



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRWOMAN

October 25, 2022

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
U.S. House of Representatives
2421 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Mullin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the pending proceeding at the Federal Communications Commission that seeks comment on whether to modify our rules to allow FM broadcast stations to use FM booster stations to air geo-targeted content. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

In order to enhance the agency's technical understanding of this technology, the Media Bureau granted stations experimental authority to conduct tests in radio markets in Mississippi and California. It also required that those stations submit reports regarding the tests into the record of the proceeding. The reports include detailed technical discussions about the operation of the booster technology, its compatibility with the Emergency Alert System, and its impact on digital FM broadcasts. On April 18, 2022, the Media Bureau issued a Public Notice seeking comment on the results of these tests, as well as any additional information submitted after the original comment periods closed on March 12, 2021. The period for comment on the Public Notice closed on June 21, 2022. The Media Bureau staff currently is reviewing the record and developing recommendations for the full Commission's consideration. I have asked the Media Bureau to include your letter in the docket of the proceeding so your views will be fully considered.

As you note, protecting existing services from harmful interference is essential. GeoBroadcast Solutions (GBS) asserts that its testing program has demonstrated its technology can be implemented without causing interference to existing broadcast services or public safety services such as emergency alerts. Additionally, GBS and its supporters believe that the voluntary nature of the technology ameliorates interference concerns because stations will not want to cause interference to their own signals. The commenters opposing this technology have asserted that GBS optimized its test program and that the tests do not show the real world impact this technology will have on existing broadcasts or public safety information. Those commenters have either called for additional testing or asked the Commission to reject the proposal to use this technology. Media Bureau staff are carefully reviewing GBS' interference test results, the listener impact studies submitted by the National Association of Broadcasters and National Public Radio, as well as the comments of others regarding the interference issues raised in the docket.

Please be assured that, as we work through the comments and data submitted in this proceeding and determine our next steps, the Commission takes seriously our role in protecting against harmful interference and ensuring access to essential public safety information through the Emergency Alert System. I hope this is helpful. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica Rosenworcel", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jessica Rosenworcel