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From: Rodger Skinner <radiotv@cris.com>
To: A7.A7(SNESS)
Date: 9/9/98 8:28am
Subject: Low Power FM

Dear Commissioner Ness:

As the petitioner in the Low Power FM RM-9242, I am writing to ask that the Commission proceed with a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking ("NPRM"), instead of the rumored Notice of Inquiry ("NOI"), at the earliest possible date. Issuance of a NOI would only serve to delay this proceeding and is unnecessary, given the large volume of comments and reply comments already filed and on record in support of RM-9242.

Myself and the many supporters of RM-9242 would like to see a NPRM on Low Power FM issued before the November Congressional elections.

We envision a Low Power FM radio broadcast service similar to the existing Low Power Television ("LPTV") service, wherein a Low Power station is afforded enough power to cover a radius of up to 15 miles (24 km). To give LPFM less coverage (power levels) would severely limit the ability of such stations to support themselves.

I am concerned about the recent trend by Commissioners and staff who have been referring to Low Power FM as "microradio" or "microbroadcasting" in press reports. I believe microradio to be a misnomer for such a Low Power FM service. Indeed, the Low Power Television industry serves well as a model for Low Power FM radio. The term "micro" connotes miniscule coverage (power levels) and has been associated with "pirate radio" and "hobby broadcasting" stations, of which we want no association. We represent serious broadcasters willing to devote ample time and resources to serving the public via Low Power FM stations.

A Low Power FM radio broadcast service can go a long way towards increasing broadcast station ownership by minorities and others of limited financial means who have been previously shut out. Indeed, I can think of no other program available to the Commission with the potential to rapidly and decisively increase minority ownership of media.

Ample application fees and regulatory fees associated with LPFM applications and stations should provide the Commission with the resources needed to process these new applications and monitor the service. By requiring an engineering certification attached to each application, showing non-interference for the frequency chosen, the work of processing LPFM applications can be made easier, much the same as in the LPTV Branch.

In fact, the Low Power Television Branch could be renamed the Low Power Television and Radio Branch and could effectively process LPTV and LPFM applications.

I sincerely urge you to proceed post haste with a NPRM for the creation of a Low Power FM radio broadcast service, as outlined in RM-9242. By doing so you will have lit the lamp of opportunity in hundreds if not thousands of communities nationwide for new voices (opinions), something sorely needed in today's radio landscape. Your positive actions today can help reshape a better America for tomorrow.

Respectfully,

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