



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

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See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Mary Diamond (202) 418-2388

FCC Adopts Localism Proposals to Ensure Programming is Responsive to Needs of Local Communities

Washington, DC – The Federal Communications Commission (the “Commission”) today took measures to help ensure that broadcast stations offer programming responsive to the needs and interests of the communities that they are licensed to serve. The Report on Broadcast Localism and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (the “Report”) adopted today sets forth proposals to increase local programming content and diversity in communities across America. In its review of these issues, the Commission accrued over 83,000 written comments and heard the testimony of 500 panelists offered during the six field hearings on localism conducted throughout the country.

The Report makes tentative conclusions regarding the following proposals, for which it seeks comment:

- Qualified LPTV stations should be granted Class A status, which requires them to provide 3 hours per week of locally-produced programming;
- Licensees should establish permanent advisory boards (including representatives of underserved community segments) in each station community of license with which to consult periodically on community needs and issues; and
- Commission adoption of renewal application processing guidelines that will ensure that all broadcasters provide some locally-oriented programming

The Report also states that the Commission will:

- Better educate members of the public as to the obligations of broadcasters and the Commission’s procedures so that viewers and listeners can become more actively involved in ensuring that stations offer locally oriented programming; and
- Investigate other ways to assist prospective radio licensees to identify suitable available commercial FM spectrum in the communities in which they wish to broadcast, including authorizing the development of software to do so.

The Report notes that, as temporary trustees of the public’s airwaves, broadcasters are obligated to operate their stations to serve the public interest, including their airing of programming responsive to the needs and issues of their station communities of license. The actions and proposals contained in the Report are intended to ensure that the nations’ broadcasters will meet this responsibility.

Action by the Commission December 18, 2007, by Report and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 07-218). Chairman Martin and Commissioner Tate, with Commissioners Copps and Adelstein concurring and dissenting in part, and Commissioner McDowell approving and concurring in part. Separate statements issued by Chairman Martin, Commissioners Copps, Adelstein, Tate, and McDowell.

Media Bureau contact: William D. Freedman (202) 418-1415

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