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February 9, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Committee:

In advance of tomorrow's hearing to examine broadcaster consolidation, the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), urges the Committee to approach any relaxation of broadcast ownership limits with significant caution. CTA represents the U.S. consumer technology industry and is North America's largest technology trade association.

Broadcast television uses exclusive access to publicly owned spectrum, a finite resource the federal government must manage in the public interest. Changes to ownership rules that further consolidate control of local broadcast licenses should not occur without a corresponding reassessment of whether broadcast spectrum is being used efficiently and in a manner that best serves American consumers and the broader economy.

As a recently released study by the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) reveals, just 9% of consumers surveyed say they use an antenna to access live television, including local broadcast TV stations, a big drop from when the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) ownership rules were first put in place in the 1940s.¹

¹ See National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), *New National Survey: Voters Say Outdated Broadcast Ownership Cap is Unfair to Local Stations* (February 2, 2026), available at: <https://www.nab.org/documents/newsRoom/pressRelease.asp?id=7389>.

CTA market research also shows that approximately 8% of video content viewers rely on a TV antenna as the only source of video content.² Ironically, while these findings confirm the reality of how most consumers choose to access local TV stations, the questions posed in NAB's recent survey on public support for relaxing ownership caps are so contrived, they stand in stark contrast to other reputable studies which show the opposite: consumers want to preserve the localism that comes from local TV stations.³

We ask this Committee to consider the obvious: local broadcast TV spectrum remains increasingly underused in many markets, as consumer viewing habits continue to migrate toward streaming, mobile, and on-demand platforms. Yet, demand for licensed and unlicensed spectrum to support next-generation wireless services, innovation, and economic growth is growing. Allowing greater consolidation of broadcast ownership without addressing this imbalance risks entrenching inefficient spectrum use while foreclosing opportunities for higher-value applications.

The NAB's push for loosened ownership restrictions and new mandates requiring the inclusion of a NEXTGEN TV tuner in all televisions and a mandate of AM radios in cars reveals a misuse of valuable public spectrum and a reliance on Washington largesse at the expense of consumers. If the spectrum broadcasters are using were being put to its best use in 2026, broadcasters would not be seeking government action to force consumers to buy receivers they do not want.

CTA believes that if Congress or the FCC considers relaxing the broadcast ownership rules, such action should be paired with meaningful measures to return underused broadcast spectrum to the federal government and should not include mandates that force consumers to buy features they do not want. This would help ensure that the public receives fair value for the use of the airwaves and that spectrum policy keeps pace with modern consumer and economic needs.

² See CTA 2025 U.S. Consumer Technology Ownership & Market Potential Study (May 2025), available at: <https://www.cta.tech/research/2025-us-consumer-technology-ownership-market-potential-study/>.

³ See TVB Television Bureau of Advertising, *Survey Finds that 95% of Respondents Believe Accessing Local News on Their Local TV Station is Important* (September 29, 2025), available at: <https://www.tvb.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Survey-Finds-that-95-of-Respondents-Believe-Accessing-Local-News-on-Their-Local-TV-Station-is-Important-.pdf>; Pew Research Center, *Views of local news* (May 7, 2024), available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2024/05/07/views-of-local-news/> ("most U.S. adults (85%) believe local news outlets are at least somewhat important to the well-being of their local community, including 44% who say they are extremely or very important.").

Ownership rules were created to promote localism, competition, and diversity. Relaxing those rules without securing tangible public interest benefits — particularly improved spectrum efficiency — risks hurting those objectives while delivering limited consumer benefit.

CTA stands ready to work with the Committee to advance a forward-looking spectrum policy that balances the needs of broadcasters with the urgent demand for spectrum to support wireless innovation, economic competitiveness, and consumer choice.

We appreciate your attention to this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Shapiro". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" and last name "Shapiro" clearly distinguishable.

Gary Shapiro
Executive Chair and CEO
Consumer Technology Association