

Chairman Kevin Martin  
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell  
Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, DC

Thank you for serving the people of the United States. As a music minister in a church, I want to express concern with the upcoming FCC recommendation vote concerning "white spaces." While it is impossible for me to consider all factors in this vote and keep doing my job at the church, I am concerned that this vote will have a significant impact on our church and many others across the nation with the technology we use in worship. Doug Gould of Shure, a knowledgeable manufacturer whose equipment is used in many churches, has stated the technical ramifications well:

Shure has proposed that the FCC set aside eight 'protected' TV channels (2 in the VHF band and 6 in the UHF band) in each market, in which unlicensed wireless microphones could operate without interference from White Space devices. The devices would check an online database and avoid transmitting on the channels that are 'protected'. The problem: the FCC plans to set aside only TWO TV channels for unlicensed wireless mics – but they haven't revealed where they are in the spectrum. Two TV channels (12 MHz of spectrum) would only be enough for four to ten wireless microphones - less if other wireless mic users are nearby. This is insufficient for many users.

With many churches adjacent to each other and many others who use 10 plus wireless devices, this will have a significant impact on churches. In-ear monitoring is being used in churches nationwide and one frequency is utilized for each person in a band or group of singers. This has enabled churches to give musicians the ability to hear themselves without sound bouncing off the wall behind them making the lyrics to our songs muddy or totally unintelligible to the congregation. In professional venues, this technology has enabled the performers to move without being tied down to a black box monitor on the floor. Innumerable churches are utilizing this technology. Add the number of in-ear monitors to the more obvious number of wireless mics multiplied by the number of churches nearby and it is easy to see that if this bill passes, many churches are going to experience the trauma of the lack of wireless mic frequency allocation within months beginning February of next year. Hearing impaired systems used in worship will also be affected.

Congregations are likely to be keenly aware of the problem when they spend money to buy new wireless mics and related equipment and then have them drop out, make various noises, or not work at all on the pastors/priests and singers during a service. They are likely to find that literally thousands of dollars invested for hearing in worship will become useless.

Thank you for your attention to this problem. Please give Shure's proposal serious consideration.

Tom Noland  
Eastern Shore Baptist Church  
Daphne, AL