

MINORITY MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL

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December 12, 2008

Hon. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Dortch:

RE: Notice of *Ex Parte* Communication: WT Docket 07-195 (AWS-3/M2Z
Networks, Inc.)

On behalf of the Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (“MMTC”), this reports on a telephone conversation I had at 4:20 PM yesterday with Commissioner Deborah Tate. The citation in the footnote below was found later.

MMTC encourages the Commission to adopt the proposed AWS-3 rules in a manner that does not inhibit new nationwide entry. MMTC has consistently supported M2Z’s proposal, which presents a prime example of the benefits of new entry and diversity in telecommunications. In addition to having very significant minority participation in ownership, M2Z’s proposed low cost national broadband service would be a highly effective means of bridging the digital divide with a national free service. A special focus of M2Z, as it should be for any potential AWS-3 licensee, is bringing service to rural consumers, including isolated rural minority populations such as those MMTC’s Rural Broadband Taskforce has under study.

The Commission should look at this potential national new entrant from “high on the mountaintop” and ask itself “ten years from now, what would the Commission want to be able to say that it had done to advance wireless competition and service?” The answer has to be “we made possible a national free broadband service.” It won’t be perfect – the starting data rate can’t be as fast as everyone would like. But it still would be about 13 times faster than dialup, and the unfortunate reality, according to the Pew Internet Study, is that 43% of the population doesn’t have access to broadband from their homes and have to do without or rely on dial-up.¹ For most uses, especially those that children need the most, M2Z’s service would be a tremendous step forward.

¹ See Horgan, John, Obama's Online Opportunities: What Our Research Suggests about where President-elect Obama's Technology Policy May Lead A Pew Internet and American Life Report, December 4, 2008 (found at http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/268/report_display.asp).

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In a separate letter today, I respond to a question Commissioner Tate asked me regarding rollout schedules for rural service.

Sincerely,

David Honig

David Honig
Executive Director