## United States Senate

## WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 23, 2025

Perry A. Sook Chairman Nexstar Media Group, Inc. 545 East John Carpenter Freeway Suite 700 Irving, TX 75062 Christopher S. Ripley President and CEO Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc. 10706 Beaver Dam Road Hunt Valley, Maryland 21030

Dear Mr. Sook and Mr. Ripley:

We write to seek information about the decisions of Nexstar Media Group, Inc. (Nexstar) and Sinclair Broadcast Group (Sinclair) not to air the *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* show — and on how those decisions may relate to regulatory issues pending with the Trump administration.

On September 15, 2025, Jimmy Kimmel, host of *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, made a series of comments about the reaction to the assassination of Charlie Kirk.<sup>1</sup> Two days later, after Mr. Kimmel had been criticized by "Pro-Trump websites and Fox News," President Trump's FCC Chair Brendan Carr said the companies airing Kimmel's show "can find ways to take action on Mr. Kimmel, or there is going to be additional work for the FCC ahead." Chairman Carr, in comments Senator Ted Cruz characterized as "right out of Goodfellas," went on to state, "[w]e can do this the easy way or the hard way" — seemingly implying that the FCC could revoke broadcast licenses or impose other regulatory harm on broadcasters that did not comply.<sup>5</sup>

Hours after Chairman Carr's remarks, ABC — which broadcasts Mr. Kimmel's show and is owned by Disney — along with Nexstar and Sinclair — two major owners of ABC local stations<sup>6</sup> — fell in line: Nexstar announced that it would "preempt *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* for the

https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/17/business/media/abc-jimmy-kimmel.html; NBC News, "Jimmy Kimmel suspension puts spotlight on Brendan Carr, Trump's FCC chair," Daniel Arkin and Kevin Collier, September 18, 2025, https://www.nbcnews.com/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-suspension-brendan-carr-trumps-fcc-chair-rcna232091.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> CNN, Here's the timeline of Jimmy Kimmell's suspension," Alex Leeds Matthews and Brian Stelter, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/18/business/timeline-jimmy-kimmel-suspension-vis">https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/18/business/timeline-jimmy-kimmel-suspension-vis</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Id.*; NBC News, "Jimmy Kimmel suspension puts spotlight on Brendan Carr, Trump's FCC chair," Daniel Arkin and Kevin Collier, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.nbcnews.com/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-suspension-brendan-carr-trumps-fcc-chair-rcna232091">https://www.nbcnews.com/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-suspension-brendan-carr-trumps-fcc-chair-rcna232091</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> BBC, "Senator Ted Cruz says US broadcast regulator acted like 'mafioso' on Jimmy Kimmel," Nardine Saad, September 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1kwzgrwdd0o">https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1kwzgrwdd0o</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Newsweek, "ABC, Nexstar and the FCC—What's Behind Jimmy Kimmel Being 'Canceled'?," Hugh Cameron, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.newsweek.com/jimmy-kimmel-show-cancelled-charlie-kirk-2131747;">https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1kwzgrwdd0o.</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> New York Times, "ABC Pulls Jimmy Kimmel Off Air for Charlie Kirk Comments After F.C.C. Pressure," John Koblin, Michael M. Grynbaum, and Brooks Barnes, September 17, 2025,

foreseeable future," as did Sinclair, and ABC pulled the show "indefinitely." President Trump praised the decision. While debating whether to suspend Mr. Kimmel's show, multiple Disney executives reportedly "felt that Kimmel had not actually said anything over the line, . . . but the threat of Trump administration retaliation loomed."

