

3662 Vine Maple St.  
Eugene, OR 97405  
November 5, 2020

Dear FCC:

I am writing to express my belief that the fees proposed to be charged for Amateur Radio Service license actions, per MD Docket No. 20-270, should not be charged.

I believe that the benefits to the U.S. government, citizens, and industry will suffer greatly if implementation and assessment of \$50 license service fees for Amateur Radio Service license actions are allowed to proceed.

### **No pecuniary interest**

Unlike holders of licenses within many other communications services within the United States, amateur radio operators are specifically prohibited from using their licenses for any pecuniary interest, thus not permitted to earn or charge for communications services we provide to the public. All expenses for equipment, training, and other activities comes out of our own pockets. We as a community provide training to the general public in the form of amateur radio classes free of charge.

I have taught 15 license classes over the past four years, an effort that has produced between 200 and 250 newly licensed amateur radio operators, and now teach online classes. I have not earned a penny from any of my efforts; it gives me great pride when I hear my students on the airwaves.

### **Public service and emergency communications**

In the era of ever-strengthening and more frequent hurricanes, wildfires, and other disasters, amateur radio operators provide critical non-commercial, distributed communications networks that are relied upon as a source of information and a backup to public safety communications systems.

Here in Oregon, we are under constant threat of earthquakes and wildfires. We just suffered through an extended period of wildfires here in the western part of the state, and amateurs were able to stay on the air with the repeater infrastructure we have built (at our own expense) and mobile and handheld equipment that operates independent of the commercial electric grid.

My personal fixed and mobile stations can operate free of the electrical power grid for several days. I operate frequently in order to keep my station in good order, and to keep my training and skills current in case I am needed to serve the public.

### **Youth, educational opportunities, and benefits to society**

Amateur Radio is unique in that there is no age limit. My 18 year old daughter holds an Amateur Extra class license (W7HER). She is an accredited Volunteer Examiner, and is responsible for signing official documents that impact others' lives.

My 12 year old son (K7NAR) holds his technician license, and uses his radio frequently.

The process of studying for and holding amateur radio licenses provides youth an excellent vehicle through which to explore STEM, geography, electronics, communications, and computers, gives them an

opportunity to perform public service, and permits interaction with adult peers on a level playing field, all of which provide opportunities for immense personal growth.

### **Other cost savings to the FCC**

Unlike most other communications services, amateur radio is self-policing. We take care of most interference sources within the amateur bands ourselves, and often learn valuable direction finding skills in the process.

When sources are found outside of the amateur bands, we frequently report our findings to the FCC, providing detailed documentation and reducing the FCC's investigatory burden..

Examination results and paperwork most often are submitted electronically to the FCC. Electronic submission could be required if there would be a cost savings realized.

### **Conclusion**

A \$50 fee is not a lot of money for a corporation. However, a \$50 fee **does** serve as an "impediment to entry" into the Amateur Radio Service, especially to a 12 year old who has to decide if it's worth it to spend that much money to do something that requires studying in order to even pass an exam.

The opportunity for anyone to participate in the Amateur Radio Service is **priceless**.

The return on investment for **society** from a child with an Amateur Radio license is **immense**.

***How much benefit can a 12 year old provide to society with an Amateur Radio license?  
If this fee is enacted, who knows what will have missed out on?***

I, for one, am one of many **thousands** of electrical engineers within the U.S. that got their start in engineering as a result of holding a Amateur Radio license (continually licensed since age 15).

For the sake of American competitiveness and ingenuity, we **MUST** keep this entry path into the engineering "career track" accessible to youth.

Because amateur radio is unlike any other federally licensed communications service, both in purpose and the qualifications and motivations of its participants, it should not be lumped together with other similar yet very different communications services.

Instead, the Amateur Radio Service should be evaluated on its own merit, along with the benefits it and its practitioners provide to American society. It should be exempted from the fees proposed under MD Docket No. 20-270.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

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**Amateur Extra Class license holder since 1987**

**ARRL Registered License Instructor**

**Accredited Volunteer Examiner under W5YI, ARRL, Laurel, and Anchorage ARC VECs**