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FCC - MAILROOM

October 24, 2005

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

IB Docket No. 05-221

Dear Chairman Martin:

I understand that the FCC has set as one of its highest priorities efforts to accelerate developing broadband access in America. In my capacity as Executive Director for the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association, I strongly urge the Commission to put a strong emphasis on solutions that will support broadband coverage in rural parts of America. Despite significant broadband coverage throughout the U.S., many areas still have inadequate coverage. I believe the satellite industry, because of its ability to provide service everywhere, is one sector which can play a vital role in bringing broadband to millions more Americans.

I understand technology exists which will allow cell phones to receive a signal from either a cell tower or a satellite. In order to overcome the high cost typically associated with mobile satellite systems, we are looking forward to the availability of advanced hybrid satellite/terrestrial systems. A hybrid network will allow a cell phone user to use a cell phone on existing cell towers or to use a satellite network if the cell phone network is inoperative. This assures virtually every location in the U.S. will receive broadband access, especially rural and underserved areas.

Not only could this approach allow for communications to and from virtually any outdoor location, it could also allow first responders to have an affordable, ubiquitous, redundant and interoperable communications system so crucial to homeland security. In addition, it would allow our agricultural producers and rural residents unequalled access to reliable communications to operate their businesses in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

I understand the Commission will soon determine whether to divide the remaining one-third of the 2 GHz mobile satellite service ("MSS") spectrum between TMI/TerreStar Networks Inc. ("TerreStar") and ICO Satellite Services ("ICO") or take another approach.

I strongly urge the FCC to move expeditiously on this item and support the allocation of this spectrum on a "2x10" basis to these two satellite operators that have already demonstrated a commitment to compete and offer these services. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Best regards,

Jodie Hickman Hettinger
Executive Director

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Cc: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Secretary of the Commission