

**STATEMENT OF  
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

*Re: Revitalization of the AM Radio Service, MB Docket No. 13-249*

AM radio is part of the foundation of our media landscape, which has tied communities together for generations. Today, it is one of the more diverse parts of our dial. Female-owned and minority-owned stations make up a greater percentage of stations on the AM dial than the FM dial. And my professional career was buoyed on an AM station in South Carolina, so I have a special affection for the AM service and its place in our culture.

But there are many threats to AM service. Listeners are migrating to newer, higher-fidelity media services, which is leading AM stations to shut down and listenership to dwindle. To help AM stations weather the tide, this item identifies challenges that should be addressed and proposes remedies. For example, due to the propagation characteristics of AM signals, many stations must reduce their power at night, and some are unable to broadcast at that time. We propose to modify the nighttime coverage rules to keep more stations on the air after dark. Moreover, reinforced buildings and structures with steel frames or aluminum siding can block AM signals and lead to poor reception in many urban areas. Our proposals to open an FM translator filing window just for AM licensees and to modify the daytime community coverage standards intend to give licensees more flexibility to deliver their programming to listeners in urban areas. Finally, electricity bills for AM broadcasters can be high. Our proposal to let AM licensees use Modulation Dependent Carrier Level control technologies or algorithms is intended to reduce those bills and lower operating costs.

During my tenure as Chairwoman, the Commission has taken a number of steps to provide relief to AM broadcasters. This summer, the Commission simplified the licensing procedures and technical requirements—including allowing “moment-method” modeling—which can save licensees over \$100,000. And this year, the Commission has actively expanded the inventory of translator stations. In fact, by the end of 2013, the Media Bureau’s Audio Division expects to have increased the number of authorized FM translators from 5,700 to about 7,300 – a 28 percent boost. This item represents the next significant step in our effort to buttress AM broadcast service and ease regulatory burdens on AM broadcasters. These steps, along with the changes proposed in today’s item, will help AM radio stay vibrant into the future. Who knows, maybe a future FCC Chairwoman is getting her start at one today.

I would like to extend a warm thank you to Peter Doyle, Jim Bradshaw, Tom Nessinger, Susan Crawford, and Lisa Scanlan for their hard work on this item. In addition to other vitally important tasks, Peter’s team in the Audio Division has worked tirelessly on the achievements I list above.