FCC NEWS from the Federal Communications Commission

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For Immediate Release

FCC WINS AN EMMY® AWARD

Innovative Design of the FCC's Historic Broadcast Incentive Auction Brought Benefits to Broadcasters, Wireless Carriers, Consumers, and Taxpayers

WASHINGTON, February 26, 2024—The Federal Communications Commission today announced that it has been awarded a Technology & Engineering Emmy® Award by the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. The Academy announced that it has bestowed the award for the creativity and engineering design of the FCC's Broadcast Incentive Auction.

The Broadcast Incentive Auction was a years-long project that allowed over-the-air TV stations to return underutilized broadcast spectrum in return for incentive payments. The innovative auction design included channel sharing options that meant that over 80 percent of the stations that relinquished their spectrum were able to remain on the air while at the same time receiving once-in-a-lifetime capital for investment in their local stations. The freed-up spectrum was simultaneously auctioned to wireless carriers, resulting in new capacity to bring consumers 5G and other broadband services.

"The Incentive Auction provided significant benefits to broadcasters, wireless carriers, consumers and American taxpayers, and it is very gratifying that the Academy has acknowledged the creativity and success of the FCC's effort by conveying this award," said Jean Kiddoo, Chair of the Incentive Auction Task Force. "It is a real tribute to all of the dedicated public servants throughout the FCC who designed and implemented the first-of-its-kind, two-sided Incentive Auction. We greatly appreciate that this Emmy® recognizes the lasting value of their effort."

The Broadcast Incentive Auction, which cleared 84 MHz of spectrum, resulted in $19.8 billion in gross auction revenues and provided $10.05 billion in payments to 50 winning broadcasters, while at the same time sending $7.3 billion to the U.S. Treasury to reduce the federal deficit. In addition, the highly complex and carefully coordinated transition post-auction plan developed by the FCC enabled the broadcast spectrum to be cleared for winning mobile carriers in just 3 years, and for the over 1000 stations who needed to change their over-the-air channels as part of the rearrangement to be fully compensated for their costs to do so. The new wireless competition that was enabled by the auction included valuable low-band spectrum to be used to expand geographic coverage and broadband capacity and enable deployment of new 5G services. For more information, see the Incentive Auction "By the Numbers" Public Notice on the impact of the auction.

The Incentive Auction Task Force and its public and private partners have won a number of awards for this groundbreaking work. The team was awarded the 2018 Edelman Award for Outstanding Use of Operations Research and Data Analytics by the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS). In addition, FCC senior economic

advisor Evan Kwerel, Ph.D., received the prestigious Paul A. Volcker Career Achievement Medal from the Partnership for Public Service for his auction work.

FCC auctions more generally were central to the 2020 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences won by Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson for their fundamental advances in auction theory and design including "new and better auction formats for complex situations in which existing formats cannot be used." The committee noted that their "best-known contribution is the auction they designed" for the FCC that enabled bidding in simultaneous multiple rounds, which the FCC began using in 1994 to auction portions of the U.S. spectrum for commercial development.

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