



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Brenda Lawrence
U.S. House of Representatives
1237 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lawrence:

Thank you for your letter supporting competition in the wireless marketplace. I share your view that the upcoming incentive auction is a unique opportunity to promote greater competition and choice by making additional low-band spectrum available for wireless broadband.

One of our priorities for the Incentive Auction is to ensure that competitive providers have a meaningful opportunity to access low-band spectrum. This is particularly important in rural areas, where low-band spectrum is necessary if competitors are to fill in their coverage gaps, and in urban areas, where low-band spectrum allows more reliable in-building coverage. I agree that facilitating access to low-band spectrum by multiple providers is important to preserve and promote competition in the mobile wireless marketplace, which brings consumers more choices, lower prices, and higher quality services.

For these reasons, as you note, the Commission has established a groundbreaking spectrum reserve for competitors in every market nationwide. The market-based spectrum reserve for the incentive auction will facilitate an opportunity for mobile wireless providers that lack significant amounts of low-band spectrum to acquire such spectrum. Additionally, the market-based reserve is designed to promote competition as well as ensure that all bidders bear a fair share of the value of the spectrum for the public and the costs of broadcaster relocation. While I believe we struck the right balance when we set this first-ever reserve at 30 megahertz, I share your goal and your belief that a spectrum reserve will help ensure that consumers will benefit directly from increased competition in all parts of the country – rural, suburban and urban areas included.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in and support of our efforts to promote competition and choice in mobile broadband. I look forward to working with you toward our mutual goal of a successful incentive auction in early 2016 for the benefit of America's consumers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler".

Tom Wheeler