

OLYMPIA J. SNOWE  
MAINE

154 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
(202) 224-5344

Web Site: <http://snowe.senate.gov>  
DEPUTY WHIP

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1903

May 5, 2008

COMMITTEES:  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION

FISHERIES AND COAST GUARD  
SUBCOMMITTEE

FINANCE

INTELLIGENCE

RANKING MEMBER, SMALL BUSINESS

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

We are writing to voice concern about changes the Federal Communications Commission has proposed for its rules to promote localism (*localism proceeding - Docket No. 04-233*). While we applaud the FCC for moving forward in suggesting modifications to policy in order to improve programming targeted to local needs and interests, we are concerned that certain proposed rules would adversely impact the ability of small, locally-owned broadcasters to serve their communities, primarily in Maine.

The proposed rule changes that are of concern are the *Physical Presence* and the *Main Studio* rules. The *Physical Presence* rule would require broadcasters to maintain a physical presence at each radio broadcasting facility during all hours of operation. The *Main Studio* rule would reinstate the pre-1987 requirement that all broadcasters maintain their main transmitting studio in their communities of license instead of the current requirement of within 25 miles from the center of the community. Reinstating these policies to their more constrictive versions will have a serious, if not disastrous, economic impact on small broadcasters and their ability to continue operating.

The FCC should not impose rules that unduly undermine the very efforts that such rules are installed to achieve. Small, locally-owned broadcasters are the stewards of localism—a recent GAO report and the FCC's abandoned 2003 report indicate as much by finding local media outlets are more likely to provide local programs that meet the needs of residents in the market compared to national outlets. These rule changes could create significant financial burdens to small, independent broadcasters—quite possibly forcing them out of business or having to sell out to larger media outlets. So instead of promoting localism, the rules could ultimately perpetuate media consolidation.

We hope the Commission will reconsider the impact that these rule modifications will have on small, independent broadcasters' ability to continue operating and examine exemptions for small broadcasters or alternative approaches to promote local programming with respect to these two items.

Sincerely,



OLYMPIA J. SNOWE  
United States Senator



SUSAN M. COLLINS  
United States Senator

AUBURN  
TWO GREAT FALLS PLAZA  
SUITE 7B  
AUBURN, ME 04210  
(207) 786-2451

AUGUSTA  
40 WESTERN AVENUE, SUITE 408C  
AUGUSTA, ME 04330  
(207) 622-8292

BANGOR  
ONE CUMBERLAND PLACE, SUITE 306  
BANGOR, ME 04401  
(207) 945-0432

BIDDEFORD  
227 MAIN STREET  
BIDDEFORD, ME 04005  
(207) 282-4144

PORTLAND  
3 CANAL PLAZA, SUITE 601  
PORTLAND, ME 04101  
(207) 874-0883  
MAINE RELAY SERVICE  
TDD 1-955-3323

PRESQUE ISLE  
169 ACADEMY STREET, SUITE 3  
PRESQUE ISLE, ME 04769  
(207) 764-5124