



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

News Media Information: (202) 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: (888) 835-5322

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Matthew Berry, (202) 418-2005
Email: matthew.berry@fcc.gov
Courtney Reinhard, (202) 418-2013
Email: courtney.reinhard@fcc.gov

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONERS AJIT PAI AND MICHAEL O'RIELLY ON THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE DECISION TO RESTRICT TELEVISION STATIONS' USE OF JOINT SALES AGREEMENTS

When the Commission voted to restrict television broadcasters' use of joint sales agreements (JSAs), we warned that this decision would lead to "less ownership diversity" and "more television stations going out of business." Unfortunately, just two months later, this is coming to pass.

Today, Sinclair Television Group announced its intent to surrender to the Commission for cancellation three television station licenses in the Charleston, South Carolina and Birmingham, Alabama markets. Sinclair reported that it was unable to find a viable buyer for any of these stations. As a result, it appears that these three stations will soon be going dark.

It didn't have to be this way. Prior to the Commission's decision to restrict the use of JSAs, Sinclair had a viable buyer for stations in Charleston and Birmingham: Howard Stirk Holdings (HSH), an African-American owned broadcaster. That deal, however, fell through because of the Commission's decision to stop Sinclair from entering into JSAs with HSH.

So what has the Commission's decision wrought? Instead of increasing the number of African-American-owned television stations, we are driving stations off the air. This will mean job losses, less service to South Carolinians and Alabamians, and less ownership diversity. We do not see how such an outcome possibly serves the public interest, and we hope that the Commission will take action immediately to correct its misguided restrictions on JSAs.