



## EXECUTIVE BRANCH

## EXECUTIVE BRANCH GOVERNOR EDDIE HAMILTON LT. GOVERNOR CORNELL SANKEY

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May 12, 2014

Mr. Geoffrey Blackwell  
Chief of Office of Native Affairs and Policy  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes wish to express their deep concern regarding the upcoming FCC bandwidth auction and re-packing of broadcast frequencies. As you are aware, the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes just recently formed their own television station CATV47 (call letters K47MU-D) with Native-centric programming available 24 hours a day to viewers within a 40 miles radius of Concho, OK the tribe's headquarters. Our signal reaches into Oklahoma City the 41<sup>st</sup> DMA market.

Though it's not known if the FCC auction will directly affect CATV47, we feel the possibility of losing our frequency for our Tribal Low Power TV station is more than enough to prompt this government-to-government letter.

As a public broadcast station under the auspices of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Department of Education, CATV47 has a three-pronged mission:

1. To preserve, promote and teach the traditional culture and the languages of the Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho people. Both the Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho Native Languages are on the brink of extinction. It is vital to our culture that our languages be preserved and taught. Our TV station is dedicated to this endeavor.
2. To keep tribal members informed and educated about public affairs and public health concerns, like diabetes wellness, Indian Child Welfare, drug and alcohol abuse, teen suicide and domestic violence.
3. to present positive images Native Americans. Cheyenne and Arapaho Television is dedicated to presenting and promoting positive images and impressions of Native Americans that encourage, inspire and uplift the Native American spirit.

There is only a handful of Native American owned and operated TV Stations in the country, and our stations stands out as a shining example among them all. In its first two years existence, CATV47 has produced almost fifty hours of original programming, interviewed dozens of tribal members and elders, attended numerous community functions, conducted a three-day summer youth video workshop, won two awards from the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA), and become an affiliate of First Nations Experience (FNX), the nation's first Native network. CATV47 works closely with the Cheyenne and Arapaho Language Department, and to date has produced fifty-two language videos, most in the thirty-second to one-minute range. Tribal members from ages four to seventy have been recorded to help promote Native words and phrases in both Cheyenne and Arapaho. CATV47 realizes the importance of community and in its two years has produced and aired over fifty "community" stories. These pieces are designed to showcase and promote tribal members of all ages in tribal communities around the tribal service area, especially youth and elders.

CATV47 is the forefront of the Native American broadcast television in the state of Oklahoma. The station recently partnered with the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority to produce "Native Oklahoma," a first-of-its-kind program featuring stories contributed by its own tribes and others throughout the state. "Native Oklahoma" air statewide and received positive reviews from Native and non-Native viewers alike. Through partnerships with the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority, First Nations Experience, and the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Cheyenne and Arapaho Television hopes to promote Native Culture and ideals to its tribal members and beyond for years to come.

Over the last three decades, American viewers have welcomed niche programming such as Black Entertainment Television and Telemundo, while Native American programming has been virtually non-existent. PBS stations offer Native-themed documentaries from time to time, but 24/7 Native American TV stations have been rare to say the least. Cheyenne and Arapaho Television (CATV47) fills a large void in the broadcast television landscape.

It would be a travesty for the FCC to crush our efforts to express the Native American voice in the heart of Indian Country. It is imperative that we strengthen our reach and our voice and not diminish it.

Should the FCC auction off the bandwidth and frequency used by the Cheyenne and Arapaho Television, the resulting mandatory reconfiguration of our transmitter, antenna and filter would cause a financial hardship on this program and our tribes. We would like to explore and discuss any alternative options with the FCC.

As stated earlier, we cannot possibly predict how the FCC bandwidth auction will affect CATV47, but the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribal Government is asking for your help and consideration in this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Eddie Hamilton,  
Governor



Cornell Sankey,  
Lt. Governor