Then on September 22, 2025, Disney announced that it would return Mr. Kimmel's show to the network. Nevertheless, Nexstar and Sinclair said they would not resume airing the show on the more than 60 local ABC affiliates they own — meaning roughly 1 in 4 local ABC stations serving U.S. households will not air Kimmel's show. 11

Your announcements that you will prevent Mr. Kimmel's show from airing on your stations come as your companies have business pending before the Trump administration: Nexstar — the nation's largest owner of local television stations and owner of dozens of ABC affiliates — needs the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) approval of its attempted mega-merger

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Associated Press, "What are Nexstar and Sinclair, the ABC affiliate owners who issued statements against Jimmy Kimmel," September 18, 2025, Mae Anderson and Matt Sedensky, <a href="https://apnews.com/article/abc-kimmel-affiliate-charlie-kirk-8eb9dca5dff2c717fd00a7083982c5c4">https://apnews.com/article/abc-kimmel-affiliate-charlie-kirk-8eb9dca5dff2c717fd00a7083982c5c4</a>; Sinclair, "Sinclair Says Kimmel Suspension is Not Enough, Calls on FCC and ABC to Take Additional Action," press release, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://sbgi.net/sinclair-says-kimmel-suspension-is-not-enough-calls-on-fcc-and-abc-to-take-additional-action/">https://sbgi.net/sinclair-says-kimmel-suspension-is-not-enough-calls-on-fcc-and-abc-to-take-additional-action/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> New York Times, "ABC Pulls Jimmy Kimmel Off Air for Charlie Kirk Comments After F.C.C. Pressure," John Koblin, Michael M. Grynbaum, and Brooks Barnes, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/17/business/media/abc-jimmy-kimmel.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/17/business/media/abc-jimmy-kimmel.html</a>; CNN, "ABC yanks Jimmy Kimmel's show 'indefinitely' after threat from Trump's FCC chair," Brian Stelter, Elizabeth Wagmeister, and Liam Reilly, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/17/media/jimmy-kimmel-charlie-kirk-trump-fcc-brendan-carr">https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/17/media/jimmy-kimmel-charlie-kirk-trump-fcc-brendan-carr</a>; Nexstar, "Nexstar ABC Affiliates To Preempt "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" Indefinitely Beginning Tonight," press release, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://www.nexstar.tv/nexstar-abc-affiliates-to-preempt-jimmy-kimmel-live-indefinitely-beginning-tonight/">https://www.nexstar.tv/nexstar-abc-affiliates-to-preempt-jimmy-kimmel-live-indefinitely-beginning-tonight/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Post on Truth Social by President Donald Trump, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115222372625104790">https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115222372625104790</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Rolling Stone "'JIMMY KIMMEL LIVE!' PULLED 'INDEFINITELY' BY ABC OVER CHARLIE KIRK COMMENTS," Charisma Madarang, Asawin Suebsaeng, and Andrew Perez, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://www.rollingstone.com/tv-movies/tv-movie-news/jimmy-kimmel-out-abc-charlie-kirk-comments-1235430078/">https://www.rollingstone.com/tv-movies/tv-movie-news/jimmy-kimmel-out-abc-charlie-kirk-comments-1235430078/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> New York Times, "Local TV Giants Boycott Jimmy Kimmel's Return to Late Night," Benjamin Mullin, September 23, 2025, <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/23/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-nexstar-sinclair-boycott.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/23/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-nexstar-sinclair-boycott.html</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> New York Times, "Local TV Giants Boycott Jimmy Kimmel's Return to Late Night," Benjamin Mullin, September 23, 2025, <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/23/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-nexstar-sinclair-boycott.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/23/business/media/jimmy-kimmel-nexstar-sinclair-boycott.html</a>; Wall Street Journal, "Sinclair, Nexstar Won't Air Jimmy Kimmel's Late-Night Return," Joe Flint, September 23, 2025, <a href="https://www.wsj.com/business/media/kimmels-late-night-show-will-return-to-air-tuesday-7450ea40">https://www.wsj.com/business/media/kimmels-late-night-show-will-return-to-air-tuesday-7450ea40</a>; Deadline, "Sinclair Will Preempt Jimmy Kimmel's Show When It Returns To ABC But Says Discussions Are Ongoing With Network," Ted Johnson, September 22, 2025, <a href="https://deadline.com/2025/09/jimmy-kimmel-sinclair-trump-preemption-1236552987/">https://deadline.com/2025/09/jimmy-kimmel-sinclair-trump-preemption-1236552987/</a>.

