



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

April 29, 2014

The Honorable Cory A. Booker  
United States Senate  
141 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Booker:

Thank you for your letter regarding the importance of local broadcasting and the potential impact of the upcoming Incentive Auction on consumers. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

I understand the value that local TV stations bring to viewers in fulfillment of their responsibility to serve the public interest. I strongly believe that the interests of the American people are served by a vibrant local broadcasting industry and include the continuation of broadcasting's historic role as a principal conveyor of news and entertainment, and especially of its invaluable role as "first informer."

The incentive auction proposals before the full Commission are a balanced approach to benefit 21<sup>st</sup> century consumers, whether those consumers use television or mobile broadband – or most likely both. Our central objective in designing the incentive auction is to marry the economics of demand with the economics of current spectrum holders, broadcast television stations, and allow market forces to determine the highest and best use of spectrum. The Commission does not know definitively which stations will choose to participate, or which stations ultimately will be selected through the auction, but our goal is to provide the industry with specific information regarding the available options in order for each station to make an informed decision.

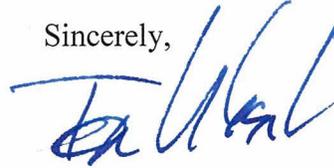
Broadcast stations have the choice whether to participate or not, and will have a range of bid options. These include the options to go off the air, relinquish a UHF channel and share a channel with another broadcast station, or relinquish a UHF channel and accept another channel in the VHF band. While the law clearly demonstrates that Congress contemplated that a successful auction would result in some stations choosing to go off the air, both the channel sharing and UHF to VHF bid options will provide stations with the opportunity to participate in the auction, receive a substantial payment, and continue to provide over-the-air programming to their local communities. For stations that choose not to participate, the Commission is required to make "all reasonable efforts" to preserve their coverage areas and populations served in any

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repacking of broadcast stations to new channels. We will comply with statutory directives regarding the protection of the remaining stations, which will minimize the impact on consumers.

I hope this information is helpful. Your letter will be made part of the record of the proceeding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler", written over a horizontal line.

Tom Wheeler