

"ORIGINAL"
0+4

Received & Inspected

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

MAR 05 2014

Washington, DC 20554

FCC Mail Room

In the Matter of :

)

) MB Docket No. 13-249

Revitalization of the AM Radio Service

)

REPLY COMMENTS

Comes now, Mark Heller, an individual, (hereinafter, "Heller") with REPLY Comments to the 156 active filings in the recent window for comment. Heller was an early filer, when the public comment 'window' was originally opened.

Heller read with interest, each filing, and found some filings pretend that AM owners are 'ill-equipped' to maintain their facilities, and with portrayals of 'aging plants', while Heller has made an investment in a large sized facility recently, which is only three years old. Heller simply does not believe the assertions made by some filers, are reality.

HELLER REITERATES INTEREST IN FM TRANSLATORS FOR AM RADIO STATIONS, KNOWING IT WILL HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH ACTUALLY "IMPROVING AM RADIO", IN FACT IT COULD EASILY CLUTTER THE FM RADIO BAND, AS A RESULT.

Heller supports the majority of the filers, that AM broadcasters should be allowed to acquire one FM translator. This 'olive branch' is only a 'band-aid' which will not improve the AM radio service, at all. What it will do, is give daytime AM operators (Class D, especially) the ability to broadcast 24 hours a day. Again, some markets, especially in Urbanized areas, will simply not qualify, and the FM band in some areas is already crowded and / or cluttered with existing, additional signals. It will be interesting, how the Commission will allow this to proceed, when a certain 'unfairness' and 'unequal' outcome is predicted and ultimately assured, under the Commission's current rules.

HELLER REITERATES THAT 'PRE-SUNRISE AND POST-SUNSET' GRANTS SHOULD BE MADE IMMEDIATELY.

Commissioner Ajit Pai, appeared on WRDN-AM Radio in Durand, WI and the interview was widely heard on the internet stream, which was distributed by WRDN. Commissioner Pai said if he could go 'down a few floors, and fix that computer

No. of Copies rec'd
List ABCDE

0+4

program, he'd do it.' Commissioner Pai should realize, that several Consulting Engineer firms have offered the corrected computer program, as a 'donation' to the Commission, just two or three years ago, and that offer was outright refused by staff. The time has come, to stop ignoring this issue.

**HELLER WISHES TO COMMEND THE EFFORTS OF 'REC NETWORKS'
FOR PROVIDING A 'FIRST DRAFT PROPOSAL' FOR THE
REDISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING AM STATIONS (CLASS C AND D, ONLY)
ON THE SPECTRUM CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO TELEVISION CHANNELS
5 AND 6.**

Heller noted with interest, the 'first draft' proposal, presented by REC Networks in the re-use of Channel 5 and Channel 6 of the television band (namely 76 MHz to 88 MHz), where a balanced assignment list was provided, at 6 kilowatts of power and showing the move of Class C and Class D AM Radio Stations. Out of fairness, the Commission should consider what solutions would be available to Class A and Class B licensees, as well. Heller appreciated seeing the serious effort by REC Networks, which he believes would be beneficial to AM Radio operators in the long term. This lightly used television spectrum, could be easily be surrendered, for a much better use by migrating AM broadcasters. Radios are already in use, elsewhere in the world, utilizing the 76 to 88 MHz band, so production of new radios for listener use, would not be decades away.

REITERATE THE IMMEDIATE USE OF 530 KHZ IN THE UNITED STATES.

While few filers mention the use of 530 KHz, as a proposal. Heller wishes to again mention that Mexico, Canada and island areas of the Caribbean are using this AM frequency, and that the United States may use this frequency, without any treaties, today, and that 530 KHz appears on all AM radios, this frequency should be allocated for interested broadcasters.

**SUPPORT THE FURTHER USE AND EXPANSION OF THE 'AM EXPANDED
BAND', INCLUDING USING THESE FREQUENCIES IN HAWAII.
REITERATE THAT AN ENGINEERING STUDY FOR 5 KILOWATTS DAYS
AND 1 KILOWATT NIGHTS WOULD BE MORE EFFICIENT, ALLOWING
FOR MORE STATIONS TO BE MOVED.**

Heller has been interested in the Expanded Band, back to its infancy (1987), when William Ball was the lead contact person, within the Commission. Heller was frustrated in seeing the failure of listeners to follow suit, and to see the Commission later amend the requirements that AM broadcasters surrender their existing AM, after five years. This effort, has been considered a 'Classic Fail', but the Commission should share in its shortcomings, as well. This can be fixed.

We never had 88 stations constructed on the Expanded Band. There never was enough activity in the Expanded Band to encourage and develop significant listenership, either. Today, from our best estimates, there are only 55 of the original 88 Expanded Band stations, actually operating. Additionally, the State of Hawaii has been 'cheated' by not having at the very least, a frequency or two, operating there.

Today, we count 7 operating stations on 1620 KHz? 5 on 1630 KHz? 5 on 1640 KHz? 8 on 1650 KHz? 9 on 1660 KHz? only 4 on 1670 KHz? 6 on 1680 KHz? 7 on 1690 KHz? again only 4 on 1700 KHz? Is this truly, the best use of AM spectrum? Heller thinks the answer is a resounding 'no'. A repackaging of the Expanded Band, using a daytime power level of 5 Kilowatts, and nighttime power of 1 Kilowatt, would be one proposal that should be considered.

SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF CONSULTING ENGINEER, RICHARD ARSENAULT, IN REGARDS TO BEGINNING PRE-SUNRISE AUTHORITY AT 5AM, LOCAL TIME.

Arsenault filed many years ago, and made a serious proposal, which should have been opened for comment, assigned a file number and allowed to be considered. Arsenault is a well-respected Consulting Engineer, who should not have been 'buried' by the Commission. Arsenault argued that 'Drive Time' AM radio begins at 5am, not 6am, local time, and the time has come to consider his proposal. The 'shelving' or 'burying' of legitimate proposals, like this one, makes the Commission staff look as if they pick 'winners and losers'. It should be further noted, that Heller has never hired Arsenault, and supports his original filing, which was filed March 1, 2010.

REITERATE SUPPORT FOR THE PREVIOUSLY FILED PROPOSAL BY SSR COMMUNICATIONS, PROPOSING TO ESTABLISH A NEW CLASS OF FM STATION, PROPOSED TO BE CALLED 'C-4'. THIS PROPOSAL NEEDS TO BE TAKEN OUT OF THE COMMISSION'S DUST-BIN, GIVEN AN ACTIVE RULEMAKING NUMBER AND COMMENTS SHOULD BE SOUGHT. SSR COMMUNICATIONS HAD THIS PROPOSAL AT THE FCC'S FEET, PROPERLY FILED, LONG BEFORE THE COMMISSION SOUGHT COMMENTS ON AM IMPROVEMENT.

Before Commissioners came forward with an AM improvement initiative, there was filed a serious, detailed proposal to allow many FM radio stations to increase their power from 6 kilowatts to 12 kilowatts. SSR Communications was assisted in their study and proposal by MMTC, and showed the improvements available to many FM stations, including Minority Owned facilities. This is another 'example' of a proposal which is 'withering on the vine' at the Commission. Again, this is an issue of 'fairness', how the Commission operates. SSR, like Arsenault (above), deserves to be brought

forward for comment, in the form of a Rulemaking proposal, before AM Improvement windows would be opened.

REITERATE THAT THE UNITED STATES COULD EASILY ALLIEVIATE CUBAN RADIO JAMMING, BY HAVING THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS, ABANDON ITS HIGH POWERED, AND QUASI-SECRET 'NAMELESS' AM STATION AT MARATHON, FLORIDA

Virtually no one wants to mention the background noise that is found, east of the Mississippi River in the United States, that is courtesy of Cuban jamming. As Heller is responding, the east coast of the US is being affected, greatly.

REITERATE AND SUPPORT THE REDUCTION OF MODULATION OF POSITIVE PEAKS AT 120% FROM 125%, AND NEGATIVE PEAKS TO 99%.

Supermodulation, simply does not work. Splatter complaints have increased over the past decade, and a simple 15-minute, once-per-year certification, does not protect adjacent operators. This could be resolved by modifying the maximum modulation levels allowed.

HELLER CONTINUES TO REITERATE AND SUPPORT A CLEARING HOUSE TO BE ESTABLISHED 'INSIDE' THE F.C.C. TO REPORT 'UTILITY BASED' AM INTERFERENCE.

Again, Heller complains about the lackluster response from electric utilities (monopolies) when informed about sparking, buzzing, loose connections, bad transformers, corrosion, failed insulators, etc. Heller was informed by a listener of a very noisy power pole, ten miles south of his tower site, in the past two months, (since filing his original comments) and after Heller noted the pole number in person, he reported it to a publicly owned utility, headquartered in Illinois, but managed out of Wisconsin. The individual who is responsible for such interference repairs said he was on the other side of the state, assisting in weather repairs, and it would take weeks to return home. When the Village President of the community later contacted the utility manager, he did not dispatch a second crew, but just responded by saying, 'It's probably not caused by us.' Heller claims this is a 'Slacker Response' by a utility, and they simply do not take utility-based interference seriously. The buzz, continues, today. It is time, for the FCC to establish a Clearing House, to garner the respect and attention by electrical utilities. Here is an initiative that the Commission can support, for the benefit of AM broadcasters, everywhere.

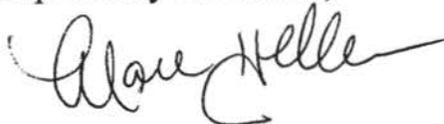
MAR -5 2014

FCC Mail Room

CONCLUSION

The Commission must balance a 'fairness' to the assignment of FM translators, as Heller cannot see how everyone who wants an FM translator for their AM station, will technically be able to have one, under current FCC rules; as well as allow for a serious review of Pre-Sunrise proposals, that were filed prior to the Commissions AM Improvement initiative. The Commission also owes the petitioner, SSR Communications of Flora, MS, a legitimate hearing on their proposal for a Class C-4 for FM broadcasters. Furthermore, the Commission deserves to look at the current TV channels 5 and 6, for consideration of relocating current TV broadcasters to another channel assignment, and to provide AM broadcasters to migrate to the band of 76 MHz to 88 MHz, over the next ten years. The Commission can also address the lack of support from electrical utilities for broadcasters, as well.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Heller
4212 Lincoln Avenue
Two Rivers, WI 54241-1873

Original and Four Copies, via US Mail