

I wish to express my strong support for proceeding 99-25, the creation of a low-power FM service. I live in Washington, DC and am dissatisfied with the variety of FM and AM radio stations available to me. I am also concerned that the radio that is available is becoming more and more influenced by special and corporate interests. The following is a list of concerns I have regarding this issue and how these concerns support the creation of low-power FM service.

1. In my hometown, Washington DC, there are an extremely limited number of college radio stations with a mostly music oriented format. To my knowledge, only the University of Maryland has a radio station with this format, and their power output is extremely low. American University also has a station, however this station has only a limited music format (bluegrass), and is not the type of music commonly found at most college radio stations around the country. Furthermore, the majority of programming on this station is NPR and PRI programs. Other stations in the area are commercially driven and corporately controlled. There are no outlets for local and amateur musicians, and formats of these stations focus on either popular music or generic, cookie cutter existing formats (like oldies, smooth jazz, etc..). Low-power FM service would allow for a greater variety of non-commercially driven formats. Some examples of non-commercially driven music include jazz, alternative rock, classical, world, dance club, and local amateur music.

2. I do not believe that technical problems due to interference and other related issues are as great of a concern as the critics of 99-25 are indicating. I feel that these problems, if they even exist, can be overcome and that the technology to proceed smoothly with 99-25 exists.

3. I am concerned that the existing "non-commercial" radio stations carrying NPR and PRI programming are relying more and more on advertisements and corporate sponsorships. I don't have any statistics on this, but this fact seems to be influencing the types of news and stories found of NPR. There seems to be more business oriented stories, and stories related more directly to business markets and corporate issues. I feel that the reliance on corporate financing changes the objective nature of NPR news and creates a bias towards corporate related stories. Because of this, I feel there are news radio stations that are not under the influence of corporate funding. I support increased funding support to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and other public interest oriented funding sources.

4. I have traveled all over the United States. Everywhere I have been, there are limited options for radio programming. There is an NPR station, the typical group of commercially driven stations (smooth jazz, adult contemporary, classic rock, modern rock, oldies, etc..), and if you are lucky a non-commercial, college or community radio oriented station. 99-25 will create outlets for local news and music interests, break up this commercial homogenization found on today's radio dial, and provide all American citizens access to our radio waves without this access going to the highest bidder. I currently support non-commercial radio through financial donations, and feel that my tax dollars would be well spent on 9-25.

Sincerely,

Jason A. Barrett