

EXHIBIT: NIU UNTIMELY OPIF UPLOADS
Licensee: Northern Illinois University

Explanation of Certification related to Northern Illinois University Online Public Inspection File (OPIF) for WNIU-FM, Rockford, IL; WNIJ-FM, DeKalb, IL; WNIE-FM, Freeport, IL; WNIW-FM, LaSalle, IL; and WNIQ-FM, Sterling, IL.

Northern Illinois University ("NIU") is the Licensee of five full-service NCE FM radio stations and one translator station, as identified in this Exhibit. The stations are operated as a regional public radio network under the name Northern Public Radio ("NPR"), and are operated by a single staff. For purposes of the FCC EEO Rule 73.2080, these stations comprise a single Station Employment Unit ("SEU" or "NIU SEU"). The NPR/the NIU SEU is composed of the following five (5) full-service NCE FM stations:

WNIU(FM) (Fac. ID 49545) Rockford, IL
WNIJ(FM) (Fac. ID 49550) DeKalb, IL
WNIE(FM) (Fac. ID 49555) Freeport, IL
WNIW(FM) (Fac. ID 49556) La Salle, IL
WNIQ(FM) (Fac. ID 49557) Sterling, IL
and one (1) translator station:
W289AB (Fac. ID 49549) Rockford, IL

As of the date of this renewal filing, NIU and station management certify that the above electronic public file OPIFs for all five NCE FM stations are complete, with respect to Issues/Programs Lists (I/PL) for all quarters since the prior license renewal in late 2012, and with respect to EEO Rule 73.2080 compliance, for all eight (8) License Years.

Issues/Programs Lists:

Between the last quarter of 2012 and February 2018, these public files were all maintained on paper, as was required by the Commission's rules. These public files all made the required transition to the internet OPIF in February, 2018. Recently, however, the following problems with the public files were identified:

- 1) In October, 2019 the station staff member who previously prepared the Quarterly Issues and Programs Lists (I/PL) and was responsible for OPIF compliance suddenly became ill and passed away unexpectedly that same month. Consequently, four quarterly reports (the last two of 2019 and first two of 2020) were not prepared and filed in a timely manner. The problem was not identified until recently.
- 2) The missing electronic quarterly issues reports have now been prepared and uploaded. All required IPLs are now uploaded to the OPIFs of all five full-service stations.

EEO:

Northern Illinois University certifies that station management of its SEU (NIU SEU) has prepared an EEO Annual Public File Report (EEO Annual Report) for the NIU SEU stations, in

compliance with the public file Rule 73.3527 and EEO Rule 73.2080, for each license year of the 2012-2020 license term. It further certifies that each of these EEO Annual Reports was prepared in the proper year, in a timely manner, and placed in each station's paper public files on or before the required date of August 1 in each year of the 8-year term. NIU likewise certifies that these reports have been uploaded to the WNIU (classical music) and WNIJ (news and information) websites in compliance with the FCC's EEO rule for the past eight license years.

As of this filing date, all eight EEO Annual Public File Reports covering this license term have been uploaded to the respective Online Public Inspection Files (OPIF) page, in the **EEO-Additional Documents** sub-section, for each of NIU's 5 NCE full-service stations. This Exhibit is being filed to explain certain timing issues with respect to the OPIF upload dates for some of these EEO Annual Reports.

- 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 EEO Annual Reports were originally loaded in February 2018 to the wrong section of the **OPIF site, rather than the EEO-Additional Documents subsection** of the stations' respective OPIFs. When this error was discovered, in June 29, 2020, a correction was made and all such files were uploaded in the **EEO-Additional Documents subsection**. These initial upload errors were due to several factors, including changes in the administrative staff responsible for web maintenance and confusion about whether EEO Reports for previous years should be uploaded to the OPIFs and, if so, in which section they belonged. All four of these files are now available in the **EEO-Additional Documents subsection** for each station.
- Please NOTE that the 2015 and 2016 EEO Annual Reports were also initially uploaded as exhibits attached to NIU's Form 397 EEO Mid-term Report (File No. B397-20160801ACI). They were thus accessible in the **EEO REPORTS Section** of the OPIF as of March 1, 2018.
- The 2017 EEO Annual Report was timely filed in the **EEO--Additional Documents subsection** on February 23, 2018 and is presently available there.
- The 2018 EEO Annual Report was prepared as a paper file as of August 1, 2018, but was not uploaded to the NIU station pages on OPIF until December 6, 2018. This late-filing discrepancy was due to the changes in the administrative staff responsible for internet upload and maintenance, as discussed above. This EEO Annual Report was uploaded on December 6, 2018 and is presently posted in the **EEO-Additional Documents** sub-section of the stations' OPIFs.
- Likewise, the 2019 EEO Annual Report was prepared as a paper file as of August 1, 2019, but was not uploaded to the EEO section of station OPIFs until January 10, 2020. This late-filing discrepancy was also due to administrative staff changes, as well as the sudden illness and death of the station employee who was responsible for compliance with FCC rules through online posting and upload of documents to the OPIF. This oversight was noted in January

2020, at which time it was uploaded to the **EEO-Additional Documents** sub-section of the stations' OPIFs, where it remains accessible.

- The current 2020 EEO Annual Report has been timely prepared and uploaded to both the websites and to the **EEO-Additional Documents** sub-section of the stations' OPIFs a few days ago, prior to August 1, 2020. It is presently accessible there.
- Northern Illinois University acknowledges and sincerely regrets the lapse in timeliness in its public file compliance, and is taking concrete specific actions through station management to avoid such issues going forward. Experienced FCC legal counsel has been retained to assist with FCC compliance obligations related to NIU's NCE stations. Legal counsel will be meeting with station management at least quarterly to ensure timely and complete public file compliance going forward, and will also consult with NIU SEU management regarding EEO Rule compliance, including reporting and uploading requirements on an ongoing basis.