

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI**

Re: *Creation of a Low Power Radio Service*, MM Docket No. 99-25

We're delighted and honored to have the two key sponsors of the LPFM bill here to speak to us, Congressman Mike Doyle and Congressman Lee Terry. They've been strong advocates for this legislation over the years and we appreciate their tremendous efforts. This is a great example of Congress and the FCC working together, and of Democrats and Republicans working together. It's significant for all Americans – rural to urban.

This is a big step to empower community voices, promote media diversity, and enhance local programming. Our order creates opportunities for thousands of new FM radio stations throughout the country.

Thanks to Congress's work on the Local Community Radio Act, today we are taking the most far-reaching actions in decades to empower new programmers to provide local radio programming and expand media diversity throughout the country.

The Information Needs of Communities report we released last year found that 86 percent of the news and public affairs programming broadcast on news-talk radio was national and not local. Low-power community radio is intended to be a hyper-local radio service. This was the vision of my friend, former Chairman Bill Kennard, who led the Commission in authorizing LPFM.

I have a personal connection to this item. I worked in a small radio station myself while I was in college as a DJ. I know firsthand both the opportunities that small stations can provide, and how important they can be to the communities they reach.

Right now, low power radio stations are already allowing diverse voices to provide valuable local service in some communities. In Lincoln, Nebraska, the Lincoln Chinese Ministry Association provide Chinese language programming from KJFT. In South Bend, Indiana, the League of United Latin American Citizens operates the only Spanish-language radio station within 25 miles. WSBL airs more than 100 hours of local programming each week, including English language vocabulary shows, outreach programming for area students, and information about health and social services available to Spanish-speaking residents.

The Pascua Yaqui Tribe is the licensee of KPYT near Tucson. The station airs Yaqui language programming three days a week and health and wellness education programming daily. It uses its mobile recording studio to visit local elementary and middle schools.

I am delighted that a number of schools have seized the opportunity that the LPFM service provides to support student-run stations. For example, the University of the Cumberland's low power station WCCR covers campus news and sports. The station boasts 20 separate on-air personalities who produce more than 40 hours of programming each week.

These stations are doing fantastic things, but now only a handful of low power FM stations operate in large markets. With today's vote, we are fully realizing the vision of creating an opportunity to bring the diverse voices of community radio to Americans across the country, including those in large urban areas. I am happy that our work will enable LPFM to fulfill its original promise.

In order to make this possible, Commission staff has completed an intensive and detailed LPFM spectrum analysis, and is prepared to implement procedures, both for LPFM and translator applicants, that preserve this limited spectrum. I want to thank the staff for all their hard work. These diligent efforts are creating many more opportunities for diverse media voices to be heard. There is no way of knowing exactly who will apply, but we expect to see literally thousands of new applicants.

This includes hundreds of registered community groups – such as Parent Teacher Associations, Girl and Boy Scouts clubs, colleges and others. Minority and tribal groups will be empowered to participate more widely in community radio, and their voices will enrich local programming in communities across the country, harnessing speech to create new platforms for innovation. This is vital work and I am pleased we can move forward.

Thank you to the FCC staff for their terrific work on this item. And, of course, none of this would have happened without the hard work done in Congress, allowing us to create licensing opportunities in virtually every market while protecting existing radio service. I would like to extend my personal thanks to all the sponsors of the LCRA and especially Congressmen Mike Doyle and Lee Terry, who joined us here today, and Senators Maria Cantwell and John McCain, and the leadership of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Commerce Committee.