

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF LOW POWER FM RADIO SERVICES AND/OR BROADCASTING

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

June 9, 1999

WHEREAS, the County of Washtenaw is committed to the principles of free speech guaranteed in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has not made affordable, Low Power (<100 watts) FM broadcast frequencies available for community use since 1978 when regulatory changes eliminated Class D FM licenses for less than 100 watts of power; and

WHEREAS, the passing of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 has led to an unprecedented consolidation of broadcast industry ownership and a marked decrease in both local and minority ownership of radio stations and organizations of programming; and

WHEREAS, the rights of free speech and a free press are threatened when access to communication media is concentrated in the hands of the few; and

WHEREAS, the FCC is now hearing public comment on a proposal to offer simple, affordable, commercial and non-commercial Low Power FM broadcast licenses (FCC's MM Docket NO 95-25); and

WHEREAS, commercial and non commercial radio stations operating under such a license could provide a community voice to individuals, musicians, artists, writers, activists, students, and points of view which are presently economically barred from access to their own abovementioned airwaves; and

WHEREAS, issuance of said licenses would constitute a net benefit to the social, cultural and political life of Washtenaw County and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Washtenaw County is committed to enhancing public awareness of current events and issues by advocating for the creation of low power FM radio stations in Washtenaw County

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners hereby supports the concept of low power radio stations and urges FCC to fulfill its mandate as guardian of a public resource and to enact a licensing regulation to grant affordable, simple, commercial and non-commercial broadcast licenses to its citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners directs the County Clerk to forward copies of this resolution to the representatives of Washtenaw County and the Michigan Association of Counties.

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