nation's media landscape -- the lack of female and minority employment in and ownership of traditional media distribution outlets.

In the United States, women and people of color own less than ten percent of all commercial radio and television stations.

We know that media outlets reflect the values and priorities of their owners and their employees.

It's critical that we find ways to make these distribution channels more reflective of our country's racial and demographic makeup so that our media may effectively serve the needs of the diverse communities that make up our nation.

Studies have shown that broadcast television and radio continue to be crucial sources of news, public safety information, and entertainment for everyone, but in particular minority communities.

It is critical that these outlets provide a diverse array of local voices that speak to the needs of the communities they serve, and that's where these statistics about female and minority ownership are telling us we are coming up short.

That's one reason I'm happy that we will be considering H.R. 3957, the "Expanding Broadcast Ownership Opportunities Act" introduced by Mr. Butterfield.

This legislation would reinstate the tax certificate program for socially disadvantaged individuals at the FCC.

This program would incentivize sales of broadcast TV and radio stations to women and people of color.

We will also consider H. Res. 549, introduced by Ms. Demings.

This resolution affirms the commitment of the House to media diversity and pledges that Congress will work with media entities and diverse stakeholders to develop common ground solutions to eliminate barriers to media diversity.

Next, we will consider H.R. 5564, the “Enhancing Broadcaster DIVERSITY Data Act” introduced by Ms. Clarke, which would require the FCC to complete its rulemaking reviewing the equal employment opportunity rules.

The bill also requires the FCC to create a public, searchable database of the broadcast ownership data collected by the FCC.

Finally, we will discuss H.R. 5567, the “MEDIA Diversity Act” introduced by Mr. Long and Mr. Veasey, which would require the FCC to consider, with the input of its Office of Communications Business Opportunities of the Commission, market entry barriers for socially disadvantaged individuals in the communications marketplace.

I look forward to the discussion on the legislation before us today.

I yield the balance of my time to my good friend and a true leader on these issues, Mr. Butterfield.

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