



Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for
Wireless Technologies

Ex Parte Filing

March 22, 2012

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W., TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Open proceedings of the Emergency Alert System [04-296] In the Matter of the National EAS Test

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center for Wireless Technologies (Wireless RERC) hereby submits an Ex Parte document regarding the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and, specifically regarding the national EAS test conducted on November 9, 2011. The Wireless RERC is funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) of the U.S. Department of Education under grant # H133E110002. All phases of this project were conducted under Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures. IRBs are governed by Title 45 CFR Part 46.

The document presents the background and results of on-line surveys and focus groups which were conducted to examine the effectiveness and accessibility of the national EAS test. The surveys evaluated responses from people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or have low vision in order to understand the effectiveness of EAS for people with sensory disabilities. The focus groups listened to and/or watched the on-air EAS test message and facilitators led a discussion that addressed any problems the participants experienced receiving and understanding the message.

This document is provided to the FCC, FEMA, IPAWS, and other stakeholders to supply unbiased data and evaluation to help ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to critical lifesaving emergency alerts. Should you have any questions concerning this filing, please do not hesitate to call.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Mitchell'.

Helena Mitchell, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Center for Advanced Communications Policy
Principal Investigator, Wireless RERC
Georgia Institute of Technology