



NEWS

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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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STATEMENT OF FCC COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI ON THREE TV STATIONS GOING DARK FOLLOWING THE FCC'S REVIEW OF THE SINCLAIR/ALLBRITTON TRANSACTION

Today, the FCC's crackdown on joint sales agreements claims three more victims: two television stations in the Birmingham, Alabama market (WCFT and WJSU) and one television station in Charleston, South Carolina (WCIV). This time, the hammer falls as part of the agency's review of the Sinclair/Allbritton transaction. Under the parties' original proposal and the rules that were in effect when the transaction was presented to the Commission, these three stations would have continued providing local service to their communities. But because of the Commission's new rules, the Media Bureau's order requires them to go dark within sixty days.

How does this outcome serve the cause of diversity? And how does this outcome serve the cause of competition? In Charleston, South Carolina, for example, WCIV would have been owned and operated by Howard Stirk Holdings, Inc., an African-American owned broadcast company. But apparently the Commission believes that it is better for that station to go out of business than for Howard Stirk Holdings to own the station and participate in a joint sales agreement with Sinclair. I strongly disagree. And so too, I'll bet, would consumers in Charleston.