

5/30/2003 Moran Opposes FCC Approval of Media Consolidation

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Proposal Could Allow More National Control over Local Media

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today informed the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Michael Powell, of his opposition to a proposed increase of the national broadcast ownership cap. The proposed rules would allow for more mergers and increased media consolidation. The FCC plans a vote for Monday, June 2nd.

"Increasing the ownership cap for television stations will place a real threat on local programming in Kansas," Moran said. "Our communities rely on local broadcasters for what's going on in their areas and matters of local interest. National programming does not. They work with a 'one-size-fits-all' mentality and have little interest in the needs of our communities."

Next week, the five-member board of the FCC will vote on whether to allow one owner to control more stations within the same market and to allow television networks to acquire more stations. Current broadcast-ownership rules limit networks to owning no more than a 35 percent share of television households. Also being considered is the lifting of restrictions on media companies owning a newspaper and television station in the same market.

The concentration of ownership could lead to fewer news sources, limiting the amount of diversity in reporting and ideas.

"It's a matter of protecting the concept of local news and about maintaining an open forum for sharing opinions and ideas - the very democratic principals that our country was founded upon," Moran said. "Opposing these changes would help preserve local control over news dissemination and promote more diversity of information sources and programming in the media markets."

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