with competitor Tegna, Inc. (Tegna). <sup>12</sup> Sinclair — the nation's second-largest broadcaster <sup>13</sup> — is also waiting on FCC authorization for a broadcast deal, and is expected to engage in further TV station acquisitions, for which it would require FCC approval, if the FCC weakens media ownership regulations. <sup>14</sup>

This series of events raises serious questions about whether Nexstar and Sinclair responded to Trump officials' warnings by removing Mr. Kimmel's show, not only to avoid regulatory backlash from the FCC, but also to influence the Trump administration's review of your pending deals. If you suspended a late-night comedian's show in part to seek regulatory favors from the administration, you have not only assisted the administration in eroding First Amendment freedoms but also create the appearance of a possible quid-pro-quo arrangement that could implicate federal anti-corruption laws.<sup>15</sup>

## Nexstar and Sinclair Are Seeking Trump Administration Approval for Key Business Deals

Sinclair and Nexstar are in the process of finalizing massive deals, each of which requires sign-off by Trump administration officials charged with reviewing the transactions' compliance with federal antitrust law and the Communications Act of 1934.<sup>16</sup>

Nexstar has announced its plan to acquire rival broadcast owner Tegna for \$6.2 billion.<sup>17</sup> Nexstar is already the country's largest TV broadcaster: it controls 201 stations in 116 TV markets, accounting for 39 percent of local TV households nationally.<sup>18</sup> The proposed Nexstar-Tegna acquisition is an explicit test of the FCC cap, set by Congress, on national television station

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Associated Press, "Nexstar Media Group buying Tegna in deal worth \$6.2 billion," Wyatte Grantham-Philips and Michelle Chapman, August 21, 2025, <a href="https://apnews.com/article/nexstar-tegna-newsnation-cw-trump-c1743d55103a809ea31c5c7c7c4c0c87">https://apnews.com/article/nexstar-tegna-newsnation-cw-trump-c1743d55103a809ea31c5c7c7c4c0c87</a>; TheDesk.net, "Broadcasters who criticized Jimmy Kimmel have deals pending before FCC", Matthew Keys, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://thedesk.net/2025/09/nexstar-sinclair-jimmy-kimmel-fcc-deals/">https://thedesk.net/2025/09/nexstar-sinclair-jimmy-kimmel-fcc-deals/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Deadline, "Nexstar And Sinclair, Two Largest Station Groups, Wield Influence In ABC Decision To Pull Jimmy Kimmel In Light Of His Charlie Kirk Comments — Update," Ted Johnson and Dade Hayes, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://deadline.com/2025/09/nexstar-jimmy-kimmel-charlie-kirk-1236547382/">https://deadline.com/2025/09/nexstar-jimmy-kimmel-charlie-kirk-1236547382/</a>; Vulture, "What Is Nexstar, and Why Did It Cancel 'Jimmy Kimmel Live!'?", Eric Vilas-Boas, September 18, 2025, hat-is-nexstar-jimmy-kimmel-live-canceled.html.

