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**APR 24 2001**

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**"INTEGRITY...FAIRNESS...SERVICE"**

**EX PARTE OR LATE FILED**

April 18, 2001

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WT Docket No. 00-32

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Baltimore County Police Department, I would like to express our concern about the FCC's intention to auction 50 MHz of spectrum in the 4940-4990 MHz (4.9 GHz) band, rather than allocating this critically needed spectrum to public safety for new broadband public safety applications.

The Baltimore County Police Department currently protects and serves 720,662 citizens over 612 square miles. Reliance on improved technology and the solutions outlined below are critical to the Department's mission to enforce laws, safeguard life and property, while preventing and detecting crime.

In 1996, the public safety community identified the need for 97.5 MHz of additional spectrum to meet our communications needs over the next ten years. The greatest amount of spectrum will be for advanced wideband and broadband technologies. To date, the FCC has allocated only 24 MHz of narrow band spectrum to public safety users in the new 746 MHz band. There are new emerging broadband technologies, custom tailored for Public Safety, appearing on the horizon that will require significantly wider bandwidths.

Solutions such as personal and vehicular area networks can wirelessly integrate a variety of existing and future devices to provide a safer environment for our officers. These include image and video cameras and viewers, mobile data terminals and all their peripheral devices, palmtops, wireless long range headsets, microphones, earpieces and voice recognition to allow complete hands free operation. Very large data and image files can be



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rapidly and wirelessly transferred within Wireless Local Area Networks (WLAN), enabling images/fingerprints of wanted or missing persons, video clips of robberies, maps and layouts to be downloaded into police vehicle mobile computers as they leave the precinct. This same technology will also allow wireless uploads of videos, images and reports from the police vehicle to the command center. WLAN technology will also enable command centers to employ full motion video for remote controlled robotics in terrorist and other highly dangerous operations, and monitoring of officers or suspects in officer assistance and high risk situations to allow on scene decision making and assistance based on video transmissions. This technology would allow real time transmission of video and imagery from surveillance helicopters to command centers.

We must have dedicated spectrum and systems that assure the safety of our personnel via immediate priority access, uninterrupted transmissions, security, guaranteed coverage and reliability. The proximity of the unlicensed 5 GHz spectrum to the proposed public safety 4.9 GHz allocation would allow us to leverage commercially developed broadband technologies and yet have the dedicated, reliable, secure and enhanced featured broadband solutions that we require.

The Baltimore County Police Department urges you and the Commission to recognize our broadband spectrum needs and allocate this much needed 4.9 GHz band to the public safety community. Obtaining this spectrum is a critical step for public safety agencies such as ours to access these new advanced broadband solutions for our mission critical applications.

Sincerely,



Terrence B. Sheridan  
Chief of Police

TBS:tm

c: Office of the Secretary  
Ms. Magalie Roman Sallas ✓  
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Sheriff Jerry Keller, President, Major Cities Chief