



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2234 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Meeks:

Thank you for your letter regarding pirate radio. I appreciate you sharing your views on this very important issue and I look forward to working with you in the future.

The FCC is committed to enforcement of the rules prohibiting unlicensed radio broadcasting. We approach the pirate radio issue in the same manner as other enforcement matters, by focusing on the most egregious violators and those that provide support to those parties. This fiscal year, the Commission's Enforcement Bureau (EB) has issued more than 100 pirate radio enforcement actions.

As you may know, pirate radio investigations are resource intensive -- a typical pirate investigation requires many hours of work by multiple EB field agents, often working overnight and on weekends in neighborhoods that require close coordination with local law enforcement officials to ensure staff safety. The time and expense of these cases present particular difficulties in the current flat budget environment, where the Commission's staffing is at its lowest point in 30 years and overtime is less available. Accordingly, we must prioritize our work based on existing resources and the harm to the public. Thus, matters posing an imminent threat to public safety or directly harming large numbers of consumers must take precedence over other matters, including pirate radio.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, pirate radio presents persistent enforcement issues. Although some pirate operators cease operations after receiving an initial warning letter, they are often quickly replaced by other pirates. Many other pirate operators may ignore the warning or resume broadcasting from another location. Even monetary penalties and equipment seizures do not deter the most aggressive pirate operators, who simply refuse to pay the FCC forfeitures and obtain cheap replacement equipment online.

Given these facts, it is clear that the pirate radio problem cannot be solved by enforcement alone. Therefore, I have created an inter-bureau task force to work with outside stakeholders, including the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), to develop policy and enforcement options to address the issue. Indeed, on June 29, 2015, this group held a Pirate

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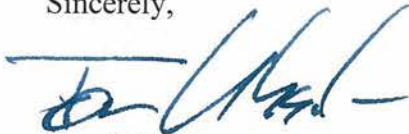
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Radio Roundtable with NAB and other broadcaster representatives. Some of the ideas discussed included:

- Revision of the Communications Act to provide for “aiding and abetting” liability for landlords and other parties that provide material support to pirate operators;
- Identification of trade associations and law enforcement entities to educate landlords, advertisers and others about the unlawful nature of pirate operations and develop best practices;
- Release of a policy statement/enforcement advisory that could be shared with these groups and help channel state, local, and federal resources on pirates; and
- Additional FCC, state, and local enforcement options for reducing pirate activities.

The roundtable was a good first step but much more needs to be done. I appreciate your interest in this matter and look forward to working with you and other stakeholders on innovative solutions to the pirate radio problem. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Grace Meng  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1317 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Meng:

Thank you for your letter regarding pirate radio. I appreciate you sharing your views on this very important issue and I look forward to working with you in the future.

The FCC is committed to enforcement of the rules prohibiting unlicensed radio broadcasting. We approach the pirate radio issue in the same manner as other enforcement matters, by focusing on the most egregious violators and those that provide support to those parties. This fiscal year, the Commission's Enforcement Bureau (EB) has issued more than 100 pirate radio enforcement actions.

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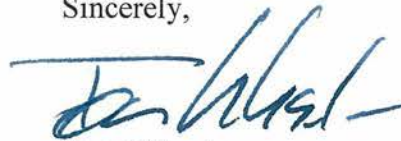
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Tom Wheeler



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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2110 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Nadler:

Thank you for your letter regarding pirate radio. I appreciate you sharing your views on this very important issue and I look forward to working with you in the future.

The FCC is committed to enforcement of the rules prohibiting unlicensed radio broadcasting. We approach the pirate radio issue in the same manner as other enforcement matters, by focusing on the most egregious violators and those that provide support to those parties. This fiscal year, the Commission's Enforcement Bureau (EB) has issued more than 100 pirate radio enforcement actions.

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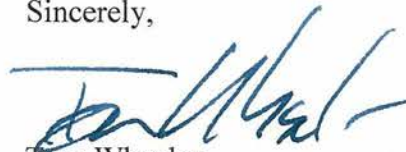
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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Donald Norcross  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1531 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Norcross:

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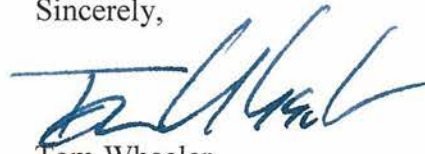
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Tom Wheeler





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OFFICE OF  
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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
U.S. House of Representatives  
237 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pallone:

Thank you for your letter regarding pirate radio. I appreciate you sharing your views on this very important issue and I look forward to working with you in the future.

