Dockets
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Honorable Craig Thomas
House of Representatives
1721 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-5001

Dear Congressman Thomas:

Your letter to Chairman Sikes has been referred to me for reply. You express concern regarding proposals to reallocate frequencies at 2 GHz that would impact railroads, public utilities, oil and gas pipelines, and state and local governments currently using those frequencies.

On January 16, 1992, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (Notice) in ET Docket No. 92-9 that proposes allocating 220 MHz of 2 GHz spectrum for use by providers of emerging technologies. With regard to licensees currently using portions of this spectrum, the Commission proposed to permit state and local government licensees, including public safety agencies, to continue indefinitely their current operations on a primary basis. Other users would be permitted to continue their current operations on a primary basis for a period of time to be established — such as 10 or 15 years — and then permitted to continue operating only on a secondary basis. Expansion and new microwave systems would be permitted on a primary basis only at higher frequencies. In conjunction with the Notice, the Commission will release a staff study of existing use of this spectrum and identify other suitable frequencies available for this purpose. To further facilitate accommodation of the competing demands for this spectrum, the Commission also proposed to permit negotiation of financial arrangements between existing licensees and parties proposing new services that would facilitate access to this spectrum for services employing emerging technologies.

These provisions are intended to prevent disruption to the communications of the existing licensees, yet still provide the spectrum needed by U.S. companies to develop new and innovative telecommunications products and services and bolster U.S. competitiveness in world telecommunications markets. An example of one such new proposed service is the personal communications service (PCS), which the Commission is addressing concurrently in GEN Docket No. 90-314.

The need of the existing users of 2 GHz for reliable communication is of importance to the Commission, and is being taken carefully into consideration. Your concerns will be taken into account before a final determination is made, and for that purpose, I am making your letter part of the record in the two dockets discussed above, ET Docket No. 92-9 and GEN Docket No. 90-314.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Stanley

Thomas P. Stanley
Chief Engineer

MALCOLM WALLOP
WYOMING

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SMALL BUSINESS
ARMED SERVICES

United States Senate

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JAN 31 1992
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
OCPA

90-314

January 27, 1992

The Honorable Alfred Sikes
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Sikes:

We write to express our grave concerns about the tremendous disruption the Federal Communications Commission would cause utilities, oil and gas pipelines, railroads and state and local governments should the Commission decide to create a "spectrum reserve" for Personal Communications Networks (PCNs) in the 2GHz microwave band (1.85-2.2 GHz).

The utilities, oil and gas pipeline companies, railroads, state and local governments and others presently use this frequency band for extensive microwave communication. These microwave systems are used because they are more reliable than those provided by common carriers in order to ensure safe, swift and reliable services. Given the reality of natural disasters and technological failures -- last summer's disruption of east coast telecommunications is a good example -- it is essential for existing 2 GHz users to have the safe, swift and reliable communications necessary to protect the public interest. In the West, it is even more critical given our vast distances between towns.

Not only is public safety and reliability at issue, but the cost of the disruption to these critical industries would be immeasurable. As alternatives, higher frequency microwave bands are less reliable for these users, are heavily congested and may not accommodate all dislocated users. Also, because reliability decreases, more microwave towers are needed, thus raising costs even more and creating environmental siting concerns. Fiber optics are poor alternatives as well, since they require continuous right-of-way and alternate routing for redundancy. Satellite links are also disrupted by weather and prone to unacceptable delays.

In conclusion, as the Commission plans spectrum allocations to accommodate new telecommunications concepts, we strongly urge you to exercise caution not to impose costly changes and disruptions to the microwave systems these critical industries and our constituents depend upon.

Thank you for your time and attention to our concerns. We look forward to hearing your views on this matter.

Sincerely,

Malcolm

Malcolm Wallop
U.S. Senator

Alan K. Simpson
U.S. Senator

Craig

Craig Thomas
Member of Congress