

As a licensed radio amateur (KF6VIQ), I am proud to see the FCC taking steps to make the airwaves more accessible to the public. Our society is gradually transitioning into an age where we place more emphasis on individualism and personal creativity than on mass popularity and national unity. This doesn't mean our national identity is going to disappear; rather it reflects a fundamental change in the way people interact with each other. With the advent of the Internet, the telephone network and other such point-to-point communications media, the information density in any one person's sphere of awareness has become such that it is no longer possible for everyone to pay attention to the same current events and be on the same "wavelength" (pun intended.)

In light of these changes in our society, low-power FM licenses are a logical step in the evolution of our communications infrastructure. Eventually, the airwaves will be digital and will carry the same kind of packetized data that network landlines carry today. Broadcast radio will be just another service offered via this homogenous medium for information exchange. We will invent new technologies that enable us to overcome the current bandwidth limitations of RF. I'm not claiming this will happen soon--it may be 20, 50 or 100 years--and changes in technology and society could alter the nature of the beast and render my predictions inaccurate. But given what we know now, convergence of protocols, irrespective of transport mechanism, is the most likely scenario for the future of the global communications infrastructure.

In closing, I once again applaud the FCC for empowering the public by giving us more control over the airwaves--which are technically ours to begin with--and for promoting the evolution of our communications infrastructure. Low-power FM is a step in the right direction.