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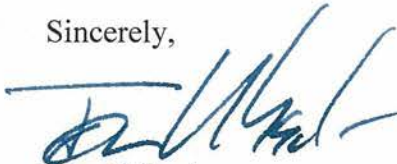
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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Bill Pascrell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2370 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pascrell:

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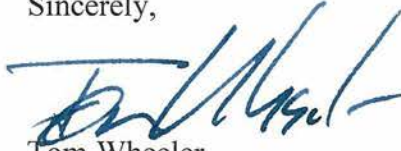
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Donald M. Payne  
U.S. House of Representatives  
103 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Payne:

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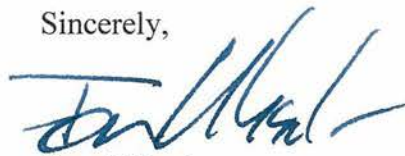
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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OFFICE OF  
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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2354 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rangel:

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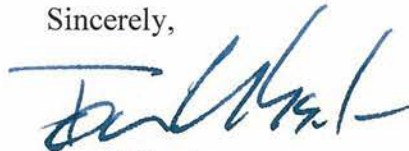
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Tom Wheeler





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Tom Reed  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1504 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Tom Wheeler



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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Kathleen Rice  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1508 Longworth House Office Building  
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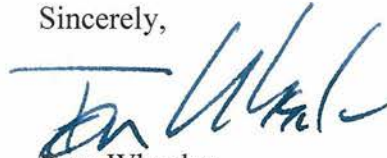
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Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Jose E. Serrano  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2227 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Serrano:

Thank you for your letter regarding pirate radio. I appreciate you sharing your views on this very important issue and I look forward to working with you in the future.

The FCC is committed to enforcement of the rules prohibiting unlicensed radio broadcasting. We approach the pirate radio issue in the same manner as other enforcement matters, by focusing on the most egregious violators and those that provide support to those parties. This fiscal year, the Commission's Enforcement Bureau (EB) has issued more than 100 pirate radio enforcement actions.

As you may know, pirate radio investigations are resource intensive -- a typical pirate investigation requires many hours of work by multiple EB field agents, often working overnight and on weekends in neighborhoods that require close coordination with local law enforcement officials to ensure staff safety. The time and expense of these cases present particular difficulties in the current flat budget environment, where the Commission's staffing is at its lowest point in 30 years and overtime is less available. Accordingly, we must prioritize our work based on existing resources and the harm to the public. Thus, matters posing an imminent threat to public safety or directly harming large numbers of consumers must take precedence over other matters, including pirate radio.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, pirate radio presents persistent enforcement issues. Although some pirate operators cease operations after receiving an initial warning letter, they are often quickly replaced by other pirates. Many other pirate operators may ignore the warning or resume broadcasting from another location. Even monetary penalties and equipment seizures do not deter the most aggressive pirate operators, who simply refuse to pay the FCC forfeitures and obtain cheap replacement equipment online.

Given these facts, it is clear that the pirate radio problem cannot be solved by enforcement alone. Therefore, I have created an inter-bureau task force to work with outside stakeholders, including the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), to develop policy and enforcement options to address the issue. Indeed, on June 29, 2015, this group held a Pirate

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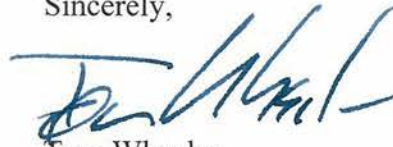
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- Revision of the Communications Act to provide for “aiding and abetting” liability for landlords and other parties that provide material support to pirate operators;
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Albio Sires  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2342 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Sires:

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Tom Wheeler





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Louise M. Slaughter  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2469 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Slaughter:

Thank you for your letter regarding pirate radio. I appreciate you sharing your views on this very important issue and I look forward to working with you in the future.

The FCC is committed to enforcement of the rules prohibiting unlicensed radio broadcasting. We approach the pirate radio issue in the same manner as other enforcement matters, by focusing on the most egregious violators and those that provide support to those parties. This fiscal year, the Commission's Enforcement Bureau (EB) has issued more than 100 pirate radio enforcement actions.

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Elise Stefanik  
U.S. House of Representatives  
512 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Stefanik:

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The FCC is committed to enforcement of the rules prohibiting unlicensed radio broadcasting. We approach the pirate radio issue in the same manner as other enforcement matters, by focusing on the most egregious violators and those that provide support to those parties. This fiscal year, the Commission's Enforcement Bureau (EB) has issued more than 100 pirate radio enforcement actions.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Paul Tonko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2463 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Tonko:

Thank you for your letter regarding pirate radio. I appreciate you sharing your views on this very important issue and I look forward to working with you in the future.

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Nydia M. Velazquez  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2302 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Velazquez:

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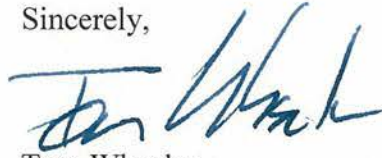
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Tom Wheeler





FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Lee Zeldin  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1517 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Zeldin:

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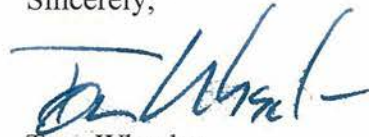
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