



NEWS

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See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 5, 2015

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**STATEMENT OF FCC COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI
ON THE INTRODUCTION OF BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION
TO PROTECT JOINT SALES AGREEMENTS BETWEEN TELEVISION STATIONS**

I commend Senators Roy Blunt, Barbara Mikulski, Charles Schumer, and Tim Scott for sponsoring legislation (S. 1182) to protect joint sales agreements (JSAs) between television stations. Under rules passed by the FCC last year on a party-line vote, JSAs that had been previously approved by the Commission would have to be unwound by 2016. This bipartisan bill, by contrast, would permit television stations to maintain those JSAs.

JSAs are contractual agreements that allow broadcasters to cut down on costs by using the same advertising sales force. The efficiencies created by JSAs have helped broadcasters to offer services that benefit consumers, especially in smaller markets. From enabling a television station in Wichita, Kansas to broadcast the only Spanish-language news in the state to allowing broadcasters in Joplin, Missouri to invest in Doppler radar technology that saved lives during a 2011 tornado, JSAs have served communities well and have promoted localism and diversity in broadcasting.

Unfortunately, the FCC's new restrictions on JSAs have already caused some stations to go off the air and other stations to carry less local news. And that disturbing trend will only accelerate if scores of existing JSAs are terminated next year. For the sake of television viewers across the country, I agree with Senators Blunt, Mikulski, Schumer, and Scott that we should not let that happen.