

**Congresswoman Maxine Waters  
Talking Points/Outline  
FCC Hearing, Media Ownership  
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Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary

I thank you for holding these hearings in Los Angeles. It is very important that you be here in Los Angeles – perhaps one of the most important media markets in the world. We are dealing with a serious issue. Media concentration and consolidation is a very serious issue. Without diversity in ownership and participation, our democracy is in danger. The public must have access to information and all points of view.

I just left a meeting of the County Board of Supervisors where we were in serious discussions about saving Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital. This Hospital has been in a crisis for over two years. There has been a crisis because the *LA Times* launched an attack on Martin Luther King Hospital, and the attack was absolutely unbelievable – the amount of time and the team it deployed in order to conduct its investigation. The amount of effort that they put into closing Martin Luther King Hospital was unbelievable. As a matter of fact, many of us have come to believe that the *Times* decided that it wanted to get a Pulitzer rather than investigating the Hospital to make sure it was providing quality healthcare services. Well, it accomplished part of what it attempted to do – they helped to close our Trauma Center, and it did get a Pulitzer Prize. Many of us believe that if the Hospital is closed altogether, the *Times* will get a second Pulitzer Prize.

The *LA Times* newspaper and KTLA are owned by the Tribune Company. This combination violates the FCC newspaper broadcast ownership rules. The *LA Times* alone generated \$1.1 billion in 2004 revenue – which was more than its 27 stations and its entertainment division generated together. Tribune owns KTLA – major local TV station and the largest newspaper in the Los Angeles area. Under the ownership rules, the Tribune Company should have sold off either the TV station or the newspaper prior to this year’s renewal of its TV broadcast license. In response to this situation, the Tribune Company has requested either a permanent or a temporary waiver of the FCC rules until the FCC has completed its ownership hearings and has adopted a new rule. Public opposition to the waiver request is due by November 1, and I plan to submit a lot of opposition. Not only am I opposed, but my community is opposed to this kind of concentration and consolidation.

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In 2004, the Tribune Company made \$5.7 billion in revenue by controlling the major markets. It owns 27 full-power television stations in 22 cities – which include KTLA in Los Angeles. Furthermore, it has an equity interest in the TV Food Network and owns two major cable channels – CLTV, which is the 24-hour Chicago news channel, and WGN Cable – otherwise known as the “WGN Superstation.” Tribune’s presence in the print media world is extraordinary. I took a look at the newspapers in our community – a few small newspapers – the *LA Sentinel*, *Daily Breeze*, *The Wave*, *LA Weekly*, and the *Watts Times*. In Los Angeles, the Tribune’s major paper – the *L.A. Times*, has a Sunday circulation of 1.4 million – that exceeds the circulations of 14 local newspapers combined!

Tribune controls video and print media around the nation as well – it owns 25 major newspapers, 10 magazines, 12 publishing houses – in addition to LA Times Communications, one production company, part of the Chicago Cubs baseball team, part of the CareerBuilder employment service company, part of six major media subsidiaries or partnerships such as Tribune Media Services, Zap 2 It, and Brass Ring. Not only does it control sources of what we read and see on the television or at the movies, it owns one of the top radio stations in the nation – WGN-AM radio in Chicago. If that is not concentration, I don’t know what is.

When *LA Times* decided it would win a Pulitzer Prize on the backs of the people of South Central Los Angeles with a scathing attack on the Hospital - with undercover agents in the Hospital trailing and chasing doctors, putting them under surveillance, we did not have another point of view. We did not have anybody with the resources to counter what it was doing. We did not have any newspapers that could put out a team of investigators. We did not have radio stations with the background information and the amount of dollars necessary to deal with this. We are in a crisis now, and we are trying to save our Hospital. The one thing that I want to ensure is that you do not make the mistake of giving the *Los Angeles Times* a waiver – they do not deserve it.