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For Immediate Release**FCC PROPOSES UPDATES TO ITS RULES FOR SHORT RANGE
RADAR SENSING TECHNOLOGY*****State-of-the-Art Devices Can Help Avoid ‘Hot Car’ Deaths, Boost Accessible
Services, Bolster IoT, and Support Healthcare Monitoring***

WASHINGTON, July 13, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed and sought comment on updated rules for short-range radars in the 60 GHz spectrum band. Cutting edge radar sensing technology has been used to enable in-car radar-based technology to monitor for children left in dangerous, hot cars and touchless control of devices, including to promote accessibility for users with mobility or speech impairments. With their ability to capture motion in a three-dimensional space and capability to be incorporated into phones and other small devices, 60 GHz short-range radars are poised to enable many new health, personal safety, automation, and environment control applications.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking adopted today proposes expanding the permissible uses for short-range radars in the 57 to 64 GHz band while promoting coexistence with other unlicensed users and not interfering with licensed and authorized users in the band. This item proposes allowing unlicensed field disturbance sensors like radar devices to operate in mobile environments at a higher power level than authorized today. This is modeled after successful waivers previously granted by the FCC’s Office of Engineering and Technology for Google’s gesture control device and to a number of parties for applications including hot car sensors. It also seeks comments on the use of sensing technology such as Listen-Before-Talk to allow transmission at the same power level as other unlicensed devices in this band.

A wide range of applications could fall under these revised rules, including medical imaging devices and Internet of Things technologies for in-home automation services like environmental control and smart home appliances. And the rules could support enterprise solutions like factory automation and further bolster safety and security devices and intelligent transport options.

Under current FCC rules, unlicensed devices that operate in the 57 to 71 GHz band generally include devices such as wireless local area networking devices, outdoor fixed point-to-point communication links, and radar devices that are used in fixed applications or mobile short-range interactive motion sensor uses. Today’s action seeks to open the door for additional technological uses in the 57 to 64 GHz portion of that band while asking questions about the applicability in the broader 57 to 71 GHz band, and proposing rules and seeking comment on how best to ensure coexistence among new and existing users.

Action by the Commission July 13, 2021 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 21-83).
Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving.
Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr and Starks issuing separate statements.

ET Docket No. 21-264

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