



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS
FLORIDA GULF COAST LOCAL 427-721
P.O. BOX 12333
ST PETERSBURG, FL 33733
5175 Ulmerton RD Suite A
Clearwater, FL 33760
(727) 572-7977 Fax (727) 571-3525



President Charles Rice
Sec/Treas Richard Sparrow

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FCC HEARING COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY: CHARLES RICE

My Name is Charles Rice and I am a retired school teacher and a professional musician. I want to speak against the idea of any further media consolidation. As it stands now, I am unable to find the music that I enjoy on commercial radio. The only stations in the Tampa Bay area that play any Classical or Big Band Jazz are the public radio stations.

Current levels of media consolidation have completely silenced all but the smoothest, lightest versions of Jazz. Even if you don't like to listen to Jazz, this loss is unfair to Americans since Jazz is truly an American Music and should be considered important because of its' history in America. I believe that we should insist on more diverse musical options on the airwaves and more local involvement in the whole process, not less. Otherwise, we might be hurting the future of our country by compromising the education of the next generation of our citizens.

You might say that there is not a market for Jazz or Classical music since it doesn't appear to make money, but I believe that as stewards of our public airwaves, you as commissioners should treat the public airwaves as an educator or historian would. I understand that there is a business and economic aspect to the airwaves, but music and creativity are such vital parts of a good education that everyone should have the opportunity to be exposed to many types of music.

Face it: There is not an opportunity for newer music and local alternative artists to get airplay because they don't make big profits for the stations. The Disk jockey has been removed from the whole process and 'play lists' now come from a National head quarters! We do not hear much variation of music on the FM dial and we only hear news and talk radio on the AM dial.

I would like to close by asking the commissioners, 'Is this the legacy we want to be leaving for future generations of Americans?'

Thank You for taking my comments.