



OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN BRENDAN CARR

FCC Secures Win for America's Leadership in Next-Gen Connectivity

Accelerates Internet Speeds, Bolsters Competition, Enhances Direct-to-Device

WASHINGTON, May 12, 2026—Today, FCC Chairman Brendan Carr announced that the agency approved two transactions that will further secure U.S. leadership in wireless and next-gen technology, including emerging direct-to-device (D2D) offerings. The two transactions—collectively surpassing \$40 billion in deal value—will allow the private sector to light up a large swath of approximately 115 megahertz of underused mid-band spectrum for the benefit of the American people.

Specifically, the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Space Bureau approved EchoStar's sale of approximately 65 megahertz of spectrum to SpaceX and an additional 50 megahertz to AT&T. These two decisions promise to accelerate Internet speeds, strengthen competition, and bolster rural service while allowing America to lead the world in next-gen connectivity, including new high-speed offerings direct to your smartphone from low-earth orbit satellites.

- **Lights Up Prime, Mid-Band Spectrum for Faster Broadband:** Valuable mid-band spectrum will move to providers motivated to expand offerings for the American people. AT&T will accelerate its 5G and fixed wireless deployment to support in-home broadband as well as manufacturing hubs, energy sectors, and small businesses. Indeed, immediately after announcing the sale, AT&T received special authority to light up EchoStar's 3.45 GHz spectrum—and within weeks, the spectrum was deployed across 23,000 sites and boosted 5G download speeds by up to 80 percent nationwide. Looking to the future, the FCC's decisions impose buildout obligations to ensure the spectrum benefits consumers, accelerates next-gen connectivity, and fosters increased competition within wireless and satellite markets.
- **Advances America's Global Leadership in Next-Gen D2D Offerings:** The FCC is advancing a series of reforms to match the innovation and investment in direct-to-device (D2D) services. D2D allows smartphones and IoT devices to connect directly to satellites for seamless, high-speed coverage everywhere, especially in remote and underserved areas. Several weeks ago, [two significant decisions](#) from the Space Bureau: (1) approved AST SpaceMobile's competitive 248-satellite D2D system; and (2) confirmed the exclusive nature of D2D spectrum bands, including the spectrum SpaceX is acquiring from EchoStar. Now with today's decision, SpaceX gains access—for the first time ever—to exclusive-use, contiguous spectrum nationwide for a Starlink D2D service and other offerings.
- **Bolsters Competition, Promoting Affordable Service.** Together, both transactions promise to reshape the wireless industry with new, disruptive competition that drives down prices for American consumers. By supercharging America's leadership in D2D services, more consumers will have more choices in more places. Meanwhile, AT&T's low-band spectrum will expand coverage across America, especially in rural, remote, and underserved areas. That enhanced

coverage will be complemented by new mid-band spectrum that boosts capacity and speeds—especially for fixed wireless to the home.

Chairman Carr issued the following statement:

“Thanks to President Trump, America is leading the world again in next-gen technology. As a result of President Trump’s work, Americans are now going to see faster Internet speeds, stronger competition, and innovative new offerings, including high-speed connections right to your smartphone from space—providing ubiquitous connectivity when these new systems are complete.

“As part of our Build America agenda, the FCC is running a two-part play in wireless to free up spectrum: FCC auctions and secondary-market transactions. Today’s approvals, coupled with other secondary-market transactions and FCC auctions already in the pipeline, put America on the path to releasing approximately 300 megahertz of low- and mid-band spectrum by the end of 2027. Today’s decisions also represent another milestone in the FCC’s concrete plan for securing U.S. leadership in D2D offerings. In the coming months, we will be taking additional actions to ensure that companies who want to innovate in D2D have the regulatory framework and spectrum resources to match. Our decisions also bring important closure that allows stakeholders to focus on the future.”

Additional Background Information:

The FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and Space Bureau approved two transactions that promote efficient spectrum use, expand competition, and deliver tangible benefits to consumers and workers. Key details of these approved transactions include:

- **5G Spectrum to AT&T:** EchoStar is selling approximately 50 megahertz of its nationwide spectrum to AT&T for its 5G network. AT&T will acquire approximately 30 MHz of nationwide 3.45 GHz mid-band spectrum and approximately 20 MHz of nationwide 600 MHz low-band spectrum.
- **D2D Spectrum to SpaceX:** EchoStar is selling approximately 65 megahertz of its nationwide spectrum to SpaceX for Starlink’s next-gen D2D offering. SpaceX will acquire approximately 15 megahertz of unpaired, nationwide AWS-3 spectrum, 40 megahertz of nationwide AWS-4 spectrum, and 10 megahertz of nationwide H-Block spectrum.
- **A Future for Boost Mobile:** AT&T and EchoStar will create a hybrid Mobile Virtual Network Operator arrangement that ensures the continued viability of Boost Mobile for the benefit of consumers.
- **Tech-Neutral Innovation:** The FCC is granting a series of pathbreaking waivers for SpaceX that anticipate and address the growing convergence of wireless and satellite broadband and break down regulatory silos. Today’s decision allows SpaceX to use its new spectrum flexibly for terrestrial, space-based, and hybrid network architectures. That flexibility is subject to first-of-its-kind performance obligations designed to be technologically neutral. SpaceX must meet demanding standards to use its spectrum intensively and provide meaningful, reliable connectivity to the public—whether D2D, terrestrial, or both—within years.
- **Stringent Buildout Conditions:** To ensure that spectrum is used intensively for American consumers, the FCC is requiring AT&T to build its greenfield 600 MHz network years faster than what the company originally requested and what the FCC’s rules ordinarily require for

builds after auction. AT&T receives no buildout extension for its 3.45 GHz spectrum, which is already deployed in large part.

- **Escrow Fund:** As a condition on the transactions, the FCC is requiring EchoStar to establish an escrow account of \$2.4 billion that can be drawn upon for qualifying claims. This encourages the resolution of outstanding claims while leaving the merits of any dispute to the parties or outside fora.

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**Media Contact: MediaRelations@fcc.gov / (202) 418-0500
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