



Congress Should Prevent Any Microsoft Spectrum Grab

APRIL 2024

Microsoft is lobbying Congress and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for free TV airwaves to operate unlicensed devices. Microsoft falsely claims this would unlock broadband for rural America, but instead it will put rural Americans' lifeline local TV service at risk.

- Broadcasters have worked cooperatively with Microsoft where possible, but **policymakers should reject further changes to ensure viewers have access to the critical news and emergency information local TV stations provide.**

Microsoft has been promising rural broadband for a decade, but has not delivered. Microsoft asked for, and was given, free access to airwaves in 2008. The FCC also granted unlicensed devices the ability to operate at higher powers and closer to television stations to help deployment.

- Broadcasters worked constructively with Microsoft to seek changes to the FCC's rules that would purportedly facilitate greater broadband deployment. But Microsoft continues to seek still more changes to the rules that could cause interference to television service. This harms television viewers throughout the country, with no promise that broadband service will ever be offered.
- Microsoft has been given every opportunity to put these white spaces to good use, but the company should not be able to constrain current or future television service to reserve spectrum for some hypothetical future use.

Congress should not harm television viewers to give a trillion-dollar company a handout.

- Despite being given the airwaves to do so, Microsoft has not delivered on its promise to bring broadband to rural America and there's no guarantee it will do so in the future.
- The future of broadcast television service should not be left in limbo while Microsoft determines what it wants to do with the free spectrum it's already been given.