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August 2, 1999

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
455 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Kennard:

As a senior citizen who has spent nearly 60 years in broadcasting, I am joining the 28 congressman and thousands of concerned citizens who are supporting the Commission's initiative to make FM frequencies available for low power radio stations. The purpose is to provide programming not now available on the commercial and non-commercial channels.

In addressing you directly on this matter, I realize that I am not following the process by which these comments are to be communicated. As an employee of a public educational station, I believe a public airing of my concerns and recommendations might place me in some peril. Because broadcasters are generally opposed to this action, there is the possibility of retribution against those who do favor it.

I have some quarrel with public and commercial broadcasting. I do not believe many of the stations are providing a service to the public as outlined the Communications Act of 1934. As I understand it, the 1934 Act established the FCC and gave it authority to regulate broadcasting. This obligation extended to: 1) the allocation of frequencies, 2) the licensing of stations within those allocations and 3) oversight of those stations to ensure that they are operating within the rules and regulations set down.

To me, the most important aspect of the 1934 Act is the definition of the broadcasters' mission, namely, that they are "licensed to serve the public interest, convenience and necessity." Are Rush Limbaugh and G. Gordon Liddy living up to that directive? Are the stations that carry them doing so? I find them totally offensive with lengthy unsupported accusations which border on libel and slander. I hear FM morning hosts engaging in lurid sexual detail, unashamedly describing various body parts and their functions. Is this in the public interest, convenience and necessity? I think not.

I realize that broadcasters are in a heavily competitive business; that they derive their income from advertisers, but time after time they stretch the bounds of propriety and good taste with their pandering to appetites which feed on sensationalism.

Although they assume otherwise, broadcasters do not have inherent rights to frequencies. They are owned by the people. The first amendment may give them the right to freedom of expression, but the law says they must abide by the rules set down by the Commission. Broadcasters are in multi-million dollar businesses without

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paying a dime for the rent or lease of the facilities they are using. Try to start-up a shoe repair shop without buying or renting the space.

I strongly feel that radio, both commercial and public, has largely disenfranchised whole segments of our population. Minorities, people of various religious convictions and especially older citizens like me.

I make the point that scarcely is heard a radio station that plays the music of Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller. Where is the trove of comedy and drama which once entertained us in our salad days. Where indeed are Fred Allen, Fibber McGee, Jack Benny, Eddie Cantor, Arch Obler, One Man's Family, Vic and Sade, Norman Corwin? This is the stuff of our youth and beyond. Is it too much to ask that we are allowed to enjoy a bit of it?

Tom Brokaw, a respected journalist, in his new book, "The Greatest Generation," is respectful of the people of my generation. He writes: "They came of age during the Great Depression and the Second World War and went on to build modern America -- men and women whose everyday lives of duty, honor, achievement, and courage gave us the world we have today."

We don't want adoration. We just want some respite from the greedy, hateful talk shows and the raucous sounds that pass for music at every increment of the FM dial. We would just like preserve the melodies and entertainment of the time when we were "building the nation."

Be assured that our 100 watt stations, finely tuned, discretely situated on the dial, will be welcome visitors in homes, retirement villages, condo developments, hospital rooms, office complexes and wherever people of good taste live and congregate. This is a potential audience of over 30 million now without representation. Low Power FM. Surely, a triumph of civility over rancor.

Sincerely,



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