



## Sinclair-Tribune Opponents Warn of “Unbalanced Market Power”

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A coalition of TV and media groups is publicly opposing Sinclair Broadcast Group's proposed \$3.9 billion acquisition of Tribune Media, the groups said in a conference call with the press on Monday. Initial comments on the deal were due to the agency Monday.

The coalition is composed of the American Cable Association, Common Cause, the Competitive Carriers Association and the Computer and Communications Industry Association

Former FCC Chairman Michael Copps, now a special advisor to Common Cause, called Sinclair "the most dangerous company most Americans have never heard of," reported Broadcasting & Cable.

Copps is specifically worried about Sinclair's habit of controlling stations it doesn't own through joint sales and other agreements, and about what the merger might do to local television journalism. Sinclair leans conservative and the New York Times and other outlets have chronicled the group's practice of creating conservative-leaning pieces and requiring its owned stations to run them on their newscasts. Copps also is concerned about Sinclair firing journalists to save money.

Copps was joined on the call by the ACA's Matt Polka, whose group has long represented small- and medium-sized cable operators, as well as One America News Network President Charles Herring, Computer & Communications Industry Association President Ed Black and Competitive Carriers Association SVP Tim Donovan.

Herring said he was concerned that as a result of the merger, Sinclair would gain "excessive, unbalanced market power."

Herring's concern is that Sinclair will drive very hard bargains with cable and satellite TV providers, requiring them to pay so much to carry its stations in individual local markets that operators will end up throwing off small, independent cable networks, such as his conservative One America News.

The deal "violates the law and it violates the public interest," said Polka, according to Variety. "This is a group of very diverse voices saying this merger is bad for consumers and bad for the public interest."

Sinclair had no comment in response to the groups, but they have until Aug. 22 to reply to the FCC with regard to opposing comments. Replies to those are due by Aug. 29.

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