



July 9, 2020

Honorable Judge Michael E. Wiles  
U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of New York  
One Bowling Green  
New York, New York 10004-1408

Dear Judge Wiles:

As the Mayor of Raleigh and a former newspaper reporter and editor, I am writing in support of the *News & Observer* and asking the courts to consider what is best for our community – and all of North Carolina – when weighing competitive bids for the N&O and other McClatchy newspapers.

The *News & Observer* was founded in 1865 to help expose corruption in politics, and has continually prided itself on digging deep into local issues to ensure accountability and maintain the public's trust in government. As the newspaper business has evolved and the industry's future has become uncertain, the *News & Observer* continues to break ground, telling stories that people need to hear, and other news organizations do not tell. One hard-hitting story just led to the resignation of one of our City Council members.

As a five-term council member and first-term Mayor, I find it reassuring that local newspaper reporters are at meetings (or these days watching them online) and highlighting accomplishments and setbacks alike to residents. Local newspapers are a non-governmental form of checks and balances, crucial to the public good. Because of the *News & Observer's* commentary, the government of North Carolina has been more responsive, more honest and of greater service to the public.

The News and Observer has the largest readership of any newspaper in North Carolina. It was one of the first daily papers in the world to launch an online version of its publication and the paper and its reporters have won three Pulitzer Prizes. However, in today's free market, these accomplishments are not enough for a paper to survive on its own.

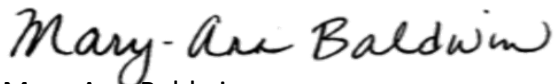
Like my colleagues, Mayor Steinberg of Sacramento and Mayor Suarez of Miami, I would strongly urge the bankruptcy court to consider what is best for our community and North Carolina when weighing bids for the News and Observer.

Our community needs a strong daily paper that is locally rooted and locally invested in our community, motivated by the desire to serve the broader public interest and not the narrow bottom line. Please consider paths for each of the local McClatchy papers that will help sustain and support strong, independent journalism.

As a personal note ... When I attended the University of Rhode Island and earned a degree in journalism, I did so with great pride, knowing I would make a difference. Having covered education, healthcare, police, courts, the legislature and local government, I saw the results of our labor. We made a difference in people's lives, telling their stories of triumph and need. We ensured that government was more responsive and responsible. And we gave back to the communities we served by sponsoring food drives, offering free advertising to non-profits and, in one instance, helping launch the first shelter for battered women in a city I covered.

When making your decision, please consider the needs of Raleigh and our 475,000 residents – and the difference a local newspaper makes. Thank you for all you do and for your consideration of this request.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary-Ann Baldwin".

Mary-Ann Baldwin  
Mayor

Cc: Robyn Tomlin, Editor, News and Observer