

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 26th, 2012

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
The Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

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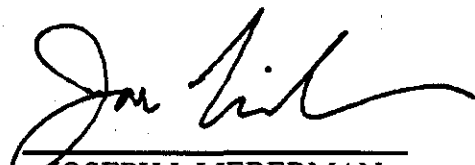
Dear Chairman Genachowski:

Last year, our state was hit by two severe storms that caused widespread power outages for as many as 10-12 days. In the aftermath of these storms, many of our constituents turned to free over the air television signals on their battery and generator powered televisions for important information about the recovery. In many cases cable TV systems, internet service providers and cell phone carriers were also down. These events underscored for us the importance of retaining access to these free over the air signals as not just a public service, but a critical emergency response tool.

To this end, we write today in regards to the television broadcast incentive auction that was authorized by the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. As you know, this measure was adopted to permit television licensees to exit the broadcast business voluntarily, which would have the effect of freeing up frequencies that could then be reallocated for wireless broadband services. There is little doubt that expanding the amount of spectrum allocated to support wireless broadband is a important national goal – in fact, we strongly support this worthy effort.

However, in doing so, we urge the commission to protect the ability of the public to continue to receive free over-the-air television signals from those stations that will continue to provide service to our constituents after the auction is over. As you move forward, we believe that any plan that the commission adopts should not negatively impact the ability of our constituents to continue to receive free local programming via free over the air service. Given the large number of individuals, households and markets potentially affected by the commission's proposal, we also urge that this process be kept transparent through robust disclosure of the plan at the earliest possible opportunity so anyone affected can have ample time to evaluate the plan.

We thank you for your attention to this request, and look forward to hearing from you.


JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN
United States Senator

Sincerely,


RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator

15 OCT 2012 RCUD

Joe Courtney

JOE COURTNEY
Member of Congress

Chris Murphy

CHRIS MURPHY
Member of Congress

Rosa DeLauro

ROSA L. DELAURO
Member of Congress

John B. Larson

JOHN LARSON
Member of Congress

Jim Himes

JIM HIMES
Member of Congress