

February 21, 2001

FCC

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the parent of a five-year old boy who is profoundly deaf. Two years ago, he received a cochlear implant, and we have been pleased with the results. I feel that my son has been blessed to have been born in a time when technological advances will open many doors in his future. However, my son's progress does not come easily. He has cerebral palsy, oral/motor difficulties, and ADHD. These are issues that actively work against his understanding and production of speech. Recently, we have been exploring the use of FM systems to enhance the signal to noise ratio he receives. Even in the quietest of environments, his attention and speech improves dramatically.

That is why when I received notice of the FCC proposal to sell FM bands, I was horrified. Finally, our family has come across yet another technology that will help my son, but we are at risk of losing this precious resource. I know that issue may come down to potential revenue, but at what price? The deaf and hard of hearing population, in my opinion, has been very patient while the fight continues to provide better accommodations, more accessibility to things that the hearing world takes for granted. By selling this precious part of the radio spectrum, this will be a major setback. How will I explain to my young son that the technology that once made speech more understandable was sold for profit? How do I as a parent accept yet another roadblock?

I am also the Family Support Specialist for a United Way program just starting here in Minnesota. We provide information and support to families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. This issue is a hot subject for the parents and professionals I know. For every response you get, I can guarantee that there are hundreds more who may not have commented, but feel strongly.

I hope you reconsider your proposal. My son is counting on it.

Candace Lindow-Davies  
Parent/Family Support Specialist  
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