

August 4, 2003

To whom it may concern:

Hello, my name is Alexander Younts, KC9CYK. I am a licensed Amateur Radio Operator. I submitted a comment into the system during the first comment period, but feel I should make another comment during the reply period to reinforce my feelings on this docket, and this very important issue. The Broadband over Power Line issue is a huge disaster.

BPL is a technology would mean bring fast Internet service to those who might not be able to obtain it another way. I just happen to be one of those people. I live about a mile to far outside of the city to receive Digital Subscriber Line or Cable Internet service. It would be wonderful to have a decent phone line, and fast Internet. Right now, I get my local phone service through Verizon, Inc. I can barely get a stable connection, let alone a speedy Internet connection over my telephone line. BPL would bring a whole new view of the world into my home.

I have been trying to get fast Internet for many years. So BPL would finally bring me a better way to access the mass amounts of content on the Internet. However, I am also an Amateur Radio Operator. My license has just barely cooled down from the printing press, so I consider myself a new ham. While I may be new to the hobby, I do consider myself a real Amateur Radio Operator. I wish to always be able to call myself a true ham.

The past few months I have been learning Morse Code to upgrade my license so I can start operating on the High Frequency bands. These fascinate me to no end. Being able to talk with someone, radio-to-radio, on the other side of the world is one of my goals in the coming months. While I plan to be on the HF bands before BPL is put in place nationwide, which will be decades after getting the current problems worked out, I do not wish my future privileges to disappear when my neighbors go on the Internet.

The Internet may be a wonderful resource, but where was the Internet during the not-so-long-ago terrorist attacks? Where was the million dollars communications systems put in place for emergencies? I can tell you exactly where they were. They were sitting under tons of rubble, smashed into the ground. These services are great, but they are to complex to rely on in an emergency. Sure, when a single house catches fire and needs to be put out, these services will work perfectly for calling 911. However, when a massive attack has occurred and taken out the major infrastructure for all of these system, in a given area, the radio spectrum will be called on to get the message out. The current systems working in an emergency are these: Amateur Radio, period.

Some might say, "How can that rag-tag group of hobbyists possibly support communications in a disaster?!" With many individuals all with their own emergency plan and emergency supplies. People who work in many different jobs, and do not get paid for their hours worth of work getting their operating skills to a high level. People who have no one group really regulating their actions relating to emergency preparedness. How, then, can this group of hobbyists actually provide life or death communications support?

All I can say is this: Look at our record. We have helped when tropical storms strike. We have helped fire fighters when summer comes and monstrous wild fires break out. We have been put into action when the local telephone network has gone down. We even made plans to support the government if the Y2K bug hit! This is not to mention that we were the only communications system working on September the 11<sup>th</sup>.

For all of our work and preparedness, we ask very little. We ask for no money for our time or equipment. We ask for no special treatment. We even do our best not to make our neighbors angry with our antennas or operating habits. Heck, even during emergencies, all we ask for is a little corner out of the way where we can throw our radios! The only thing was ask for is that we are allowed to survive and continue aiding our neighbors when they need us.

BPL threatens our hobby's very survival. If this service is put in place with the current regulations in place, it would cause many, many operators to give up and leave the hobby. This would cause many operators to not look to better their skills, because they will only be able to talk with their buddies down the street using UHF or SHF frequencies. Why is this? BPL would wipe out the HF and lower parts of the VHS radio spectrum. From tests done at the Amateur Radio Relay League, the noise level would be so high that operating at those frequencies would be all but impossible.

Even if some way could be found to limit the amount of energy radiated from the power lines, how could the FCC ensure that Amateur Radio Operators could still operate? When one of us would start

to put over a kilo-watt out of his/her radios, to be able to talk with that fading station in the middle of Artic Circle, what would happen to the poor Part 15 user who is browsing the web? They would probably lose their connection and then go on a witch-hunt. Even though they are unlicensed users of the spectrum, and must accept interference from licensed operators, they would certainly not see it that way. Whatever the law says, mom and dad will not want the ham next-door messing up their Internet service. While this is not a direct issue of BPL, it will certainly be a side-effect that will affect all licensed services in the proposed spectrum space.

Without space to operate, Amateur Radio will not exist. This would take away the livelihood of many people around the country. Then, when people are either forced out of the hobby or see no more reason to fight the hordes of BPL devices in the area, the country will have lost its most reliable communications system. The FCC is here to ensure that the spectrum is maintained as a "public resource". BPL would only serve the big power companies who see a way to make more money. The government and the people of the United States of America need us, hams, and we need you.

BPL may bring about a short term growth on the Internet, but the need for more bandwidth will grow and then BPL will be called a thing of the past. When the BPL service is forgotten many years from now, at what cost did the FCC spend to line the pockets of the big corporations with cold, hard cash? You, the FCC, might just have spent many human lives because you wiped out the most valuable radio service in times of a disaster.

I may be new and young to Amateur Radio, and the world in general, but at fifteen years old I think my little hobby is worth every sleepless hour I spend on it. Please, think long and hard if BPL is truly the right way to get people fast Internet. Also, please take the ARRL's research into consideration when making your decision. They are honest people only trying to protect the radio spectrum for our use, and the use of many other people.

Sincerely,  
Alexander Younts  
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