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For Immediate Release

FCC REFERS ST. LOUIS-AREA RADIO STATIONS TO HEARING

***Radio Licenses at Risk for Potential Unauthorized Transfer of Control,
Misrepresentation of Ownership, and Violations of FCC Rules***

WASHINGTON, June 05, 2019—The Federal Communications Commission’s Media Bureau announced today it has designated St. Louis area-based Entertainment Media Trust (EMT) for a hearing in front of an Administrative Law Judge to determine whether it committed serious violations of the Communications Act and the Commission’s rules. If found to have committed these serious violations, EMT’s licenses may be cancelled.

EMT purchased four AM radio stations: KFTK-AM (formerly WQQX-AM), WQQW-AM, KZQZ-AM, and KQQZ-AM in the St. Louis, Missouri market between 2006 and 2010. The company filed renewal applications for each of these stations in 2012. After receiving a petition to deny those applications from local resident and listener Mark Kern, the Media Bureau conducted a multiyear inquiry into the allegations that the stations were actually controlled by Robert S. Romanik, who has been convicted of felony offenses for obstruction of justice and bank fraud, which would be a violation of the Communications Act and the Commission’s rules.

The Bureau’s investigation found significant evidence supporting the claim that Romanik exercised de facto control over the stations. The investigation confirmed that Romanik established EMT and provided all of EMT’s funds for the acquisition of the stations, but was not listed as a party in any of EMT’s applications.

The Bureau’s investigation also found that Romanik has identified himself as a radio station owner on various forms disclosing his political contributions, purported to assign EMT’s beneficial interest in the radio stations to his longtime girlfriend, Katrina M. Sanders, and participated in negotiations involving a Local Programming and Marketing Agreement with Emmis Radio, LLC for KFTK in 2016. In addition, the investigation showed that EMT’s 2012 trust instrument was executed after EMT acquired the stations and does not appear to contain provisions insulating Romanik from ownership of the stations as required under Commission rules.

The hearing will be scheduled and heard by the Commission’s Administrative Law Judge.

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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).