

Re: FCC proceeding 99-25

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in support of the proposed rulemaking to create a Low Power Radio Service. Such a service will not only be a valuable addition to existing avenues of communication and the promotion of the public interest, but may represent one of the few remaining possibilities for creating a more community-based media.

Since the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, I have witnessed in my hometown (Minneapolis/St. Paul) the homogenization of content available on the radio. I have seen several "small" stations with "innovative" formats disappear, to be replaced by stations that are obviously owned and operated by enormous, absentee corporations with no interest in anything outside of mainstream mediocrity and certainly no interest in promoting local culture or "flavor." Community oriented broadcasting can be an important part of what binds communities together. This is a valuable good that is clearly not being provided by existing full-power radio stations, owned as they are by huge media conglomerates.

I would love to be able to turn on my radio and hear people espousing ideas other than "buy!" for once. I would like to be able to turn to the radio to hear a range of music that is as broad as my own musical tastes. I have all but given up on listening to the radio and increasingly limit my listening to the two available "non-commercial" stations, both of which must spend substantial airtime annually drumming up financial support from listeners. I see LPFM as an opportunity to address all of these issues.

More than any other electronic medium, radio holds the potential to provide a means of supporting the development of local communities and strengthening our democracy through providing opportunities for a plurality of voices to be heard. The creation of a LPFM service would make it more likely that this potential could be realized. And it is likely exactly for such reasons that the notice of proposed rulemaking to create a LPFM service is being assailed by the National Association of Broadcasters.

As one who values the diversity of voices that exist in local communities, and who is dismayed by the lack of diversity I experience daily in most of the media with which I come into contact, I would be thrilled to see non-corporate entities establishing small broadcasting endeavors that might carry ideas, views, music, news, or other messages that are currently not heard, due in large part to the enormous financial investments required of anyone wishing to make use of the airwaves. LPFM would make this a real possibility.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brian Martinson