



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

FCC HEARING TESTIMONY DELIVERED BY: RICHARD SPARROW

4/30/2007

Thank you for bringing this FCC Hearing to Tampa.

My name is Richard Sparrow. I am a member of the American Federation of Musicians and a delegate to the West Central Florida Federation of Labor, a non profit organization.

On Labor Day 2006, the West Central Florida Federation of Labor held a Labor Day celebration at the Florida State Fairgrounds and invited the public to attend for free. Since the day after Labor Day 2006 was a primary election in Florida, we also invited many politicians to come to the event and spend time with the public. With help from the Music Performance Trust Fund, we were able to provide live music for our event.

I volunteered to be on the media committee and I want to share some of the issues we had with our local commercial media. We sent faxes and emails to several local newspapers, radio and television stations, detailing our event for the news department and asked to be included in the calendar of events they published for the general public.

Because of the free nature of this event, we thought it would be easy to get Public Service Announcements from the local Media. It turned out that all the airtime for Labor Day Weekend was being held because the candidates and political parties were buying ALL of it. I can only assume now that the stations couldn't pass up an opportunity to make some more money off of our election process.

After we discovered that we were being shut out for Public Service Announcements, we found some money to use to purchase some air time. We inquired at several local commercial radio stations and they gave us options to buy packages that started in the several thousand dollar range. After further inquiry, we discovered that it would be impossible to buy what we needed. We did spend our money on advertising, but it went to ads in local newspapers and we relied on community calendars to announce our celebration and invite the public to come to our event. We were not served well by the local commercial media in this case.

Fortunately for us, our Community radio station WMNF held a live on air Labor discussion forum on the Friday prior to Labor Day and they invited Labor to take part and gave us an opportunity to speak directly to the public.