

BEFORE THE  
**Federal Communications Commission**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of )  
 )  
Broadcast Localism ) MB Docket No. 04-233  
 )

To: The Commission

**COMMENTS OF ENTERCOM GREENVILLE LICENSE, LLC**

Entercom Greenville License, LLC (“*Entercom Greenville*”), by its attorneys, hereby submits comments in response to the *Notice of Inquiry* in the above-captioned proceeding (“*Notice*”). Entercom Greenville is the licensee of Stations WFBC-FM and WYRD(AM), Greenville, South Carolina; WOLI(FM), Easley, South Carolina; WOLT(FM), Greer, South Carolina; and WORD(AM), WSPA(AM) and WSPA-FM, Spartanburg, South Carolina. As discussed below, the Commission’s current policies with regard to broadcast localism properly allow licensees the flexibility to address the concerns of their communities in inventive and inspiring ways, as demonstrated by the attached summary of community-oriented programming and activities. There is no reason to impose new regulations on the industry in this regard that potentially would diminish, and not enhance, local community service activities by broadcasters.

**I. Localism and Deregulation of Radio Content**

“The concept of localism was part and parcel of broadcast regulation virtually from its inception.” *Deregulation of Radio*, 84 FCC 2d 968, 994 (1981) (“*Radio Deregulation Order*”). The Commission has long recognized that, in serving the needs of its community, a broadcaster should be afforded some latitude in tailoring its programming to the needs of its listeners. *Radio Deregulation Order* at 994-98. The Commission acknowledges that it should avoid “regulations

that straight-jacket all stations into the same mold.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 998. More than twenty years ago, therefore, the Commission correctly eliminated its non-entertainment programming guidelines for commercial broadcast radio, requiring only that stations offer programming responsive to the issues of concern to the station’s listeners, as discerned by the station licensee. *Radio Deregulation Order* at 1013-14.

The Commission recognized in 1981 that the radio industry had been “characterized from its beginning by rapid and dynamic change” and noted that the number of stations had grown from 583 stations in 1934 to nearly 9000 at the time of the Commission’s decision. *Radio Deregulation Order* at 969. This upsurge in the number of broadcast stations, the Commission concluded, required that “licensees specialize to attract an audience so that they may remain financially viable.” *Id.* The Commission judged that the marketplace would more effectively dictate the broadcast of content meeting the needs of a particular community than generic regulations prescribing such content. *Radio Deregulation Order* at 1013-14. These conclusions have been borne out over the past two decades and are at least as true today as they were then.

In eliminating its non-entertainment programming guidelines, the Commission remained “convinced that absent these guidelines significant amounts of non-entertainment programming of a variety of types will continue on radio.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 977. The goal of deregulation was to provide radio broadcasters with “the maximum flexibility to be responsive to issues important to their listeners, with the minimum amount of governmental interference.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 978. The Commission observed that “regulation of necessity would be standardized nationwide, would be relatively inflexible, and would be likely to impose costs without compensating benefits.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 1024. The Commission further noted that “to require programming aimed at unrevealed needs, which are difficult to

determine, at the expense of programming that is clearly demanded by the public, is to replace the judgment of the government for that of the public.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 1031.

In the *Radio Deregulation Order*, the Commission outlined its expectation that broadcasters would “continue[ ] [the] provision of news programs in amounts to be determined by the discretion of the individual broadcaster guided by the tastes, needs, and interests of its listenership” and “responsive[ness] to the issues facing their community.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 978. The Commission affords broadcasters the opportunity to address these issues by “virtually any means.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 982. In making its determination, the Commission recognized that “more issues can be addressed through [ ] specialized programming than through a generalized ‘something for everyone’ requirement.” *Radio Deregulation Order* at 988-89.

