

Religious Broadcast Rumor Denied

FCC Consumer Facts

Background

A rumor has been circulating since 1975 that the late Madalyn Murray O'Hair, a widely known, self-proclaimed atheist, proposed that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) consider limiting or banning religious programming.

These rumors are untrue. In December 1974, Jeremy D. Lansman and Lorenzo W. Milam filed a petition (**RM-2493**) asking the FCC to inquire into the operating practices of stations licensed to religious organizations, and not to grant any new licenses for new noncommercial educational broadcast stations until the inquiry had been completed. The FCC denied this petition on August 1, 1975. Ms. O'Hair was not a sponsor of this petition.

Since that time, the FCC has received mail and telephone calls claiming that Ms. O'Hair started the petition and that the petition asked for an end to religious programs on radio and television. **Such rumors are false.** The FCC has responded to numerous inquiries about these rumors and advised the public of their falsehood. There is no federal law that gives the FCC the authority to prohibit radio and television stations from broadcasting religious programs.

For general information on other telecommunication-related issues, you may contact the FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau by e-mail at fccinfo@fcc.gov, or at the address below. You may also call the FCC's Consumer Center at 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY.

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For this or any other consumer publication in an alternative format (electronic ASCII text, Braille, large print, or audio), please write or call us at the address or phone number below, or send an e-mail to FCC504@fcc.gov.

To receive information on this and other FCC consumer topics through the Commission's electronic subscriber service, click on <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/contacts/>.

This fact sheet is for consumer education purposes only and is not intended to affect any proceeding or cases involving this subject matter or related issues.

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