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Spectrum Incentive Auctions

June 29th, 2015

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

I am encouraged by the progress the Federal Communications Commission has made in its preparations for the broadcast incentive auction scheduled for 2016. I am writing to urge the FCC to take additional actions to ensure robust competition in the wireless broadband market.

The upcoming incentive auction represents an opportunity to preclude future competition in the wireless broadband market. In order to promote competition, the FCC's market-based spectrum reserve in each market prevents larger providers from effectively freezing out smaller providers from bidding that would allow them to reduce quality and raise prices. However, I have heard concerns from a number of industry stakeholders, as well as my constituents, that the proposed three-block reserve is not large enough to allow more than one non-dominant carrier the opportunity to acquire enough spectrum for a commercially viable enterprise.

Expanding the spectrum reserve from its current maximum to at least four blocks, or 40 megahertz of high-quality spectrum, will increase post-auction competition in the mobile broadband market by allowing for multiple non-dominant competitors to acquire the low-band spectrum they need to provide reliable broadband service.

There is only one opportunity to get this "once in a lifetime" broadcast incentive auction right. Expanding the size of spectrum reserve will ensure that this auction promotes wireless broadband investment, innovation and deployment. I urge the FCC to give full consideration to expanding the incentive auction's spectrum reserve to at least four blocks of high-quality spectrum.

Sincerely,

Brenda L. Lawrence

Member of Congress

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