

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Noncommercial Educational Station Fundraising for Third-Party Non-Profit Organizations*, MB Docket No. 12-106.

In the 1830s, French diplomat and political scientist Alexis de Tocqueville marveled at the good work done by private associations in America. As he put it in *Democracy in America*, “I often admired the infinite art with which the inhabitants of the United States managed to fix a common goal to the efforts of many men and to get them to advance to it freely.” In modern times, that selfless spirit lives on through countless non-profit organizations that do good work each and every day. They feed the hungry, house the homeless, provide relief when disaster strikes, and serve communities in many other ways, large and small.

Today, we take a small but meaningful step to help these organizations help more Americans. Specifically, we will permit noncommercial educational (NCE) stations, except those that receive funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, to devote up to one percent of their annual airtime on fundraising for the benefit of third-party, non-profit organizations. Minimally relaxing our longstanding third-party fundraising restrictions will benefit the public interest by making it easier for noncommercial stations to partner with disaster relief groups, charities, and other non-profits to raise funds for worthy causes.

Currently, NCE stations need a waiver to do such fundraising. For instance, when Hurricane Andrew struck Florida, the licensee of an NCE radio station and an NCE television station had to proactively seek a waiver from the FCC in order to broadcast a two-hour program aimed at raising funds and providing information about hurricane relief efforts. And shortly following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, a station in Asheville, North Carolina sought, and ultimately was granted, an FCC waiver to fundraise on-air for relief efforts. As a result, the station was able to raise \$272,250. Today’s *Order* will make it easier for NCE stations to do this kind of important work without having to file paperwork with the Commission and then wait for an answer.

This rule change may also enhance the educational nature of NCE stations by raising public awareness about important topics. For instance, NCEs will now be able to air a fundraising program for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, which could help to educate station audiences about the hospital’s research needs and ongoing efforts to find life-saving treatments for childhood diseases.

I’d like to thank the dedicated staff of the Media Bureau, including Kathy Berthot, Michelle Carey, Lyle Elder, Martha Heller, and Mary Beth Murphy, for their hard work on this *Order*.