Some points:

* The largest pool of Amateur Radio licensee are Technicians.
* Each year more than 30,000 people get licensed because they want to serve their community during times of emergency or natural disaster.
* During regional emergencies or disasters, most communications is made using HF SSB.
* New digital communication modes are being developed and HF digital communication is increasing.

To be effective an Amateur Radio operator needs to be able to provide short, medium, and long-haul communications when needed. Under the current licensing structure, the Technician class licensee is severely restricted because he/she is not permitted to operate on frequency bands and modes where effective communications take place.

Good operating skills and habits are developed by more time spent on the air. The proposed changes would allow the Technician class licensees to participate in training nets and exercises that develop good communication skills, and would increase the pool of active, useful communicators to serve our communities when called upon to do so.

Please consider making this rule change as submitted, or with additional bandwidth on the 75/80 meter band.

I hold an Amateur Extra class license and have been licensed 35 years.

Norman Fusaro, W3IZ