## **II. Deregulation of Programming Content Fosters Localism**

The *Notice* considers again introducing the straight-jacket of program content regulation. The Commission should not alter its deregulatory approach in this regard, however. The “rapid and dynamic change” that has characterized radio throughout its history has only accelerated during the 23 years since adoption of the *Radio Deregulation Order*. In those two decades, more than 5000 radio stations have joined the nearly 9000 stations licensed in 1981. Audio Division, Federal Communications Commission, *Broadcast Station Totals* (as of June 30, 2004), available at [www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/totlas/bt040630.html](http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/totlas/bt040630.html). Other traditional sources of news and information, such as broadcast television and weekly and alternative newspapers, have witnessed tremendous growth as well. Penetration rates for cable have increased significantly, and DBS has been introduced, offering hundreds of new channels, including both national and local news and discussion. Technological advances have also led to ever-increasing competition for the

public's attention and have provided the public with access to diverse and antagonistic viewpoints in numbers unimaginable at the release of the *Radio Deregulation Order*. In just the past decade, the Internet has become commonplace in American homes, schools, and workplaces and the introduction of satellite radio offers hundreds of additional audio channel selections to American consumers.

For all of these reasons, broadcast radio licensees find themselves in an ever-more competitive marketplace. As the Commission correctly recognized in 1981, these competitive pressures create economic incentives for broadcasters to air community-responsive programming. Consumers now more than ever have a plethora of sources for the news, information, and entertainment they seek. The competitive market pressures have and will continue to guide local broadcasters' appropriate community-responsive programming efforts much more effectively than any generic policies, practices, or rules imposed by the government far removed from local audiences.

The market-driven sensitivities to issues of local concern envisioned by the Commission in 1981 are a reality, obviating any need for new government intervention. Because its continued existence is predicated on its meeting the needs and wants of its listeners effectively, the Entercom Greenville radio stations make concerted efforts to program to the "tastes, needs, and interests of its listenership" as envisioned by the *Radio Deregulation Order*. In addition, Entercom Greenville stations strive to be good neighbors and responsible corporate citizens by sponsoring, supporting and participating in local and community events and causes. Attachment A documents the substantial commitment of Entercom Greenville's stations to community-responsive programming and activities. For example, WORD has held debates for US Senate candidates and Greenville City Council candidates. Annually, all of the Entercom Greenville

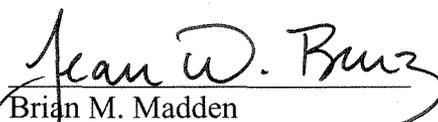
stations volunteer together for "Make a Difference Day." In 2003, the stations' entire staffs conducted a food drive at area Winn Dixie stores for the benefit of Meals on Wheels – filling 28 fifty-gallon barrels with food in one day. In 2002, the estimated value of PSAs broadcast and funds raised through the efforts of the Entercom Greenville stations exceeded \$570,000.

### **CONCLUSION**

As demonstrated by the foregoing material, the stations owned by Entercom Greenville are highly responsive to the needs and interests of their local communities. New regulatory intervention into program content is unnecessary and would only serve to stymie the efforts of broadcasters like Entercom Greenville to effectively serve their communities. For the foregoing reasons, Entercom Greenville urges the Commission to refrain from adopting policies, practices, or rules governing broadcast stations' program content.

Respectfully submitted,

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# **ATTACHMENT A**

ENTERCOM GREENVILLE'S  
COMMITMENT TO LOCALISM

## NEWS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMMING

Entercom's Greenville stations air "Movers and Shakers," a locally produced 30-minute show hosted by WFBC's news director. The show addresses local concerns voiced by community leaders throughout the area via requests the station sends out for their assessment of the top ten concerns in their community.

Entercom's Greenville stations air "Focus on the Upstate," a locally produced 30-minute show hosted by WORD/WYRD's news director. This show addresses local concerns voiced by listeners throughout the area via requests the station sends out for their assessment of the top ten concerns in their community.

WFCB-FM, WOLI, and WOLT-FM broadcast "Radio Health Journal," a 30-minute nationally syndicated show that covers current health and medical news.

On May 3, 2004, from 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm, WORD held a debate for the Republican nomination for the US Senate. All 6 Republican Candidates were invited and 5 attended the debate. The station's format was a free wheeling exercise that allowed the candidates to ask each other questions. The station had the candidates sit next to the crowd in Westgate Mall in Spartanburg. This allowed the candidates to feel that this was not a traditional debate. Station hosts were on the stage, looking down on the candidates. Every candidate remarked that this was the best debate they had attended. The debate covered the national issues important to the Greenville/Spartanburg area. The station allowed people attending to write questions, and WORD's hosts picked the best questions to ask the candidates. This debate received statewide media coverage from television and newspaper.

WORD held a debate for the Republican Nomination for Greenville County Council on May 18, 2004 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm. The candidates debated county planning and the Martin Luther King Day holiday, which Greenville County does not recognize as a formal employee holiday.

From 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm on June 17, 2004, WORD held a debate for the Republican Nomination for US Senate run-off. Congressman Jim DeMint and former Governor David Beasley debated the issues on The Ralph Bristol Show. The station discussed the differences between the two candidates.

WORD and WYRD broadcast the program America in the Morning each weekday morning for an hour. America in the Morning includes up-to-the minute coverage of breaking news and on-scene reports plus the morning essentials: weather, business, sports and lighter material. This show also features United States Senators Edward M. Kennedy, a Democrat and John McCain, a Republican debating the national issue of the day.

WSPA-FM airs a three-hour program each Friday morning in the spring and fall called the Magic Mornings Home Town tour. The program addresses issues of concern to the

community in focus during that day's program, including economic growth, education, law enforcement and recreation.

WSPA(AM) broadcasts the one-hour weekday program called "Speaking of Spartanburg." The show consists of national news and interviews with a different community leader everyday discussing local concerns of these organizations.

WSPA-AM airs "The Battle Of The Brains" a contest featuring 28 local schools. This contest features teams from local middle schools who answer questions about current events, science, history, and other subjects. Schools in the Spartanburg Community and surrounding communities participate yearly with this event. This show encourages academic achievement and rewards the area's best students. The station runs this show Saturday Morning from January through July.

The Entercom Greenville stations air literally thousands of Public Service Announcements for dozens of charities and community organizations each year. The stations air produced PSAs supplied to them from these organizations either directly or through the stations' ABC Network affiliation or through the Advertising Council. The station creates PSAs for many charities and organizations, especially for events that it stages either to build awareness or to conduct fund raising.

#### **COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES**

WFBC FM's charitable activities (in addition to PSAs) include:

- Scream Xtreme – Haunted House – Portion of the proceeds went to Meyers Center for Special Children
- Leukemia Society Suspension Promotion – Entercom employee Heidi Aiken was suspended from a crane for 5 hours and all money raised went to the Leukemia Society. Heidi Aiken was also named Woman of the Year by the Leukemia Society for 2003.
- Entombed in Concrete – Entercom employee Kato Keller was entombed in concrete for 48 hours. Listeners gave pledges to get him out. The station raised \$5,000 for the Meyer Center for Special Children.
- Usher backstage online auction – The station auctioned a pair of backstage passes for Usher with money raised going to the Upstate American Red Cross to benefit flood victims.
- Make A Difference Day – Station personnel visited retirement communities and played games and interacted with residents.
- Make A Difference Day – Station personnel went to Winn Dixie stores across the Upstate and collected canned goods for Meals on Wheels.
- WFBC sponsored the Friends of the Reedy River concert with Edwin McCain. Money raised went to Friends of the Reedy River to protect and preserve the Reedy River.

- Kato's Ride for Freedom – On air talent Kato from the Hawk and Tom morning rode a bike from Greenville to the steps of the state capitol in Columbia in the name of freedom. His goal was to arrive at the State House on September 11<sup>th</sup>. WFBC listeners sponsored Kato at any amount of money per mile they wanted to. All the money collected was given to local all-volunteer fire departments.

In addition to the causes supported by individual stations or the stations working together, Entercom's Greenville stations participate in Entercom's company-wide "Make a Difference Day." One day each year, the stations dedicate the on-air resources and every member of the 65 person staff to a particular cause. In 2004, the stations adopted 15 area homes for the elderly. Entercom Greenville employees went to one of these facilities to read to the residents, play games with them and talk to them. In 2003, the stations' entire staff conducted a food drive at area Winn Dixie stores for the benefit of Meals On Wheels. With the help of listener donations, the Greenville stations filled 28 fifty-gallon barrels with food in one day!

