

Public Law 117–344
117th Congress

An Act

To require the Federal Communications Commission to issue a rule providing that certain low power television stations may be accorded primary status as Class A television licensees, and for other purposes.

Jan. 5, 2023
[S. 3405]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Low Power
Protection Act.
47 USC 336 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Low Power Protection Act”.

SEC. 2. LOW POWER TV STATIONS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission;

(2) the term “Designated Market Area” means—

(A) a Designated Market Area determined by Nielsen Media Research or any successor entity; or

(B) a Designated Market Area under a system of dividing television broadcast station licensees into local markets using a system that the Commission determines is equivalent to the system established by Nielsen Media Research; and

(3) the term “low power TV station” has the meaning given the term “digital low power TV station” in section 74.701 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide low power TV stations with a limited window of opportunity to apply for the opportunity to be accorded primary status as Class A television licensees.

(c) RULEMAKING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue a notice of proposed rulemaking to issue a rule that contains the requirements described in this subsection.

Deadline.
Notice.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The rule with respect to which the Commission is required to issue notice under paragraph (1) shall provide that, during the 1-year period beginning on the date on which that rule takes effect, a low power TV station may apply to the Commission to be accorded primary status as a Class A television licensee under section 73.6001 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

Time period.

(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—The Commission may approve an application submitted under subparagraph (A) if the low power TV station submitting the application—

(i) satisfies—

(I) section 336(f)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 336(f)(2)) and the rules issued under that section, including the requirements under such section 336(f)(2) with respect to locally produced programming, except that, for the purposes of this subclause, the period described in the matter preceding subclause (I) of subparagraph (A)(i) of such section 336(f)(2) shall be construed to be the 90-day period preceding the date of enactment of this Act; and

(II) paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of 73.6001 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation;

(ii) demonstrates to the Commission that the Class A station for which the license is sought will not cause any interference described in section 336(f)(7) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 336(f)(7)); and

(iii) as of the date of enactment of this Act, operates in a Designated Market Area with not more than 95,000 television households.

(3) APPLICABILITY OF LICENSE.—A license that accords primary status as a Class A television licensee to a low power TV station as a result of the rule with respect to which the Commission is required to issue notice under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) be subject to the same license terms and renewal standards as a license for a full power television broadcast station, except as otherwise expressly provided in this subsection; and

(B) require the low power TV station to remain in compliance with paragraph (2)(B) during the term of the license.

(d) REPORTING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report regarding the implementation of this section, which shall include—

(1) a list of the current, as of the date on which the report is submitted, licensees that have been accorded primary status as Class A television licensees; and

(2) of the licensees described in paragraph (1), an identification of each such licensee that has been accorded the status described in that paragraph because of the implementation of this section.

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to affect a decision of the Commission relating to completion of the transition, relocation, or reimbursement of entities as a result of the systems of competitive bidding conducted pursuant to title VI of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.), and the amendments made by

Time period.

List.

that title, that are collectively commonly referred to as the “Television Broadcast Incentive Auction”.

Approved January 5, 2023.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 3405:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 168 (2022):

Dec. 21, considered and passed Senate.

Dec. 22, considered and passed House.

