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For Immediate Release

CUMULUS PAYS \$540,000 PENALTY TO SETTLE SPONSORSHIP IDENTIFICATION INVESTIGATION

Radio Station Owner Admits It Failed to Identify Corporate Sponsor of Energy Project Announcements

WASHINGTON, January 7, 2016 – The Federal Communications Commission’s Enforcement Bureau reached a \$540,000 settlement with broadcaster Cumulus Media regarding sponsorship identification in radio advertising promoting a proposed energy project.

The settlement resolved an investigation into whether radio station WOKQ (97.5 FM) in Dover, New Hampshire violated the Commission’s sponsorship identification rules. The station had broadcast 178 announcements in support of the Northern Pass hydro-electric energy project without identifying the sponsor of those announcements, in this case a company with a financial interest in the project. This is the largest payment in FCC history for a single-station violation of the Commission’s sponsorship identification laws.

“Radio and television stations that are paid to air any announcements or other content are required to clearly disclose the payer’s identity,” said Enforcement Bureau Chief Travis LeBlanc. “While failure to disclose these identities generally misleads the public, it is particularly concerning when consumers are duped into supporting controversial environmental projects.”

The Northern Pass energy project is a \$1 billion proposal to run 180 miles of new power lines from Canada through New Hampshire. The Enforcement Bureau began its investigation after receiving a consumer complaint alleging that WOKQ had broadcast an announcement for the Northern Pass project in September 2011 without identifying who sponsored the announcement. The investigation revealed that the station had broadcast multiple versions of the announcements from May through October 2011 that referenced the Northern Pass project but none of them expressly identify Northern Pass Transmission LLC, a company with a financial interest in the project, as the sponsor.

Under the terms of the settlement, which takes the form of a Consent Decree, Cumulus Media Inc. subsidiaries Cumulus Radio Corporation and Radio License Holding CBC, LLC will pay a penalty of \$540,000 and will enter into a robust compliance plan governing 195 stations across the country. The plan includes appointing a Compliance Officer, enhanced operating procedures, employee training on sponsorship identification laws, and a hotline for reporting violations of the compliance plan.

To file a complaint with the FCC, go to <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov/hc/en-us> or contact the FCC's Consumer Center by calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or by writing to:

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Order and Consent Decree are available at:
https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-16-3A1.pdf.

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).