



March 16, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Republican Leader
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Doyle
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications &
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bob Latta
Republican Leader
Subcommittee on Communications &
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Chairman Doyle, and Republican Leader McMorris Rodgers and Republican Leader Latta:

As carriers and members of the wireless ecosystem that depend on access to finite spectrum resources to preserve and expand broadband and communications services, we strongly urge Congress to extend the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC" or "Commission") spectrum auction authority.

Since Congress first authorized the FCC to establish "a system of competitive bidding" for spectrum for commercial use in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993, the Commission has conducted over

one hundred spectrum auctions, supporting wireless technologies and services that depend on licensed spectrum while generating hundreds of billions of dollars in revenue for the Treasury. Congress has since extended auction authority four times to support FCC efforts, in coordination with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, to identify spectrum bands that can be reallocated for commercial wireless use and bring that spectrum to market. Absent further Congressional action however, the FCC's current general spectrum auction authority will expire on September 30, 2022.

While our industry works to expand next generation 5G services and looks ahead to successor technologies, continued expansion of wireless connectivity depends on sustainable and predictable access to spectrum. Indeed, the extension of auction authority is critical to ensure the success of work already underway to make spectrum currently in the pipeline available for commercial use. For example, success of the upcoming 2.5 GHz band auction could depend on extension of the FCC's auction authority. Smaller carriers in particular cannot meaningfully prepare to participate in potential upcoming auctions without the confidence that the auction can close and that spectrum will be available for use.

Particularly as Congress considers ways to support spectrum coordination efforts between the FCC and other government users, allowing FCC auction authority to lapse hampers the FCC's ability to participate in the intergovernmental process. This could create new barriers to improved spectrum management policies that benefit federal users and consumers alike at a time when strong FCC leadership is needed to ensure the United States continues to lead the world in the development of next generation wireless networks and applications.

Smaller carriers and carriers serving rural America are at greatest risk of harm if FCC spectrum auction authority were to lapse. Meeting the Congressional mandate, the FCC has successfully used spectrum auctions to support competition and widely disseminate licenses through a variety of means, including appropriately tailored geographic license sizes, small business and rural bidding credits, and interoperability requirements. Particularly for carriers that may have challenges securing spectrum on the secondary market, FCC-led spectrum auctions are the primary way to have a meaningful opportunity to access this critical resource and in turn provide the latest wireless services in small towns and rural communities that may otherwise be left behind.

Continued wireless leadership and growth depends on access to additional spectrum resources, and we strongly support the extension and continued success of FCC spectrum auction authority to advance wireless connectivity. Thank you for your focus on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

ATN International
C Spire
Cellcom
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Ericsson
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HTC
IDI
Inland Cellular
Interop Technologies

MTPCS d/b/a Cellular One
Nex-Tech Wireless
Nokia
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