



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRWOMAN

November 1, 2022

The Honorable Tony Cárdenas
U.S. House of Representatives
2438 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Cárdenas:

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.

In your letter you express concern about the impact of this technology on communities of color, low-income listeners and immigrant communities; the potential for this technology to cause interference; and the impact of this technology on critical public safety information. These are important issues that are the subject of comments by many stakeholders in this proceeding. With regard to your specific concerns about the potential for discrimination if stations are allowed to use targeted advertising, GeoBroadcast Solutions (GBS), and other proponents of this technology, including small and minority broadcasters, assert that this technology will help minority and low-income communities by reducing the cost of advertising and providing opportunities for new advertising entrants that were previously priced out of the market. The opponents of geo-targeted broadcasts have filed comments questioning the validity of claims that this technology will provide new opportunities for minorities and new entrants. They have also raised concerns about the ability of broadcasters to use this technology to focus certain programming and advertising only on affluent areas. Before moving forward, the Commission will carefully review the potential impact of this technology, including how our existing rules may address these issues.

Finally, know 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



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WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRWOMAN

November 1, 2022

The Honorable Steven Horsford
U.S. House of Representatives
562 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Horsford:

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