

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Julius Genachowski  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Secretary Napolitano and Chairman Genachowski:

We are writing to request that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) explore the potential benefits for the American public of including radio tuners in mobile telephone handsets. Many of our colleagues urged the DHS and the FCC to support this in a 2009 letter.

More than 239 million Americans daily count on local radio to provide news and information. Radio's emergency alert system (EAS) is a proven, reliable warning service and radio has long served as a critical lifeline for information during times of emergency. Recent national and international disasters have shown, when mobile networks become clogged, over-the-air broadcasts are still available. For the benefit of the American public, radio-enabled mobile phones should be a critical component of any next-generation wireless alerting solution. In fact, a recent nationwide survey found that 73 percent of Americans said having a radio-capable mobile phone would be "important" during an emergency.

Globally, it is expected that roughly 700 million radio-capable mobile phones will be on the market by the end of this year, or approximately 45 percent of all active mobile phones. But in the U.S., penetration of radio-enabled mobile phones substantially lags the global market. There is no excuse for American consumers' access to advanced technology to lag behind that available worldwide.

Accordingly, we would encourage both DHS and FCC to consider extending Americans' access to radio emergency information via mobile phone handsets. The American public, public safety officials, the mobile phone and broadcasting industries stand to benefit.

Sincerely,

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Cc: FCC Commissioners