



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF

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February 21, 2001

Magalie R. Salas  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW, TW-A325  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Docket 00-221, In the Matter of Reallocation of 216-217 MHz

Dear Secretary Salas:

The National Association of the Deaf is acutely aware that many schools serving deaf and hard of hearing children, as well as many auditoriums and other places of public assembly make use of radio frequencies that include the bands 216 - 217 which the FCC is seeking to auction off.

Assistive listening systems, and the assistive listening devices that work with them, use these frequencies to amplify auditory signals, including voice, and send these directly to children, youth and adults who have impaired hearing.

Were these frequencies to be sold off, several very deleterious consequences might occur. First, some movie theatres, legitimate theatres, schools, public auditoriums, and other places of assembly might lose their investments in FM assistive listening systems. Given that it has taken the deaf and hard of hearing communities many years of diligent advocacy just to get them to "loop" these locations, that would set us back many years, even decades. We do not relish the prospect of having to go back to many locations in each of the communities where our members live and have advocated for many years and try to convince those places of public assembly to acquire *another* assistive listening system plus the necessary assistive listening devices.

Were some such places of public assembly to continue to use 216 - 217 despite the FCC auction (which is very likely to be the case in many instances) users of the assistive listening devices would be subject, without warning, to sudden interruptions. Imagine watching a play and abruptly hearing in your ear: "No, you idiot. I told you to take the bales in that truck to South Street. The others go up to Trenton. Get it right, you dimwit!".

While the NAD understands that Congress told the FCC to auction some spectrum in order to raise revenues, we very strongly urge the FCC to confine such auctions to spectrums that are *not* already being used for such vital consumer purposes.

Sincerely,

Nancy J. Bloch  
Executive Director

cc: FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell  
FCC Commissioner Susan Ness  
FCC Commissioner Harold W. Furchtgott-Roth  
FCC Commissioner Gloria Tristani  
NAD Board of Directors

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