CITY OF LOBELVILLE

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March 30, 2012

The Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: IB Docket No. 11-109; Reply comments for Public Notice DA 12-214

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

Please consider the below op-ed published in the Buffalo River Review on March 28, 2012 regarding VisionPerry and how LightSquared's proposed 4G-LTE network can help those living and working in areas inherently disadvantaged due to geographical location. The Commission should not revoke LightSquared's authority to deploy a terrestrial network and instead should continue to find a solution that enables LightSquared and GPS to coexist.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mayor Bobby J. Moore
City of Lobelville

[OPINIONS & EDITORIALS]

Our entrepreneurial spirit

Guest Columnist
MICHAEL DUMONT
Vision Perry

Americans don't like being told, "No, you can't." We believe that bold action—not passivity—is the way to solve tough challenges. That's why, even in these difficult economic times, most Tennesseans and Americans remain confident that we can get our economy moving again without shredding our social safety net or creating unnecessary burdens for business owners.

By contrast, elected leaders in Washington seem mired in gridlock and artificially stark choices: lower taxes vs. good schools; financial safeguards vs. vibrant markets; balanced budgets vs. creating jobs. In Washington, all we hear is "No, we can't." But that's not the philosophy that made America great.

In Perry County, we have tackled the job-creation problem by choosing action over gridlock. After studying a report prepared for the county by Strategic Development Group of South Carolina, which portrayed an uphill battle in attracting a new traditional manufacturing facility to Perry County because we lack a four-lane highway, we chose another route toward economic revitalization and job creation.

VisionPerry—in collaboration with cTechnology, Inc. of Nashville; South Central TN Workforce Alliance; the Town of Linden; the City of Lobelville; and Perry County Government— launched a pilot training program to develop a "Digital Factory" in Perry County using high-speed Internet to overcome the disadvantages of our geographic location.

The program is divided into various "production lines" requiring increasing skills, similar to a standard factory concept. Outfitted with broadband connections, VisionPerry has the technical capabilities to be utilized as both a training and work-center facility. Training programs began in 2010 and placed an initial emphasis on the development of customer service representative and computer programmers. The self-paced training program has developed a skilled, certified workforce who supporting nationally based companies In addition, a Nashville based company has located a satellite facility in Linden to take advantage of the Vision-Perry program.

The key to Vision Perry's success is broadband access—and ultimately its job-creation capabilities will require greater access and adoption of wireless broadband all over the county, so everyone in our communities can use smart phones, tablets and other next-generation devices to compete in the global economy. Currently, only 37.5% of Tennesseans with Internet in the home have access to wireless broadband.

We need Washington to do its part by expanding the portion of the publicly owned, federally administered airwaves that are assigned to wireless broadband. That's why we've watched with interest as over the last year, lawmakers and federal agencies have been engaged in an odd tug-of-war over plans for a new wireless company to launch a nationwide next-generation wireless network that could create billions of dollars in economic opportunity for businesses of all sizes and bring much-needed access to underserved communities in Tennessee and throughout the country.

At first glance, there's nothing controversial about the company—called LightSquared—or its goal of investing $14 billion in a hybrid 4G LTE and satellite wireless communications network. The Virginia-based company intends to sell wholesale access to its network, unleashing scores of new wireless competitors and innovative services into the marketplace. The potential for entrepreneurs and small business creation is enormous.

However, it turns out that certain global positioning system (GPS) devices, which have become enormously popular with consumers in the last decade, have been programmed to use LightSquared's airwaves in addition to the GPS airwaves, which happen to use a nearby frequency. This means that some GPS devices would be "washed out" once the new network goes live.

There's no question about the value of GPS to millions of Americans, whether it be for personal navigation, air traffic control or homeland security. There's also no doubt that America would benefit greatly from LightSquared's new network, which will bring billions in investment, more wireless competition and a new business model that catalyzes job creation. We shouldn't have to choose one or the other.

There are those in Washington who maintain that this engineering problem can't be solved, and that LightSquared will have to give up the airwaves it has been permitted to use since 2003; otherwise millions of GPS devices will just plain stop working.

Thankfully, according to recent news reports, this coin flip may not be necessary. Several companies have already developed technical solutions to the problem in the form of receiver "filters" that enable GPS and LightSquared to co-exist. It should surprise no one that where Congress sees problems, businesses see opportunities—and like most Americans, they're ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work.

Cooler heads, like that of Senator Lamar Alexander (who sits on both science and defense spending committees), will hopefully prevail. Congress needs to be reminded that this is America, where our bright businesses and technical minds can solve our toughest problems. After all, freedom of choice is as American as apple pie—but being forced to choose between two job-creating technologies is not.