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July 9, 1998

FILE # RM-9267

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir:

My name is William B. Walker, III. I am currently the president of the Centralina Amateur Radio Club and will shortly celebrate my 40th year as a licensed amateur radio operator. I am proud to still enjoy the mystery of radio communication as well as the spirit that prevails among most of our fraternity.

I write to you today in reference to RM-9267 which may, in the future, cause a portion of the 420-430/440-450 mhz frequencies currently available for amateur operation to be removed from use.

It is obvious that there is a huge demand for available spectrum and, while more and more services come on line, this demand can only increase. In the recent past, 40% of our allocation in the 220-225 mhz band was transferred to commercial service. Even though a later allocation of 219-220 mhz for digital usage was made, the loss of these frequencies caused severe under-utilization of this band, an effect that is just now beginning to be overcome. We, in the amateur community, fear a similar fate might be visited upon segments of the 420-450 mhz band.

One has only to listen to the crowded 144-148 mhz band, even in suburban and rural areas, to appreciate the need to maintain the current allocations, not remove them. Also, with the current entry level licensing structure, more amateur operators than ever will fill these frequencies as beginning hams.

We know that the FCC does not need to be reminded that amateur radio is a national resource of immense value. Just ask some of the victims of local and regional disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding and, not to mention, other public service situations that arise. The frequencies most commonly used for local communications are those in the VHF and UHF range.

We request that a careful study and thorough evaluation be made with reference to the requests of the Land Mobile Communications Council and their effect on current and future growth in both the public and private sectors and their need for additional spectrum.

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Regards and 73,

William B. Walker, III
W4ZCV

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