

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI**

Re: *Creation of A Low Power Radio Service (MM Docket No. 99-25) and
Amendment of Service and Eligibility rules for FM Broadcast Translator
Stations (MB Docket No. 07-172)*

Today, we act to break a spectrum logjam, clearing the way for development of a more robust local community radio service and processing of thousands of pending FM translator applications. This is a win for communities across the nation. It is another step forward on our spectrum agenda. It promotes efficient use of spectrum, an increasingly vital public resource. And it provides new benefits to consumers everywhere.

Proponents of the LPFM and translator services have long vied for space on the crowded radio dial. Several months ago, Congress passed the Local Community Radio Act (LCRA), and I would like to acknowledge the members of Congress who worked hard on this important legislation, including the legislation's sponsors Representatives Mike Doyle and Lee Terry, as well as Senators Cantwell and McCain. I was pleased that the Commission served as a resource to Congress during consideration of the law, and I'm pleased that today the Commission takes important steps toward implementing the law.

In 2007, we imposed a 10-application limit on FM translator applicants in order to preserve licensing opportunities for LPFM. Today's *Further Notice* takes a fresh look at the ten-application limit in light of the LCRA and tentatively concludes that it is not consistent with the new law's directives. Based on a detailed engineering analysis of the top 150 radio markets, we've crafted a locally tailored, market-based processing proposal that will yield benefits for both translator and LPFM service: it will allow the licensing of many more translators than under the previous approach, while at the same time doing a better job of preserving opportunities for LPFM in spectrum-limited markets.

The biggest winner will be the American public – in both urban and rural areas. Radio continues to provide a very valuable service. Indeed, notwithstanding the growth of the Internet and other platforms, broadcast over-the-air radio listening has been increasing, with 93% of Americans 12 and older tuning in to radio each week.

The recently released Information Needs of Communities report stressed the importance of local voices and local news. It noted that the LPFM service was specifically created to provide new voices on the airwaves and allow local groups, including schools, churches, and other community-based organizations, to provide programming responsive to local community needs and interests. And LPFM has done just that. LPFM stations have done a strong job reaching underserved communities such as non-English speakers, seniors, and migrant workers, providing news and information regarding local issues and civic affairs, and serving as emergency responders.

By expanding LPFM opportunities, voices of many more new entrants and independent programmers will be heard on the radio and they will reach more communities, all over the country, in both rural and urban areas.

This will strengthen both our democracy and our economy. It will advance traditional goals of localism and diversity in this important medium that reaches almost all Americans, and create new opportunities for business and job creation.

We are also proposing to immediately restart the licensing of FM translator stations in most smaller markets and rural areas to meet the needs of communities that have been waiting too long for these stations. And after we implement other provisions of the LCRA, I am hopeful that we will be able to open an LPFM-only window in the coming year. We have our work cut out for us, but this is important and we are moving forward.

Finally, I am pleased that the *Third Further Notice* seeks comment on expanding opportunities to use FM translator stations to rebroadcast AM stations. Our initial 2009 action, a deregulatory initiative which permitted cross-service rebroadcasts for the first time, has been an unqualified success. Nearly 500 AM stations now use translators to provide expanded nighttime service to their communities. In many cases, the added translator service has transformed marginal AM stations into competitive full-time media outlets that now provide expanded coverage of local news and events. Promoting these arrangements is consistent with our policy to make the most intensive use of valuable spectrum resources and to boost investment and job creation in local communities, and is yet another win for the American public.

I thank the Media Bureau, especially Peter Doyle, and my Senior Counsel and Legal Advisor Sherrese Smith for their excellent work on this item.