



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 3, 2015

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
107 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley:

Thank you for your letter concerning the impact of the upcoming voluntary Broadcast Television Spectrum Incentive Auction on rural, over-the-air, low power TV (LPTV), and TV translator stations in Oregon.

I agree that LPTV station and TV translators provide important services upon which many consumers and businesses in rural communities rely. In the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act, Congress did not provide LPTV or TV translator stations with the same legal protection as full power and Class A stations. The Commission is taking steps, however, to help ensure that the important programming content these stations provide continues to reach viewers.

To help accommodate some of the needs of LPTV and translator stations following the auction, these stations will be permitted to remain on their existing channels during the transition period after the Incentive Auction, unless or until they are notified that they interfere with the primary service. Licensees of operating LPTV and TV translator stations that are displaced by a broadcast television station or a wireless service provider, or whose channel is reserved as a guard band, will be permitted to submit an application for displacement relief in a special filing window.

Additionally, in October 2014, the Commission initiated a proceeding to address other LPTV and translator issues related to the Incentive Auction. This proceeding explores options that may help LPTV and TV translators continue to serve their communities. In it, we seek comment on a possible extension of the low power digital transition deadline and channel sharing for LPTV stations, among other mitigating measures. We anticipate completing this proceeding prior to the auction.

I appreciate your interest and concerns. Your letter will be placed in the appropriate record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler".

Tom Wheeler