

Comments regarding: MM Docket 99-25

Comments on the Mass Media Bureau Policy and Rules Division's proposal on Low Power FM Radio Service.

Mass Media Bureau Policy and Rules Division:

I am writing in regards to of the crack down on small community pirate radio stations and your proposal to license 100 watt and 1,000 watt small radio stations. In this time of post communication-act mass media consolidation, the hunger for alternative cultural and political views has never been higher. Throughout the country local stations have been consolidated into fewer and fewer mass corporate outlets. There has probably never been a time in American media history when there has been such homogeneity of opinions, and musical and cultural styles to be heard on the air. As a response to this we've seen a great explosion in pirate radio stations, small 10-100 watt community base stations with something to say that cannot be heard on the mass media outlets. It should be telling to the FCC that the stations are extremely eclectic compared to the large corporate offerings sanctioned by the FCC. The FCC should realize that indeed there are voices with something to say coming out of the community themselves. It is a travesty that a country which prides itself on a its first amendment rights to free speech, mounts a rigorous crackdown on the these small eclectic pirate station's that so clearly display a hunger to say publicly that which is not being said. This crackdown makes it appear that it is a lie that the FCC merrily regulate stations for the public's benefit; the public is being shut out of much of the process of regulation and the fruits of mass communications. The FCC should temporarily suspend the crackdown until a policy on micro-stations is formulated. Furthermore the current tendency towards allowing for-profit 1,000 watt stations is appalling. It would provide no more cultural or political expression than that, is currently available on large high wattage stations. This would merely duplicate the same economic and cultural dynamics that exist in the current mass medium radio market. It is as if, faced with the threat of free speech and cultural decent in a new market, the FCC quickly moves to duplicate the standard rules and environment that have given rise to the world of corporate mass media, in this new smaller arena. Thus cutting off a new potential avenue for free speech and dissent. All this makes the FCC appear as though it real purpose is to protect the political interests of the status quo, and to create regulations that guard against cultural descent and real free speech. I hope that this is not your purpose. I'm hoping it is possible for you to see the benefits of sample regulating and coordinating the licensing of small community not for-profit micro-stations. Their existence pose no threat to the economic viability or even cultural dominance of the existing world of high wattage, for-profit mass media stations. I want you to know that I am neither an operator of a micro-station nor a lawyer or lobbyist for any side in this battle. I am a private citizen who sometimes listens to micro-stations, and find college radio the only radio of any real interest culturally. I find the uniformity of the corporate media a threat to the cultural and political vitality of the nation as a whole. I encourage you to allow 100 watt and smaller stations to exist but only in not for-profit formats as is the case already for college radio.

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