



NewsRadio 920 KLMR and The Heat 93.5

7350 US Highway 50

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Lamar, Colorado 81052

News-Talk 1400 KBLJ and Big Country 92.1

116 Dalton Avenue

P.O. Box 485

La Junta, Colorado 81050

April 30, 2019

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

To the Honorable Commissioners of the FCC:

There are many benefits to living and owning a business in small-town, rural America. Those benefits are why my wife and I decided to make the leap and start 25-7 Media, Inc. Our locally-owned radio venture has proved to be rewarding, but incredibly stressful. Much of that stress could be eliminated if you, as Commissioners, voted to relax ownership rules in small, unrated markets. I will use our company and the company I used to work for as our example.

In 2015, I returned as operations manager at Beacon Broadcasting's KVAJ in Lamar, Colorado. It was a single station competing in Lamar against Cherry Creek Media's KLMR-AM and KLMR-FM. Over the course of two years, we took KVAJ to record profits while sending the competition to the brink of closing their doors by them losing massive amounts of money. Cherry Creek approached us in 2017 about purchasing those stations along with the operation 50 miles away in La Junta. Beacon Broadcasting did not move forward with the purchase, but my partners and I formed 25-7 Media, Inc. for the purchase. Your approval came in April 2018 and we took over operations in May 2018.

Our first month there was \$11,000 of revenue for four stations total. We have increased revenue, but still remain unprofitable. Meanwhile, Beacon Broadcasting has taken a significant hit financially as money has transferred from KVAJ to our stations. Neither company is now able to be significantly profitable because we both are serving our region's need, necessity, and convenience and advertising dollars are being split. There is virtually no "new money" for businesses to sink into advertising and new businesses are few and far between. We live in an economically impoverished area. Businesses struggle and now both media companies are struggling as well.

With a change in the ownership rule to allow for no restrictions in small, unrated markets, Beacon Broadcasting and 25-7 Media would merge. We have a personal relationship and our companies would create significant efficiencies that would save money. Therefore, it is much easier for us to be profitable. This is the most viable way to see radio thrive in Lamar and rural communities like ours across the country.

I urge the Commission to take this necessary step. I am one that typically favors regulation, but in this instance, I ask for deregulation. Otherwise, my company or my friends across town may eventually be forced into bankruptcy, sale, or closure. Please help struggling small media companies like ours thrive. Vote to remove ownership restrictions on small, unrated markets.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron J. Leiker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aaron J. Leiker
President and General Manager