

April 25, 2007

Susan Dudley
Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, D. C. 20503

Dear Ms. Dudley:

The Federal Communications Commission requests clearance under the “emergency processing” provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (5 CFR 1320.13) for a new, unnumbered information collection, submitted through the ROCIS system today, entitled “How People Get News and Information - Media Ownership Study 1.” We request approval by May 8, 2007.

I am requesting expedited emergency processing because, as described in the background section below, this collection of information is needed prior to the expiration of the normal 120-day time period associated with routine processing of information collections. I also explain below why this information collection is essential to the responsible and effective implementation of the Commission’s mission and what unanticipated events underpin this request. Finally, the section below and the information submitted via ROCIS note the consultations with interested agencies and members of the public that the Commission has already conducted on this topic. These consultations have allowed us to focus the proposed information collection in order to minimize the burden of the collection of information.

BACKGROUND:

This requested information collection is a telephone survey, to be conducted by the Nielsen Media Research, of approximately 3,000 individuals. Individuals contacted by Nielsen will be asked approximately 40 questions about how they get news and information. The results from this study will become one part of the larger public record in the Commission’s on-going review of the Nation’s media ownership rules.

As you’re aware, the Congress, media, and public have a high level of interest in this topic. In addition to public hearings the Commission has held, many of the Nation’s largest cultural and ethnic organizations are sponsoring or actively participating in public discussions of media

ownership.¹ Additionally, several Congressional committees have indicated their plans to hold hearings on this socially, culturally, and economically important topic.²

Because of the intense public interest in this topic and the accelerated schedule for Congressional hearings on the topic that came about following the recent swearing-in of the 110th Congress, waiting until September 2007 for approval to begin collecting this information is likely to lead to a situation in which the Commission might be made to provide information to Congress that may not fully reflect the current facts-on-the-ground. As a result, failure to allow the Commission to gather this information in May 2007 could lead to out-of-date information being shared with Congress - potentially leading to inappropriate or ineffective public policy.

My staff is ready to work with your PRA Desk Officer to immediately provide any additional information needed to assure OMB's approval of this emergency request by May 8, 2007.

Karen Wheelless
Associate Managing Director for Performance
Evaluation and Records Management
Federal Communications Commission

¹ For example: sponsors and endorsers of a public hearing on media ownership held in Oakland included the NAACP, Media Alliance, Youth Media Council and Free Press, Applied Resource Center, Coleman Advocates for Youth, ColorLines, Communities United Against Violence, Critical Resistance, Just Cause Oakland, La Raza Centro Legal, Power, Prometheus Radio Project, San Francisco Day Laborers Program, School of Unity and Leadership, SPIN Project, Youth in Focus, and Youth Movement Records.

² "House Dems Eye Telecom Review." David Hatch. *National Journal*. February 27, 2007.