

June 26, 2008

The Honorable Deborah Taylor Tate
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Tate:

On behalf of Tennessee's Public Radio Stations, we are writing to express our concerns about the proposed merger of XM Satellite Radio (XM) and Sirius Satellite Radio (Sirius). The public radio community remains steadfast in its opposition to the proposed XM-Sirius merger. However, if the merger is to proceed, then we urge the Federal Communications Commission to condition it by requiring the merged entity to incorporate HD Radio technology in all new satellite radio receivers.

Each week, more than 400,000 citizens in Tennessee listen to public radio. We oppose the merger between XM and Sirius on the grounds that a combined satellite radio provider would substantially harm the public interest by creating a monopoly satellite radio provider. We fear that a merged satellite company could leverage its business relationships with companies dominating the satellite receiver distribution and retail channel to frustrate the rollout of terrestrial digital radio receivers.

Public radio stations have been on the forefront of developing the digital broadcasting standard. Today, more than 380 public radio stations are broadcasting in digital and 300 more stations will soon be on the air. Tennessee's public radio stations are at the forefront of digital broadcasting, with all of Tennessee's public radio stations broadcasting in digital or in the process of transitioning. Our investments, with considerable help from Congress, total millions of dollars in this next generation of broadcasting. A merger condition requiring the inclusion of HD Radio technology in all new satellite receivers would ensure a competitive market for digital terrestrial broadcasting, while preventing monopolistic market forces from squeezing out this growing service.

Last week, the LHHR Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee approved an additional \$40 million to assist public radio stations transition to HD radio technology. Clearly, the Congress supports our transition to terrestrial digital broadcasting. Congress' investment in our broadcasting infrastructure will be marginalized by the merger of XM and Sirius unless the merged entity is required to insert HD Radio technology in all new satellite receivers.

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Your interest in promoting competition while fostering innovation should remain at the forefront of this critical decision-making process. We urge your continued support in working with your colleagues at the FCC to promote and preserve the public interest in the historic proceeding by urging the inclusion of HD Radio technology in all new satellite radio receivers. The citizens of Tennessee deserve to continue reaping the benefits of public radio. With your support, terrestrial broadcasting can remain healthy and vibrant for years to come.

Sincerely,

Robert Gordon

President and General Manager

WPLN-FM (Nashville)

WHRS-FM (Cookeville)

WPLN-AM (Madison)

WTML-FM (Tullahoma)

Daniel L. Campbell

Director of Radio

WKNO-FM (Memphis)

WKNP-FM (Jackson)

Wayne Winkler

Director

WETS-FM (Johnson City)

Regina Dean

Executive Director

WUOT-FM (Knoxville)

cc: Ms. Marlene Dortch (for inclusion in MB Docket 07-57)