

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Reexamination of the Comparative Standards and Procedures for Licensing Noncommercial Educational Broadcast and Low Power FM Stations* (MB Docket No. 19-3)

Opelousas is the largest city in St. Landry Parish in Louisiana. It's only two hours west of New Orleans but it feels a whole world away. It's deep in Acadiana. It's a place steeped in creole tradition and justifiably proud of its place in music history. That's because Opelousas is where zydeco began. A fusion of blues and two-step, heavy on accordion and washboard, zydeco was first fashioned in the fields just outside the city more than a century ago.

But in the decades after its development, a curious thing happened. Zydeco disappeared from the radio in Opelousas. The airwaves featured pop, rock, country, and news but not the distinctive sounds straight from the city's own backyard. That changed when a few years ago a non-profit started a low power FM station in Opelousas to bring zydeco music back home. It's an amazing effort. I know because I visited KOCZ. I was treated to a feast, alligator included, and spent some time on air talking about the power of community radio.

I believe it. I think that even in a day of expanding audio opportunity, there is still something special about a voice in the air. There is still something powerful about broadcasting that sounds like the community where it comes from. Today's rulemaking seeks to update our policies governing low power FM radio and noncommercial educational broadcast stations. In practice, this means we are proposing to update our system for selecting among competing applicants for these licenses and our principles governing localism and diversity for this subset of broadcasting interests. In addition, we seek comment on suggestions from low power FM stakeholders that would make it easier for the transfer of licenses and underlying construction permits.

I look forward to the record that develops. I look forward to the opportunity to update our rules. I hope this effort leads to many more local stations like KOCZ that give voice to the history, sounds, and stories that make communities across the country unique.