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Congress of the United States
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WORKFORCE

February 3, 2012

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

With the many natural disasters this country has experienced over the last year, we are mindful that having ready access to emergency alert information is critically important. Therefore, we are writing to request that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) hold a hearing to explore the potential benefits to the American public by including radio tuners in mobile telephone handsets.

More than 241 million Americans depend on local radio to provide community news and information. About 94 percent of African-American consumers aged 12 years and over listen to the radio each week at home, at work, in the car and in other locations. Regardless of age, time of day or location, radio is a valuable media companion to African-American consumers.

What sets local radio apart is that since the 1950s, broadcasters have been the backbone of the public warning system and remain so today, providing emergency alerts, live coverage during emergencies and information on storm paths and evacuation routes. With an activated radio chip in mobile phones, every handset could also function as a local radio receiver using the free over-the-air broadcast signal that operates independently of the mobile networks. Recent national and international disasters have shown, when mobile networks that depend on the cellular or broadband infrastructure become overwhelmed, over-the-air broadcasts remain available.

Interestingly, the penetration of broadcast radio capability in mobile phones in the U.S. is low when compared to other countries. In Latin America and Asia, nearly 50 percent of users list the availability of radio reception as one of their top three priorities in choosing a mobile phone. However, in the U.S. relatively few phones on the market offer this feature, although a recent nationwide survey found that 73 percent of Americans believe that having a radio-capable mobile phone would be "important" during an emergency.

Having widely available mobile devices that are broadcast ready is a critical component of any next-generation wireless alerting solution. Radio-enabled mobile phones would save lives, including the approximately 87 percent of African Americans who own a cell phone and consider it a vital part of their lives. For these reasons, we respectfully request that the FCC hold a hearing to explore the potential benefits of including a radio tuner in mobile telephone handsets. Having free, local radio available on mobile devices is important, not only for receiving up-to-date local news and

information, but also for communicating vital emergency information to our citizens when they are away from their homes or vehicles.

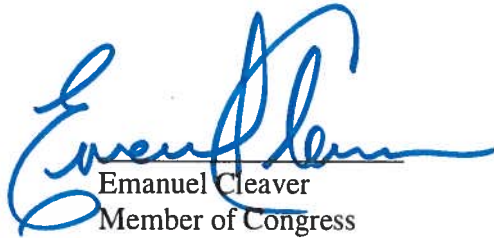
Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress


Charles Rangel
Member of Congress

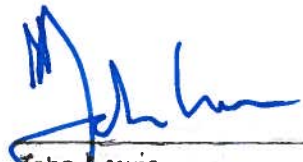

Bennie Thompson
Member of Congress

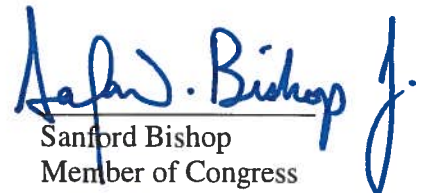

Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress

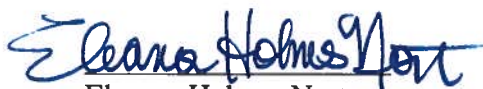

Donna Christensen
Member of Congress


G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

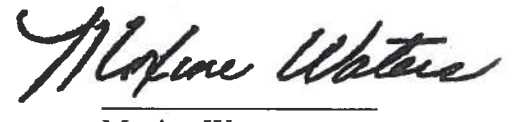

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