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For Immediate Release**FCC PROPOSES FINE AGAINST UNLICENSED ‘PIRATE’ RADIO STATION, INCLUDING PROPERTY OWNERS**

WASHINGTON, September 26, 2017—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed the maximum fine allowable by statute—\$144,344—against a so-called “pirate radio” operation in North Miami, Florida. The action marks the first time the Commission has proposed finding the property owners where the transmission equipment was located apparently liable for the operation of the station. Unlicensed radio broadcasts are illegal and can interfere with licensed broadcasting, including broadcasters’ ability to communicate public safety warnings to their communities.

The Commission’s investigation of this matter first began in 2012 when the Enforcement Bureau’s Miami Field Office received a complaint about a potential unauthorized station broadcasting on 90.1 MHz in the North Miami area. After finding that the station was not authorized, Commission agents repeatedly warned both Fabrice Polynice, a programming provider, and Harold and Veronise Sido, who own the property where the station’s transmission equipment is located, that the unauthorized transmission of a radio broadcast is illegal. These earlier actions resulted in a seizure, pursuant to a Federal court order, of transmission equipment from the Sido residence in 2012 and a Forfeiture Order against Mr. Polynice in 2013.

Despite knowing that these actions were illegal, Mr. Polynice apparently continued to operate the pirate station from the Sido residence. In fact, the parties even posted video of themselves in their pirate studio to social media. Commission field agents found on a least seven different occasions that the illegal station was still being operated from the Sido residence by Mr. Polynice. The Bureau’s investigation found that while Mr. Polynice apparently provided programming for the station, the Sidos apparently provided material support in the form of free use of their property, including the shed from which Mr. Polynice broadcast, as well as electricity and internet connectivity necessary for operation of the transmitter and antenna.

As a result of this investigation, the Commission today issues a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (NAL) against Mr. Polynice and Mr. and Mrs. Sido. The NAL finds that the actions of all three individuals were continuous and deliberate. Accordingly, the NAL proposes to fine all three individuals jointly and severally for a total of \$144,344.

Federal law generally prohibits the operation of a broadcast radio station without a license issued by the Commission. Congress enacted this requirement as a means of ensuring a fair and equitable distribution by the FCC of scarce spectrum resources to maximize its availability and use among entities, such as TV and radio broadcasters, public safety agencies, and wireless phone

and data networks. The Miami area, along with Boston and New York, have generally proven to have the greatest concentration of pirate radio activities, as shown by this FCC map: <https://go.usa.gov/xRMhe>.

Mr. Polynice and Mr. and Mrs. Sido will have 30 days to respond. The Commission will then review the response and any additional evidence, and may then proceed to issue a final forfeiture order. If finalized, the Commission expects prompt payment of a fine. If such a payment is not received within 30 days, the matter is referred to the Justice Department for collection.

The Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture is available at: <https://go.usa.gov/xRh3p>

Action by the Commission September 26, 2017 by Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (FCC 17-127). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn, O’Rielly, Carr and Rosenworcel approving. Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn, O’Rielly and Carr issuing separate statements.

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).