

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Fabrice Polynice, North Miami, FL, File No. EB-FIELDSCR-13-00012949; Harold Sido and Veronise Sido, North Miami, FL, File No. EB-FIELDSCR-15-00018596.*

One week ago today was International Talk Like a Pirate Day, which is probably the only holiday that can trace its origin to a racquetball game. When the two co-founders were playing, one of them suffered an injury and screamed out “Aaarr!” One thing then led to another, and a day of light-hearted commemoration was born.

By contrast, there’s nothing funny about pirate radio, which interferes with the lawful use of the airwaves and can disrupt public safety communications. Since becoming Chairman, I’ve made it quite clear that the FCC won’t tolerate the unauthorized and illegal use of the radio spectrum. Towards that end, I’ve made it a Commission priority to crack down on pirate radio operations. And with today’s action, we again back up these words with action.

For at least five years now, it appears that Mr. Polynice and the Sidos have jointly engaged in the illicit operation of a radio station in North Miami, Florida. On numerous occasions since 2012, the Commission has warned these individuals that operation of an unlicensed radio station is illegal, and that continued operation could result in further enforcement action. And in 2012, the Justice Department even seized the parties’ radio broadcast equipment from a shed in the Sidos’ backyard. But Mr. Polynice and the Sidos appear to have ignored each of these measures.

Specifically, it appears that Mr. Polynice continued to provide the programming for the unauthorized station and to publicly promote its operations. And it appears that the Sidos authorized the installation and operation of the FM broadcast station in the backyard of their residence and provided material support in the form of use of their property, their electricity, and their Internet connection, all of which are necessary precursors to successful operation of the illegal station.

This conduct is unacceptable. So we propose to hold these individuals jointly and severally liable for the maximum fine allowed under the Communications Act. With this action, we send a clear message to all pirate operators far and wide that we will use the strongest enforcement tools within our disposal to end this illegal practice.

Commissioner O’Rielly has consistently advocated for the Commission to do more to combat pirate radio operations, and I would like to thank him for his commitment to this cause. I’d also like to thank the staff of the Enforcement Bureau, including Charles Cooper, Jennifer Epperson, Rosemary Harold, Jeremy Marcus, Janet Moran, Phil Rosario, and Steven Spaeth, as well as the tireless FCC agents in the field, some of whom I had the chance to meet last week in Florida, for your diligent work on this matter. You are critical to the Commission’s ongoing efforts to combat harmful interference and protect and manage the radio spectrum, especially for those with valid FCC licenses.