



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
United States Senate
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

I understand that you disliked or disagreed with the content of particular broadcasts, but I can hardly think of an action more chilling of free speech than the federal government investigating a broadcast station because of disagreement with its news coverage or promotion of that coverage. Instead, I agree with Senator Markey that “[a]ny insinuation that elected officials could use the levers of government to control or censor *[sic]* the news media would represent a startling degradation of the freedom of the press.” I also take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment I made to several members of the Senate Commerce Committee last year that the Commission under my leadership would “not act in a manner that violates the First Amendment and stifles or penalizes free speech by electronic media, directly or indirectly.”

Thank you for your interest, and let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai".

Ajit V. Pai



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cantwell:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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April 12, 2018

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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April 12, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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OFFICE OF
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April 12, 2018

The Honorable Tina Smith
United States Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warren:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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OFFICE OF
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Udall:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Baldwin:

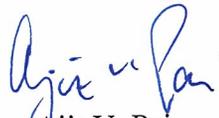
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April 12, 2018

The Honorable Cory Booker
United States Senate
359 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Booker:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

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OFFICE OF
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
United States Senate
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Markey:

Thank you for your letter requesting that the Commission investigate a broadcaster based on the content of its news coverage and promotion of that coverage. In light of my commitment to protecting the First Amendment and freedom of the press, I must respectfully decline.

A free media is vital to our democracy. That is why during my time at the Commission I have consistently opposed any effort to infringe upon the freedom of the press and have fought to eliminate regulations that impede the gathering and dissemination of news. Most relevant here, I have repeatedly made clear that the FCC does not have the authority to revoke a license of a broadcast station based on the content of a particular newscast.

I understand that you disliked or disagreed with the content of particular broadcasts, but I can hardly think of an action more chilling of free speech than the federal government investigating a broadcast station because of disagreement with its news coverage or promotion of that coverage. I agree with what you wrote me earlier this year that “[a]ny insinuation that elected officials could use the levers of government to control or sensor [*sic*] the news media would represent a startling degradation of the freedom of the press.” I also take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment I made to several members of the Senate Commerce Committee last year that the Commission under my leadership would “not act in a manner that violates the First Amendment and stifles or penalizes free speech by electronic media, directly or indirectly.”

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