News Release

**Former FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate Supports Rule Change**

**for Radio Geo-Targeting as a Matter of Public Safety in Emergency Alerting**

***In Letter to Chairman Pai, Fugate Says Radio’s Reliability in Times of Crisis***

***Supports the Need to Reach the Public on a Zoned Basis***

**CHICAGO, April 14, 2020** – The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator from 2009-2017, Craig Fugate, has written to Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai in support of the proposed rule change that would permit radio broadcasters to broadcast geo- targeted programming, including emergency alerts in times of regional and local crises.

“I have witnessed first-hand that our oldest form of broadcast, radio, remains the most reliable, stable form of communicating,” said Fugate. “Radio has literally weathered all forms of disasters – be it California wildfires, where 200 cellular towers were destroyed, hurricanes like Sandy and Katrina, which overloaded most forms of communications, or coastal floods in Florida.

**Read the Fugate Letter Here:**

[Administrator Fugate Letter](https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/10414997930653/Fugate%20letter%20to%20FCC%20Pai.pdf)

“Without a doubt, localized radio broadcast updates of today’s COVID-19 crisis would serve the public good by communicating public safety information pertinent to specific portions of the airwave’s audience. Consider the benefit of reaching a 25-mile portion of a radio signal about

local test sites or shelters versus informing that same station’s 100-mile audience that do not need those specifics but require their own, zoned, details,” Fugate added.

The FCC is requesting comments through May 4 on the petition filed by GeoBroadcast Solutions LLC on March 13. Members of the public can go to <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings/>and enter proceeding number **RM-11854** to file a comment of any type. The original filing can be found at

[https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/10313759820502/GeoBroadcast%20Petition%20for%20Rulemaking%20%5BFINAL%5D.pdf.](https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/10313759820502/GeoBroadcast%20Petition%20for%20Rulemaking%20%5BFINAL%5D.pdf)

“We appreciate Administrator Fugate’s perspective and appreciation of the critical role radio stations can provide to get important, time-sensitive information to portions of a broadcast audience rather than an entire signal,” said Bill Hieatt, CTO of GeoBroadcast Solutions. “Our technology was specifically designed to provide over-the-air broadcasters the ability to target regions within its broadcast signal and provide them with local news, weather, traffic, and advertising.”

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*Former FEMA Administrator Supports Geo-Targeting Rulemaking Petition – 2*

The rule GeoBroadcast seeks to change relates to FM boosters, and no changes to the FCC's rules regarding translators or interference are necessary. Radio is currently the only mass medium that cannot geo-target its content. The television industry gained the ability to geo- target in 2017 when the FCC adopted the Next-Gen TV standard — also known as ATSC 3.0 – at the urging of NAB.

The ability for radio stations to add localized weather and traffic, news, advertising, and emergency alerting during parts of a broadcast hour is beneficial to listeners, small businesses, and advertisers. It would allow the radio industry to progress and remain competitive in the market.

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**About GeoBroadcast Solutions LLC**

GeoBroadcast Solutions was formed in 2011 to develop the ZoneCasting™ Geo-Targeting platform. This platform has been successfully tested under special FCC authorization. Geo- Targeted separation of the main channel audio of an FM radio station to its listeners allows the ability to split an FM signal into local “zones.” Out of this development effort came MaxxCasting™, which increases signal quality, PPM watermark decoding, and allows geographic targeting and fencing of radio screen advertising. It is successfully deployed and operational in many markets and growing rapidly. Additional information is available at [geobroadcastsolutions.com.](https://www.geobroadcastsolutions.com/)

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