

I strongly disapprove of the proposed auction of the 216 to 217 MHz band.

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Electronic interference is a barrier to access for persons who use assisted listening devices -- just as curbs are a barrier for persons who use wheelchairs.

Increased electronic interference resulting from reassignment of this frequency band will create new barriers to access.

The 216 to 217 MHz band is used to provide access to public education and events for people who have hearing impairments. Of the many situations in which this frequency band is used for public access, perhaps the situation of greatest need is that of school children who have a hearing loss. It is simply outrageous to think that their fundamental needs might be considered less important than the wishes of a commercial enterprise to offer yet *another* paging system.

In addition, this band is also being used by at least two top-of-the-line FM assisted listening devices (ALDs) sold for personal use by people with hearing impairments: the new AVR LogiCom TX20 and the Phonak MicroLink systems. Other manufacturers are also moving to this band because it is relatively free of the electronic interference that plagues users of other frequency bands.

I am profoundly hard of hearing. Although my hearing aids have helped me regain much of my ability to understand s