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ORIGINAL

MM 99-25

March 17, 1999

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Chairman Kennard
 Federal Communications Commission
 445 12th Street, SW
 Washington, DC 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Mr. Kennard:

We are a small African-American family-owned AM radio station. It has come to our attention about the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that the FCC has begun on the issue of low-power FMs. That would be totally detrimental to small stand alone AM stations. As it stands we have had to find a niche in our market to make our AM viable. Low-power FMs will push us out of the market. As it stands we have to compete in a market with three radio groups, some of whom have 5 FMs in one group. The low-power FMs, which to my understanding are for niches and communities, will only compete with small AM operators like my family who are fighting everyday for survival. They will not infringe on the big radio groups' formats and sales.

Isn't the FCC supposed to ensure an interference-free environment? I understand that interference will not allow most major markets to have low power FMs. They will mostly fall into medium sized markets like ours. Will digital signals be undermined by low-power FMs? How will ownership truly be determined on a fair basis to comply with the Telecommunications Act of 1996 or the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

As a minority radio owner I would like us to have the same opportunities as others in this country. I don't believe that the low-power FM is the answer. It would be very difficult to make a low power FM with a niche format that does not cover the market a viable business. If you are going to increase minority ownership you must create an equal playing field. We want 100KW FM Stations just like everyone else.

Sincerely,

April Beard

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