

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), who is the founder and chairman of Congress' Future of American Media Caucus, today released the following statement regarding Comcast's deal to acquire NBC Universal from General Electric.

"Comcast's acquisition of NBC Universal would have a devastating impact on the already decreasing ability of the American people to receive unfiltered access to news, information, and entertainment programming from a wide array of sources. Given that we've already seen Comcast try to censor the Internet when it sought to undermine network neutrality several years ago, the American people should have no faith that Comcast would allow them to have access to a wide array of television programming.

"Comcast already has significant control over content distribution and this acquisition would enable it to expand that control into content production. This would put Comcast in a powerful situation to advance its own interests by promoting and making its own content widely available while also potentially hindering the ease and access of other programming. If this acquisition goes through, it would greatly limit the diversity of programming while also serving as a dangerous precedent for other content distributors to acquire a major network and news provider.

"Today, just five companies own all of the country's broadcast networks, 90 percent of the top 50 cable networks, produce three-quarters of all prime time programming, and control 70 percent of the prime time television market share. These same companies, which own the nation's most popular newspapers and networks, also own over 85 percent of the top 20 Internet news sites. At the same time, there has also been a severe decline in the number of minority owned broadcast stations.

"A diverse media system is critical to a properly functioning democracy. Further consolidation would shortchange the wide array of ideas and content needed to keep the American people informed about their elected officials. This acquisition must be stopped."