

**UNC-TV STATEMENT REGARDING THE BROADCAST OF
NORTH CAROLINA NOW SEGMENTS ABOUT THE YADKIN RIVER**

AUGUST 3, 2010

Because of continuing interest in the issue, UNC-TV submits the following statement regarding its coverage of Alcoa Inc. and related events.

On June 30, 2010, Senator Fletcher L. Hartsell, Jr., chairman of the Senate Judiciary II Committee, sent a letter directing UNC-TV to turn over all materials in its possession regarding the Alcoa Corporation's activities in Stanly County, North Carolina, in and near the Yadkin River. On July 5, 2010, UNC-TV complied with the request by turning over 13 DVD copies containing 10 hours and 47 minutes of work tapes in UNC-TV's possession.

UNC-TV producer/reporter Eszter Vajda, who produced the Alcoa coverage, was subpoenaed to provide all materials in her possession on the issue.

On July 6, 2010, there was a meeting of the North Carolina General Assembly's Senate Judiciary II Committee, during which the committee viewed a 56-minute unauthorized, derivative work produced independently by Ms. Vajda using UNC-TV video. The work tapes provided by UNC-TV were not viewed by the committee during the meeting.

On July 6, 7, and 8, 2010, UNC-TV broadcast a series of three reports on **North Carolina Now**, with a cumulative length of 35 minutes and 11 seconds, on the issue of relicensing water rights in Stanly County to Alcoa Inc. It is important to differentiate between the unauthorized, derivative work viewed by the committee and the **North Carolina Now** reports. These are two separate pieces of work produced by Ms. Vajda.

On July 9, 2010, Alcoa made a public records request of UNC-TV for all materials pertaining to the development of the reports. Also on July 9, Tom Howe, the director and general manager of UNC-TV, requested a critique of the three **North Carolina Now** segments by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Journalism in order to assure an objective evaluation that would be credible to all concerned. On July 13, Mr. Howe postponed the critique to allow time for a full review of the broader situation.

Alcoa also made a public records request of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Journalism for a copy of the draft report.

The UNC-CH School of Journalism review panel found fault with the reporting in the **North Carolina Now** reports, stating that the stories were presented with "an apparent point of view." The panel members also indicated their belief that UNC-TV management should not have aired two of the three reports without the normal editorial review process.

The reports aired with a full disclosure statement that they had not undergone the normal review process. The reports did receive a legal review.

It is important to note that:

- UNC-TV does air point-of-view programs provided by PBS and other sources.
- UNC-TV does not produce point-of-view journalism for **North Carolina Now**.

An editorial review and the resulting changes that would have been dictated by such a review would have prevented these **North Carolina Now** reports from airing in a timely way and precluded the public from having immediate access to the information, provoking additional allegations that UNC-TV was suppressing the story.

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