

## SEPARATE STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER KEVIN J. MARTIN

*In re: Improving Public Safety Communications in the 800 MHz Band (March 14, 2002)*

Public safety operations are critical to the welfare of our society. It is imperative that the communications systems supporting the nation's emergency response providers, who are responsible for the protection of our lives and our property, are interference-free and readily available when they are needed.

The public safety community has expressed concern that their communications systems in the 800 MHz band are being impacted by interference from other spectrum users. These problems are partially related to the manner in which the Commission has regulated this band. They are also related to accelerated growth of the varied systems making use of this band.

While the root causes of the problems are complicated, our goal is very clear - we must remedy this situation. I am pleased to support this item, which addresses the interference problems in that band and takes an important step toward finding a resolution. Equally important, this item will generate a fresh record regarding the amount of spectrum required by the public safety community in carrying out their important missions.

I am optimistic that this item will generate a range of creative and effective options for improving the spectrum environment in that band. I thank Nextel, the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), and others who have already taken the initiative to offer such options for our consideration. I am also hopeful that this Commission will find a remedy that will not result in unnecessary disruption to the incumbent licensees. I look forward to working closely with the public safety community, Nextel, NAM, and other impacted spectrum users in better understanding and resolving the issues implicated in this proceeding.