

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

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September 30, 2022

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

We write concerning a proposal to permit FM booster stations to be used to selectively serve certain communities over others within a radio broadcast station's service area. We are specifically concerned about the harmful impacts of such selective use of public airwaves on rural communities, which rely disproportionately on broadcast radio for news, emergency information, and entertainment.

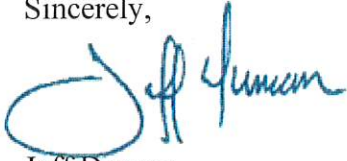
Local broadcast radio stations represent an essential source of information for Americans. This is even more true for those in rural communities, so many of whom have limited, if any, broadband service and may not be able to afford subscription satellite or even cell phone services. Broadcast radio is free, it is locally focused, and it is a lifeline for those impacted by tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other severe weather.

The proposal to allow a broadcaster to selectively target only certain geographic areas of their federally licensed service area raises very troubling implications for communities across the country. While the hypothetical prospect of a broadcaster using geo-targeting to send specialized content to underserved areas may sound inviting, the reality is not so optimistic. First, those traveling within an area being selectively targeted could easily lose signal at a critical time, especially during weather or other emergencies. Additionally, advertisers will likely want to focus their attention on more affluent communities to the exclusion of rural, frequently less affluent areas. This concern is especially plausible given that the substantial costs – an estimated \$175,000 for implementation and \$65,000 to maintain – would create a powerful incentive to target advertisements to more affluent communities in an attempt to recapture those costs. In this real-world context, the notion of any meaningful amount of original content being offered to any area, but especially underserved areas, is fantasy.

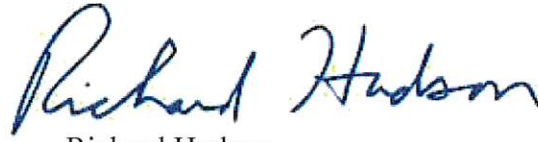
We also note the broad opposition of the broadcast industry to geo-targeting, especially as it concerns the degradation of radio reception due to interference created by geo-targeting, and concerns that FEMA has expressed with respect to the implications for public safety.

We ask for your assurance that you will take these concerns seriously for the sake of the communities we serve, and not take any action that risks our constituents' access to free, local radio or degrades the public's access to essential information.

Sincerely,



Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Greg Pence
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
Member of Congress



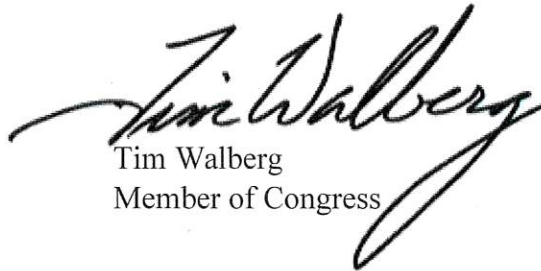
David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress



Debbie Lesko
Member of Congress



Billy Long
Member of Congress



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress



H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.
Member of Congress