



Press Statement

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MMTC Press Statement: FCC NPRM to Eliminate the Broadcast Main Studio Rule

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 19, 2017): The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) seeking input on the proposed elimination of the Main Studio Rule. The Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) commends the FCC's action, which will favorably impact minority broadcasters by removing an archaic rule that historically has worked to their disadvantage.

The rule, dating to 1946 when most broadcasters locally originated most of their programming, requires that all full-power broadcasters must maintain a studio either within their city of license, or at another site either within 25 miles of its city of license or within the city-grade contour of any station licensed to the same city of license as the station.

A year ago, MMTC filed [comments](#) urging the Commission to repeal the Rule because it “locks in the present effects of past discrimination against minority licensees.” MMTC pointed out that “[a]s a result of racial and ethnic discrimination, minority and ethnic broadcasters entered the industry later than others. Broadcasters who entered the market earlier were able to capitalize off the prime real estate of stronger signals in populous locations. The Main Studio Rule further exacerbates this advantage. Larger companies, who were earlier entrants, are able to maintain a single studio for all of their stations in larger cities, while smaller minority broadcasters frequently have to assemble a cluster of stations in more suburban areas” – each of which has had to have its own “main studio” at enormous expense.

Further, MMTC noted, meeting the main studio staffing requirement can be a significant financial burden for smaller stations, particularly those owned by minorities. The rule serves no logical purpose now that unattended station operation is permitted by another FCC rule.

The Commission's NPRM – adopted today by a vote of 3-0 – is a welcome step in the direction of removing this disproportionately unfavorable, anti-minority market entry barrier.

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About MMTC:

The Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) is a non-partisan, national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and preserving equal opportunity and civil rights in the mass media, telecom and broadband industries, and closing the digital divide. MMTC is generally recognized as the nation's leading advocate for minority advancement in communications.