

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 15, 2011

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

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

Access to, and effective use of, the public airwaves are vital to our economic, public safety and national security interests. The House of Representatives is considering authorizing the Federal Communications Commission to auction spectrum that has been voluntarily relinquished by current licensees and to share in the auction proceeds with those entities. While we recognize that such an arrangement has the potential to fairly and efficiently increase our usage of the spectrum, we must be diligent in obtaining the information needed to serve the best interests of our constituents.

As we move forward, it would be beneficial to have a comprehensive inventory of the nation's airwaves – both governmental and commercial – so, as legislators, we have a complete picture of who is licensed to use what airwaves and how effectively they are being used. In the last Congress, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill which would have provided a framework for the Commission to initiate such an inventory.

Additionally, a voluntary incentive auction arrangement will need to address several questions. If a licensee opts to participate in a voluntary incentive auction, what will be the effect on those licensees who opt to retain their spectrum? Where and how will they be relocated? Will there be assurances to those licensees that their new channels will be as strong and robust as their previous channels? How do you plan to protect and educate those viewers who rely on existing over-the-air services?

It is vital that we be prepared to manage the ever increasing demands on our spectrum. We aim for solutions that protect the public interest by encouraging efficient use of all our public airwaves. Opening up additional spectrum for wireless broadband capabilities is critical to innovation and job creation in America, as is protecting our local television broadcasting system. We look forward to working with you to compile this necessary and important information.

Sincerely,



Representative Robert Latta
Member of Congress



Representative John Barrow
Member of Congress



Representative Greg Walden
Member of Congress



Representative Joe Barton
Member of Congress



Representative Jim Matheson
Member of Congress



Representative Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress



Representative Charlie Bass
Member of Congress



Representative Gene Green
Member of Congress



Representative Marsha Blackburn
Member of Congress



Representative Brian Bilbray
Member of Congress



Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress