



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20554

Brendan Carr
Chairman

April 13, 2026

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Nexstar—Tegna Transaction Letter

Dear Ranking Member Cantwell,

Thank you for your March 30, 2026, letter regarding the Nexstar-Tegna transaction. As you know, the parties announced their transaction on August 19, 2025. The parties then filed the transfer applications with the FCC following the partial government shutdown, which were officially accepted for filing by the agency on December 1, 2025. Following the close of the relevant pleading cycle, the FCC's Media Bureau announced its decision on March 19, 2026.

In your letter, you ask about the FCC's authority to have the Media Bureau issue the March 19 decision, rather than proceeding with an initial vote at the full Commission level. The Media Bureau, like other components of the FCC, has longstanding authority to waive FCC rules.¹ I believe that your letter focuses on two sets of regulations or rules in particular.

As to the national ownership regulation, the full Commission has previously addressed this rule on several occasions—including in votes under both Republican and Democratic agency leadership. In those full Commission votes, the full Commission made clear that the 39% rule is an FCC rule, rather than a statutory limit.² This full Commission precedent is consistent with a

¹ 47 CFR § 1.3 (“The FCC may waive its rules ‘where particular facts would make strict compliance with a rule inconsistent with the public interest.’”); *see also* *WAIT Radio v. FCC*, 418 F.2d 1153, 1157 (D.C. Cir. 1969); *Northeast Cellular Telephone Co. v. FCC*, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990) (citing *WAIT Radio*, 418 F.2d at 1159); *NetworkIP, LLC v. FCC*, 548 F.3d 116, 127 (D.C. Cir. 2008); 47 CFR §§ 0.61, 0.283.

² *Amend. of Section 73.3555(e)*, MB Docket No. 13-236, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 28 FCC Rcd 14324, 14329, para. 13 (2013); *Amend. of Section 73.3555(e)*, MB Docket No. 13-236, Report and Order, 31 FCC Rcd 10213, 10223-10224, para. 21 (2016) (“We conclude that the Commission has the authority to modify the national audience reach cap . . . We find that no statute bars the Commission from revisiting the cap . . . in a rulemaking proceeding so long as such a review is conducted separately from a quadrennial review of the broadcast ownership rules pursuant to Section 202(h) of the 1996 Act. The CAA simply directed the Commission to revise its rules to reflect a 39 percent national audience reach cap and removed the requirement to review the national ownership cap from the Commission's quadrennial review requirement. It did not impose a statutory national audience reach cap or prohibit the Commission from evaluating the elements of this rule. Thus, the Commission retains authority under the Communications Act to review any aspect of the national audience reach cap.”); *Amend. of Section 73.3555(e)*,

prior D.C. Circuit decision.³ There, the court found that a previous FCC ownership limitation—which, like the current one, was expressed by Congress in statute as a percentage limitation—did not operate as a statutory cap, but instead as an agency rule that could be changed or modified by the agency.

Given that the full Commission has made clear that the national ownership cap is an FCC rule and not a statutory limit, the Media Bureau had the legal authority to waive that rule. Turning to the local ownership rule, this was not the first time that the Media Bureau waived that regulation. Indeed, the Media Bureau recently approved a waiver of the local television ownership rule to allow Circle City Broadcasting to own three television stations in the Indianapolis market.⁴

Your letter also raises questions about the Media Bureau’s decision given the size of this transaction. The Nexstar-Tegna transaction was in line with (and in many cases substantially smaller than) others decided previously by the Media Bureau or other components of the FCC on delegated authority. For instance, under Chairman Wheeler, on September 2, 2015, and May 3, 2016, respectively, the Wireline Competition Bureau approved the sale of assets from Verizon to Frontier,⁵ a deal valued at \$10.5 billion, and Altice’s acquisition of Cablevision, a deal valued at \$17.7 billion.⁶ In the broadcast space, under Chairman Pai, the Media Bureau approved the acquisition of Media General by Nexstar,⁷ the acquisition of Cox by Terrier Media,⁸ and the acquisition of Raycom Media by Gray, deals valued at \$4.6 billion, \$3.6 billion, and \$3.1 billion, respectively.⁹ During President Biden’s term in office, under Chairwoman Rosenworcel, no large broadcast deals were approved at all, either at the Commission level or on delegated authority. However, the Media Bureau designated for hearing the applications for Standard

MB Docket No. 13-236, Order on Reconsideration, 32 FCC Rcd 3390, 3398, paras. 3-4, n. 60 (2017) (“[T]he parties fail to support their assertion that the Commission lacks authority to modify the cap, ignoring the Commission’s prior analysis and conclusion that it has such authority, which remains undisturbed.”).

³ See *Fox Television Stations, Inc. v. FCC*, 280 F.3d 1027, 1043 (*Fox I*), modified on reh’g, 293 F.3d 537 (*Fox II*) (D.C. Cir. 2002) (“First, the choice of 35% rather than any other number determined only the starting point from which the Commission was to assess the need for further change.”).

⁴ See *Application for Consent to the Assignment of the License of WRTV(TV), Indianapolis, Indiana, from Scripps Broadcasting Holdings LLC to CCB License, LLC*, Order, DA 26-207 (MB Feb. 27, 2026).

⁵ *Applications Filed by Frontier Communications Corporation and Verizon Communications Inc. for the Partial Assignment or Transfer of Control of Certain Assets in California, Florida, and Texas*, WC Docket No. 15-44, 30 FCC Rcd 9812 (WC/IB/WTB 2015).

⁶ *Applications to Transfer Control of Cablevision Systems Corporation to Altice N.V.*, WC Docket No. 15-257, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 31 FCC Rcd 4365 (WC/IB/MB/WTB 2016).

⁷ *Consent to Transfer Control of License Subsidiaries of Media General, Inc., from Shareholders of Media General, Inc. to Nexstar Media Group, Inc. et al.*, MB Docket No. 16-57, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 32 FCC Rcd 183 (MB/WTB 2017).

⁸ *Consent to Transfer Control of Certain License Subsidiaries of NBI Holdings, LLC to Terrier Media Buyer, Inc. et al.*, MB Docket No. 19-98 et al., Memorandum Opinion and Order, 34 FCC Rcd 10554 (MB 2019).

⁹ *Consent to Transfer Control of Certain License Subsidiaries of Raycom Media, Inc. to Gray Television, Inc. et al.*, MB Docket No. 18-230, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 33 FCC Rcd 12349 (MB 2018).

General's proposed acquisition of TEGNA,¹⁰ effectively killing a deal valued at \$8.6 billion. More recently, under my Chairmanship, much larger deals, in terms of dollar value, were approved on delegated authority in the non-broadcast space, including Charter's acquisition of Cox,¹¹ a deal valued at \$34.5 billion, and Verizon's acquisition of Frontier,¹² a deal valued at \$20 billion.

On a going forward basis, my own view is that the FCC should operate consistent with the statute, agency rules, and FCC case law. That will continue to guide and constrain agency decisions—operating as a limiting principle. Your letter also asks about the use of delegated authority to block transactions. In my time as Chairman, the FCC has not blocked a large transaction without a Commission vote. This represents a departure from the agency precedent set during the Biden years.

Finally, in this particular case, as your letter notes, the Bureau-level decision is not a final action by the full Commission. Parties have appealed the Bureau decision to the full Commission by filing an application for review.¹³ I would welcome the chance to work with you or your offices on any legislative ideas that you believe would aid the FCC's decision-making process.

Sincerely,



Brendan Carr
Chairman

¹⁰ *Consent to Transfer Control of Certain Subsidiaries of TEGNA Inc. to SGCI Holdings III LLC et al.*, MB Docket No. 22-162, Hearing Designation Order, 38 FCC Rcd 1282 (MB 2023).

¹¹ *Cox Enterprises, Inc. and Charter Communications, Inc., Applications for Consent to Transfer Control*, WC Docket No. 25-233, Memorandum Opinion and Order, DA 26-211 (WCB/OIA/WTB Feb. 27, 2026).

¹² *Frontier Communications Parent, Inc. and Verizon Communications, Inc. Application for Consent to Transfer Control*, WC Docket No. 24-445, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 40 FCC Rcd 3156 (WCB/OIA/WTB 2025).

¹³ Emergency Application for Review of the Broadband Communications Association of Pennsylvania et al., MB Docket No. 25-331 (filed Mar. 20, 2026).



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20554

Brendan Carr
Chairman

April 13, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Nexstar—Tegna Transaction Letter

Dear Chairman Cruz,

Thank you for your March 30, 2026, letter regarding the Nexstar-Tegna transaction. As you know, the parties announced their transaction on August 19, 2025. The parties then filed the transfer applications with the FCC following the partial government shutdown, which were officially accepted for filing by the agency on December 1, 2025. Following the close of the relevant pleading cycle, the FCC's Media Bureau announced its decision on March 19, 2026.

In your letter, you ask about the FCC's authority to have the Media Bureau issue the March 19 decision, rather than proceeding with an initial vote at the full Commission level. The Media Bureau, like other components of the FCC, has longstanding authority to waive FCC rules.¹ I believe that your letter focuses on two sets of regulations or rules in particular.

As to the national ownership regulation, the full Commission has previously addressed this rule on several occasions—including in votes under both Republican and Democratic agency leadership. In those full Commission votes, the full Commission made clear that the 39% rule is an FCC rule, rather than a statutory limit.² This full Commission precedent is consistent with a

¹ 47 CFR § 1.3 (“The FCC may waive its rules ‘where particular facts would make strict compliance with a rule inconsistent with the public interest.’”); *see also* *WAIT Radio v. FCC*, 418 F.2d 1153, 1157 (D.C. Cir. 1969); *Northeast Cellular Telephone Co. v. FCC*, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990) (citing *WAIT Radio*, 418 F.2d at 1159); *NetworkIP, LLC v. FCC*, 548 F.3d 116, 127 (D.C. Cir. 2008); 47 CFR §§ 0.61, 0.283.

² *Amend. of Section 73.3555(e)*, MB Docket No. 13-236, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 28 FCC Rcd 14324, 14329, para. 13 (2013); *Amend. of Section 73.3555(e)*, MB Docket No. 13-236, Report and Order, 31 FCC Rcd 10213, 10223-10224, para. 21 (2016) (“We conclude that the Commission has the authority to modify the national audience reach cap . . . We find that no statute bars the Commission from revisiting the cap . . . in a rulemaking proceeding so long as such a review is conducted separately from a quadrennial review of the broadcast ownership rules pursuant to Section 202(h) of the 1996 Act. The CAA simply directed the Commission to revise its rules to reflect a 39 percent national audience reach cap and removed the requirement to review the national ownership cap from the Commission's quadrennial review requirement. It did not impose a statutory national audience reach cap or prohibit the Commission from evaluating the elements of this rule. Thus, the Commission retains authority under the Communications Act to review any aspect of the national audience reach cap.”); *Amend. of Section 73.3555(e)*,

prior D.C. Circuit decision.³ There, the court found that a previous FCC ownership limitation—which, like the current one, was expressed by Congress in statute as a percentage limitation—did not operate as a statutory cap, but instead as an agency rule that could be changed or modified by the agency.

Given that the full Commission has made clear that the national ownership cap is an FCC rule and not a statutory limit, the Media Bureau had the legal authority to waive that rule. Turning to the local ownership rule, this was not the first time that the Media Bureau waived that regulation. Indeed, the Media Bureau recently approved a waiver of the local television ownership rule to allow Circle City Broadcasting to own three television stations in the Indianapolis market.⁴

Your letter also raises questions about the Media Bureau’s decision given the size of this transaction. The Nexstar-Tegna transaction was in line with (and in many cases substantially smaller than) others decided previously by the Media Bureau or other components of the FCC on delegated authority. For instance, under Chairman Wheeler, on September 2, 2015, and May 3, 2016, respectively, the Wireline Competition Bureau approved the sale of assets from Verizon to Frontier,⁵ a deal valued at \$10.5 billion, and Altice’s acquisition of Cablevision, a deal valued at \$17.7 billion.⁶ In the broadcast space, under Chairman Pai, the Media Bureau approved the acquisition of Media General by Nexstar,⁷ the acquisition of Cox by Terrier Media,⁸ and the acquisition of Raycom Media by Gray, deals valued at \$4.6 billion, \$3.6 billion, and \$3.1 billion, respectively.⁹ During President Biden’s term in office, under Chairwoman Rosenworcel, no large broadcast deals were approved at all, either at the Commission level or on delegated authority. However, the Media Bureau designated for hearing the applications for Standard

MB Docket No. 13-236, Order on Reconsideration, 32 FCC Rcd 3390, 3398, paras. 3-4, n. 60 (2017) (“[T]he parties fail to support their assertion that the Commission lacks authority to modify the cap, ignoring the Commission’s prior analysis and conclusion that it has such authority, which remains undisturbed.”).

³ See *Fox Television Stations, Inc. v. FCC*, 280 F.3d 1027, 1043 (*Fox I*), modified on reh’g, 293 F.3d 537 (*Fox II*) (D.C. Cir. 2002) (“First, the choice of 35% rather than any other number determined only the starting point from which the Commission was to assess the need for further change.”).

⁴ See *Application for Consent to the Assignment of the License of WRTV(TV), Indianapolis, Indiana, from Scripps Broadcasting Holdings LLC to CCB License, LLC*, Order, DA 26-207 (MB Feb. 27, 2026).

⁵ *Applications Filed by Frontier Communications Corporation and Verizon Communications Inc. for the Partial Assignment or Transfer of Control of Certain Assets in California, Florida, and Texas*, WC Docket No. 15-44, 30 FCC Rcd 9812 (WC/IB/WTB 2015).

⁶ *Applications to Transfer Control of Cablevision Systems Corporation to Altice N.V.*, WC Docket No. 15-257, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 31 FCC Rcd 4365 (WC/IB/MB/WTB 2016).

⁷ *Consent to Transfer Control of License Subsidiaries of Media General, Inc., from Shareholders of Media General, Inc. to Nexstar Media Group, Inc. et al.*, MB Docket No. 16-57, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 32 FCC Rcd 183 (MB/WTB 2017).

⁸ *Consent to Transfer Control of Certain License Subsidiaries of NBI Holdings, LLC to Terrier Media Buyer, Inc. et al.*, MB Docket No. 19-98 et al., Memorandum Opinion and Order, 34 FCC Rcd 10554 (MB 2019).

⁹ *Consent to Transfer Control of Certain License Subsidiaries of Raycom Media, Inc. to Gray Television, Inc. et al.*, MB Docket No. 18-230, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 33 FCC Rcd 12349 (MB 2018).

General's proposed acquisition of TEGNA,¹⁰ effectively killing a deal valued at \$8.6 billion. More recently, under my Chairmanship, much larger deals, in terms of dollar value, were approved on delegated authority in the non-broadcast space, including Charter's acquisition of Cox,¹¹ a deal valued at \$34.5 billion, and Verizon's acquisition of Frontier,¹² a deal valued at \$20 billion.

On a going forward basis, my own view is that the FCC should operate consistent with the statute, agency rules, and FCC case law. That will continue to guide and constrain agency decisions—operating as a limiting principle. Your letter also asks about the use of delegated authority to block transactions. In my time as Chairman, the FCC has not blocked a large transaction without a Commission vote. This represents a departure from the agency precedent set during the Biden years.

Finally, in this particular case, as your letter notes, the Bureau-level decision is not a final action by the full Commission. Parties have appealed the Bureau decision to the full Commission by filing an application for review.¹³ I would welcome the chance to work with you or your offices on any legislative ideas that you believe would aid the FCC's decision-making process.

Sincerely,



Brendan Carr
Chairman

¹⁰ *Consent to Transfer Control of Certain Subsidiaries of TEGNA Inc. to SGCI Holdings III LLC et al.*, MB Docket No. 22-162, Hearing Designation Order, 38 FCC Rcd 1282 (MB 2023).

¹¹ *Cox Enterprises, Inc. and Charter Communications, Inc., Applications for Consent to Transfer Control*, WC Docket No. 25-233, Memorandum Opinion and Order, DA 26-211 (WCB/OIA/WTB Feb. 27, 2026).

¹² *Frontier Communications Parent, Inc. and Verizon Communications, Inc. Application for Consent to Transfer Control*, WC Docket No. 24-445, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 40 FCC Rcd 3156 (WCB/OIA/WTB 2025).

¹³ Emergency Application for Review of the Broadband Communications Association of Pennsylvania et al., MB Docket No. 25-331 (filed Mar. 20, 2026).

JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA
 ROGER F. WICKER, MISSISSIPPI
 DEB FISCHER, NEBRASKA
 JERRY MORAN, KANSAS
 DAN SULLIVAN, ALASKA
 MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE
 TODD YOUNG, INDIANA
 TED BUDD, NORTH CAROLINA
 ERIC SCHMITT, MISSOURI
 JOHN CURTIS, UTAH
 BERNIE MORENO, OHIO
 TIM SHEEHY, MONTANA
 SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, WEST VIRGINIA
 CYNTHIA M. LUMMIS, WYOMING

MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
 AMY KLOBUCHAR, MINNESOTA
 BRIAN SCHATZ, HAWAII
 EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
 GARY C. PETERS, MICHIGAN
 TAMMY BALDWIN, WISCONSIN
 TAMMY DUCKWORTH, ILLINOIS
 JACKY ROSEN, NEVADA
 BEN RAY LUJAN, NEW MEXICO
 JOHN W. HICKENLOOPER, COLORADO
 JOHN FETTERMAN, PENNSYLVANIA
 ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY
 LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER, DELAWARE

