ROY BLUNT
MISSOURI

VICE CHAIR, SENATE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

260 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2508
202-224-5721

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES
APPROPRIATIONS
ARMED SERVICES
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RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

December 13, 2013

1242

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

The Honorable Michael O'Rielly
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler and Commissioner O'Rielly:

I am writing to inquire about the status of the FCC proposed rulemaking *Noncommercial Education Station Fundraising for Third-Party Non-Profit Organizations* (MB Docket No. 12-106). I am aware that the Commission sought comment on the proposed rulemaking in April 2012, however, there has been no further action. I appreciate the Commission's previous work on this proposal and am interested to learn whether the FCC intends to provide the issue further consideration.

Charitable giving comes to the forefront of Americans' minds during the holiday season in particular. As the end of the year approaches, we are reminded of how religious institutions, charities, hospitals, museums, and other non-profit organizations use private funds to meet a number of community needs in the best possible way. Feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, serving the poor, supporting educational institutions, and undertaking critical research are all the kinds of things that Americans do because they give to charity.

The Commission's proposal to provide more flexibility to noncommercial educational broadcast stations to raise funds for non-profit organizations highlights the valuable role broadcast stations already play in supporting relief services for catastrophic events and national disasters, including Hurricane Katrina and the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Others on the Commission were part of the proposed rulemaking in 2012. As new members, I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to working with both of you.

Sincere regards,

Roy Blunt
United States Senator

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

April 4, 2014

The Honorable Roy Blunt
United States Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blunt:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the status of the Commission's *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* on Noncommercial Educational (NCE) Station Fundraising. I appreciate your interest and will have your letter placed into the record of the proceeding.

As you note, the Commission sought comment on whether to provide additional flexibility for certain NCE stations to conduct on-air fundraising that interrupts regular programming for other non-profit entities. Under current rules, absent a waiver, NCE stations are only allowed to interrupt programming for fundraising efforts on behalf of the station itself. In the pending proceeding, the Commission must evaluate the impact of altering this longstanding policy, including consideration of the legal issues pertaining to the nature of non-commercial broadcasting, the scope of NCE stations that may engage in third-party fundraising, limits on the eligibility of non-profit organizations to be the beneficiaries of third-party fundraising, and limits on the amount of air time spent on third-party fundraising.

Commission staff continues to review the record and develop recommendations for the full Commission's consideration. I look forward to reviewing the Bureau recommendations and working with you as we explore these issues.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler