

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN KEVIN J. MARTIN**

Re: Implementing a Nationwide, Broadband, Interoperable Public Safety Network in the 700 MHz Band; Development of Operational, Technical and Spectrum Requirements for Meeting Federal, State and Local Public Safety Communications Requirements Through the Year 2010, Ninth Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, (PS Docket No. 06-229, WT Docket No. 96-86).

In our Intelligence Reform Act report to Congress last year, the Commission found that emergency response providers would benefit from development of an integrated, interoperable network capable of delivering broadband services nationwide. Consistent with that finding, and at the urging of public safety, earlier this year the Commission asked whether certain channels within the current twenty-four megahertz of public safety spectrum in the 700 MHz band should be modified to accommodate broadband communications.

Today we expand upon our earlier inquiry by seeking comment on a national approach to maximize public safety access to interoperable, broadband spectrum in the 700 MHz band. I believe this proposal could offer many public safety benefits and is consistent with public safety's views on achieving an interoperable broadband network. Many national and local public safety organizations have expressed support for a public-private partnership approach for a single, national licensee to achieve an interoperable public safety broadband network in the context of other public safety proposals. One example is the Cyren Call proposal, which involves spectrum not currently allocated to public safety. The proposal in today's notice contains these elements, and it involves only the portion of the spectrum already allocated for public safety.

Although today's proposal is similar to other public safety proposals, it is not intended to be a substitute for them. The question of how the nation's spectrum resources in the 700 MHz band should be allocated is ultimately a question for Congress, not the Commission. If Congress determines that additional spectrum resources in the 700 MHz band should be allocated to public safety, the Commission would implement that determination.

In the meantime, however, the Commission is charged with efficiently and effectively managing the 700 MHz spectrum already allocated to public safety by Congress. We must continue to discharge that obligation to the best of our ability consistent with our statutory authority. To do otherwise would abdicate our responsibility at a time when it is more important than ever to ensure that our rules give first responders the communications capabilities they need to protect safety of life and property of the American public.