

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2102

September 25, 2009

*PS Docket
700 MHz
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18/8*

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Office of the Commissioners
Federal Communications Commission
445 - 12th Street, SW, Room 8B201
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I write in strong support of the amended request for waiver pending before the Federal Communications Commission as submitted on behalf of the City of Boston, Massachusetts (PS Docket No. 06-229). To best serve the public interest, I believe the first responders of Boston should be granted access to available spectrum in the 700 MHz band that has been reserved for a nationwide public safety interoperable broadband network. I believe this would help meet the urgent needs of the Boston Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Service workers.

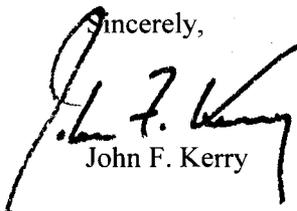
It has been eleven years since Congress directed the D Block spectrum in the Upper 700 MHz Band to be allocated to public safety communications. Today, since full-power television stations have completed the transition from analog to digital, the airwaves have been cleared for use by first responders. However, the FCC was unable to secure a national public/private partnership for D Block during Auction 73 in 2008, and, although you have rightfully recognized this issue as a top priority for the FCC, I understand that it will likely be a significant period of time before a national plan for this spectrum is completed. Mayor Menino, in coordination with public safety officials and neighboring communities, has put forward an important proposal for a regional network that would utilize this bandwidth in the interim until a national plan is established. I believe it is worthy of your support.

The proposed network would have the capability and intention to adapt to the standards and requirements of a national, interoperable public safety network upon the institution of such a system, and would provide greater security to the people of the Metro-Boston Homeland Security Region. The Boston plan would build out a network that conforms to the technical specifications proposed in the Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking by the FCC regarding D Block usage.

In the absence of any national plan or access to spectrum in the 700 MHz band, the City of Boston is currently designing a local public safety wireless network in the less-efficient 4.9 GHz band to support first responders. Not only would this project undermine the ultimate goal of an interoperable national network in the D Block spectrum, but the 4.9 GHz plan would also be more costly with reduced propagation. In the interest of public safety and to hasten the adoption of a state of the art, interoperable communications network, I urge you to consider the amended request for waiver submitted by Mayor Menino.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact Nick Christiansen of my staff at 202-224-2742 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,


John F. Kerry

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