### **EMERGENCY PROGRAMMING**

WORD covers special news events. In the past 2 years, the station has had special live coverage for the following events: Election Coverage, The Columbia Space Shuttle Disaster, The Iraq War, Special Weather Coverage, The Death, Funeral and Burial of President Ronald Reagan and The Capture of Saddam Hussein. On all of these events, the station solicited and accepted phone calls from its listeners. With the stories of national importance, the station carried network coverage from ABC News, plus it had special local coverage of these events. With the stories of local importance, the station had extended coverage of local elections. For the Democratic Presidential Primary Election on February 3, 2004, the station had live coverage from The John Edwards Campaign Party in Columbia from one of its reporters. The station's local coverage for that event included reporters at Spartanburg and Greenville County election offices.

For state election races June 8, 2004, WORD had election coverage from 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm. This coverage was hosted by WORD's Ralph Bristol and by Mike Smith of the Spartanburg Herald Journal with WORD reporters all over the state. WORD's Coverage featured call-ins from WORD reporters who were with the two leading Republican US Senatorial candidates and those candidates were interviewed live on the air. WORD had live coverage from the party of the US Senatorial Nominee of the Democratic Party that night as well.

For the June 22, 2004 run-off election, WORD did special election news reports of the Republican US Senatorial race from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. The station spoke with the winner of the election live on the air. WORD had reporters live at Greenville County and Spartanburg County counting the votes.

During the past 2 years, WORD has covered special weather events. During these events, the station announces school, business, and road closings. WORD solicits and accepts calls from its listeners to get reports from around the listening area. WORD has a

special weather plan, where staff members work extra hours getting the information to the public. The station posts school closings on its website.

WORD's coverage of the liberation of Iraq, included extended coverage from ABC Radio Network and extended coverage from the WORD staff. The station paid special attention to the liberation of Iraq on its local shows. With the Columbia disaster and the death of former President Ronald Reagan, WORD peppered network coverage from ABC with local coverage from the WORD Talk Show Hosts and WORD News Anchors.

WSPA-AM covers weather emergencies, Amber Alerts and news emergencies. WSPA-AM announces school closings and other announcements in regards to the weather. The station has been on the Amber Alert system. The station carried extended coverage of the Iraqi War, The Death of Ronald Reagan, and The Columbia Disaster.

WSPA FM, WFBC FM and WOLI/WOLT FM broke regular programming to provide continuous coverage of the momentous events of the last three years, including 9/11, The Columbia Disaster, and The Iraqi War.

The stations also interrupted programming for the following:

- Amber Alerts – reports every fifteen minutes for the first two hours of the report, then once an hour until the alert is over
- Flood warnings – interrupt music programming to give warnings.
- School and business closings – the stations interrupt music programming to report all school and business closings during ice storms and snow.

The stations do local news reporting on each station:

#### WFBC FM

Does local newscasts on the hour and half hour throughout morning drive time, i.e., 5:30AM-10AM

#### WOLI/WOLT FM's

Does local newscasts on the hour and half hour throughout morning drive time, i.e., 5:30AM-10AM

#### WORD/WYRD AM's

WORD/WYRD is Greenville's News Radio Station. WORD/WYRD offers National News from The ABC Information Network and Local News Broadcasts from its four-person news staff, customized weather reports from Accuweather, Traffic Reports from Metro Networks, and business reports from Dow Jones Money Reports.

The stations offer these information services Monday through Friday on the hour and half hour mixing ABC Network News with their own locally reported news.

WORD/WYRD(AM)'s weekend programming includes several locally-produced 30-minute and 60-minute programs hosted by local businesses and experts.

### **LOCAL MUSIC INITIATIVES**

WSPA-FM and WFBC-FM work with small & independent labels to play music from those artists to try and help launch their careers. WSPA-FM featured a promotion called "Upstate Idol" in April 2004 where listeners got the chance to sing on air. Some sang songs they had written. On a Home Town Tour stop in Clemson the stations had Jamie Stake, a Clemson University student and her group "Take Note" sing live on the show. On another stop the stations had The Traveler's Rest High School Band perform live on the show.