

SandraLyn Bailey

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From: Bart Walker [bart.walker@comcast.net]

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Sent: Tuesday, January 02, 2007 11:01 PM

FEB - 9/007

To: Deborah Tate

Subject: AM using FM translators

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Hi Debi:

First, the Commission's hearing in Nashville was powerful in collecting a cross-section of ideas while maintaining a positive atmosphere. You are to be commended for bringing this honor to Tennessee.

One of the messages that came from the Nashville session was the **importance of LOCAL programming**. In your travels around the nation, I'm certain you have noticed this is an area in which AM broadcasters excel. The AM service is the *father of mass media*. AM radio laid the groundwork for **LOCAL** programming. AM broadcasters still find that **LOCAL** is what sets them aside from other services.

As mentioned earlier, unfortunately the physics of Amplitude Modulation make it more prone to interference in a world that is going more high tech every day. Leaking RF from cable TV lines create interference to only AM signals. Only AM signals are covered by electrical power line problems. The metal utility poles that are replacing the old wooden poles only harm AM signals. The metal poles re-radiate signals and make a null or distortion of only AM signals. Only AM signals get buzz from under-road sensors that operate traffic lights. And this is only the *tip of the iceberg* of interference problems impacting only AM signals.

Each day I drive around Murfreesboro and hear new areas in which WGNS receives interference. I'm not being dramatic, but the amount of harmful interference to AM broadcasters does increase daily. This is causing more and more listeners to switch to frequency modulation, because it is less prone to interference and is not hurt by electrical static from storms.

If the Commission would approve AM licensees using FM translators in accordance with what was described in RM 11338, then a major source of **LOCAL programming** would have a new way to better serve the health and welfare of residents living in its city of license.

I am concerned that when we met in late October, there was hope that this issue could be put on "fast track". Are we closer today to getting this approved? As we approach the anniversary of the tragic Barfield-Crescent tornado in Murfreesboro, I fear that our next emergency need may arise and WGNS would not be able to adequately serve our city of license in the manner that is needed. **Please, do you have any suggestions on how this issue can be put on "fast track"?** I have written to the other Commissioners and to the Chairman. I have encouraged other broadcasters to do so as well.

Hopefully, this opportunity to improve the AM service that has a proven track record of **LOCALISM** will not be allowed to gradually fade away and die. I'm afraid this may be one of AM's final chances for survival. In-band digital does not seem to be the answer for AM. Even the Commission sees problems with increased interference and is not permitting night-time AM digital.

Your help and guidance is desperately needed--

Respectfully,

Bart

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