TheDesk.net, "Sinclair to acquire WHAM-TV from Deerfield Media," Matthew Keys, September 9, 2025, <a href="https://thedesk.net/2025/09/sinclair-buying-wham-deerfield-media/">https://thedesk.net/2025/09/sinclair-buying-wham-deerfield-media/</a>; CNBC, "Sinclair is exploring merger options for its broadcast business," Lillian Rizzo, August 11, 2025, <a href="https://www.cnbc.com/2025/08/11/sinclair-is-exploring-mergers-for-its-broadcast-business.html">https://www.cnbc.com/2025/08/11/sinclair-is-exploring-mergers-for-its-broadcast-business.html</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> 18 U.S.C. 201.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> NPR, "Jimmy Kimmel's suspension shows power of FCC's Brendan Carr," David Folkenflik, September 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.npr.org/2025/09/19/nx-s1-5546764/fcc-brendan-carr-kimmel-trump-free-speech">https://www.npr.org/2025/09/19/nx-s1-5546764/fcc-brendan-carr-kimmel-trump-free-speech</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Nexstar, "Nexstar Media Group, Inc. Enters into Definitive Agreement To Acquire TEGNA Inc. for \$6.2 Billion in Accretive Transaction," August 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.nexstar.tv/nexstar-media-group-inc-enters-into-definitive-agreement-to-acquire-tegna-inc-for-6-2-billion-in-accretive-transaction/">https://www.nexstar.tv/nexstar-media-group-inc-enters-into-definitive-agreement-to-acquire-tegna-inc-for-6-2-billion-in-accretive-transaction/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> New York Times, "TV Giant Nexstar Agrees to Acquire a Rival, Tegna, for \$6.2 Billion," Benjamin Mullin, August 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/19/business/media/nexstar-tegna-deal.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/19/business/media/nexstar-tegna-deal.html</a>; Associated Press, "Nexstar Media Group buying Tegna in deal worth \$6.2 billion," Wyatte Grantham-Philips and Michelle Chapman, August 21, 2025, <a href="https://apnews.com/article/nexstar-tegna-newsnation-cw-trump-c1743d55103a809ea31c5c7c7c4c0c87">https://apnews.com/article/nexstar-tegna-newsnation-cw-trump-c1743d55103a809ea31c5c7c7c4c0c87</a>.

ownership.<sup>19</sup> If the FCC approves this merger, Nexstar would stand to control stations that reach an *unprecedented 80 percent* of TV households in the United States<sup>20</sup> — more than double the existing limit.<sup>21</sup> In order for the deal to go through, Nexstar needs a change in media ownership rules or a waiver from FCC Chairman Carr<sup>22</sup> — the same official who, after Nexstar's decision to pull Mr. Kimmel's show, tweeted: "I want to thank Nexstar for doing the right thing."<sup>23</sup> Chairman Carr similarly applauded Nexstar's and Sinclair's decision to keep Kimmel's show off their stations even after Disney announced it would restore the show, posting on social media: "Notably, this is the first time recently that any local TV stations have pushed back on a national programmer like Disney. And that is a good thing because we want want [sic] empowered local TV stations."<sup>24</sup>

Sinclair, which operates 178 TV stations in 81 markets, <sup>25</sup> similarly has business before the FCC. <sup>26</sup> Like Nexstar, Sinclair has pushed for the FCC to revise the television ownership cap, as part of its larger plans for potential acquisitions announced this August. <sup>27</sup> As Sinclair CEO Chris Ripley said in making the announcement, "[s]cale wins in today's broadcast industry, and we intend to lead that consolidation." <sup>28</sup> This slew of planned acquisitions would be contingent on FCC approval. In addition, Sinclair is currently awaiting FCC approval for a proposed TV station acquisition. <sup>29</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Federal Communications Commission, "FCC Broadcast Ownership Rules", January 17, 2020 <a href="https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/fccs-review-broadcast-ownership-rules">https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/fccs-review-broadcast-ownership-rules</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Poynter, "Nexstar's takeover of Tegna would require an overhaul of FCC ownership rules," Al Tompkins, August 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.poynter.org/business-work/2025/nexstar-tegna-fcc-ownership-rules-media-consolidation/">https://www.poynter.org/business-work/2025/nexstar-tegna-fcc-ownership-rules-media-consolidation/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> CNBC, "Nexstar to buy smaller rival Tegna for \$3.54 billion in big local-TV deal," August 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.cnbc.com/2025/08/19/tv-broadcaster-nexstar-to-acquire-rival-tegna-for-3point54-billion.html">https://www.cnbc.com/2025/08/19/tv-broadcaster-nexstar-to-acquire-rival-tegna-for-3point54-billion.html</a>; Hollywood Reporter, "Fox, CBS May Want In on Local TV Station Buying Spree," Alex Weprin, September 2, 2025, <a href="https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/business/business-news/fox-cbs-nexstar-local-tv-buying-1236358490/">https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/business/business/business-news/fox-cbs-nexstar-local-tv-buying-1236358490/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> CNN, "Why Trump and his FCC chairman's threats against TV station licenses are 'aggressive yet hollow'", Brian Stelter, September 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/19/media/trump-carr-fcc-abc-kimmel-license-threat">https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/19/media/trump-carr-fcc-abc-kimmel-license-threat</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Post on X by FCC Chairman Brendan Carr, September 17, 2025, https://x.com/BrendanCarrFCC/status/1968449919221416427.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Post on X by FCC Chairman Brendan Carr, September 23, 2025, https://x.com/BrendanCarrFCC/status/1970466563271623139

