



Public Safety Alliance

Dedicated to First Responders...First

May 30, 2013

Acting Chairwoman Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel
Commissioner Ajit Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: Policies Regarding Mobile Spectrum Holdings; WT Docket No. 12-269

Dear Acting Chairwoman Clyburn and Commissioners Rosenworcel and Pai:

The Public Safety Alliance (“PSA”) is a partnership of the nation's leading public safety associations, which includes the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International (APCO), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the National Sheriffs’ Association (NSA), the Major Cities Police Chiefs Association (MCC), the Major County Sheriffs’ Association (MCSA), the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association (Metro Chiefs), and the National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO). Given the paramount importance of establishing a Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (“NPSBN”), the PSA urges the Commission to adopt incentive auction rules that will result in auction revenue of the repurposed broadcast spectrum consistent with the Commission’s public interest mandate.

Our nation has an urgent need for a robust nationwide public safety broadband network. Almost twelve years have passed since the attacks of September 11, 2001, and in the intervening years, Congress, the Commission, state and local governments, the Department of Homeland Security, the 911 Commission, and many others have repeatedly called for our public safety communications system to be improved and to take advantage of new broadband technologies. Despite numerous efforts and false starts – most notably, the failed attempt to auction the Upper 700 MHz D Block spectrum for public safety uses – the nation’s need for a 21st Century public safety network remains unaddressed. But, as the recent events in Boston remind us, the deployment of a state-of-the-art NPSBN cannot wait any longer. American lives are at stake, and it is imperative that we, as a nation, provide our emergency personnel with all of the tools they need to respond effectively in times of crisis.



International Association of Chiefs of Police | International Association of Fire Chiefs
National Sheriffs’ Association | Major Cities Chiefs Association
Major County Sheriffs’ Association | Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association
Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International
National Association of State EMS Officials

With the Spectrum Act,¹ Congress found a way to fund a new NPSBN (or “FirstNet”). Securing that funding, however, depends on the successful implementation of an unprecedented two-sided incentive auction of spectrum currently used by broadcast television stations. There was widespread support within Congress for this unique incentive auction structure, and many members of Congress have made clear that they expect the auction to yield at least \$7 billion for the deployment of a state-of-the-art public safety network.²

But like all of the goals of the Spectrum Act – from reallocating as much spectrum as possible to mobile broadband to reducing the national debt – the goal of using the auction proceeds to deploy FirstNet depends upon a successful auction that realizes the full value of the repurposed broadcast spectrum. The upcoming incentive auction represents the best and perhaps only chance for the next several years to raise the billions of dollars necessary to fund FirstNet. And, given all of the false starts and failed efforts of the last decade, it is absolutely essential that the upcoming auction successfully generate the funding for FirstNet that Congress intended.

In short, the Commission faces significant challenges in this auction to raise sufficient revenues to reallocate a meaningful amount of spectrum from television broadcasters to mobile carriers, while also funding the cost of the auction and the costs of deploying critical public safety infrastructure. The PSA urges the Commission to adopt incentive auction rules that will result in auction revenue of the repurposed broadcast spectrum consistent with its public interest mandate under the Communications Act.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/
Gregory Frederick
PSA Chair

/s/
D. Terry Hall
PSA Vice Chair

¹ Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012, P.L. 112-96 (Feb. 22, 2012) (“Spectrum Act”).

² See, e.g., 158 Cong. Rec. S888-01 (daily ed. Feb. 17, 2012) (statement of Sen. Rockefeller) (the Spectrum Act “provides \$7 billion in spectrum auction proceeds as well as D-Block spectrum worth \$2.75 billion to develop a nationwide, interoperable wireless broadband network for public safety officials through a new First Responder Network Authority”); *Ex Parte* Letter from Fred Upton, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives, et. al. to Chairman Julius Genachowski and Commissioners McDowell, Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai, Docket No. 12-269 (filed April 19, 2013) (“*Energy and Commerce Committee Letter*”) (auction is expected to “contribute up to \$7 billion toward the construction of a nationwide public safety broadband network”).