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For Immediate Release**FCC TAKES STEPS TO TRANSFORM THE 2.5 GHz BAND FOR NEXT GENERATION 5G CONNECTIVITY**

WASHINGTON, May 10, 2018—The Federal Communications Commission today adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to consider updating the framework for licensing Educational Broadband Service (EBS) spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band.

The 2.5 GHz band (2496-2690 MHz) constitutes the single largest band of contiguous spectrum below 3 gigahertz and is prime spectrum for next generation mobile operations, including 5G. EBS spectrum in this band, however, currently lies fallow across approximately one-half of the United States, primarily in rural areas. Moreover, access to this spectrum has been strictly limited since 1995, and current licensees are subject to outdated regulations.

The NPRM proposes to modernize and rationalize the EBS spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band to allow more flexible use. The item proposes to rationalize the service areas of existing EBS licenses and to provide additional flexibility to current and future EBS licensees.

The NPRM also seeks comment on whether to establish up to three local priority filing windows to allow applicants physically located in a license area to access 2.5 GHz spectrum: First, a window for existing licensees to expand their service to the county boundaries; second, a window for Tribal Nations located in rural areas to acquire licenses; and third, a window for educational entities that do not currently hold EBS licenses to acquire licenses. The NPRM proposes to make any spectrum remaining after these priority windows available for commercial use through competitive bidding and seeks comment on alternative approaches to the priority filing windows for licensing the spectrum for commercial use.

The ideas teed up in the NPRM seek to allow more efficient and effective use of this spectrum band and to provide new opportunities for EBS eligible entities, rural Tribal Nations, and commercial entities to obtain unused 2.5 GHz spectrum to facilitate improved access to next generation wireless broadband, including 5G.

Action by the Commission May 10, 2018 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 18-59). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr and Rosenworcel approving and issuing separate statements. Commissioner Clyburn not participating.

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