BRAD GRANTZ, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
 LILA HARPER HELMS, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
 AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

March 30, 2026

The Honorable Brendan Carr
 Chairman
 Federal Communications Commission
 45 L Street, NE
 Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Carr:

We write regarding the Commission's March 19th approval of Nexstar Media Group's acquisition of Tegna on delegated authority.¹ This decision raises serious concerns about the Commission's use of delegated authority in matters involving significant legal, policy, and economic consequences. The transaction is unprecedented in scale, resulting in the largest local broadcast television group in U.S. history, with 259 full-power television stations across 44 states, reaching nearly 80 percent of U.S. television households, even after required divestitures. A transaction of this magnitude alone warranted consideration and a vote by the full Commission. Although you have indicated that a full Commission vote may still occur, the Commission has already approved the transaction on delegated authority, effectively determining the outcome. Under these circumstances, any subsequent vote risks being largely procedural rather than a genuine exercise of Commission responsibility.

Congress has entrusted the Federal Communications Commission with substantial authority under the Communications Act, including the mandate to act in the "public interest."² Within this authority, the FCC may delegate certain responsibilities to its bureaus, but such delegations are constrained by statute and regulation.³ Among other limits, a bureau may not act on matters that present new or novel legal, factual, or policy questions unresolved by existing precedent.⁴ This merger required the resolution of significant and unresolved legal questions. Most notably, the order granted an expansive waiver of the 39 percent national audience reach cap—a statutory limit set by Congress—despite ongoing debate about the Commission's authority to modify or circumvent that cap.⁵ In addition, the order approved extensive waivers of local ownership rules, including authorization of three major full-power stations in a single market in numerous

¹ *Applications for Consent to the Transfer of Control of TEGNA Inc. to Nexstar Media Inc.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, MB Docket No. 25-331, DA 26-267 (Mar. 19, 2026), <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-26-267A1.pdf> (hereinafter "Nexstar Order").

² *See, e.g.*, 47 U.S.C. §§ 214, 303, 307, 309, 310.

³ 47 U.S.C. §§ 155(c)(1)–(3); 47 C.F.R. § 0.5(c).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *See* Nexstar Order at paras. 25–45.

cases.⁶ These are not routine applications of settled policy; they are substantial departures from existing rules.

The size of the transaction and the scope of the waivers presented are precisely the type of novel and consequential issues that Commission precedent, as well as basic principles of administrative accountability to the American people, require to be decided by the full Commission. Equally troubling is the procedural consequence of this choice. Because bureau-level decisions are not final orders, parties must first seek Commission review before accessing the courts.⁷ In a transaction of this scale, where integration proceeds quickly and unwinding becomes impractical, delay in judicial review can insulate the decision from meaningful challenge. That outcome is difficult to reconcile with the Commission's obligation to ensure transparency and accountability in major actions.

Such concerns have been previously raised by lawmakers with similar transactions. In 2023, Chairman Cruz opposed the FCC's use of delegated authority for the 2023 Standard General-Tegna transaction.⁸ The following year, he raised the same worry about the Audacy transaction.⁹ In the latter case, then-FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel ultimately agreed and had the FCC conduct a full Commission vote.¹⁰

You have previously said that significant transactions should not be resolved at the staff level. In June 2023, you committed to "not block a large transaction without a Commission vote," emphasizing that such decisions "must reflect the will of the Commission."¹¹ You have also criticized prior instances in which the Media Bureau acted on "new and novel decisions without authorization from the full Commission," noting that the Bureau "does not have the authority to do" so.¹²

The Nexstar-Tegna order presents the same kinds of questions. Yet here, the Commission proceeded in the opposite direction. This inconsistency raises an important question about the

⁶ See *id.* at paras. 46–54.

⁷ *Comcast Corp. v. FCC*, 526 F.3d 763, 769 (D.C. Cir. 2008).

⁸ Letter from Ranking Member Cruz and Chair McMorris Rogers to Chairwoman Rosenworcel (Apr. 5, 2023), <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-393048A2.pdf>.

⁹ Letter from Ranking Member Cruz to Commissioner Gomez (July 9, 2024), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/9FB4E85D-5EAD-4DE2-9D5D-0B91E41B44BB>; Letter from Ranking Member Cruz to Commissioner Starks (July 9, 2024), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/016E1D6D-DAE5-4C01-A2D5-D647B46F96BF>.

