

## Fight Back Against Media Deregulation!

### HELP PRESERVE A DIVERSITY OF NEWS AND OPINION

On June 2, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to ease limits on ownership of newspapers, television and radio stations, opening the floodgates to further consolidation of the media industry. The decision allows fewer giant corporations to control more of what we see, hear, and read, endangering the diversity of ideas and opinions that is the foundation of our democracy. Such diversity simply cannot exist when a few giant companies control almost the entire media spectrum

But citizen groups of all stripes, from Common Cause to the National Rifle Association, are fighting back to reverse the rules. Opponents of the rules received some extra time on September 3, when a federal circuit court in Philadelphia agreed to delay the new rules for further study. Congress is considering taking action to reverse some or all of the rules. A real victory for media diversity is within our reach! Here are several concrete steps you can take to FIGHT BACK!

**1. Talk to your elected officials about the importance of media diversity.** Make sure your Senators and Representatives know that you support media diversity and that you are opposed to the new FCC rules.

In the Senate, there are three developments to watch: 1) Senators Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Trent Lott (R-Miss.) are planning to bring their Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution of disapproval to the floor. The CRA would nullify the FCC rules. Let your Senators know they should support this important resolution; 2) Senate Bill S. 1046 (sponsored by Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) and Fritz Hollings (D-SC)) would reverse some of the FCC rules (most notably the cross-ownership bans). This bill passed out of committee with strong bipartisan support, but is still awaiting a full floor hearing. Let your Senators know they should support this bill. 3) The CJS appropriations bill may contain amendments blocking one or more of the FCC rules. In a sharply divided Congress, this may be the most promising means to blocking the FCC rules. Let your Senators know you support amendemnts to the CJS appropriations bill to block FCC rules.

In the House, Representatives voted 400-21 on July 24 to reverse the television ownership rules. But the House bill leaves the FCC's cross-ownership rules in place. Let your Representatives know that this matters.

*When you talk to your elected officials, here are some key message points:*

- The concentration of power is already bad enough under the current regulations-- just five television companies control the information the public gets to know and huge radio behemoths like Clear Channel devour local radio stations
- The new rules will allow one company to own the local newspaper, several TV and radio stations and the cable TV system within one community, impeding the development of informed and diverse viewpoints
- The new rules will likely result in higher costs for businesses that advertise in local media, and those costs likely would be passed onto consumers

**2. Petition the FCC directly.** More than 2.3 million Americans have asked the FCC to reverse the rules its members passed by a narrow 3-2 margin with only one public hearing. [Join then by signing Free Press's petition.](#)

**3. Call on the President to commit to signing legislation.** The Administrations has warned that Bush's senior advisors would recommend that he veto any bill that reverses the FCC rules. Many Americans have been telling President Bush to listen to the American people, not the media industry. [Join this effort by signing Common Cause's petition.](#)

**4. Get educated.** Read more about the important issue of media reform by visiting some (or all) of the sites listed here:

- [Center for Digital Democracy](#)
- [Free Press Media Reform.net](#)
- [MoveOn](#)
- [Common Cause](#)
- [Media Access Project](#)
- [Our Media Voice](#)

## NEWS

- [House Votes to Prevent Change in Media Rule](#) July 24, 2003, *The Washington Post*
- [Committee Votes to Block FCC Media Rule](#) July 16, 2003, *The Associated Press*
- [Panel Votes to Overturn Some New FCC Rules](#) *The Associated Press*
- [Senators Attack FCC Rules](#) June 5, 2003, by Frank Ahrens, *The Washington Post*
- [FCC: Public Be Damned](#) June 2, 2003 by John Nichols and Robert McChesney, *The Nation*
- [Read Ralph Nader's Letter to the FCC](#)

*last updated September 3, 2003*

[About Citizen Works](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Jobs/Internships](#)

ALL CONTENT © 2004 CITIZEN WORKS