
Part 2d: Funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Protecting America's Performing Arts Communications

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Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Access to Educational and Cultural Programming for All

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CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Background

- Transmitting arts & culture has been an integral part of public broadcasting since its inception.
- CPB does not produce programs itself. It is a granting organization.
- Over 70% of CPB funding reaches local public TV & radio stations in the form of Community Service Grants (CSGs).
- On average, CSGs account for 16% of station funding—the rest is raised from state, local and private sources.
- CPB is advance funded by 2 years.
- The previous administration had proposed cuts to CPB in past years. There is no current threat to CPB, however, the arts community wants to remain on record about the importance of the availability of arts programming through CPB.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Talking Points

- Public broadcasting provides Americans a broad range of high-quality arts and cultural programming.
- Public broadcasting brings the arts in to 99% of American households through award-winning national programming.
- Public television and radio stations serve as a showcase for local artists and performers.
- Public television airs arts programming that is not available on commercial television.
- Public television stations go beyond the broadcast to educate their communities through innovative partnerships.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Talking Points, cont.

- Americans view public broadcasting as a good investment of public dollars.
- Digital technology has provided expanded opportunities for public broadcasting.
- Public television stations are using their new digital spectrum for a wide variety of purposes, including multicasting and emergency communications.
- Public television and radio stations are using new media platforms to extend their reach beyond the broadcast.

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Federal Communications Commission

Protecting Performing Arts Technology

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Important policy statement

- The performing arts community recognizes the benefits of greater access to the internet and encourages innovations that expand connectivity for everyone. Public policy is already moving strongly in this direction, and we understand and embrace this position. We are not advocating against White Space devices. *We are advocating to become licensed users of the spectrum and that while the FCC pursues innovation and greater access, our sector does not suffer.* Shared use of a re-allocated broadcast spectrum, with all devices working properly, is our goal.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Complicated issue: What's it all about?

- Soon, the television industry will transition to digital transmission, which will open up certain “white spaces” in the broadcast spectrum.
- The consumer electronics industry sought a ruling from the FCC to allow new electronic hand-held devices, such as PDA's, cordless phones and even newer technologies to operate in these frequencies.
- Performing arts venues have operated wireless microphones and audio systems in this “white space” spectrum for 35 years.

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White Space - What's the problem?

- The new electronic devices were approved by the FCC in a November, 2008 vote. The FCC Rule and Order were published in the Federal Register in February, 2009. In other words, the FCC voted to open the White Spaces to new devices.
- The new devices could pose a threat to performing arts technology. There could be interference in our systems from these new devices.
- There are 3 uses of this wireless technology in the performing arts:
 - Infrared technology used for hearing impaired patrons
 - Amplification of performers' voices, allowing unrestricted movement onstage along with sophisticated sound
 - Communications backstage among stagehands
- All of these uses could suffer interference from the new devices.

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What's happening now?

- The FCC has an internal Appeals process
 - It is called a Petition for Reconsideration
 - About 20 entities have filed Petitions
 - There will be a public reply comment period in which more entities are expected to file
- Many organizations continue to urge the FCC Chairman to preserve the ability of wireless microphones used in the performing arts to operate without interference.
 - As new devices are developed, they will have to be tested by the FCC, before they can be approved for sale
 - Organizations continue to urge the FCC to conduct adequate testing before permitting new devices to operate in the White Space spectrum

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What We're Doing Now:

- Performing arts organizations are asking the FCC to include them in the list of entities that are eligible to apply for a license. Until now, only broadcast entities have been eligible.
- When the FCC voted to open the White Space to new devices, they included certain protections for incumbent users. These protections will most likely only be supported for entities that have a license. So, it is important, now more than ever, for performing arts organizations to be eligible to apply for a license to operate their wireless microphones.

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What We're Doing Now:

- We are hoping the FCC will not only establish a way for performing arts organizations to be
 - Licensed
 - But will also make sure the technical protections actually work
- We therefore have no 'ask' of Congress. Our attention is on the FCC
 - If the FCC internal processes do not meet our needs – we will be back to Congress
 - Our Members of Congress need to be kept informed so that we can ask for their help in the future, if we need to

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