

Received & Inspected

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FCC Mall Room

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March 29, 2014

David Bonetti
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Media Bureau - Audio Section
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Room TW-A325
Washington D.C. 20554
and
The Trustees
WGBH Educational Foundation
One Guest Street
Boston, MA 02135

RE: License Renewal Applications of
WGBH-FM (#BRED 20131202BIA)
WCRB-FM (#BRH 20131202BIR)

To the FCC and the Trustees,

I am writing with sadness to protest the actions taken by the owners of WGBH-FM (and now WCRB-FM as well) to dismantle what had been the Boston - and regional - music powerhouse at 89.7 FM (WGBH-FM), and to say that I agree with the Committee for Community Access' *Petition to Deny* the renewal of the licenses of WGBH-FM and WCRB-FM.

When I moved back to Boston nearly four years ago from St. Louis, a city where the last radio station broadcasting classical music went off the air soon after I left, I looked forward to hearing the intelligent programming I remembered WGBH providing when I'd lived there before. I quickly discovered that it had changed— change is inevitable and often for the good – but the changes the WGBH owners had made were not positive. Jazz programming was reduced to just three nights a week on WGBH and WCRB's classical programming, although often excellent, increasingly featured movements instead of entire works. Most infuriating to me was the bantering on local sports teams the announcers were forced to make. I suspect that most classical music lovers are not waiting to hear the scores of the local teams as much as WGBH's managers think they are.

WGBH has been turned into a talk-station. I have nothing against such stations, although I choose not to listen to them. But the fact is that there are many talk-stations on the air everyday to choose from. There are increasingly few that broadcast classical music and jazz.

For many years 89.7 FM has been a high-powered beacon broadcasting great music: classical music of both European and American origins, including jazz, folk and blues. It billed itself as Boston's "NPR Arts and Culture Station" - in distinction to Boston University's WBUR-FM (90.9 FM), which is an NPR news and talk station.

Listener contributions helped the Trustees make WGBH-FM one of the most powerful signals on the dial and to build state of the art studios, including a small concert hall used regularly to stage and broadcast live music performances, which members of WGBH's Classical Club and its Jazz Club were invited to attend. Members paid \$100 a year to join those clubs.

WGBH also regularly carried live remote broadcasts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. With the purchase of WCRB-FM, a weak suburban station, five years ago, WGBH banished classical music from the airwaves of 89.7, and banished folk and blues entirely the same year. In the daytime, WGBH became a near-clone of WBUR. The only music that remained on 89.7 was jazz, which it had carried on an all night, every night basis from 7pm until the morning NPR news, though it began moving the start time back a little at a time until it got it to 9pm. The only music still on WGBH is on weekend evenings after 9 pm.

I cannot believe that the trustees of the WGBH Educational Foundation, which has always put quality before financial concerns, have decided to abandon their long-time commitment to quality music - a commitment in which they were supported financially by members of the public - to duplicate the programming of the other NPR station, and to duplicate their own daytime programming in the evenings. For these reasons I chose not to donate to the station's annual campaign this year.

Have they sunk so low that they have succumbed to the lure of easy money in the hopes of syndicating their local talk shows nationally? What other cities would want them? WGBH-TV can do this,

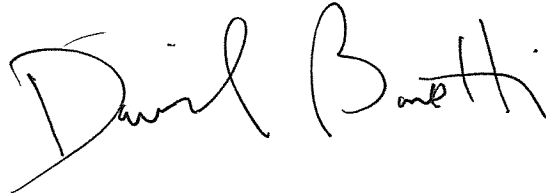
because it is producing shows of national and international interest, but the same can't be said of their local talk shows.

Are they hoping to bring in lots of advertising revenue in and around the talk shows? What kind of "public broadcasting" is that?

This must be fixed - either by WGBH restoring the great music it used to air to 89.7, or by letting someone else do so.

Very truly yours,

David Bonetti

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Bonetti". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "David" is written in a large, sweeping script, and the last name "Bonetti" is written in a smaller, more compact script. The signature is positioned below the typed name "David Bonetti".