

**CANADIAN BROADCAST STANDARDS COUNCIL  
ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Appendix B to

*CILQ-FM re the Howard Stern Show (Group Homes)*

(CBSC Decision 99/00-0722)

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## **I. The Complaint**

The following complaint dated July 17, 2000 was sent to the CBSC. As you will see from the correspondence below, this is the same complainant as the one who complained to the Council on two previous occasions concerning Howard Stern's use of the word "retard":

For identification purposes, I enclose a copy of your letter to me of May 19, 2000.

I would like to augment my complaint with respect to a further Howard Stern Broadcast on CILQ-FM which took place on Friday, July 14th, 2000 between 10:00 am and 10:15 a.m. The segment started off with jokes and crude comments about the victims of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1984. There then followed a discussion between Howard Stern and one of his staff about the purchase of a home. That led to a most obscene discussion about group homes for the retarded devaluing properties. The remarks then dealt with the sexual proclivities of developmentally handicapped people and description of defecating on the front lawn of a group home for the retarded. Naturally, the word developmentally handicapped was never used and the segment went on and on about the retarded having group homes and affecting property values thereby punishing homeowners who had saved to purchase a home. The attack was obviously directed at the developmentally handicapped community who live in group homes. I trust that your adjudication committee will agree with me that there was no humour or redeeming value in the segment and I continue to find it more than alarming with the comment that is announced throughout the programme that the content complies with the recognized standards of the CRTC.

I thank you for your ongoing consideration and look forward to the results of the adjudication with this added material taken into account.

## **II. The Broadcaster's Response**

The Regional President, WIC Radio Ltd - CILQ-FM, responded on August 3rd, 2000 with the following:

We are responding to your complaint to the CBSC of July 12, 2000, which they forwarded to us on July 25, 2000. Specifically, you are complaining about a segment of the Howard Stern show, which aired July 14, 2000.

It is my understanding from your letter that you are trying to "augment" your previous complaint with respect to the Howard Stern show.

Your complaint is dealing with a segment of the program in which Howard Stern and the other hosts on the show discuss purchasing a home. It is my opinion that you have chosen to selectively interpret the comments made on the program. The segment of this program also included discussion with respect to group homes and halfway houses, in addition to homes for the developmentally handicapped. The discussion included comments from the co-host, that "it is wrong" and Howard Stern replying "of course", that these types of community facilities affect property values. I believe the point they were trying to make is that it is unfortunate our society views these types of facilities in this manner. Unfortunately, I believe that their comments are, in fact, correct that property values are unfairly impacted in certain circumstances.

My interpretation of the segment is not that this was an attack on the handicapped, but rather typical of many Stern segments, satirical of society in general.

We recognize that the Howard Stern brand of entertainment is not everyone's taste and regret that you were offended by his comments.

The Stern show generates strong emotional reactions on both sides of the issue. Some feel that nothing short of its removal from Canadian airwaves will suffice. Others are just as adamant about Canadians' freedom of expression and listeners' rights to receive programming of their choice.

We do take steps to ensure that warnings about the nature and content of the show are broadcast at least twice each hour and in other day parts whenever the program is being promoted, in an effort to inform listeners (and parents) who may be sensitive to such issues.

A program producer whose sole function is to monitor the show is employed, with a view to ensuring sensitivity to and continuing compliance with Canadian Broadcast Regulations.

A new state of the art piece of digital equipment has been installed which facilitates the seamless editing of the Howard Stern Show and increases the length of our broadcast delay by 400%.

As we noted earlier, the Howard Stern Show has polarized public opinion. The most recent BBM ratings released, indicate that approximately 488,300 Q107 listeners choose Howard Stern each week as their preferred program despite a multitude of alternatives.