

I strongly support RM-11828 and the additional privileges that it grants to Technician License holders.

I have been working with a group teaching Amateur Radio license classes for 3 years now - 6 classes a year, 2 each Tech, General, and Extra. Our work has resulted in over 200 new license grants and upgrades with our class grads enjoying a 90%+ success rate in license exams. I'd like to share a little "real world" information about newly licensed amateurs and some perspective on the potential impact of these proposed changes.

The biggest single problem that we face is bringing young people into Amateur Radio. Without this, the Amateur Radio service will eventually cease to be relevant and the associated pace of innovation will slow to a stop. I am very involved in local middle schools and high schools with a variety of projects to get young people involved in amateur radio and we are enjoying quite a bit of success. Our Youth Projects are helping students gain experience relevant to STEM careers as well as sparking their interest in Amateur Radio.

The problem is not getting young people to earn their Tech Licenses. The problem is having meaningful activities for young people (and new hams in general) to do once they earn their Tech Licenses. Most of the numerous local repeaters are "dead" with little or no traffic. EMCOM nets are not much of a draw to get young people and new hams active either.

I see a great deal of interest among young people and new hams in the HF bands but the current approach – to give very limited access to HF bands – combined with the lack of repeater activity, is resulting in a large number of new Technicians never getting active on the air.

I strongly support the proposed changes to provide expanded HF privileges to Techs to get them on the HF bands up front and get them more excited about using their Amateur Radio privileges. These changes are about making the first licensing step relevant and exciting for new (and especially younger hams) to not only get them licensed but also to get them active on the bands.

I believe that this proposal is EXACTLY what is needed to motivate new hams (and young people) to get a license and become meaningfully involved in Amateur Radio. I expect that we will see a big jump in Techs upgrading to General if they get a real taste of what the HF bands offer. One a Technician invests in the equipment and starts having fun with the limited privileges offered by this proposal, they will be motivated to upgrade to General and then Extra to get the full set of HF privileges available to amateurs.

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