

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN AJIT PAI**

Re: *Acerome Jean Charles, Boston, Massachusetts, File No. EB-FIELDNER-17-00024504*

Today's two Notices of Apparent Liability send a strong signal that the FCC will not tolerate unlicensed radio broadcasting. In each case, the pirate radio operator in question was given multiple warnings that he was violating the law. So in each case, we are proposing the maximum forfeiture amount permitted under the Communications Act. The harms of unlicensed radio broadcasting are serious: pirate stations interfere with licensed stations—whose owners have invested time and money in providing lawful service to the public—and can also cause interference to critical public safety systems.

Moreover, there are many legal alternatives to unlicensed broadcasting. In 2013, we held a successful filing window for low-power FM (LPFM) construction permits, and as a result, nearly 1,400 new stations catering to diverse local interests have been licensed. Next year, we will hold an auction of construction permits for 130 vacant FM allotments. And just this week, we adopted a Report and Order fine-tuning our noncommercial educational and LPFM point systems, paving the way for filing windows for construction permits for those services. Those particularly eager to get on the air have other legal avenues, such as collaborating with existing stations. Indeed, one of those newly licensed LPFM stations, WBCA-LP, Boston, Massachusetts, is a community radio station that allows residents to apply for time on the air. Finally, Internet streaming has become a popular and accessible platform for distributing audio programming without an FM license.

My thanks to the Commission staff that prepared these two items: from the Enforcement Bureau, Dave Dombrowski, Matt Gibson, Rosemary Harold, Chris Killion, Shannon Lipp, Jeremy Marcus, Janet Moran, and Ron Ramage, and from the Office of General Counsel, Susan Aaron, David Konczal, Linda Oliver, Bill Richardson, and Royce Sherlock.

I'd like to give a special thanks to our dedicated Enforcement Bureau field agents that put in the work necessary to make these NALs possible. The work of going after illegal broadcasting is time-consuming. You face harassment and even threats in your line of work (as I heard during a personal visit to the Miami field office), but your efforts are certainly appreciated those of us here at the Commission.