

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)	
)	
Policies to Promote Rural Radio Service)	MM Docket No. 09-52
And to Streamline Allotment and Assignment)	RM-11528
Procedures)	

To: The Commission

**COMMENTS
OF
SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY, INC.**

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY, INC. ("Sacred Heart"),¹ by Counsel, pursuant to *Notice of Proposed Rule Making ("NPRM") FCC 09-30 (released April 20, 2009)*, hereby submits these Comments in the above-captioned rule making proceeding regarding the Commission's proposal to prohibit FM Translator "Band Hopping" applications. For the reasons set forth below, Sacred Heart believes that a more practical approach should be taken than that which is proposed in the NPRM. In support hereof, Sacred Heart submits the following:

1. In paragraphs 36, 37 and 38 of the NPRM, the Commission explains that "a number" of successful applicants in the Auction No. 83 FM translator filing window from March 2003 subsequently filed modification applications seeking to move their channel of operation from the commercial band to the reserved band. Such modifications, as the Commission points out, permit the use of alternative methods of signal delivery, such as satellite and terrestrial microwave facilities. The NPRM goes on to explain the Commission's concern that these applicants filed band-

¹ Sacred Heart is the licensee of 2 NCE-FM broadcast stations, 1 AM broadcast station and 7 FM translator stations.

hopping modification applications prior to the construction of their facilities, and that perhaps a two-year on-air holding period should be implemented before any band-hopping application can be entertained.

2. While Sacred Heart recognizes the fact that several Auction No. 83 applicants were speculators that had no genuine intent to construct and operate the facilities they had applied for, the public interest is not served by punishing the entire FM translator community for the actions of the disingenuous few. As the Commission's records should reflect, Sacred Heart operates three full power broadcast stations and seven FM translator stations that provide a classical music and public radio programming format to Connecticut, Long Island and portions of the New York City metropolitan area.

3. Due to the secondary status nature of an FM translator license, there have been two times when Sacred Heart had to apply for an FM translator station frequency change to resolve an interference issue with a full power FM station, or apply for a displacement channel once a new full power FM station commenced operations on the same channel as a Sacred Heart translator station in the same service area. The fact that Sacred Heart was permitted to avail itself of these creative application procedures has allowed it to provide continuous broadcast service in areas that might otherwise would have lost its service.

4. Sacred Heart submits that the Commission's concerns about the prior abuse of its application procedures can be cured in a number of simple steps:

- (a) Place a special operating condition on all future new-station FM translator construction permits that would prohibit band-hopping modification applications unless granted a special waiver.

- (b) Band-hopping modification applications that are approved as a result of a waiver contain a special operating condition that require the Primary Station to feed the translator station solely by over-the-air signal, thereby negating the concern over application gamesmanship that might be intended to use alternative methods of signal delivery.²
- (c) Place strict limits on the number of translator applications that may be filed by one party in any future FM translator filing windows; and,
- (d) Place a specific time holding period on the assignment or transfer of any construction permit or license acquired as a result of a future FM translator filing window.

Sacred Heart submits that adoption of the foregoing four suggestions will continue to respect the policy considerations set forth in the NPRM without arbitrarily penalizing those FM translator licensees and permittees that have a long, established track record of serving the public interest. Sacred Heart's suggestions will not only allow the Commission to maintain a fair and equitable FM translator licensing process but also will permit the business of FM translator broadcasting to move forward with a reasonable level of respect and appreciation. Sacred Heart's suggestions, if adopted, will provide reasonable and accountable flexibility to the Commission's licensing process without jeopardizing the policy considerations set forth in the NPRM. Sacred Heart believes that its suggestions provide a "win, win" scenario for all the parties involved here.

² Any such Special Operating Condition should also be listed in that station's

WHEREFORE, the foregoing premises considered, Sacred Heart urges the Commission to adopt its suggestions regarding "Band Hopping" FM translator applications..

Respectfully submitted,

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY, INC.

By: 

Cary S. Tepper

Its Attorney

Booth, Freret, Imlay & Tepper, P.C.

7900 Wisconsin Avenue

Suite 304

Bethesda, MD 20814-3628

(301) 718-1818

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subsequent FCC License Authorization.