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> WTOP News, "What are Nexstar and Sinclair, the ABC affiliate owners who issued statements against Jimmy Kimmel," September 18, 2025, <a href="https://wtop.com/tv/2025/09/who-are-nexstar-and-sinclair-the-abc-affiliate-owners-who-issued-statements-against-jimmy-kimmel/">https://wtop.com/tv/2025/09/who-are-nexstar-and-sinclair-the-abc-affiliate-owners-who-issued-statements-against-jimmy-kimmel/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> TheDesk.net, "Broadcasters who criticized Jimmy Kimmel have deals pending before FCC", Matthew Keys, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://thedesk.net/2025/09/nexstar-sinclair-jimmy-kimmel-fcc-deals/">https://thedesk.net/2025/09/nexstar-sinclair-jimmy-kimmel-fcc-deals/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Variety, "As Nexstar and Sinclair Take on Disney Over Jimmy Kimmel, the FCC Is Happy — but Will It Backfire?," Michael Schneider, September 20, 2025, <a href="https://variety.com/2025/tv/news/nexstar-sinclair-jimmy-kimmel-live-disney-backfire-fcc-1236525294/">https://variety.com/2025/tv/news/nexstar-sinclair-jimmy-kimmel-live-disney-backfire-fcc-1236525294/</a>;

Sinclair, "Sinclair Launches Comprehensive Strategic Review for Broadcast Business", August 11, 2025, <a href="https://sbgi.net/sinclair-launches-comprehensive-strategic-review-for-broadcast-business/">https://sbgi.net/sinclair-launches-comprehensive-strategic-review-for-broadcast-business/</a>.

28 Id.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> TheDesk.net, "Sinclair to acquire WHAM-TV from Deerfield Media," Matthew Keys, September 9, 2025, "https://thedesk.net/2025/09/sinclair-buying-wham-deerfield-media/.

## Questions about Sinclair's and Nexstar's Decisions to Acquiesce to Trump Administration Demands

Make no mistake: the statements from FCC Chairman Carr and President Trump represent an extraordinary abuse of power that jeopardizes all Americans' First Amendment rights. These moves should be investigated to determine if they violate federal law.

But Nexstar and Sinclair, which chose to immediately buckle under Trump administration pressure, also have questions to answer. If you used this incident as an opportunity to influence or appease President Trump or other administration officials as you seek federal approval of your mergers or other regulatory favors, that may raise questions about your compliance with federal anti-corruption law and the Communications Act's requirement to broadcast in the "public convenience, interest, and necessity." Suspending the show of a comedian critical of the Trump administration clearly has value to President Trump, who has been critical of Mr. Kimmel for years. If Nexstar or Sinclair traded the censorship of a critic of the administration for official acts by the Trump administration, your companies are not only complicit in an alarming trampling of free speech rights but also risk running afoul of federal law. 32

As the Wall Street Journal has noted, "anyone who thinks this is the free market at work is ignoring the ways government can punish companies. . . . All the more so given how Mr. Trump has pursued retribution against political opponents in his second term." Teamsters Local 399 characterized Nexstar's and Sinclair's moves as part of "a dangerous trend of corporations trying to fast-track mergers through the back door," with "corporations . . . selling out working families and our American freedoms to amass even greater wealth."

This is not the first such example of a media company appearing to appease the President in order to curry favor: in July 2025, Paramount cancelled *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* three days after the comedian made a joke about Paramount's \$16 million settlement with

<sup>31</sup> New York Magazine, "Trump's Beef With Jimmy Kimmel: A Brief History," Margaret Hartmann, September 19, 2025, <a href="https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/trump-jimmy-kimmel-feud-history.html">https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/trump-jimmy-kimmel-feud-history.html</a>; Rolling Stone "'JIMMY KIMMEL LIVE!' PULLED 'INDEFINITELY' BY ABC OVER CHARLIE KIRK COMMENTS," Charisma Madarang, Asawin Suebsaeng, and Andrew Perez, September 17, 2025,

https://www.rollingstone.com/tv-movies/tv-movie-news/jimmy-kimmel-out-abc-charlie-kirk-comments-1235430078/; Time, "From Firing Threats to Epstein Mentions, Here's a Look at the Fraught History Between Trump and Kimmel," Callum Sutherland, September 19, 2025, <a href="https://time.com/7318768/trump-kimmel-feud-history-fired-threats-epstein-row/">https://time.com/7318768/trump-kimmel-feud-history-fired-threats-epstein-row/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> 18 U.S.C. 201; 47 U.S.C. 309.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> See, e.g., Department of Justice, "Criminal Resource Manual: 2044. Particular Elements," <a href="https://www.justice.gov/archives/jm/criminal-resource-manual-2044-particular-elements">https://www.justice.gov/archives/jm/criminal-resource-manual-2044-particular-elements</a> (citing United States v. Girard, 601 F.2d 69, 71 (2d Cir. 1979), which found that a "thing of value" in the context of political crimes could be intangible, such as a promise to reinstate an employee or an agreement not to run in a primary election, and United States v. Williams, 705 F.2d 603, 622–23 (2d Cir. 1983)).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Wall Street Journal, Editorial, "The FCC, Disney and Jimmy Kimmel," The Editorial Board, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.wsj.com/opinion/fcc-disney-jimmy-kimmel-brendan-carr-media-regulation-197bdf0a">https://www.wsj.com/opinion/fcc-disney-jimmy-kimmel-brendan-carr-media-regulation-197bdf0a</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Hollywood Reporter, "Hollywood Teamsters React to Jimmy Kimmel Suspension, Rail Against Corporate Consolidation," Katie Kilkenny, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/business/business-news/hollywood-teamsters-react-jimmy-kimmel-suspension-1236375437/">https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/business/business-news/hollywood-teamsters-react-jimmy-kimmel-suspension-1236375437/</a>.

President Trump — while Paramount awaited FCC approval of its merger with Skydance.<sup>35</sup> President Trump took credit for the suspension on social media, and suggested Mr. Kimmel and other late night hosts should be next.<sup>36</sup> President Trump's calls for Mr. Kimmel's suspension followed years of attempts to censor Mr. Kimmel:<sup>37</sup> as early as 2018, President Trump reportedly "became so incensed at Kimmel that he had people in his administration call top Disney executives and urge them to rein him in," and began targeting him again in early 2024.<sup>38</sup> Following the suspension of Mr. Kimmel's show,<sup>39</sup> President Trump directed the same warning toward other late-night hosts, calling for the cancellation of two late-night comedians on NBC next and posting, "Do it NBC!!!." He also suggested the FCC could revoke certain networks' broadcast licenses, without which they could not operate, based on content critical of President Trump.<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile, FCC Chairman Carr has gone on to warn that other television programs like ABC's The View may face regulatory scrutiny.<sup>42</sup>

These events raise serious questions for your companies. So that the American people can understand the possible existence of a quid-pro-quo arrangement, we request answers to the following questions by October 7, 2025:

