

Opening Remarks of Chairman Michael Powell
FCC Low Power FM Forum
Washington D.C.
February 8, 2005

Good morning to everyone, and welcome to our FCC home and to Washington D.C.

I had a few minutes when I first got here to walk around and speak to some of you. It's really quite heartening to see such a constellation of community leaders from all over the country which I think, is the living embodiment of the promise that we hoped for five years ago when we first initiated the Low Power FM process. I'm really, really excited to have all of you here so that we can go through the exercise of celebrating our accomplishments --- and from the many people I have met, there are many --- taking stock of where we are, and looking at what we need to move toward the future.

Low Power FM truly represents a unique opportunity to give new voice to old communities, and to new communities as well. It really holds a special place in our heart here at the Federal Communications Commission and I think a special place in America.

So I'm very excited to have this first-ever forum of its type --- and it won't be the last --- to share as a community our experiences, learn from each other, and see where we need to go. The Commission remains, as it always has, a deeply committed partner of yours in this wonderful endeavor.

As you know, one of the most significant things the Commission has done recently is in our report to Congress to urge that Congress lift the third adjacency restrictions that limit the availability of spectrum. We were excited that in 2004 Senator John McCain was willing to sponsor this legislation, and I have been told on the phone this morning that Senator McCain will introduce the LPFM bill this morning, again seeking the removal of the third adjacency restrictions which will provide new opportunities. So we're off to a fast start in the new Congress. I am hopeful and excited about this and we will have full support here at the Commission behind trying to make that a reality. That's an exciting thing.

We at the Commission also know that we need to continue our efforts here as well. I want to emphasize that our Media Bureau, which has always been a champion of this service, is working very, very hard to draft a set of orders and NPRM's as we continue to try to address some of the issues that have been raised by this community. I am personally working on overseeing them, and we hope to present an item to our colleagues as soon as possible.

Today we're going to have a wonderful morning. I think we have an outstanding program planned for you, and we're really excited to hear from people who have made such a commitment to serve the public and to bring new diversity, new voices, and renewed vigor to the high ideal of localism. We look forward to listening, learning and setting a new path for the continued growth and blossoming of this wonderful service.

Thank you for being with us.