AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH FINANCE DEPARTMENT

June 10, 2009

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
12th Street Lobby, TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

Ex Parte Presentation
Of the African Methodist Episcopal Church
In ET Docket Nos. 04-186 and 02-380
And WT Docket Nos. 08-166 and 08-167

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The African Methodist Episcopal Church ("AMEC") has formally joined the Coalition of Wireless Microphone Users ("CWMU).[1] We would like to thank the Commission for this opportunity to submit our comment on the above-cited dockets.

The AMEC's mission is to minister to the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and environmental needs of all people by spreading the gospel throughout the world. The AMEC grew out of the Free African Society established in Philadelphia in 1787. Because black Methodists encountered racism and desired religious autonomy, Richard Allen, a former Delaware slave and AMEC pastor, successfully sued in 1807 and 1815 for the right of his congregation to exist as an independent institution.

Prior to the Civil War, major congregations were established in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington, DC, Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, and other large cities. Numerous northern communities also gained a substantial AMEC presence. The slave states of Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, Louisiana, and, for several years, South Carolina, became additional locations for AMEC congregations. The denomination reached the Pacific Coast in the early 1850s with churches in Stockton, Sacramento, San Francisco and other parts of California.

During the Civil War and Reconstruction, AMEC clergy invited newly freed slaves into their denomination. In 1880, AMEC membership reached 400,000 because of our rapid expansion into Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Texas.

---

[1] In addition to AMEC, CWMU is comprised of the Broadway League, the Shubert Organization, National Basketball Association, National Football League, National Hockey League, Major League Baseball, ESPN, Inc., Alliance of Resident Theatres, Educational Theatre Association, League of Resident Theatres, League of Off-Broadway Theatres and Producers, Theatre Communication Group, Sports Video Group, and News Corporation.

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

HEADQUARTERS
1134 11TH STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001
(202) 371-8700 FAX NUMBER: (202) 371-8735

OFFICE
512 8TH AVE. S., NASHVILLE, TN 37203-4181
(615) 259-3771 FAX NUMBER: (615) 259-3776

Today, the AMEC celebrates over 2,000,000 members, 8000 ministers, and 7000 congregations in more than 30 nations in North and South America, Africa and Europe. The AMEC has 4,078 churches in the continental United States which, when combined, utilize approximately 3,700 wireless microphones. Houses of worship rely upon these microphones almost daily and the freedom of movement and crisp sound afforded by modern systems is absolutely essential for our sermons, lectures and musical celebrations.

Many of our larger churches host thousands of observers and interference with these systems would devastate our ability to continue effectively communicating with our members. Accordingly, the AME repeats, reiterates and supports the CWMU's comments offered to the Commission in its Opposition filed on May 8 and in its Reply filed May 18, 2009. Most significantly, houses of worship should be eligible for Part 74 licenses to operate wireless microphones and should be permitted to register their uses of wireless microphones in the database proposed in the Commission's rules. Only with these provisions can we so effectively continue our important work of teaching and inspiring our congregations.

Again, the AMEC appreciates this opportunity to comment on these proceedings. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please direct them to counsel, Antoinette Cook Bush at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP, phone 202-371-7230.

Dr. Richard Allen Lewis,
CFO of AMEC
512 8th Street,
Nashville, TN. 37203.
P: 615-259-3771, F: 615-259-3776
www.ame-church.com/

cc: Acting Chairman Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell