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Congress of the United States
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October 3, 2007

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: OET Docket No. 04-186; 02-380

Dear Chairman Martin:

I am writing to express my concerns about the proceeding on unlicensed devices in the TV "white spaces."

There are dual consumer interests at stake in this proceeding. One interest is in the potential economic and technological benefits of developing and permitting devices that can effectively use the unused spectrum in the television bands. Development of such technologies could address the digital divide by providing broadband access to largely rural, underserved areas of the country. It could also provide needed competition in the broadband market in both rural and urban areas.

The other consumer interest is in providing interference-free digital television signals to the millions of Americans who will continue to rely on over-the-air broadcasts after February 2009. There are growing and legitimate concerns about the extent to which consumers will be properly educated by the transition date. The termination of analog broadcasts was a U.S. government decision, and government has an obligation to the public to ensure that the transition proceeds as smoothly as possible. The Commission should make every effort to ensure that any certification of unlicensed devices in the white spaces does not undermine the promised benefits of digital TV, and add to consumer confusion during the transition.

Competing claims about the technological readiness and the testing of the unlicensed devices by the Office of Engineering and Technology have been made by intervening parties. While I cannot offer independent insight into the state of the technology, I do believe that adhering to a process of robust testing is prudent, especially when the stakes are high.

Therefore, I ask that the FCC, when considering the pace of this proceeding, allow for proper and thorough testing of the proposed technologies for unlicensed white

space devices. American consumers have two important interests at stake in this decision. As we proceed with advancing those interests, we should take special care to ensure that the government's actions do not cause undue harm to either interest.

Again, thank you in advance for your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Tom Allen
Member of Congress