- 1. Given that Disney has decided to return Mr. Kimmel's show to the network, why have Nexstar and Sinclair decided not to restart airing the show on the stations you own?
- 2. Which Nexstar executives were involved in discussions about preempting *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*? Please provide information regarding the timing, nature of, and participants in these discussions, including whether the pending transaction with Tegna was discussed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Associated Press, "Stephen Colbert's 'Late Show' is canceled by CBS and will end in May 2026," David Bauder, Alicia Rancilio, and Andrew Dalton, July 18, 2025, <a href="https://apnews.com/article/stephen-colbert-late-show-cbs-end-8bad9f16f076df62c0ffc50e9c8adbab">https://apnews.com/article/stephen-colbert-late-show-cbs-end-8bad9f16f076df62c0ffc50e9c8adbab</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> The Guardian, "Trump v Kimmel: simmering feud ends with comedian's talkshow yanked off air," Edward Helmore and Chris Michael, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/18/jimmy-kimmel-suspended-trump">https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/18/jimmy-kimmel-suspended-trump</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> RollingStone, "TRUMP WHITE HOUSE PRESSURED DISNEY TO CENSOR ... JIMMY KIMMEL," Asawin Suebsaeng and Adam Rawnsley, February 26, 2023, <a href="https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/trump-white-house-pressure-disney-censor-jimmy-kimmel-1234686853/">https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/trump-white-house-pressure-disney-censor-jimmy-kimmel-1234686853/</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> New York Magazine, "Trump's Beef With Jimmy Kimmel: A Brief History," Margaret Hartmann, September 19, 2025, <a href="https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/trump-jimmy-kimmel-feud-history.html">https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/trump-jimmy-kimmel-feud-history.html</a>.

<sup>39</sup> *Id.* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Donald J. Trump, Truth Social Post, September 17, 2025, <a href="https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115222372625104790">https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115222372625104790</a>; PBS News, "Kimmel suspension highlights Trump's growing power over U.S. media landscape," Chris Megerian, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/kimmel-suspension-highlights-trumps-growing-power-over-u-s-media-landscape">https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/kimmel-suspension-highlights-trumps-growing-power-over-u-s-media-landscape</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Newsweek, "Donald Trump Says Late Night Shows Aren't Allowed to Mock Him," John Toher, September 19, 2025, <a href="https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-says-late-night-shows-arent-allowed-mock-him-jimmy-kimmel-2132463">https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-says-late-night-shows-arent-allowed-mock-him-jimmy-kimmel-2132463</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Hollywood, "Brendan Carr Sets His Sights on 'The View' in Appearance on Conservative Radio Show," Carly Thomas and Alex Weprin, September 18, 2025, <a href="https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/tv/tv-news/brendan-carr-suggests-fcc-investigate-the-view-1236375049/">https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/tv/tv-news/brendan-carr-suggests-fcc-investigate-the-view-1236375049/</a>.

- 3. Which Sinclair executives were involved in discussions about preempting *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*? Please provide information regarding the timing, nature of, and participants in these discussions, including whether the pending transaction with Tegna was discussed.
- 4. What actions are your companies taking to facilitate the Trump administration's sign-off on your pending or future transactions?
- 5. Have officials from your company discussed making other concessions with President Trump or Trump administration officials in the context of the transaction reviews?
- 6. Did Nexstar, at any time in the context of its decisions to remove Mr. Kimmel's show from its stations, have any conversation with Chairman Carr or any other Trump administration officials?
  - a. If so, what was the nature of these discussions?
  - b. Did you offer or were you offered any regulatory favors in exchange for your decision?
- 7. Did Sinclair, at any time in the context of its decisions to remove Mr. Kimmel's show from its stations, have any conversation with Chairman Carr or any other Trump administration officials?
  - a. If so, what was the nature of these discussions?
  - b. Did you offer or were you offered any regulatory favors in exchange for your decision?
- 8. Do your companies have any policies and procedures related to compliance with 18 U.S.C. 201 and any other laws governing public corruption? If so, please provide a copy of those policies and procedures.
- 9. Has Nexstar agreed to make changes to Nexstar's distribution of content or Tegna's distribution of content at the request of the Trump administration, to facilitate approval of the pending transaction? If so, please describe those requests.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Warren

United States Senator

Ron Wyden

**United States Senator** 

Edward J. Markey

**United States Senator** 

Chris Van Hollen

**United States Senator**