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----FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE----

FCC APPROVES LPTV \$150 MILLION POST AUCTION RELOCATION FUND

“The passing of today’s Post Auction LPTV Displacement Funding Report & Order, with \$150 million in Congressional funding, is an historic step in keeping over 1500 of the nations’ secondary TV stations in business, and is most welcomed in many small and large communities across the country. This funding will support the continued free TV distribution of over 100 diverse content networks and new voices in today’s crowded media marketplace, and most importantly, this funding will ensure the continued valuable emergency alert services, which LPTV are mandated to provide.”

WASHINGTON, DC - MARCH 15, 2019 - The **LPTV Spectrum Rights Coalition** today wholeheartly supports the FCC’s Report & Order detailing the rules and processes for the distribution of the \$150 million in funding Congress authorized for auction and repack displaced LPTV and TV translators. These rules culminate the more than 6-year process the FCC has taken to plan, conduct, clear, and now fund for rebuilding the nations’ LPTV and TV translator system.

Our Coalition appreciates the careful attention to detail the FCC staff and Commissions have taken to make sure as many as possible LPTV and TV translator qualifying entities can have quick access to these funds. Some licensees were already displaced in “Phase Zero”, the first 16 months of the repack, and will be waiting over two years after moving channels for displacement funding.

More than 2000 stations, licenses, and permits were displaced by both the auction and repack, and over 1500 of these entities have qualified for new construction permits, the first step of displacement funding. They will however, need to pass a 2nd test passed by Congress, that of being on air 9 of the 12 months before the auction started. This requirement is not part of the current LPTV and TV translator operating rules, and as such is an arbitrary new condition needed to obtain funding. Our Coalition estimates that between 20-40% of all stations receiving a new construction permit may not qualify for this 2nd condition for funding.

In addition, the 500 or so applications which were rejected for new construction permits, will still be able to apply for a new channel when the current filing freeze is lifted later in 2019. And many may still be able to qualify for funding once they have those new permits.

Coalition Director Mike Gravino said...

“It is a huge vote of confidence and worthiness that Congress authorized \$150 million for LPTV and TV translator relocation funding. While our part of the industry is considered a secondary service, in many smaller communities, LPTV and translators are the ONLY source of free broadcast television services. Combined with the LPTV EAS (emergency alert services) requirement, LPTV, with this Congressional funding, will continue to keep this essential lifeline service available through the country. We thank the FCC Commissioners, Media Bureau, and Video Division for their diligent work to both fairly and timely implement the Congressional funding directive.”

Gravino further points out...

“The facts are that more LPTV and TV translators were NOT displaced by the auction and repack than those that were. The facts are that 100s of displaced stations will have had to wait over 2 years for funding to reimburse them. The facts are that the many 1000s of stations not displaced by the auction or repack have had their valuations be severely depressed for years now by all of the uncertainty of the incentive auction process. And the fact remains, that despite a movement to end the LPTV service, our industry has prevailed over those forces, and is now poised with new next gen TV standard to blaze the trail into the future, once again.”

ABOUT THE COALITION - The LPTV Spectrum Rights Coalition is a DC-based research, advocacy, and lobbying project with support during the 5-year incentive auction process from more than 300 LPTV & TV translator broadcasters with more than 4000 stations and construction permits in almost all states and territories. <http://www.lptvcoalition.com>