

I am a broadband operator in rural Northeast Mississippi that uses all available frequency bands to service local customers. We absolutely appreciate all of the unlicensed spectrum that is available today. However, the only frequency band that is usable in most places is the unlicensed 900 Mhz band, which is very small. In fact, we have to be extremely careful and even turn down opportunities when the frequencies would probably cause interference to our own equipment as well as others. Frequencies higher than the 900 Mhz band are essentially useless in rural areas due to non line of sight conditions. The FCC knows that the lower frequencies provide greater foliage penetration characteristics and are essential to further rural broadband development, a key element of President Bush's 2007 broadband agenda.

I do not wish to argue against Bell, cablecos, or even the television industry. However, to help meet the president's agenda, we must find common ground. It is our opinion that more availability of lower frequency spectrum for broadband operations is essential to the welfare of the American public.

There are countless television channels that are unused today and will probably never be used in the future for television only applications. One has to wonder how long RF powered television will and/or should exist. Why can't we carry television using IP based video over broadband utilizing old frequencies? Our local television station, WTVA, is indeed interested in broadband applications over those frequencies. We must be forward looking instead of backwards.

In closing, it is absolutely paramount to closing the digital divide or broadband gap, however you choose to say it, that we open up these lower frequencies to further our common broadband goals for all Americans. Thanks for your consideration, and I will certainly be available to discuss this matter further.