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For Immediate Release

FCC ESTABLISHES INCUBATOR PROGRAM PROCEDURES TO INCREASE DIVERSITY IN THE BROADCAST INDUSTRY

WASHINGTON, August 2, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today took a historic and long overdue step to increase ownership diversity in the broadcast industry. Specifically, the Commission adopted requirements that will govern an incubator program to assist new, small, or struggling voices, including women and minorities, in overcoming the key barriers to entry into the broadcast sector.

For many years, both the civil rights community and broadcasting industry have called for the establishment of an incubator program. Today's Order, at long last, answers that call. Under the program, an established broadcaster will provide financial and operational support, including training and mentoring, to a new or small broadcaster. At the end of a successful incubation relationship, the new or small broadcaster will either own and operate a new station independently, or the previously struggling broadcaster's station will be on a firmer footing. Once an incubation relationship is completed successfully, the established broadcaster will be eligible to receive a waiver of the Commission's Local Radio Ownership Rule, subject to certain requirements.

The incubator program initially will apply to full-service AM and FM broadcast radio stations as the costs of obtaining and operating radio stations make the radio sector a significantly more accessible entry point than television for entities with limited capital resources and operational experience.

The incubator program addresses the need for more innovative approaches to provide access to capital, as well as technical, operational, and management training, to new entrants and small broadcasters that otherwise would not be able to own a full-service broadcast radio station, acquire an additional station, or remain in the broadcasting business.

The Commission appreciates the input of all stakeholders that participated in this proceeding, especially its Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment.

Action by the Commission August 2, 2018 by Report and Order (FCC 18-114). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly and Carr approving. Commissioner Rosenworcel dissenting. Chairman Pai, Commissioners O'Rielly, Carr, and Rosenworcel issuing separate statements.

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