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**EX PARTE VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

Ms. Marlene Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington DC 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Transforming the 2.5 GHz Band, WT Docket No. 18-120**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b), this letter summarizes an oral presentation regarding the above-referenced proceeding made during a meeting held at the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC" or "Commission") on June 12, 2019, attended by Michael Goggin, Alex Starr and Brian Benison representing AT&T Services, Inc. ("AT&T") and by John Schauble, Blaise Scinto, Jonathan Campbell, Nadja Sodos-Wallace, Christiaan Segura, Nancy Zaczek, Catherine Schroeder and Matthew Pearl of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

During the meeting, AT&T reiterated that an incentive auction process is the best way to attempt to repurpose an operationally meaningful amount of the 2.5 Ghz EBS spectrum currently held by incumbent licensees.<sup>1</sup> AT&T recognizes the complexity of the 2.5 GHz EBS spectrum band (see attachment) but believes the optimal approach to resolve the challenges is to hold both an incentive auction for currently assigned licenses and a traditional auction for the white spaces (i.e., currently unassigned licenses), potentially making this entire band of EBS spectrum, or at least an efficiently usable amount, available for rapid 5G deployments. A tandem auctions approach would be a "win-win" for everyone involved, because it would give current licensees an additional option that offers them a better chance of realizing the fullest value of their licenses, without taking away any option that any party now holds. In other words, an incentive auction would merely *add* an option that EBS licensees do not already have. If any EBS licensee would want to continue its operations as before, it would be free to do so. No existing licensee would be forced to participate in the incentive auction. Even better, an incentive auction could provide an EBS licensee a greater opportunity than the current leasing model to fulfill its educational mission, because the incentive auction proceeds would likely be considerable.

Critically, an incentive auction process would provide information to prospective bidders in a white space auction about which licensees may be interested in relinquishing spectrum. By contrast, if the Commission were to employ an overlay auction, the lack of reliable information about which licensees were inclined to sell, increases the complexity of participation for competing bidders and will negatively impact the outcome of the auction. In any event, before the Commission makes any decision about how to proceed, the Commission should attempt to evaluate the repeated record statements that certain terms in most or all of those leases would

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Comments of AT&T, WT Docket No. 18-120 (filed Aug. 8, 2018); Reply Comments of AT&T, WT Docket No. 18-120 (filed Sept. 7, 2018). Letter dated March 18, 2019 from Brian J. Benison AT&T, to Marlene Dortch, FCC, WT Docket No. 18-120.

preclude meaningful participation by incumbent EBS licensees in an incentive auction. Indeed, the Commission cannot engage in reasoned decision-making regarding the merits of an incentive auction without such an assessment.

Finally, so long as the Commission makes both incumbent-held licenses and white-space licenses meaningfully available for purchase by new entities (preferably via an incentive auction and a simultaneous SMR auction, respectively), AT&T generally supports the Commission's proposals to (i) modify all EBS spectrum licenses to flexible use licenses under Part 27; (ii) eliminate the educational use requirements for all EBS spectrum licenses; (iii) rationalize the boundaries of incumbent EBS spectrum licenses via converting each current Geographic Service Area (GSA) into a single license made up of the counties it covers or intersects; and (iv) impose more stringent performance requirements on newly acquired EBS spectrum licenses.

Pursuant to the Commission's rules, a copy of this letter is being filed electronically in the above-referenced docket. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have questions.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Brian J. Benison

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Matthew Pearl  
Christiaan Segura  
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