

The FCC's proposals for changing the way radio stations operate are preposterous.

1. To be subject to community advisory boards is to destroy free speech. If the radio broadcast violates the law, take it to civil or criminal court. No one is forced to listen who does not want to. Those who dislike programming for political reasons can do activist harm without any legal issue at stake.

2. Reporting requirements on content--including how it reflects the interests of a cross-section of local residents--is nothing but Big Brother. There is no moral or legal principle that could support the requirement that a station broadcast what some majority of the community wants to hear (or not broadcast what some majority doesn't want). Again, no one has to listen who does not want to.

3. Forcing granting airtime to any group that requests it is just as bad as forcing families to allow salespeople to attend their birthday parties and be given a time to speak. The broadcast is by certain people and intended for certain people. It is paid for privately and is not government provided. It should be private just like a birthday party is private for those hosting the party and those attending it.

4. Changing renewal processing from person-judged to a more bureaucratic solution will destroy the existing de facto freedom that stations have. It's clear the government wants to control broadcast radio in ways that are not appropriate, and to do so it must take the power out of the hands of regular civil servants.

5. Forcing an employee to be present at the station itself is like forcing the phone company to station personnel at every switch box. What possible justification can be made for this if the presence of a person has no effect on the content delivered? Such a requirement will destroy smaller stations that deliver their content via satellite.

6. Rules that force stations to relocate their main studio facilities are not okay. The imposition of great costs to move,

construct, and manage new facilities is unreasonable.

This all paints a grim picture about the government's desire to control and restrict free speech and the free exercise of religion. Many of us practice key elements of our religion through radio stations that would be severely damaged by the enactment of these proposals.

If you pretend that you are only making logistical and infrastructure changes, ignoring the real damaging effect of these actions on hundreds or thousands of small radio stations is just lying to yourself. And it's lying to the people. And we don't buy it.

We value our free speech and the free practice of our religion. You should, too.