

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C.**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks)	WT Docket No. 06-150
Comment on Process for Relicensing 700 MHz)	
Spectrum in Unserved Areas)	

REPLY COMMENTS OF AT&T

AT&T provides these reply comments in response to the Public Notice released by the Federal Communications Commission (“Commission”) on process for relicensing 700 MHz spectrum in unserved areas.¹

AT&T supports the Commission’s efforts to remove uncertainty and provide licensees with a detailed framework for managing the relicensing of 700 MHz unserved areas. But, the Public Notice misses the mark in proposing to use a 40 dBµV/m Smooth Contour to derive the unserved area that is to be relicensed when a licensee fails to meet its end of term performance benchmark. AT&T echoes the comments of CTIA.² The Smooth Contour proposal would lead to an inaccurate depiction of unserved area, penalize certain 700 MHz licensees, and increase the administrative burden on licensees and Commission staff.

700 MHz licenses file their interim and end of term build showings based upon actual coverage, which is dependent on the licensee’s network technology. AT&T agrees with CTIA that unserved areas should be determined based on this actual coverage rather than by using the Smooth Contour (or an Alternative Smooth Contour) to avoid the potential for overcalculating

¹ Process for Relicensing 700 MHz Spectrum in Unserved Areas, WT Docket No. 06-150, *Public Notice*, 32 FCC Rcd 6698 (2017) (“*Public Notice*”).

² Comments of CTIA, WT Docket No. 06-150 (filed Sept. 27, 2017).

the size of the unserved area.³ The Smooth Contour (and Alternative Smooth Contour) proposal presents the potential for the Commission to recapture geographic areas that are in fact served by a 700 MHz licensee, in contravention of Commission rule section 27.14(g)(1).⁴ In those fringe areas, 700 MHz licensees would be forced to abandon service to customers, with no guarantee that another provider would apply to serve the same area. For the same reason, AT&T opposes T-Mobile's proposal to derive unserved areas based on covering 50% of a county.⁵ T-Mobile's proposal would require a licensee covering 49% of a county to stop providing 700 MHz service everywhere in that county so that the areas can be relicensed. These proposals are not in the public interest.

Using actual coverage to calculate unserved area avoids this result, while also imposing fewer administrative burdens for 700 MHz licensees because licensees already base their build showings on actual coverage, would not have to use an alternative method for deriving unserved area, and would not need to make a duplicative unserved area filing. It also avoids increasing what is already likely to be a monumental workload for Commission staff in 2019, when AT&T alone will file more than 1100 end-of-term build showings, not including business as usual renewals and modifications. Added to the filings of other licensees, Commission staff may be challenged to process the filings within a reasonable time. Although AT&T does not expect a significant number of 700 MHz licensees to miss their end of term performance benchmark, any increase in filings that is unnecessary, as is the Smooth Contour proposal, need not be pursued.

³ *Id.* at 3-7.

⁴ 47 C.F.R. §27.14(g)(1).

⁵ *See* Comments of T-Mobile USA, Inc., WT Docket No. 06-150 at 3-4 (filed Sept. 27, 2017).

Dated: October 10, 2017

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert Vitanza", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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