

1/25/2007

Alliance for Community Media and Local Governments Retain Counsel to Challenge FCC Rulings

The Alliance for Community Media Strongly Questions the Legality of FCC Actions

The Alliance for Community Media (ACM) and the Alliance for Communications Democracy (ACD) working with local government partners, National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA), National League of Cities (NLC), and National Association of Counties (NACo) announced today that they have retained legal counsel to challenge the FCC's recent Order preempting local government control and authority over cable franchises, compensation for public property, community services and the availability of consumer protection in local communities.

The ACM and ACD and local government associations announced today that Mr. Alan Fishel and Mr. Jeffrey Rummel from the firm of Arent Fox, LLP in Washington , DC , have been retained as counsel to assist them with the analysis and legal challenge to the FCC's Order as adopted by the Commission on December 20, 2006. While the text of the order has not yet been released, the statements of the Chairman, his staff and those of the other Commissioners have made it clear that the Commission has far exceeded the scope of its statutory authority.

According to ACM Executive Director Anthony Riddle, "We do not want to go to court, but we cannot stand silent while giant corporations take away the only voices our communities have-- public, education and government access channels. We chose to stand with the cities and towns and with our neighbors against these aggressive giants."

ACM and ACD and the local government partners will work with counsel to determine all appropriate steps and actions to be filed. In addition to the services of Arent Fox, Mr. Tillman Lay and Mr. James Horwood of the firm of Spiegel & McDiarmid will continue their representation of the national associations in the Commission's announced Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Spiegel & McDiarmid is the counsel of record for the associations in the underlying proceeding before the agency, and will continue in that regard. Ms. Lani Williams, General Counsel for the Local Government Lawyer's Roundtable, has agreed to assist the association members with preparation and coordination of friend of the court (Amicus) briefs.