

October 31, 2011

Cyrus R. Vance Jr., District Attorney
New York County District Attorney's Office
One Hogan Place
New York, NY 10013

Re: John Farley, Arrest #M11683116

Dear District Attorney Vance:

I write in reference to the captioned arrest of John Farley, a WNET staff reporter/producer, in order to request that your office exercise its discretion to dismiss this matter, set for initial appearance on November 3, 2011.

I am president and chief executive officer of WNET, the premier public media provider of the New York City metropolitan area and parent company of PBS member public television stations THIRTEEN and WLIW21.

Mr. Farley is a staff reporter/ for WNET's online newsmagazine MetroFocus (www.thirteen.org/metrofocus.org), which covers news in and around New York. At the time of Mr. Farley's arrest, he and his WNET colleague Samantha Lewis were engaged in news gathering duties covering the "Occupy Wall Street" demonstrations in Union Square. He was wearing his WNET-issued employee-identification card, declared his position as a member of the press and disclosed WNET as his employer to the arresting officers. Nonetheless, he was arrested, detained, processed and charged with disorderly conduct.

As head of WNET, the former president of NBC News, and a lifelong news producer and television news executive, I am gravely concerned about the First Amendment implications of the New York City Police Department's actions in this matter. On behalf of WNET, our millions of viewers and our hundreds of thousands of members in the New York metropolitan area, and on behalf of Mr. Farley, I respectfully request that you dismiss this matter.

Sincerely,

