

Proposed Changes to the LPFM service requested in Proceeding RM-11753

Over the past ~25 years, the FM radio spectrum has become more and more concentrated into a few corporate hands, who deliver homogenous and formulaic programming akin to common fast food franchises that universally dot the American landscape. Most commercial radio stations are now controlled by media conglomerates Clear Channel Communications, Townsquare Media and Cumulus Media.

I applaud the January 2000 FCC ruling that established Low Power FM as a new designated class of radio station and The Local Community Radio Act of 2010 signed into law by President Obama January 4, 2011 as Pub.L. 111-371. The rise of LPFM has given a genuine voice to local communities.

I wholeheartedly agree with the statement made by FCC chairman Julius Genachowski, “Low power FM stations are small, but they make a giant contribution to local community programming. This important law eliminates the unnecessary restrictions that kept these local stations off the air in cities and towns across the country.”

These were vital steps that allowed local radio stations to do what they were originally designed to do with their local reach of broadcasting – provide a true grass roots service and voice to their respective communities.

The essence of Proceeding RM-11753 is to take the next necessary and logical step to allow LPFM radio stations to become viable businesses. Without the ability to attract capital and talent, LPFMs will simply not prosper, and will not be able to fulfill these steps that the FCC, Congress and the President have endorsed. It is fair and only makes common sense to somewhat level the playing field for LPFMs. They are already at a tremendous disadvantage to deep-pocketed corporate radio who have little to no interest in specializing their programming to serve diverse communities. Corporate radio becomes more profitable with an economy of scale and homogenous programming. On the other hand, LPFMs will thrive with content uniquely tailored to their communities.

Allow LPFMs to play commercials and to be owned by local small businesses, not just nonprofits. Classify LPFMs as primary radio stations to protect against displacement and allow one entity to own two LPFM stations. The proposal also asks for the creation of a common sense set of technical rules for both FM translators and LPFMs regarding spectrum spacing. Otherwise, corporate radio will muzzle LPFMs.

Pulled straight from www.fcc.gov/what-we-do:

- Promoting competition, innovation and investment in broadband services and facilities
- Supporting the nation's economy by ensuring an appropriate competitive framework for the unfolding of the communications revolution
- Encouraging the highest and best use of spectrum domestically

These mandates of the FCC make it clear to me that you should support and approve the requests of RM-11753.

I enthusiastically support RM-11753 and ask the FCC to endorse this proposal.

Thank you,

Citizen Peter Lewman
Sr. Project Manager
McKesson Cop.