

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 12, 2018

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Ajit Pai, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking - MB Docket No. 18-119/FCC 18-60

Dear Chairman Pai:

We are writing to oppose the portion of your proposed rule that would prohibit existing broadcasters from contesting FM translators on their frequency if the translator is located outside the broadcaster's 54 dB μ contour. Local, culturally important independent broadcasters located in gateway cities in our districts could be threatened by this rule change if they are not allowed to challenge FM translators emanating from central locations such as the Boston area.

For instance, WJFD-FM is an excellent example of an independent station with a strong history of serving the Portuguese-speaking population of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. As a 50,000-watt station, WJFD provides Portuguese news, music, and cultural programming that is accessible as far north as New Hampshire and as far west as Central Connecticut. WJFD provides a community resource to the many Portuguese-speaking residents of our districts and throughout southern New England. Recently, the community celebrated a very special Day of Portugal featuring a visit from the President of Portugal. The event included celebrating crowds not only in New Bedford and Fall River, but also in the capital cities of Boston and Providence, many of whom no doubt heard about the visit on WJFD.

WJFD reports that it has successfully opposed previous FM translator applications on its 97.3 frequency throughout its coverage area. If the proposed rule passes as drafted, the station is concerned it would no longer be able to ensure the clarity of its signal throughout southern New England, fundamentally harming WJFD's unique role as a cultural focal point for the Portuguese diaspora in the Northeast. Other independent stations in our districts also could suffer from the inability to protect their signals from FM translators.

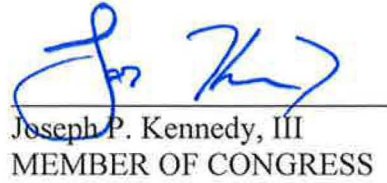
The proposed rule states that this change would benefit less populous areas "where translators may offer the only local broadcast services." Clearly this is not the case in Massachusetts, where a relatively dense population means a crowded FM band, and where interference beyond the 54 dB μ contour renders a station like WJFD less viable. Therefore, we wish to register our opposition to this portion of the proposed rule that would undermine the work of local stations, and ask the Commission's fair and full consideration of efforts to retain the local broadcaster's ability to contest FM translators on their frequency.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Michael Jackman with Congressman Keating's office at Michael.Jackman@mail.house.gov or (508) 746-9000.

Sincerely,



William R. Keating
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Joseph P. Kennedy, III
MEMBER OF CONGRESS