

Request for Extension Of Special Temporary Authority

Puerto Rico Public Broadcasting Corporation (“PRPBC”), licensee of Station WIPR-DT, San Juan, Puerto Rico (“Station”), hereby requests an extension of the Special Temporary Authority to operate at reduced facilities (0000111346) (“STA”).

As the FCC is aware, Hurricane Maria destroyed the tower site specified in the Station’s post-Incentive Auction construction permit authorization. The Station commenced operations with reduced facilities in August 2018, and is in the process of constructing its post-Incentive Auction facilities. The owner of the site on which the Station’s tower was located is the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources (“DRNA”). The tower that was located there (until Hurricane Maria knocked it down) was owned by WAPA-TV. WAPA-TV recently informed PRPBC of its decision not to rebuild the tower, and PRPBC then entered into an agreement directly with DRNA to erect a new tower at the site. Although no further local approvals are necessary in order to start construction, because the tower will be over 700 feet tall, it will require FAA approval.

PRPBC has taken substantive steps to complete the construction of its post-Incentive Auction facility. Although it likely will take at least 12 more months in order to complete construction of the tower and the associated transmitter shelter, as evidence of PRPBC’s good faith efforts to resume operating the Station from the DRNA (licensed) site, PRPBC has ordered a transmitter for the Station, which is ready for shipment, and PRPBC expects to receive the associated antenna and transmission line sometime in May 2021. Upon receipt of such equipment, PRPBC will commence construction, erection, and rigging of the tower, along with construction of a new transmitter building, plus other related installations. The Commission’s repack administrator approved funds for the construction of the Station’s new tower.

Therefore, pursuant to the flexibility afforded by the FCC to Puerto Rico licensees pursuant to the Public Notice, DA 18-901, dated August 30, 2018, which has provided additional time for television stations that have been silent since Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico in September 2017, PRPBC requests an extension of the STA to operate with reduced facilities for an additional six months. PRPBC is working as diligently as possible to resume operations with its post-Incentive Auction facility, but has faced insurmountable obstacles and delays, including the delayed decision by its tower owner not to reconstruct the shared tower, along with the delay in the delivery of construction resources and transmission equipment, which has forced PRPBC to continue operation on its post-Incentive Auction channel with reduced facilities. The devastating effects of the current COVID-19 pandemic has added to the delays.

Grant of this request would be in the public interest because it will allow PRPBC to continue delivering the programming of the Station to viewers in San Juan and the surrounding areas without interruption.