¹⁰ Ranking Member Ted Cruz, Sen. Cruz Convinces FCC to Reverse Course on Unaccountable Plan to Rubber-Stamp Soros Takeover (Aug. 15, 2024), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2024/8/sen-cruz-convines-fcc-to-reverse-course-on-unaccountable-plan-to-rubber-stamp-soros-takeover>.

¹¹ *Nomination to the Federal Communications Commission: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Com., Sci., & Transp.*, 118th Cong. 527 (2023) (statement of Brendan Carr, Comm'r, Fed. Comm'ns Comm'n), <https://www.congress.gov/event/118th-congress/senate-event/LC74354/text>.

¹² *Carr Statement on FCC's Denial of WADL TV's Application* (Apr. 23, 2024), <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-402042A1.pdf>.

limiting principle of delegated authority. If a transaction of this scale, involving statutory caps and waivers across dozens of markets, can be resolved at the bureau level, it is unclear what types of decisions still require Commission-level review.

That concern is not merely academic. Process choices in high-profile cases establish precedent. We are particularly concerned that this approach could be invoked in the future to justify bureau-level approval of major transactions—potentially accompanied by extensive conditions¹³—without a full Commission vote.

So that we may better understand the Commission’s actions regarding the Nexstar-Tegna transaction, please provide written responses to the following questions no later than April 13, 2026:

1. At the Commerce Committee’s hearing last month reviewing the Commission’s media ownership rules in light of this proposed transaction, Chairman Cruz reiterated that “a full Commission vote is required for certain matters, particularly those involving significant legal or policy consequences. Designating a multi-billion-dollar transaction such as the Standard General Tegna transaction for an ALJ hearing is precisely the type of serious decision for which commissioners must take responsibility.”¹⁴ Given the scope of the transaction, the novel legal issues involved, and the waivers required, why was the transaction resolved by delegated authority rather than by the full Commission? Please identify and describe the precedents you used to authorize the use of bureau-level delegated authority to approve the Nexstar-Tegna transaction, including any precedents addressing the waiver of the 39% national audience reach cap and the local duopoly waivers.
2. You recently characterized the Nexstar-Tegna approval order as an “initial [staff] decision,” with the possibility of a full Commission vote following an application for review.¹⁵ Please clarify the process and expected timing for full Commission consideration. Further, what role would a Commission vote serve at this stage, given that the transaction has already been approved on delegated authority, and how would such a

¹³ See, e.g., *Applications of Comcast, Corporation, General Electric Company and NBC Universal, Inc. For Consent to Assign Licenses and Transfer Control of Licensees*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 26 FCC Rcd 4238 (2011), https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-11-4A1_Rcd.pdf; *Applications of AT&T Inc. and DIRECTV For Consent to Assign or Transfer Control of Licenses and Authorizations*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 30 FCC Rcd 9131 (2015), https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-15-94A1_Rcd.pdf; *Applications of Charter Communications, Inc., Time Warner Cable Inc., and Advance/Newhouse Partnership For Consent to Assign or Transfer Control of Licenses and Authorizations*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 31 FCC Rcd 6327 (2016), https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-16-59A1_Rcd.pdf.

¹⁴ *We Interrupt This Program: Media Ownership in the Digital Age*: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Com., Sci., & Transp., 119th Cong. (2026), <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2026/2/we-interrupt-this-program-media-ownership-in-the-digital-age>.

¹⁵ Federal Communications Commission, *March 2026 Open Commission Meeting*, YouTube (Mar. 26, 2026), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQy5MI_gXSo (1:30:59–1:31:14) (remarks of Chairman Carr).

vote ensure meaningful Commission-level deliberation on a transaction of this magnitude?

3. In your dissent to the Biden FCC's approval of the Audacy transaction, you stated that "[i]t is hornbook law that staff-level decisions (whether they complied with federal law or not) do not set precedent for the Commission."¹⁶ Did this consideration factor into your decision to delegate review of the Nexstar-Tegna transaction to the Media Bureau?
4. Given the size and complexity of the legal issues surrounding the waivers granted in the Nexstar-Tegna order, what limiting principle will govern the use of delegated authority in transactions going forward?

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
Chairman



Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member

¹⁶ Dissenting Statement of Commissioner Carr, *Audacy License, LLC, as Debtor-in-Possession (Assignor) and Audacy License, LLC (Assignee), Application for Consent to Assignment of Licenses*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 39 FCC Rcd 11040, 11063 (2024), <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-24-94A4.pdf>.