



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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Americans to Congress: Leave Conservative Media Alone

New grassroots site (www.stopmediaregulation.org) generates thousands of phone calls and letters to Congress in support of President Bush's FCC

WASHINGTON - Americans for Tax Reform's (ATR) new website and advertising campaign in support of the recent Federal Communications Commission (FCC) decision to expand the limits of media ownership has caught the eye of several prominent national radio talk show hosts this week. After hearing about the site, thousands of Americans logged on to tell their congressmen and senators to support the FCC's updating of obsolete, anti-free market media regulations. On Friday afternoon, messages to Congress were pouring through the site at a rate of one per second, and reports had senators' offices flooded with phone calls. By the end of the weekend, Capitol Hill had received more than 34,000 e-mails through the website.

On June 2, 2003, the FCC held its Media Ownership Biennial Review, in which they voted to increase the number of television stations broadcast networks may purchase from 35 percent of audience reach to 45 percent, and to lift the ban on newspapers purchasing television stations in the same city.

ATR's new website, located at www.stopmediaregulation.org, is educating the public about the importance of the FCC's decision and allows visitors the ability to take action so that the decision is not thwarted by pending congressional legislation.

Some in Congress, including Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.), Rep. David Obey (D-Wis.) and Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-N.Y.) want to block the rule change in Congress in favor of restoring obsolete bans and impeding the free market of media ownership through several vehicles, including S. 1046, the Preservation of Localism, Program Diversity, and Competition in Television Broadcast Service Act of 2003 and the FY 2004 Commerce, State, Justice Appropriations bill. Both would reverse all or part of the FCC's decision.

"This weekend, Americans sent a clear message to Congress that they oppose efforts to re-regulate media ownership," said Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform. "American consumers know they can decide the limits of media ownership just fine without the help of Washington bureaucrats."

To help draw traffic to the website, ATR also rolled out a series of national Internet ads. Visitors to the website find facts on the benefits of media deregulation and an explanation of the agenda behind those who support efforts to re-regulate mass media. The new site also gives visitors the option to locate and send a message to their senators by typing in their zip code.

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who support tax simplification and oppose all federal and state tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jcollegio@atr.org.