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Office of the Secretary

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October 31, 2003

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals Building, Room 2-A622
445-12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Station WQED-DT
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Facility I.D. No. 41315
FRN: 0003189461
File No. BPEDT-19991012ABV

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of WQED Multimedia, permittee of noncommercial educational Station WQED-DT, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, we hereby request a waiver for six months, until May 1, 2004, of the simulcasting requirement of Section 73.624(f) of the rules, which is effective for public television stations as of November 1, 2003. See *Order in MM Docket No. 03-15*, released April 29, 2003. At paragraph 6 of the order the Commission stated:

In the event the Commission has not yet acted on the simulcasting issues raised in the *Second DTV Periodic NPRM* by November 1, 2003, and in the event some NCE stations decide to request a waiver for an additional period of time, we will consider those requests at that time on their individual merit

Station WQED-DT is operating under special temporary authority at power less than that specified in the station construction permit. It currently broadcasts a high-definition signal which several large local cable systems have agreed to carry because the programming is unique in the market. During the day the station broadcasts the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) High-Definition Demonstration Loops, with a wide sampling of innovative high-definition programming. In the evening it broadcasts PBS'

special primetime HDTV schedule. While many of those programs are also carried at some time during the week on Station WQED(TV), they are generally not "simulcast" within the meaning of the rule. The systems carrying the WQED-DT signal serve over half a million subscribers. The permittee anticipate that the cable systems would drop the WQED-DT signal if it were to duplicate WQED(TV) 50% of the time.

For now, broadcast of PBS' high-definition schedule is, in the permittee's view, the best way to accustom viewers to watching its new digital station, with the HDTV broadcasts making possible a vastly larger audience than otherwise possible. The permittee does not yet have the encoding and decoding equipment necessary to generate both an HDTV signal and a conventional digital stream of its local programming. That equipment will cost a quarter of a million dollars, and the permittee needs additional time to budget that expenditure.

Grant of the requested waiver will serve the public interest by permitting the orderly inauguration of local DTV programming and simulcasting in this market.

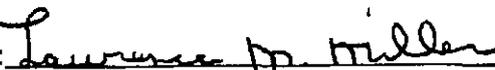
No fee is required for this filing, pursuant to Section 1.1114(c), inasmuch as it pertains to a noncommercial educational station.

The licensee has authorized us to state on its behalf that neither it nor any party to this request is subject to denial of federal benefits under the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988.

Please address any questions concerning this request to this office.

Respectfully submitted,

SCHWARTZ, WOODS & MILLER

By: 
Lawrence M. Miller

cc: (by e-mail) Jim Brown, FCC
LMM/nmc