

Press Freedom Groups Tell FCC: Media Consolidation Poses Grave Threat to Independent News and Information in the United States

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Press Release



‘Allowing for even more media consolidation poses too great a risk to our democracy, and to the free press on which it depends.’

WASHINGTON — On Monday, 16 leading press freedom groups, civil liberties organizations and labor unions urged the Federal Communications Commission not to move forward with plans to loosen media ownership limits before it fully assesses the negative impacts media consolidation has had and will have on local news and information in the United States.

Earlier this summer, the FCC asked for public comments on changing or eliminating a longstanding rule that limits the size and national reach of giant broadcasters — like Sinclair, Nexstar and Fox Corporation — which already own hundreds of local stations across the country.

“Our chief concern regards the impact further consolidation of media ownership will have on the independence of the nation’s press and the vitality of its local journalism,” [wrote the groups](#), including the **NewsGuild CWA, Free Press, Open Markets Institute, Reporters Without Borders-USA, the Society of Professional Journalists, the National Coalition Against Censorship, Project Censored, Writers Guild of America East and Writers Guild of America West**, among others.

[The letter to the FCC](#) looks at the past 30 years of media consolidation following the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which radically changed the radio and television broadcasting marketplace, causing rapid consolidation of station ownership. This consolidation spurred further waves of consolidation across all media sectors, they write, “the full harms of which are being felt by local newsrooms and the communities they serve.”

The groups document the widespread and sizable newsroom job losses that have occurred following media-company mergers and acquisitions, and the related impact on people’s ability to access trustworthy news and information throughout the country.

Rather than pursue a path of further industry consolidation the groups urged the FCC to uphold its obligation to promote competition, localism and diversity in the U.S. media. “Allowing for even more media consolidation poses too great a risk to our democracy, and to the free press on which it depends.”

[The full letter is available here.](#)

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