

July 28, 1999

Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Gentlemen:

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the matter of  
Creation of a Low  
Power Radio Service

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) MM Docket No. 99-25  
) RM-9208  
) RM-9242  
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**Comments of  
FRANKLIN BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.**

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I am Mollie B. Evans, CEO, Secretary & Treasurer, and General Manager of Franklin Broadcasting Company, Inc. in Louisburg, North Carolina which owns and operates WHLQ-FM, 6000 Watts on 102.5 FM, and WYRN-AM, 500 Watts (daytime) and 35 Watts (nighttime). Today these two stations are simulcasting mainly due to the limited coverage of the AM signal. We are a small market, full service operator depending on listeners and advertisers in the Louisburg area and surrounding nearby areas such as Youngsville, Wake Forest, Henderson, Oxford, Bunn, Spring Hope, and Franklinton, all within a short distance of ten to twenty-five or so miles away.

Since the FM was established in 1989, the FM band has become increasingly crowded with interference. The AM signal was never sufficient for the market. Over the years, people would tell us constantly, "I wish I could receive your signal!" This is in reference to the low wattage on the AM, also a struggle until we were granted the license for 102.5 FM operating currently at 6000 Watts. We are not allowed by the Commission to up-grade our power because of interfering with larger stations on the band, therefore we questioned why the Commission would create LP1000 or LP100 stations that could interfere with our signal. We have trusted the Federal Communications Commission to guide and regulate the broadcasting industry to best serve the public interest. Today, we fear the proposed rule making will result in less service for all.

We are pleased to say we provide a valuable FM service for the Louisburg-Henderson-Wake Forest area, and this service is now being threatened by more interference with the

proposed rule making.

Small market radio in the U.S. is needed. If the Commission wishes to help small markets, then help by offering more coverage with up-grades for stronger signals for both FM and AM. In some areas (to the East and Southeast) there are stations so close to 102.5 FM that it causes interference with our signal. There is a station in Edenton, North Carolina licensed to 102.5 FM that actually comes in on our frequency when we are off the air, and also creates interference at times in the fringe areas less than fifteen miles away.

**In addition to Low power FM causing interference to existing stations:**

- Low power FM will harm the development of In-Band, On-Channel (“IBOC”) digital radio.
- We understand the proponents of IBOC digital radio have been developing their systems based on the current interference protection standards, and will utilize the “sidebands” of the analog signal to transmit the digital signal without the need for additional spectrum. Any alteration to the second-adjacent channel spacing restrictions could harm radio broadcasters in their transition to digital.
- Low power FM proposal will not achieve what the Commission wants. Even if the Commission eliminates second and third adjacent channel protections that are so desperately needed.
- Low power FM will not create viable stations to increase minority and female ownership. Even if it is determined that a station is available in a particular area, there is no guarantee

that minority and female owners will want and or actually receive a license - whether they are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis or through an auction process.

Furthermore, the economic viability of low power stations is questionable.

- Low power FM will be an administrative nightmare for the FCC.
- Low power FM proposals for 1 - 10 watt stations are an inefficient use of the spectrum.

We hear new FM stations still coming on the band continuing to create overcrowding. Please listen to what broadcasters are saying across the country regarding the proposed ruling. I have been working on a daily basis in broadcasting for thirty-six years, and thirty years as a co-owner and general manager. We have helped to promote the community through support for fire departments in Louisburg, Franklinton, Pilot, White Level, Epsom, Gold Sand, Bunn, Centerville, Kittrell, Brassfield, Wake Forest, rescue departments for the same areas, Red Cross Bloodmobile drives, Louisburg Area Jaycees, Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, and various fund raisers for United Way, American Cancer Society, Franklin County Happy Camper for underprivileged children, Person Place Preservation Society, and school closings, not to mention coverage of the damage caused by hurricanes Fran and Hugo in recent years.

Our Local News is aired numerous times throughout the day to keep listeners informed during morning, midday, afternoon, and evening drive periods. Should the Commission choose to open the spectrum with more FM-1000 or FM-100 in our market, it will only cut into the service that is being provided. It does take dollars to provide this valuable service and businesses wholeheartedly support our programming since the AM was built in 1958 and the

FM was established in 1989. Please reconsider the proposed rule making that would interfere with this valuable service we provide.

I know of no business so heavily regulated as the broadcasting industry. Broadcasters need help, not interference. Broadcasters need dollars to provide the service not more stations to flood the market.

The Commission will have enough work just by dealing with current problems broadcasters are faced with. It is hard to operate a business with all the regulations facing this business including engineering, programming and management which are all backed by sales. Without the sales, there would be no engineering nor management needed for programming. It would only be non-commercial supported by our government and fund raisers.

Radio is already everywhere. The choice is unlimited, including a format for every walk of life and interest. Please do not harm what has worked for our great country.

I am a dedicated broadcaster by thirty years in Louisburg, N.C. We filed for the FM under the 80-90 docket where not one from our immediate community filed against us. There were three outside of the community that did compete. In other words, our AM service was not questioned by the community, the people knew first hand of our needs for an up-grade in order to better serve their needs.

I am puzzled as to how the Commission can convince the public how this move will be in their best interest. Local programming as we know it in our area will be badly affected. The local government agencies, law enforcement, and municipalities do not need numerous stations seeking the same information. This will increase their work load, making it harder to get the information to the public. We are already experiencing this situation with the North Carolina Highway Patrol due to the cut backs apparently with not enough time and staff. This could be quite frustrating for all.

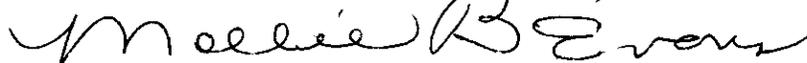
The challenge that radio is facing today with Internet, cable and TV is enough. Please do not add more to what we are already dealing with now. Should you choose to move forward with the rule making, then radio as we know it today will be gone but not forgotten. The industry needs help for the AM broadcasters now more than ever.

The Commission was established in 1934 for many good reasons. Now sixty-five years later, we need to look at eliminating some of the rules and regulations instead of adding total chaos to the service that is being provided in small markets.

Please consider the proposed rulings with fairness to the people and to the broadcaster.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANKLIN BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mollie B. Evans".

Mollie B. Evans  
CEO