



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

April 17, 2015

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
H2-117 Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Thompson:

Thank you for your letter supporting the inclusion and activation of FM chip sets in mobile wireless handsets. Your views on this issue are very important.

Please be assured, one of the Commission's highest priorities is to ensure that all Americans can receive timely and accurate alerts, warnings, and critical information regarding disasters and other emergencies irrespective of what communications technologies they use. As we have learned from previous disasters, such a capability is essential so that Americans can take appropriate action to protect their families and themselves.

As you note, the addition of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) enhances the reliability, resiliency, and security of our nation's alerting capability by providing for alerts to be distributed over a more diverse array of communications platforms, including mobile devices. Consistent with the Commission's well-established, flexible approach to technological requirements, I believe that mobile service providers and equipment manufacturers are in the best position to select and incorporate the technologies that will enable them to most effectively and efficiently deliver mobile alerts.

Importantly, Commission regulations do not prohibit activated FM chips in wireless handsets. I agree with you that FM chip sets can provide important benefits to consumers. I understand that there are already an increasing number of phones that include them, and, as you note in your letter, at least one major carrier has embraced the technology by providing FM radio access to its customers. The question, however, is whether activation of these chips should be mandated or based on consumer choice. At this point, it appears as though the issue may be resolving itself in the marketplace, which we will continue to monitor for further developments.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if we can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler



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WASHINGTON

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April 17, 2015

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman DeFazio:

Thank you for your letter supporting the inclusion and activation of FM chip sets in mobile wireless handsets. Your views on this issue are very important.

Please be assured, one of the Commission's highest priorities is to ensure that all Americans can receive timely and accurate alerts, warnings, and critical information regarding disasters and other emergencies irrespective of what communications technologies they use. As we have learned from previous disasters, such a capability is essential so that Americans can take appropriate action to protect their families and themselves.

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